* Pre-Western History
  + Pre-History
    - Crater Formation
      * Hypothesis #1
        + Crater was once a massive super volcano that violently erupted million years ago.
      * Hypothesis #2
        + The crater was formed by an anomaly in the earths crust, causing magma to reach the surface
    - Animal evolution
  + Indigenous History
    - Cayuse and Paiute Peoples
      * Little presence before the pass, but there were some small permanent residences inside the crater
* Neilman Family
  + First non-indigenous people to visit the park
  + Made up of:
    - Joseph Neilman - Husband
    - Racheal Neilman - Wife
    - Annie Neilman – Eldest Daughter
    - Emma Neilman – Middle Daughter
    - Francine Neilman – Youngest Daughter
  + Went to Oregon alone in 1834, which was seen as highly unusual
    - Neilman told others that god told him to go alone
  + Last seen April 15th 1834 departing from Independence
  + Neilman and Family travel first westward before heading north into modern day Wyoming then west again until they reached the crater. The first assumed that the crater was another mountain range, until they went north and found craters pass where they entered
  + Neilman kept journal of accounts when inside the crater
    - Describes natural wonders, strange animals
    - Later entries begin to get more sporadic, and short. Begins to describe strange occurrences
      * Lights in the forest
      * People running across open fields with lights
        + Possibly Indigenous peoples
      * Describes lights in the sky several times at different times in the day
        + Shooting Stars
        + Super Nova?
      * People began to disappear
        + First Francine Disappeared, thought to have disappeared around the tunnels that are now named after her
        + Second was Racheal and Emma, who were last told to have gone searching for Francine.

Remains have been found on Numidea Island

* + - * + Next Annie disappeared apparently in the middle of the night, but is not elaborated on by Neilman
        + Neiman’s last entry is on January 16th 1836 where he says that he “Can see the light of god descending from the heavens” something dumb like that
        + Modern speculation is that Francine got lost in the caves, It was suspected that Racheal and Emma died from hypothermia since they died in the winter in the wilderness, but modern forensics have said otherwise. since they disappeared at night in the winter. Annie and Neilman have never been solved.
* Johansson Sisters
  + Johansson sisters are commonly referred to as a second Lewis and Clark. They are responsible for documenting a majority of the flora and fauna in the lower parts of the lower areas of the Louisiana purchase, as well as part of northern Spanish territory.
    - Route took them through Kanas, to Colorado, and then north through the Wyoming, into Montana and through the rocky mountains into Idaho and ending at the Saranoma Crater in Oregon
  + They were immigrants from Norway who were looking for fertile land In the west.
    - At the time the Johansson family lived in the rural north and did not practice Christianity and still practiced Nordic faiths. This was part of the reason the emigrating, as Christianity withing Norway was being heavily enforced in Europe at the time, as well as a Norwegian economic crisis.
  + Notable Discoveries
    - Documented many of the Colorado Mountain Ranges
    - Were some of the first people to come in contact with tribes in Wyoming, mainly the Shoshone and the Arapaho
    - Documented aspects of Yellowstone’s
    - Three Sisters Route through the Rocky Mountains (Including the Three Sisters Mountains)
    - Documenting the area in an around the Saranoma crater
  + The sisters are:
    - Aud Johansson
      * Aud Johansson was 24 at the time of departure from independence with her sister. Aud was known to be an excellent naturalist and geologist.
    - Catherine Johansson
      * Catherine was Born Kari Johansson but started to use the name Catherine when she converted to Christianity. She was an impressive linguist.
  + The Sisters reached Saranoma Crater in 1838 where they documented much of the area outside the crater before entering it
    - Johansson Meeting the Neilman remains
      * The Johansson’s found the remains of the Neilman Family. The area they occupied was a clearing with a small log cabin erected near a large methuselah tree. The inside of the cabin had clearly been abandoned for years, food was still on the table rotting.
      * They found Joseph’s Diary, however there was no sign of Joseph himself.
      * Discovered Remains of Racheal and Emma in 1840 in Numidia Island during their second return to the crater
        + The bones are buried on Numidia Island. The only remains were degraded clothing and scattered bones. The skulls were exhumed in 1975 and it seems that the died from skull trauma and not hypothermia like previously thought.
      * Discovered the corpse of Annie at Annie’s Peak in 1840.
        + The Body was in mostly perfect condition. It was record to have been perforated with small holes in about 3mm each in a perfect grid. The body is buried at Annie’s tomb at the primary base bellow Mount Annie.
        + The Body was exhumed in 175 to study the remains. The body was mostly bones at this point, but the bones had evidence of trauma as well as the aforementioned perforations in certain places.
        + Remains a mystery to this day, hypothesis suspect Joseph neilman to have possibly murdered her due to his debilitating mental state.
    - After staying in the crater for a number of months they returned to Missouri and traveled with their large family, along with some others and established a settlement in the crater’s interior. This place soon came to be known as St. Catherine.
    - Death Hypothesizes
      * Francine died deep inside the caves after getting lost, possibly due to starvation, or something relating to the caves
      * Rachel and Emma Died were possibly killed from some falling object, potentially a branch from a tree or falling on an object
      * Annie is suspected to have been murder by Joseph but this is extremely unclear
      * Joseph’s body has never been found, he possibly died from exposure during the winter
      * Unlikely Hypothesizes
        + Killed by Native Americans

One of the earliest theories, very unlikely, while small settlements did exist it is unlikely that they had much if any contact at all with the Neilman’s as most settlments were located at the crater pass, while the neilmans were located more towards the southern part of the crater

* + - * + Aliens

Just no.

* US Military Presence
  + Fort Saranoma
    - Established in 1870, the fort was built near the Johansson settlement, which had now grown into a much larger town due to the ever growing Oregon trail. The official reason that the fort was established was to protect people traveling on the Oregon trail, as well was the town that was slowly growing in the area. Many people, especially Aud was very against the decision to establish the fort but none the less the fort was constructed and garrisoned.
    - The fort would stay garrisoned, even lightly until 1902 when it was officially decommissioned
    - The fort was turned into a museum in 1915 was part of a greater public push to preserve the historical parts of the Saranoma Crater
  + Outpost 13
    - Outpost 13, officially known as the Saranoma Highlands Storage Depot, was established in 1942 as a small military depot to serve as a junction for military equipment coming from the Midwest to the pacific coast.
    - The real purpose of the base was to store chemical weapons in the event that they were ever needed. The base took advantage of the extensive cave system below the saranoma highlands
    - Post WWII the base served as a chemical weapons storage facility until 1975 after the 1975 Saranoma Earthquake, which posed a hazard to the chemical weapons. The chemicals were then moved to the Umatilla Chemical Depot in 1975 where they were disposed of.
    - The Outpost was decommissioned in 1980 where it was then acquired by the “Saranoma County Veterans Association” who now operate the outpost as a museum. The association gives tours of the outpost, including a small amount of the underground caves. It is possible to stay the night in the outposts barracks, as the place is said to be haunted.
* St. Catharine’s Village/Town
  + Following the Johansson’s second trip from Missouri to Oregon, they brought their entire family, along with other who chose to travel with them. They then established a settlement in the crater, as the area was well suited for farming.
  + The town was usually just referred to as Johansson’s Town or Crater Town, but eventually Aud began to refer to the town as St. Catherine’s Village, poking fun at her sister’s religious piety. They name never stuck until Catherine’s death in 1879, where the name was used to honor her memory, and eventually would become the towns official name.
  + The settlement soon began to grow and it became an important stop in the Oregon Trail, providing safe harbor for those traveling long distances.
  + The town was briefly home to a military for called fort saranoma in 1870, against the objections of many residents
  + The town was officially incorporated as a town in 1890 with a population of 1,721
* NPS Management/Present Day
  + Park Management in 1921
    - Park signed into law by congress in 1921
    - St Catherine was given a large part of land and special rights around the town
      * Town works with NPS to support tourism and conservation
    - Park includes the main crater
      * Inside the crater is usually referred to as the Hearth
      * Has many mountains but only three extinct volcanic mountains Annie, Francine, and Emma. Called the Crater sisters
      * Most wildlife lives in the Hearth but have spread out throughout some of the highlands
    - The Underground
      * The highlands are filled with underground lava tunnels, possibly from the formation of the highlands and the crater
      * Most tunnels are connected to the three crater sisters
      * Tunnel have been partially mapped through exploration, and through using underground penetrating radar
    - Crater Basin and Lake Luther
      * The Crater basin is an area behind the crater and contains a large lake known as lake Luther
      * Lake Luther is one of the largest lakes Oregon.
      * Lake is made up of run off from the mount Annie and eastern glaciers
      * Popular boating location
    - Seats of Mars
      * Largest concentration of hills in the Saranoma Highlands
      * Famous for their view of the night sky
      * Named by Ida Johansson, daughter of Catherine
        + Ida was and accomplished astronomer
        + Made many discoveries including the location of Alpha Centari years before official discovery
      * Astronomical Observatory build in 1975 after earthquake, the area was chosen years before by Ida
  + 1975 Earthquake
    - January 16th, 1975, 6.6 Magnitude Earthquake occurred
    - Unknown why or how this happened, seems to confirm theory about the anomaly in the earth’s crust
    - Caused extensive damage to park infrastructure as well as St. Catharine’s Town
    - 23 People died, 712 people suffered major injuries
    - No aftershocks occurred
  + Current Park Activities
    - The park continues to operate to this day with around 750,000 visitors per year