

Cinder Cone

Cinder Cone in Lassen Volcanic National Park is a cinder cone type volcano that erupted in the 1650s. It is 750 feet high, and spread ash over 30 square miles. It was snuffed out when several basalt lava flows erupted from its base. These flows, called the Fantastic Lava Beds, spread northeast and southwest, and dammed creeks to form Snag and Butte Lakes.

A cinder cone is a steep conical hill made of volcanic cinders and ash. They are formed by explosive eruptions—or lava fountains—from a volcanic vent. As the gas-charged lava is blown into the air, it breaks into small fragments that solidify as they fall to the ground. The steep slopes are usually between 30–40°. Most cinder cones have a crater at the summit.

The most famous cinder cone, Parícutin, grew out of a corn field in Mexico in 1943. Eruptions continued for nine years, building the cone to a height of 424 meters and lava flows that covered 25 km².

Many scientists believe cinder cones also exist on Mars, the Moon, and perhaps many other planets in our solar system.