

## Minutes of the Valles Caldera

### National Preserve

### Board of Trustees

July 13, 2001

#### Trustees Present

Leonard Atencio

William deBuys, Chair

Karen Durkovich

Palemon Martinez

Stephen Stoddard, Vice Chair

Thomas Swetnam

Dennis Vasquez

David R. Yepa, Secretary

Bob Armstrong

#### USFS Employees Present

Denise McCaig

Steve Romero

Dolores Maese, Recorder

#### Park Service Employees Present

Law enforcement Officer, Dusty Olson

### Welcome and Introductions

William deBuys welcomed and thanked the audience for attending. Mr. Stoddard introduced Diane Albert, Los Alamos County Council, Lawry Mann, Vice Chair-Los Alamos County Council.

### Review Agenda

Agenda was reviewed with those in attendance, copies were provided to all.

### Correction to Minutes of Last Meeting

Under "Committee Reports"- Finances : Correction in first paragraph, second sentence to read: The Board will need 2.5 to 2.8 million for FY2002. Sciences : Correction in first paragraph, 6 th sentence: Approximately \$.5 million for geological mapping will be forthcoming through the generosity of LANL. Tours : Correction to 6 th paragraph: According to Ms Durkovich, the total cost for the tours would be \$18,000. [Other grammatical, spelling corrections will be corrected and posted on web.] With those changes, Minutes were approved.

### Upcoming Board Activities

In June the Board met in Taos and toured Valle Vidal Unit and proceeded to Raton where they were guests of Vermejo, in the company of David Vacker. The purpose of this trip was to acquire

knowledge of how large areas such as Valle Vidal and Vermejo are being managed.

7/13-Board will meet with Tribal Representatives;

7/14-The Board will travel to Redondo for Cultural awareness trip, and to review and discuss past logging and ranching practices on ranch;

7/27-Tour of Forest Service National Lands Office personnel;

8/16-Board Meeting in Santa Fe (location to be announced)

8/17-Board to meet with NM Congressional Delegation at VCNP

9/6-Board Meeting in Los Alamos (location to be announced)

10/11-Board Meeting in Jemez (location to be announced)

#### Executive Director/Preserve Manager Recruitment

William deBuys announced that there were 80 applicants for the Executive Director position and that the Board had narrowed this number down to 12. Selections following interviews should be and offered in September. Selection is a private process.

The Preserve Manager position will be made two weeks following selection of Executive Director. The newly selected Executive Director will participate in selection of Preserve Manager.

#### FY01 Budget Reprogramming and Allocations

The funding received has not been adequate, given the work required to conduct inventory and monitoring assessments that are essential to managing the land and complying with NEPA. The Board asked Forest Service for financial help. The Forest Service was extremely helpful in funding an additional \$349,000. Reprogramming and transferring of money is in the making and quite a challenging process.

#### FY02 Budget Request

There is a need for \$2.5-\$2.8 million for FY02 and that need has been communicated. Preliminary appropriations committee provides \$1.5 from Senate and \$1.1 from House.

#### Inventory and Monitoring Progress Report

There are 17 projects underway which include research and monitoring with state agencies, individuals and institutions. Under a cooperative agreement, USGS has spent \$150,000 for:

1. Ecological survey and Assessment by NM Heritage Program, develop mapping of habitat and species;
2. Flora Assessment-floral diversity by University of Wyoming;
3. Raptor Survey by Terry Johnson;
4. 3-Color Aerial Photography Survey-2 sets;
5. Rain Gauges
6. Maps
7. GPS units;

A motion was made to authorize funding of \$125,000 to cover additional Monitoring and Inventory work:

1. Range Monitoring, Jornada Experiment Station;
2. Elk and Prairie Dog population assessments;
3. Helicopter elk survey planned for late summer/early fall-this will include videotaping of elk herds for information on migration patterns;

Following discussion, which included the need to provide cumulative effects information with Inventory and Monitoring, the Board voted unanimously to authorize \$125,000.

There was also discussion on fisheries inventory and monitoring. Sean Ferrell, Forest Service Fisheries Biologist is working on assessments in the Jemez, Lower San Antonio and East Fork and moving toward the Preserve. This includes: habitat assessment, species, habitat quality, numbers. NM Game and Fish is doing work on detecting whirling disease. NM Trout has submitted recommendations actions to the Board via memo which will be forwarded to Sean Ferrell. Other work has been carried out by NM Environment Department-Water Quality Bureau. A database is being built.

#### Public Tours

A motion was made to conduct a series of tours of the Valles Caldera in September to welcome the public to their new property. There will be no charge for the tours. They will be on a reservation basis only and participants will spend approximately 3 hours on the Preserve. Though there will be no charge to the public for this first venture, there will probably be access fees in the future.

Proposed tour dates: 9/12, 15, 16, 19, 22, 23. First-come, first-served basis, reservation system. Forest Service and Park Service will assist with tours. Accommodations will be made to tour 225 people per day, 4 tours: 8 a.m., 10 a.m., 12 p.m. and 2 p.m.

These tours are being offered as a gesture of welcome and thanks to the public and as an opportunity to celebrate this marvelous place to be protected and preserved.

The Motion was passed.

#### Policy Development Status

Prior to Board assuming responsibility, October 1, certain policies need to be in place and the Board needs to be familiarized with policies.

Denise McCaig reported that the Personnel Policy is ready to implement, however the Board is requesting changes to legislation. Recommendation to the Board is to wait to implement until changes to legislation are made.

Procurement -Legislation states policy should be developed in consultation with Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and developed with Office of General Counsel (OGC). A draft is at OMB and Board is awaiting response.

Financial Policy- Proposals were received based on description of work to be done. Department of Treasury submitted a proposal (at lowest cost) for identifying financial systems to meet Board's needs. This will be followed by a contract for implementing (receiving money, writing checks and accounting) Recommendation was made to accept that proposal. A motion was made to accept the proposal from Department of Treasury. Motion was passed.

Filing System -National Archives has prepared a proposal which will be submitted later this month.

#### Agreements Status

1. Legislation included Law Enforcement under agreement with the Trust. A draft agreement between Forest Service and Trust to jointly cover the cost of 1 Law Enforcement Officer was provided.
2. Fire Management Services by Forest Service is on a reimbursable basis according to Legislation. Board recommended to change legislation because of possibility of using up all funds on one large wildfire. Proposal is to provide service to Trust on a reimbursable basis, except in the case of wildfire.
3. The Trust can request federal employees free of charge up to 30-day details , according to Legislation. A draft Interagency Agreement with the Forest Service was provided for review. This

agreement could be a template for other federal agency agreements.

Board members will review these proposals and provide comments back to Denise in two weeks.

#### Potential Changes in Legislation

There are 3 areas that will be addressed with Congressional delegation which may result in changes in legislation:

1. Personnel policies; hiring and firing;
2. Reimbursement to FS for fire suppression costs;
3. Conflicting deadlines, 2 different 2-year deadlines in legislation with overlapping dates. This may just take a simple letter of clarification.

#### Administrative Offices

Discussion regarding administrative office space ensued. About 1,500 sq. ft. are needed soon. Los Alamos may be one of the most likely places another was Jemez Springs. Another possibility discussed was a joint use facility with National Park Service. Board has received a letter from Mayor of Jemez Springs inviting VCNP to entertain a visitor information center in Jemez Springs. Options are being explored with the assistance of General Services Administration.

#### Other Business

Steve Romero, Forest Service employee assigned to coordinate interim Preserve activity presented the Board with a full report on: Occupancy, Research, Facilities, Fences, Archeology work, Wildfires, South Mt./Willow Timber Sale (under previous owners), Electronic radio towers, Special Permit Requests, Security Operations.

1. A Request for Proposals for assistance with the preparation of the comprehensive management program called for in the enabling legislation is in draft form.
2. A summary of the listening sessions will be on the VCNP website "soon". The trust would like to have its own site independent of the Forest Service.
3. Inventories of fences roads and bridges with funding requirements for these infrastructure items are underway.
4. A representative from NM Trout and Trout Unlimited presented the Board with proposal to offer recommendations for proper management of fisheries in conjunction with Forest Service (Sean Ferrell efforts). Recommendations must be science based for fisheries and riparian areas to reach full potential. They offered their help in inventorying and monitoring.
5. Leonard Atencio suggested that at next Board Meeting, a strategy be developed to plan-out hunting along with fishing opportunities.

#### Public Comment

Mr. Paul Guthels commented that he was very impressed with what the Board has done thus far. Suggested looking at other entrances to the Preserve at different times of year.

Mr. Parker called attention to a presentation by Mr. Tukamier made a presentation to the Board. Denise will distribute written information to Board Members.

Tom Jervis spoke on behalf of the Valles Caldera Coalition who were very appreciative of the Board's efforts to date and have offered their support in publicizing the Boards actions to 20 environmental groups (all part of Coalition). They are in the process of hiring a person to facilitate communication within the coalition and to help carry information about the Preserve to the Public.

Tom Swetnam mentioned that a Research Symposium is being planned for late October and will be open to the public.

Jim Burns commended the Board for the progress they've made. Thanked the Board for the Listening sessions and for considering a variety of uses on the Preserve. He cautioned the Board to not take too much time in taking action.

Mr. Loya thanked the Board and offered his help.

A motion was made to adjourn at 3:15 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

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