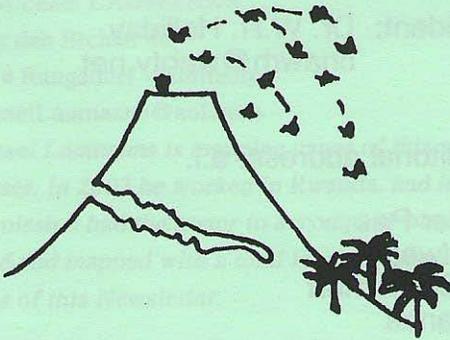


INTERNATIONAL UNION OF SPELEOLOGY
UNION INTERNATIONALE DE SPÉLÉOLOGIE

Commission on Volcanic Caves



Feb. 2005

In this issue:
Lava Tubes of
RWANDA

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the U.I.S is affiliated with UNESCO

The Newsletter is sent free to members of the Commission. It is not possible to subscribe - but will be send to all interested in lava-tube caves. However: News and information is always appreciated !!



Honorary President: Dr. W.R. Halliday
bnawrh@webtv.net

Chairman & editorial address: a.i.

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jpgvanderpas@hetnet.nl



As always: late. Also due to the chaotic lay-out of this publication. Some news was not 'adjusted' to the A-5 size and added as loose pages. Note the new address-list. If you note errors of 'other' readers - please report.

NEW / IMPORTANT ADDRESSES

Dr. Tsutomo HONDA

Soshigaya, Setagaya-ku

Tokio - Japan

hondat@itergps.naka.jaeri.go.jp

Dr. Honda participated in many lava-tube symposia. He is going to replace our dear member Takanori Ogawa.

Mr. Michael LAUMANNNS

Unter den Eichen 4C

15834 Rangsdorf - Germany

MichaelLaumanns@aol.com

Michael Laumanns is mapping caves of this world. He issued several atlases. In 2003 he worked in Rwanda, and in 2004 the chairman of this commission had the honor to accompany him. Some 20 lava-tubes were found and mapped with a total length of more than 9 km's. More on other pages of this Newsletter.

Harry A. MARINAKIS , M.D.

14, Wexford Way

Bridgeport, WV 26330 - U.S.A.

h_marinakis@yahoo.com

Harry has explored many volcanic caves. He participated in Iceland 2002 symposium, and is currently working on a DVD of this symposium.

Mr. Jean-Claude NGARUYE

Ruhengery Province

P.O. Box 03, Ruhengery - Rwanda

jclaudengar@yahoo.fr

Jean-Claude has been trained as a geologist, but works now as a government official. He has been very helpful during the 'Rwanda 2004' project by making pre-arrangements.



Heard from Árni Stefánson (Iceland):

Árni is still working on the project to produce a tunnel into the Thrínúkagígur crater-cave. This project was mentioned in a lecture during the Azores symposium. He seems to have support from some politicians and parliamentarians. Reykjavík has just promised 90.000 US\$ to support the preliminary work, while the municipality of Kópavogur is willing to lease the land.

João Paulo Constância (Azores):

*Starts with the database of the 100 longest caves in the world (lava-tubes). It can be a starting point for a larger database system that can summarize the most relevant caves, and constitute a survey of these natural heritage. Also working on a basic structure for a database, hoping that in Korea (2006) we could present it already fill up. I strongly suggest all those who have information, lists and so on: inform João Paulo.
constancia@mail.telepac.pt*

Some coming symposia:

Commission on Glacier Caves: 6-12 Sept. 2005

Azou, Caucasus, Russia info < karmenka@gugu.usal.es >

Commission on Pseudokarst: 2006

Poland info < urban@iop.krakow.pl >

Commission on Pseudokarst: 2008

Italy (Judrio Valley - this is North-Italy - border with Slovenia)

info < maurizio.tavagnutti@metso.com >

New E-mail for Herman de Swart (NL):
< hermandeswart@casema.nl >



RWANDA 2004 Speleological Project 40 lava-tubes - total 9094 meters

During 30 November - 16 December 2004 a team with leader Michael Laumanns, Germany, (President German Speleological Society) visited the Ruhengery and Gisenyi provinces (districts Mutobo, Cyanzarwe, Kikigi and Mutura) in NW-Rwanda.

Participants were J.P. van der Pas, Netherlands, (chairman Commission on Volcanic Caves), and during 11 - 13 December Chris Newton (U.S.A.) and Jamal al-Ismaïly (Zanzibar).

This was a follow-up of the 2003 project.

A report about 2003 was published (see Newsletter # 41, page 22).

A report about 2004 is under preparation.

Note the E-mail address in # 41 contained an error, it should be < Michael.Laumanns@bmf.bund.de >

RWANDA 2004 project Leader Michael Laumanns (Germany)

J.P. van der PAS

During the yearly Dutch cavers-meeting I met Michael Laumanns, who casually asked: he needed one more team member for Rwanda. Since these were 'only easy lava-tubes' I agreed. I had hoped to be really a 'last' man - looking around in the cave, taking pictures, just observing. But no - we were just two.

So, that meant mapping and mapping. The hope to have an easy day just to look around was in vain - more and more cave was mentioned and we mapped till the very last day.

This in itself was very successful, 20 caves were mapped. With a total length of more than 9 kilometers.

For myself the organization was easy: Michael had been there the year before, knew the way, and had also seen 'there was so much more'. That was very right.

Lots of time are spent to get permission from the authorities, but it always worked. It involves in the end that you get a 'guide', someone who knows the way (and is needed....) and an armed guard. We had a rented car with driver - both were invaluable to us. The car (a pick-up Toyota 19 years old), and a charming but fantastic driver, who also acted as translator and mediator to get access to all the authorities needed.

Rwanda (= country of 1000 hills) has in the North/West volcanoes and lava-tubes. The political situation was during our stay quiet, despite alarming articles in our 'home papers'. Clearly not all is shown, nor told.

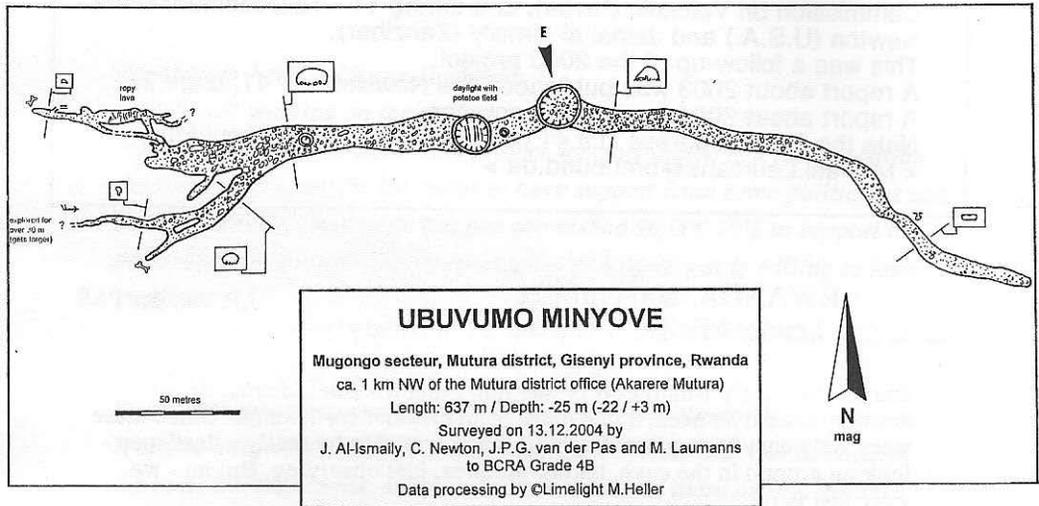
The country is very, very poor. Certainly the area we investigated, near to the Kongo border. There is between Rwanda and Kongo a huge lava-plain, and who knows what is there to find? But that is off-limits.

Going into the caves is interesting: the 'guide' mostly follows you, also the armed guard. Sometimes others. We have to supply them with light (and I



learn to ask lamps back at the end of the trip). The AK-47 gun of the guard is happily following us, clanging and banging over the rocks. They have never been in a cave.

In some caves are skeletons, but I don't know how old. All is hurry hurry. We see pottery, but how old? I don't know. We see bats, and Michael tries to collect some skulls for an institute in Germany.



J.P. van der PAS

THE UNFINISHED UBUVUMO MINYOVE (= Minyove Cave)

Cavers might ask: there is a ?mark on the map. Why? What is the reason this was not investigated when you were there?

Here an answer.

This cave was mapped during the 'Rwanda 2004 project'. The three weeks over there we were with two cavers, but had the privilege that just one very long weekend two more joined us. So this made four of us, from three continents: America, Europe and Africa.

Despite all other caves with enough protection to keep unwanted followers out, this time it failed. Only one elderly man had to accompany us, and no control over who or whatever.

So entering the cave, a roomy collapse, some 30 youths started to follow us. No way to stop them. Most were barefooted, maybe three or four had a torch, but with flat batteries. In this entrance hall they already were a nuisance, because due to their noise it was difficult to shout mapping information. Going in further they followed us much closer since they just moved with our lights.

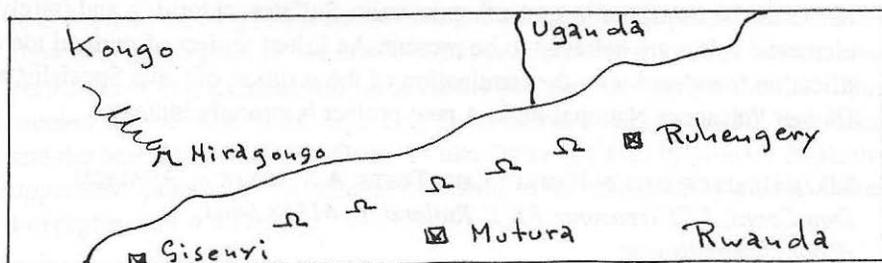
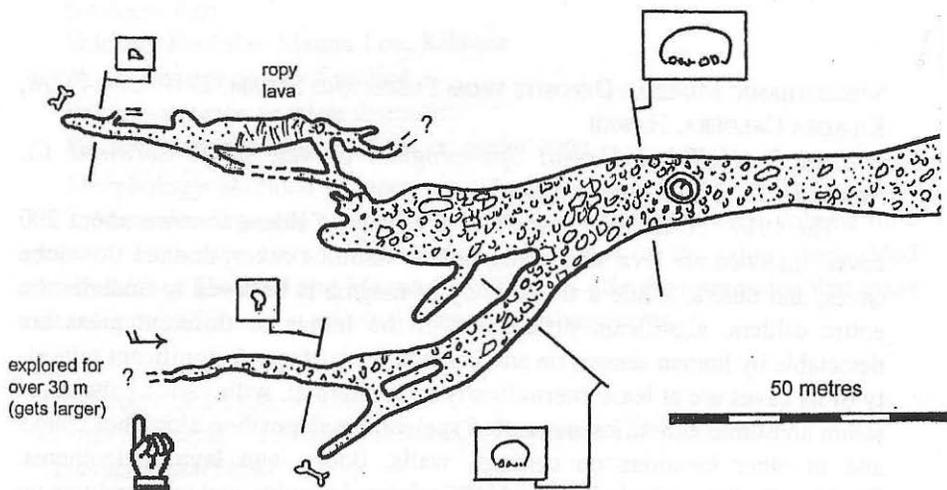


When the cave started branching and getting much narrower this began to be a danger. Moving into the cave no problem, but at dead ends trying to get back was nearly impossible - they did not realize to change direction and just plugged our retreat.

So each time when a new branch was mapped, one our team just blocked the way for them. As long as this worked.....

Of course it is always difficult (when in a kind of haste) how much time you give an 'impossible' crawl/continuation.

At the marked '?' the crawl was dry, and just tried with the idea it would only be a few meters, but adding to the mapping. So I pulled the tape behind me. At 30 meters this was the maximum, so this was sure. Than the crawl started to be easier, but continued at least another 50 meters, getting higher and higher. Than, suddenly a small hall with a collapse dome, and a continuation But what to do? Going on while the others 'defended' our exit? Well next time maybe we find an enormous continuation



*In the 'Journal of cave and Karst Studies, a
NSS publication, of December 2004 some
selected abstracts of the 2004 NSS Convention
(Marquette, Michigan) concerned lava-tubes.*

SPELEOTHEMIC MINERAL DEPOSITS FROM FUMES AND STEAM, 1919 LAVA FLOW,
KILAUEA CALDERA, HAWAII

*William R. Halliday, Hawaii Speleological Survey, 6530 Cornwall Ct,
Nashville, TN 37205, bnawrh@webtv.net*

The 1919 "Postal Rift" lava flow in Kilauea Caldera contains about 200 caves. Included are lava tube caves, hollow tumulus caves, drained flow lobe caves, and others. While a single body of magma is believed to underlie the entire caldera, significant differences in the fumes of different areas are detectable by human senses, on and beneath the surface. A significant minority of its caves are at least intermittently hyperthermal, with varied patterns of steam and fume emissions and varied speleothem deposition along hot cracks and in other locations on ceilings, walls, floors, and lava speleothems. Working conditions include up to 100% relative humidity and temperatures up to 55° C, but as a result of thermostratification, temperatures as high as about 80° C can be measured in speleothemic areas. Sulfates, chlorides, and (rarely) elemental sulfur are believed to be present. An initial project of mineral identification foundered with the termination of the position of Cave Specialist at Hawaii Volcanoes National Park. A new project is strongly indicated.

MAZE DEVELOPMENT IN HAWAII LAVA TUBES: A STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

*Don Coons, KCI Treasurer, RR 1, Rutland, IL 61358-9801,
dcoons@maxilis.com*

Over the past two decades, the Hawaii Speleological Society has docu-



mented more than 1,000 cave entrances and accumulated nearly 200 miles of survey. Twenty of these caves range from 1 to 40 miles in length. These form the study group for the project. Many are rather simple straight-line drainage tubes, while others form extremely complicated maze systems. Cavers have long wondered why there is such a radical difference in caves that are all formed by the same volcanoes.

This study uses the Compass cave program to analyze a line plot of each cave. Two separate analytical techniques placed the sample caves into three distinctive groups: Linear, Transitional, and Maze. The next step in the study was to correlate each cave with the characteristics of the individual flow unit within which it occurred. The intent was to establish the major criteria that influenced maze development. Six characteristics were tested:

Geologic Age

Volcano—Hualalai, Mauna Loa, Kilauea

Slope—average angle of incline

Volume—average passage diameter

Environment—rift zone, caldera, or cinder cone

Morphology—shielded vs. open air

Maze development was most strongly correlated with large volume flow events. These are more common along rift zones on the taller, steep-sided mountains of Hualalai and Mauna Loa. There is also the impression that maze development formed in relatively short, open-air events.

THE CHAIN OF PUKAS SYSTEM, HAWAII

Bernie Szukalski, 1224 Mira Monta Dr, Redlands, CA 92373-6582,

bszukalski@esri.com

The Chain of Pukas System began with the mapping of A'a Surprise Cave in 1998, an unusual find in an a'a lava flow, following-up on a Doug Medville lead from an aerial photograph showing a distinct line of pukas in an historic flow. The exploration of the chain of pukas commenced in 2003, with a concerted effort to document and tie in all the pukas in this part of the flow. This yielded several new finds, including Beer Barrel Puka, Cave 'Til You Puka, and the best find of the trip: Once A Puka Twice A Cave. In January 2004, the uppermost pukas in the nine-puka chain were explored, yielding Pukas Interruptus, and A'a Demise.

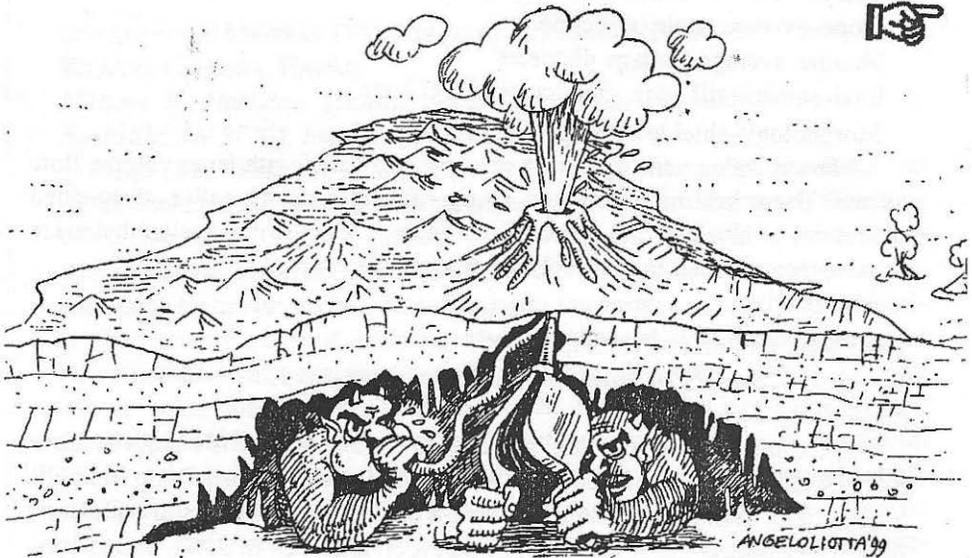




INSIDE VOLCANOES

*IXth International Symposium on
Vulcanospeleology*

Catania, Italy, 11-19 september 1999



Finally, it is coming!

CD-ROM containing the Proceedings (pdf format; more than 400 pages plus color pictures, drawings, images etc.)

It will be distributed to all entitled parties.



Please, if you will/have to buy this item, make sure or contact the addresses mentioned on next page.

Hello,

As previously advised, the distribution of the CD-ROM is in progress and will be completed within mid February. In the meantime all of us would appreciate from your side the announcement, in the Newsletter, that the CD is available at € 40,00 incl. P&P, whereas people registered at Catania can obtain additional copies at € 27,00 ea. incl. P&P. (*)

Payments, net of bank charges, should be made to the bank account # (IT63) H050 3616 900C C045 1287 289

with BANCA AGRICOLA POPOLARE DI RAGUSA, Catania main office, in favour of CENTRO SPELEOLOGICO

ETNEO, Catania, Italy, with notice to nicolabarone@tin.it (Nicola BARONE, Via Macello 23 – 95030

MASCALUCIA

CT, Italy) and/or graycat@tiscali.it (Giuseppe M.

LICITRA, V.le V.Veneto 151 – 95127 CATANIA, Italy).

Ciao.

Giuseppe

(*) We are still endeavouring to materialise a cartaceous version of the Proceedings with INGV's financial support. All subscribers, both old and new, are obviously entitled to receive one free copy of the volume, if and when printed.

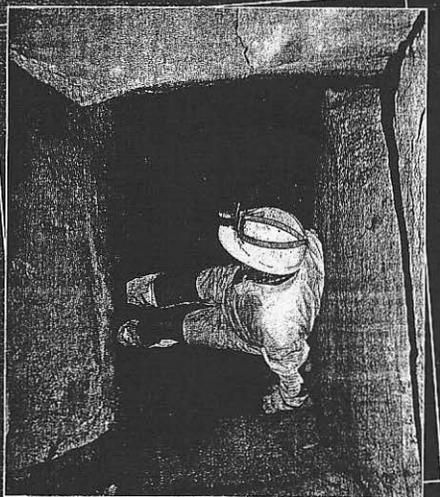


PSEUDOKARST - Proceedings of the 8th Int. Symposium
Teplý Vrch - Slovakia - 26-29 May 2004

- 144 pages, 20 lectures (ranging from Finland to Japan etc.)
- 51 participants (with good address-list)
- dozens of maps, pictures and graphs (all B/W)
- most articles in English, some Italian and Hungarian
- size 17x24 cm, weight 300 gram
- ISBN 80-8064-222-2
- editor: L'udovít Gaál
gaal@ssj.sk

Slovak Caves Administration, Liptovský Mikuláš
Slovak Speleological Society
International Union of Speleology, Commission for Pseudokarst

Proceedings of the 8th
International Symposium
on Pseudokarst



Teplý Vrch - Slovakia, 2004

*Just received: Proceedings of 6th International Symposium
"Glaciar Caves and Karst in Polar Regions".*

This symposium was held on Svalbard (Spitsbergen) September 2003. Issued in October 2004. Dozens of pictures and graphs (all in colour). 193 pages. 24 Lectures, one by Dr. WR Halliday - 20th century glaciосpeleology in the USA.

(Two persons of our commission had intention to go, but prices for transport and some other inconveniences prevented this).

Edited by Adolfo Eraso & Carmen Domínguez
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ISSN: 1696 - 1897 < karmenka@usal.es >

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<p>6th International Symposium "Glaciar Caves and Karst in Polar Regions" 2-4 September 2003 Ny Alesund, Svalbard, lat. 79°N</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">EDITORS Adolfo Eraso Carmen Domínguez</p>		
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Svalbard Science Forum	Kings Bay AS	Norwegian Polar Institute

MORE ABOUT MOWICH CAVE



As all readers know from this publication: Bill Halliday has tried everything to get access to Mowich Cave. For a long time..... Well finally access was granted, and some result was achieved! But Bill wasn't there. Very sad. At the moment of publication of this Newsletter however Bill is on Hawai'i and mapping caves. On other pages of this Newsletter some of his arguments concerning the 'Cave Management Plan for Mowich Cave'.

No, I didn't get to Mowich. A week before the trip I tore a back muscle quite badly and was in bed, sedated, at the time of the trip. Forest Service people including Jim Nieland did go, and remapped the cave. They found only two bats present. A heavy snowfall occurred 3 days later.

They plan to return to Mowich Cave in about 6 months, and have invited me to accompany them. This will be approximately in April, and I am looking forward to going. I have had a month of intensive physiotherapy and physical reconditioning, and now expect to be able to complete my field work in Hawaii beginning 18 January. Today I was able to walk up a 30 m hill at a good pace.

The long-overdue Cave Management Plan for Mowich Cave now is being prepared, but without any caver input as far as I know. This is contrary to Federal law.

Renewed greetings for the rest of 2004. Aloha, Bill H.

Well, there are many pages involved with the 'Mowich'-argument. The UIS Commission on Volcanic Caves supports all work Bill Halliday is doing to clear unfair/unreasonable arguments for non-access to very important caves.

Bill got a 'Cave Management Plan for Mowich Cave'. Too much for this publication. Just to show some of the baselessness clauses of this 'Plan' here a few pages of the answer by Bill. His answers are clear enough to realize all the errors and unheard statements in this 'Plan'. Due to lack of pages not all published

Page 1. Lacks a mission statement. It should begin with something like the following:

"The diversity of caves on the Umpqua National Forest is believed to be unique among national forests. Most of its caves lack fundamental characteristics commonly attributed to caves; e.g., origin by dissolution of limestone or other soluble rocks, significant length, total darkness, and uniform humidity and temperature. Thus the commonest type of caves on this national forest generally is excluded from scientific and encyclopedic reports on caves, and many provisions of broadly written cave management documents are irrelevant to them. On the other hand, one Umpqua National Forest cave is a potential Geological Area: a world-class feature. It is an ancient lava tube cave almost uniquely preserved despite burial beneath a thick stack of deeply dissected canyon-filling lava flows. Thus the management of caves on the Umpqua National Forest necessarily differs substantially from that of caves present on other national forests and requires unusually individualized management planning."

Also on page 1: in line 2 the word "located" is incorrect and should be replaced by its mailing address, i.e. c/o Charlie Larson, 13318 NE 12th Avenue, Vancouver, WA 98685-2743.

Also on page 1, at the end of the second paragraph, the last sentence should be changed to end: ... "the fact that scrambling of satellite signals was in effect at that time."

Also on page 1, the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 should be included in the group of Acts cited in the first sentence of the third paragraph. This is in order to stress the necessity of compliance with this federal law.

Someone's delusion that the USFS is not obligated to comply with this Act contributed heavily to the long-contined Mowich Cave controversy.



Also on page 1, in the third paragraph, authority should be cited for the surprising statement that this handbook is not subject to NEPA. Otherwise the statement should be omitted.

Also on page 1, "...and users of caves" should be added to the last sentence.

On page 2, the first and second paragraphs are wordy and repetitive. They should be shortened and placed in context.

Also on page 2, in the third paragraph the sentence about lava tubes being highly susceptible to collapse at the time of their formation is incorrect and should be deleted. The next sentence is irrelevant and also should be deleted.

Also at the end of this paragraph, another sentence should be added: "Other types of caves are pseudokarstic."

Also on page 2, there is a discrepancy between the number of persons per permit (6) and the actual permit form (5).

On page 3, in the sections entitled "Sensitive Cave" and "Undeveloped Cve", the word "exploration" is misused. "Visitation" is intended.

Also on page 3, the definition of "Undeveloped Cave" is (1) circular, and (2) so divergent from the ordinary meaning of the word that it would be very confusing. A comprehensible word should be used instead.

(This deplorable misuse is carried over into later parts of the document. "Undeveloped Cave" should have its ordinary meaning.)

Also on page 3, the last paragraph is greatly fouled up and must be extensively corrected. Appendix B page 5 makes it clear that only cave LOCATION information is to be confidential; this is mere common sense since recreational, educational and other resources and values are cited elsewhere.

On page 4, in the first paragraph, the statement about the recreational resources category is incorrect and must be deleted.

Also on page 4, in the fourth paragraph the word "discover" is incorrect and should be replaced with "...find for themselves".

Regarding page 6, 2nd paragraph, experience elsewhere has shown that brass caps commonly are not emplaced for years, if ever. "Temporary" marking with aluminum tags should be emphasized instead.

Also on page 6, in Table 2, reports from users of caves should be included.

On page 7, the section on "Naming of Caves" completely omits the rules and regulations of the U.S. Board on Geographic Names. The USFS is required to comply with these rules and regulations and this section much be rewritten completely.

On page 8, the big problem of the sequence of "Classes" begins to appear in paragraph 1. This is discussed below.

On page 9, the first paragraph has been copied verbatim from some manual relevant to "deep caves" (probably that of the Gifford Pinchot National Forest, whose caves are radically different from those on the Umpqua). It is incorrect and/or irrelevant for most of the latter's caves. To make it correct and relevant, the following phrase should be added:

"The entrances of caves extensive enough to have significant zones of uniform humidity and temperature in total darkness may be sensitive and critical to cave ecosystems. Some of these entrances are a focus..."

Also on page 9, in order to comply with Appendix B 2356.2(5), the last paragraph should end with:

"...and be used only as a last resort. Existing cave gates will be removed within one year unless an Environmental Impact Study has shown that they are a means of last resort."

On page 10, the first paragraph refers to some highly controversial matters as if they are Bible truth. The following should be corrected:

1) Contary to its statement, no cave on the Umpqua National Forest contains critical habitat for *P. townsendii*. The word "critical" should be replaced with "important".

2) If the second sentence refers to Mowich Cave, it is disinformation. I have presented data to all levels in the USFS showing that this calumny on the people of Douglas County is false.

3) The third and fourth sentences are internally inconsistent. Further, the USF&WS no longer is studying the western subspecies as alleged.

4) By court order, this bat "has a low tolerance to disturbance" See Appendix D. In fact, this bat does not have a low tolerance to disturbance. They are commonly handled by biologists without harmful effects, and one of the largest roosts in Oregon is over the pingpong table of a well-known ranch house. As the latter information was provided to me by the Umpqua National Forest (in response to a FOIA), this allegation is surprising. It should be omitted or rewritten to correlate actual fact with a contrary judicial decision.

5) The last sentence of this paragraph is an overstatement. As previously supplied to all levels of the USFS, my graph of monthly *P. townsendii* populations in Mowich Cave showed virtually 100% pregnancy, parturition and survival of infants to volant status during the years it was open to recreational use. The sentence could be made acceptable by beginning it with the phrase: "In some cases..."

Also on page 10, the following phrase should be added at the end of paragraph 5:

"Features of lava tubes shall be recorded using terminology published in Charles Larson's 1993 'An Illustrated Glossary of Lava Tube Features' (Western Speleological Survey Bulletin 57, available from the author at 13318 NE 12th Avenue, Vancouver, WA 98685)."

On page 11, the sequence of classes does not follow an ascending order, and consequently is very confusing. The present Class 1 should become Class 3.

Also on page 11, in Table 4 the word "exploration" is misused twice, and should be replaced with "visitation".

It also should be noted that no adequate "EC" are included in this document. As discussed below, the so-called "Evaluation Criteria" in Appendix I are a mixture of significance and sensitivity criteria and must be redone in collaboration with "users of caves".



KENIA - some notes about Mount Elgon
from 'Decent' # 181 dec/jan 04/05

Is it hot, or is it not?

THE caves of the remote dormant volcano of Mount Elgon, in western Kenya, have drawn attention of late. Kapsoi Cave, in the foothills on the south-east side, lies near a community of around 60,000 people. They were naturally alarmed when two holes about 30cm long opened up about 300m from the cave entrance, then began to emit smoke and what was described as a hot, greyish-white sludge (lava). Temperatures inside the cave were reported to have risen to 170°C and flames occasionally glowed through the fumes.

Elgon's caves attained world fame when it was found that elephants helped to carve through the soft rock in search of salt; Kitum Cave further north is the best known example (see *Descent* 162). At Kapsoi, local residents collect the salt to give to their animals and thus discovered the rise in temperature. A similar incident was recorded in 1910 and, in response to the latest discovery, the government was called upon to move the community to new lands amid fears of a volcanic eruption.

Later examinations quickly and miraculously reported that the 'sludge' was in fact ash and that no eruption was likely as the temperature had fallen dramatically and no smoke was actually present. Residents were urged to forget about Kapsoi Cave and 'stop panicking and get on with their normal lives'.

LA GOMERA - Canary Islands

Bujero del Silo protected

A procedure has been started to protect the only volcanic cave on the island Gomera.

This cave in the community San Sebastian is located on 700 meter a.s.l.

The entrance is a narrow shaft of 16 meters, and widens into a hall of 15 meters.

The cave is very important due to finds of the Quarternary Period.

Source: Institutum Canarium, Nr. 86 - July 2004

*This E-mail was received in October 2004.
It announces an expedition to the Easter Island - know for lava
tubes. A web-site is mentioned, but I could not reach this in
October.*

J.P. van der PAS

Van: "Jabier Les" <jabierles@yahoo.es>
Aan: <bosak@gli.cas.cz>
Verzonden: dinsdag 12 oktober 2004 17:37
Onderwerp: expedición rapa nui 2005

Señores:

A través de la presente y con motivo de nuestra proxima expedición espeleológica a la remota Isla de Pascua, les solicitamos nos avalen en dicha expedición como técnicos en el organo científico-técnico de la UIS.

La expedición en este momento está avalada por dos universidades, la asociación de arqueólogos submarinos profesionales, la Sedeck, la federación española de espeleología etc...

La página web que abajo se describe, esta semana tendrá el proyecto completo con los estudios que se realizarán, participantes etc...

Les rogamos colaboren con nosotros.

Jabier Les

Presidente de la Sociedad de Ciencias Espeleológicas Alfonso Antxia

<http://expediciónrapanui2005.com>

*This message reached the commission in October 2004.
My Spanish is very bad - and this was translated to me as by a
person who wants information about lava caves from Canarias
and the rest of the world. Information about the commission was
given, but the rest of the world is difficult for me. Just for your
information.*

J.P. van der PAS

Van: "Alfredo Lainez Concepción" <alfrelainez@eresmas.com>
Aan: <jpgvanderpas@hetnet.nl>
Verzonden: zaterdag 23 oktober 2004 19:41
Onderwerp: Saludos desde Canarias,Tenerife Alfredo Lainez Concepción

Estimado amigo mandarte un gran saludo desde las entrañas de los volcanes de Tenerife,hace ya muchos años 1986 que lo guie por las entrañas de la cueva del viento con su cajita de madera haciendo fotos,han pasado los años y seguimos con la misma afición soy Alfredo Lainez un vulcanoespeleologo del Grupo de Espeleología de Tenerife Benisahare, el motivo de la presente es aparte de volver a contactar y saludarlo es que estoy realizando un trabajo para publicar un libro sobre las cavidades volcanicas a nivel mundial y de canarias, por eso me dirijo a usted para solicitar documentación e información sobre este tipo de cavidades a nivel mundial y de canarias,ya que por desgracia aqui no se consigue casi nada,estara mas enfocado sobre geología de los tubos y simas volcanicas, pero tambien entraran otros campos (biología,arqueología,etc), le estaria muy agradecido desde su cargo en la UIS de vulcanoespeleología el poder recibir toda la mayor información posible sobre estos temas, mis datos son:

Alfredo Lainez Concepción
Chimisay Bl. 27, 1º- D.
cp. 38010 Santa Cruz de Tenerife.
Canarias.
email: alfrelainez@eresmas.com

Sin otro particular y deseandole todo lo mejor quedo a la espera de su información y documentación, Un fuerte Abrazo Amigo y quedo a su entera disposición Atentamente Alfredo Lainez Concepción.

Many X-mas greetings and other wishes arrived. Maybe this one of the most remarkable: one from the Antarctic. It was sent by the Commission on Glacier Caves.

Of course the original is in beautiful colors...



This is the mission statement (published before) as drafted during the U.I.S. Congress in Switzerland (1997). In the mean time symposia have been held in Iceland (2002) and the Azores (2004). However, at times you will find names and addresses of persons not official-commission member. But anyone working (and supplying date) on lava-tube caves is more than welcome in the commission.

MISSION STATEMENT

of the UIS Commission on Volcanic Caves

The Commission on Volcanic Caves is an integral unit of the International Union of Speleology and upholds the high standards of its parent organization. It meets during international congresses of speleology, during international and regional symposia and all appropriate occasions. It solicits and approves sites for such symposia, held to date in the USA (2x), USA-Hawaii, Italy (3x), Japan, Spain (Canary Islands) and Kenya.

The basic mission of the Commission is to advance the scientific exploration, study, and preservation of lava tube caves and related features in volcanic rock, throughout the world. It seeks to bring together all persons, organizations, and agencies with legitimate concerns with volcanic caves, their features, and their environments. Its members are leading vulcano-speleologists from each country or area with especially important lava tube caves or related figures. Members are expected to keep the Commission informed about progress and problems in vulcano-speleology and to disseminate vulcano-speleological information to other speleologists in their country or study area.

The Commission collects and disseminates information through its Newsletter, through sponsorship of internal symposia and conferences and through exchange visits, through meetings of its Chairman/President with individual Commission members and cooperators, and through data compilation in a world data base on lava tube caves at Arizona State University (USA). Currently this world data base contains information on more than 2000 lava tube caves in 40 countries. Further, the Commission provides reports and recommendations to national and regional organizations as the American Geological Institute. Its Newsletter is published at least two or three times each year. In addition to current information it contains reports and abstracts. It is archived at two U.S. Geological Survey libraries, in the UIS library (Switzerland) and is abstracted in Volcano Quarterly.

The Commission intends to continue and expand all current projects. Especially it intends to expand its cooperation (as requested by the UIS Committee during the XII-th International Congress of Speleology in Switzerland - 1997) with other Commissions and Working Groups of the International Union of Speleology and with national and regional speleological organizations working in the field of vulcano-speleology.



During the 'Rwanda 2004' project also an American caver (working at the time in Rwanda) joined us for three days.

Chris Newton (NSS-member) wrote a report for his caving club.

Here his story:

RWANDA 2004, by Chris Newton

This past weekend (and Monday), December 11 - 13, I joined a project exploring lava tubes in northwestern Rwanda, for which I'd arranged permits. Over these three days we, Michael Laumanns of Germany, Jan Paul van der Pas of the Netherlands, Jamal al-Ismaily of Zanzibar, and myself, explored four lava tubes, mapping over a mile of passage.

Day 1: On Saturday we started in Ubuwamo bwa Manjori 2 in the Mutobo district of Ruhengeri province. Michael and Jan Paul had already mapped about 1.1 km in this cave earlier in the week and we had returned to finish the far reaches of the cave. The four of us were accompanied by a local Rwandan guide and a member of the local defense forces, who was accompanied by his AK-47 (which was passed along with the baggage in certain tight spaces). At the end of the cave we mapped an additional 100+ meters before we were stopped by a lava plug. On our return towards the entrance, we cleaned up 4 possible leads, most of which turned out only to be a few meters long, but one of which extended for over 120 meters (and actually still continued, but as a low, muddy crawl). After mapping this portion of the cave, we returned to the entrance, and mapped the extension of the cave on the other side of the roof collapse through which we'd entered. This turned out to be less than 200 m of passage, leaving the day's total survey at 407 m.

Day 2: Sunday, after overcoming some initial car trouble, we ended up in the Mutura district of Gisenyi province. We started with Ubuwamo bwa Kanyondo, which we were told was quite short. However, after passing a few tight breakdown piles, we ended up in passage that was at least 7 meters in height and seemed to just keep going. This tube had no side branches, numerous small formations, and a large (for the area) population of bats. It finally ended at 427 meters of survey.

The second cave of the day was a fairly quick survey, as it was not, at any point, necessary to dodge the ceiling. This cave, Ubuwamo bwa Bihungwe, developed between two roof collapses, had been used as a potato cellar, and featured a number of man-made walls. It's total survey length for the day was 246 meters, but we left one branch for Monday.

Day 3: On Monday we returned to Mutura and quickly finished off the survey of Buhungwe with another 30 meters or so. We then hiked over a hill and through several fields before reaching the second cave of the day, which shall remain nameless due to my poor note-taking skills. At this point we were accompanied by massive numbers of local children, many of whom followed us into the cave. Despite all our attempts to convince them to leave, they stayed with us for the rest of the day, eventually resulting in our early departure despite continuing passage. In this cave we found two human skeletons. The cave was segmented into at least four sections, the last of which continued with air flow but, due to circumstances, we did not press on. Total survey length was 574 meters.

All in all, it was one of the best weekends I've spent here in Rwanda, and the first time I've been able to get underground in over a year. But I am soon off to my next posting, in Sydney, Australia, and look forward to a more active subterranean lifestyle!