

**Valles Caldera Trust**  
**Minutes of the Working Meeting – November 16, 2007**  
**BLM Offices, Albuquerque**

Board members present:

Bill Keleher, chair  
Ed Tinsley, vice chair  
Steve Henry, secretary  
Jim Gosz (by phone)  
Tracy Hephner  
Dan Jiron  
Ray Loretto  
Jim Range (by phone)  
Vito Spinale

Staff present:

Jeffrey Cross, executive director  
Dennis Trujillo, preserve manager  
Bob Parmenter, preserve scientist  
Debbie Boggess, administrative officer  
Ana Steffen, cultural resources coordinator  
Rob Dixon, recreation coordinator

Others present

Doug Fraser, Los Amigos de Valles Caldera  
Marv Jensen, consultant

1. State of the Preserve Report

Jeff Cross reported that the draft State of the Preserve report was posted on the Trust's Web site on September 26 and that the Trust had accepted comments through the end of October. He said he was revising the report and the final version should be available by the end of December.

2. Main Entrance to the Preserve

Cross updated Board on the progress of work on Highway 4 and the main entrance. The earthen berms on the north side of the highway were removed, the shoulders graded, and the base course was laid. The first asphalt layer will be laid if the weather cooperates. The final asphalt layer will probably be laid in spring 2008.

3. Forage Management

Cross updated Board on forage management planning and preparation of the new environmental assessment for livestock grazing programs for 2009 and beyond.

#### 4. FY08 Budget

Debbie Boggess reported that the Trust was operating under a continuing resolution and had received authority to spend \$717,150 through December 14. She identified several changes to the approved FY08 budget that staff was recommending the Board approve, including increases and decreases to personnel and contract costs and an increase in carryover from FY07.

**Ed Tinsley made a motion to approve the revised budget. Tracy Hephner seconded. The motion was approved.**

#### 5. Revenue Account

Boggess reported that the Trust's revenue account had a balance of \$2,186,000 as of September 30, 2007. Tinsley said that the revenue fund could serve as a reserve and that the Board needed to establish a 'safe balance' and asked Cross and Boggess to come back with a recommendation.

#### 6. Strategic Business Plan

The Board discussed the following business enterprise activities that could be developed in a business plan for the Trust.

- Lodging and concessions – construct a lodge, series of housing, and/or RV campground that provide a range of visitor experiences on the Preserve. Could be in partnership with established hotels. Restaurants could be operated by concessioner. Would have to be aesthetically appropriate and part of a master plan. Target revenues: \$1-\$1.5 million.
- Educational and academic opportunities – Trust would build the facilities, including classrooms, laboratories, lodging, conference/training facility, food service. Recruit universities, colleges and private schools to offer education and research programs. Preserve could be significant site for climate change research. Target revenues: \$500,000.
- Livestock grazing – high operation costs require substantial income. Develop program in consideration with community priorities and needs. Seek third-party partner with strong record of success. Look at long-term (5 year) commitments. Conduct experiments that involve pharmaceuticals, supplement, and feed companies. Target revenues: \$500,000.
- Hunting elk, deer, and turkey – discuss opportunities to increase hunt revenues with NN Department of Game and Fish. Consider lodging and camping for hunters. Look at lottery and fee schedules. Work to build customer base. Target revenues: \$1 million.
- Fishing – expand fishing to East Fork and evaluate other streams. Consider developing flatwater fisheries by upgrading existing earthen stock tanks. Look at stream management and access issues. Target revenues: \$300,000.
- Recreation – opportunity for creativity. Activities overlap with lodging. Concentrate on special events (running, mountain biking, etc.) that are short-term, high use. Evaluate ongoing activities (hiking, tours, etc.) and store sales. Find opportunities that fill a niche not being filled by our neighbors. Target revenues: \$500,000-\$750,000.
- Film industry – staff has met with NM Film Commission; film scouts need to be aware of the Preserve. How can we use state incentives? Need marketing plan.
- 501(c)(3) – friends group can develop volunteer programs, run the gift stores, and write grants for infrastructure and resource restoration to offset operational costs. The group must be closely connected to the Trust.
- Timber – if there is little or no potential for profitable timber harvest, then there likely is a need for forest restoration. Trust should deal with forest fire issues; fire on Preserve

could reduce value of all other activities. Explore opportunities to thin forests and provide material for post and poles and wood pellets.

- Other ideas discussed briefly – academic research (combine with education), Highway 4, partnerships with surrounding pueblos and organizations to provide tourism services, green burial.

#### 7. Fee schedule

The Board discussed revising the existing fee schedule and posting the new schedule for public comments for 60 days as required by the Act.

**Steve Henry made a motion to study the fees during development of the business plan. Dan Jiron seconded. The motion was approved.**