

5.0 CHALLENGES and STRATEGIES

5.1 Planning Approach

The potential variety of users—recreational, scientific and resource management—has major implications for planning. The challenges addressed in this section include:

- Integrating “working ranch” experiences for users
- Opportunities for interaction—this will need to be carefully planned in order to avoid conflict
- Viewing corridors—the physical beauty and rich views are important site values that must be maintained
- Experiences—an enormous range of experiences are possible on site, but which ones are appropriate, affordable and sustainable?
- Time required (for experience)—what is the appropriate ratio for extended experiences versus shorter experiences?
- Where on site (location)—how can the high quality solitude-based experiences be provided at the same time as group experiences?
- Infrastructure—what level of services and facilities are needed?

5.1.1 Evaluation of Experience Possibilities

A significant result of the project workshops was group direction on ways that experiences could be provided for users. The goal of the workshop exercise was to determine the means by which the Preserve can meet and satisfy the needs of users who have different reasons for being there and different interests, knowledge and learning styles. The results are summarized below together with a few examples. The complete results of the experience workshop are included in Appendix C.

Off-Site & On-Site “Information”

There is a clear need for information. Most of what is required begins with orientation (i.e., answering questions such as: Where am I? What can I do here?). Meeting various information needs can be achieved through website information, advertising, brochures at information centers, maps, books, site orientation and highway signage.

Interpretation for Meaningful Connections

This is the broadest category of experiences because these interpretive experiences are typically presented to a volunteer audience of whom we know little about.

Experience Stories Through Media and Built Environments

Some users are most comfortable learning through the use of physical aids, such as media. To reach these audiences, interpretation needs to provide opportunities to:

- Build and use appropriate environments to reinforce experience, e.g., themed play area for kids

- Learn remotely through technology, e.g., watch a video on caldera formation
- Preserve experience through purchased mementos, e.g., buy art that reminds them of their experience

Active On-Site, Real Time Experience

Many users will be seeking real experiences in a real place. These can be achieved through:

- Onsite interactive educational experiences, e.g., topic-based tours
- Northern New Mexico heritage experiences, e.g., be a cowboy for a day

Unguided Personal Experience

Other users will favour a do-it-yourself style of learning experience, through:

- Solitary sensory experience of nature, e.g., hear an elk bugling while alone

Included under this category of experience are Pueblo native practices, which provide opportunities for religious and cultural activities

Hands-On, Adaptive Management Education: Two-way

In keeping with the Preserve’s mandate, users may also be drawn to the site for very specific purpose

Development & Sharing of Personal Working Knowledge

- Participate in the ongoing sustainable working landscape of the Jemez Mountains, e.g., real cowboys interacting with visitors or visitors participating in biological research



5.2 Challenge #1: Enhancing VCNP operations to complement interpretive goals

Challenge:

Interpretation is often the mandate of recreation, which “works around” scientific and cultural activities (ranching, archaeology, etc.). This approach has issues particularly for visitors who may feel shut out of the real thing. The Preserve strives for a better model but, as is commonly the case, has problems acquiring information in a timely manner, and lacks dedicated space and time to efficiently get together.

Strategy:

To share goals in:

- Achieving individual objectives
- Assisting objectives of others
- Providing public experiences
- Attaining economic sustainability

Recognize that everyone needs to get work done efficiently. Assist individuals in looking for ways to involve the public in getting the work done and disseminating the results of that work.

- Identify or create a new staff position with the responsibility to collect stories from the people and events on the site and make sure that they are communicated broadly.
- Develop an operational approach that underscores collaboration and cross-fertilization of disciplines and roles within the organization.
- Support staff and volunteers getting together regularly to understand what is happening within the organization.

- Provide staff and volunteers with training in dealing with the public and interpreting the mission, messages and stories of the organization and place.
- Incorporate the public in accomplishing as many roles as possible.
- Form partnerships with surrounding groups and organizations that can assist in providing interpretation and spreading the word about the mission, messages and stories of the organization and place.

All disciplines should focus on what they can provide for the other users...providing added value to each activity. For example:

- Science could provide opportunities for the visitor to participate in field studies; researchers who apply to work in the Preserve should include how they propose to incorporate or provide benefits for other users.
- Archaeology should accept volunteers or paying individuals to assist in research.
- Ranching could include the cattle-owners or paying visitors as cowboys.
- Recreation should provide tours/hikes/overnight stays for those who come for education, training and skills development or as part of other projects.

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5.3 Challenge #2: Reduce On-site Conflicts Among Users

With the mixed goals for the Preserve and the numbers of users undertaking a wide range of activities on-site, there is potential for conflicts. These conflicts may be broadly categorized as:

Environmental: potential risk to scientific research, wildlife disturbance, vegetation, water

Archaeological: potential risk to important historic/prehistoric sites

Functional: potential interference with ranching operations, and in the future, possible timber operations

Aesthetics: solitude and/or privacy could be disrupted by views or interactions of others

Economic: busy site would detract from uniqueness of experience which could result in disinterest in activities that produce revenue but are similar to those available free or at significantly lower cost in National Parks or National Forests

Religious/Spiritual: potential disturbance of area (Redondo Peak) sacred to Pueblos



Access and activities without conflict can be achieved through space (zoning), through time (scheduling) or through a combination of these. Different times, locations and capacities could also be considered for overnight stays (if these are implemented) versus day use.

Theoretical zoning criteria by space, time and capacity.

1. SITE-SPECIFIC ACCESS ZONES:

- No entry
- Limited entry
- Guided entry only
- Full entry

2. CAPACITY ZONING:

- Low, moderate and high intensity

3. SCHEDULING:

- Overnight stays vs. day use
- Seasonal

Develop a plan that lays out the “absorption” / “level of use” zones that can provide guidance for future decision-making on level of public use. Very few areas will be no entry; some will require a guide in attendance; others will only require clear instruction and orientation for the user.

Continue the current program development approach that separates diverse uses through careful scheduling and spatial distribution.

Conceptual Space and Capacity Zoning

Low: The Valles

Valles are zoned for low capacity as a result of their views. Anything that is going on in the Valles can be seen by anyone standing on an edge or viewing from afar.

Medium: The Forest Edges

The more densely forested southwestern area with its significantly smaller grassland areas and fewer viewpoints provides the opportunity for more group activities and/or special events. Clear areas are primarily forested and suitable for moderate use particularly along the forest edges. Prospect / Refuge Theory indicates that this is the best zone for circulation and observation; one can be seen without being seen. An important caution to this is, however, that a number of these edges are also Elk Refuge Areas, which should be skirted wherever they occur.

High: Selected Areas

These would be areas that are out of direct view of the visiting public and do not conflict with ecologically sensitive areas (e.g., a number of the pads in the Redondo Creek area; parts of Banco Bonito; the edge of the Valle Grande where it meets Highway 4, etc.)

Conceptual Time Zoning

Rotation of Use by Area

Rotating specific areas for different activities would provide new experiences for repeat users without compromising the number of users who could be accommodated. In the case of overnight accommodation, for example, if the tent pads or yurts were moved to different locations on an annual or biannual basis, the impact on the original site(s) would be mitigated and new experiences would be available for repeat users. This model—borrowed from the ranching ethic—would also see certain areas taken out of use entirely for significant periods of time (e.g., one to three years) to allow it to recover.

Special Events

Special events could eliminate conflicts by closing an area to other uses for the event’s duration, usually a day or two at most.

Seasonal Zoning

At present, seasonal zoning already occurs at a basic level with regard to cross-country skiing in winter versus other uses in summer. The Preserve is annually closed to most other uses during the elk-hunting season. This model could be used for other purposes, e.g., more biking, hiking or equestrian travel in the spring shoulder season or on specific weekends.

An exception to this broad zoning scheme could be the Historic Ranch District, which has a history of people living in it and could be considered for more intensive use on an occasional or regular basis, e.g., hayrides combined with chuckwagon dinners.



5.4 Challenge #3: Address Socio-Economic Barriers

While some free entry opportunities are currently offered, the Preserve is sometimes perceived as “too expensive” for certain groups. The challenge is to offer a range of activities without undermining the quality of experience.

Strategy:

Recognize that the interests and needs of the local communities, or “neighbors,” are different from those of “tourists.”

1. Provide opportunities for lower income participation in diverse activities that do not detract from the ability of the Preserve to support itself.
2. Develop affordable overnight accommodation so that regional users can participate more easily in activities (e.g., trail riding).
3. Develop communications methodology that does not solely rely on the Web.
4. Develop programs, activities and roles that respond to the needs of “neighbors.”
5. Host community-focused special events emphasizing informal gatherings and shared experiences.



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5.5 Challenge #4: Broaden Appeal of the Preserve's Offerings

Overview

Current interpretation occurs in a number of ways, primarily focusing on natural values and settings:

- Users are transported to their recreation areas and receive interpretation as part of the trip to and from the area—e.g., hikers and anglers
- Dedicated interpretive events focus on interpretation throughout the tour—e.g., van tours and special tours
- Special tours, such as elk viewing, receive interpretation integrated with elk-specific information
- Others who are largely self-directed receive some interpretation as part of their orientation to the site—e.g., elk hunters, horse riders, cyclists
- Travelers who stop at one of the Hwy 4 pullouts receive some limited interpretation via graphic panels

These staff-and-volunteer-intensive interpretive events reach most visitors to the Preserve; excluded are those who use the free trails. The low numbers of users—somewhere around 8,000 annually—reflect a careful approach to using the site for recreation, based on conservative capacity limits and close control of user movements and actions. The only users who may freely move around the site, within their designated areas, are elk hunters.

The primary audience at present for interpretation is New Mexico residents who value personal or private experiences in an apparently pristine environment. To some extent they can be categorized into three broad, overlapping groupings: those who are drawn to the site by its special resources (e.g., elk hunting and high quality fishing); those who are willing to pay for personal or private experiences in nature; and those who are acquainted with the site as the Baca and are curious. If this categorization is accurate, these audiences may be expected to change over time:

- Elk hunting and fishing should continue to attract users as long as the resource is of continuing high quality.
- Visitors seeking private experiences in nature may decline unless a greater variety of experiences is made available.
- Curiosity-seekers will decline in number as their curiosity is satisfied.
- Lack of overnight experiences will deter visitors from more than two hours away.

Why People Don't Come

Visitors from outside the state: most will be unfamiliar with or unaware of VCNP and what it has to offer.

Highway travelers on fixed, tight schedules: not in the area long enough to commit to the longer activities.

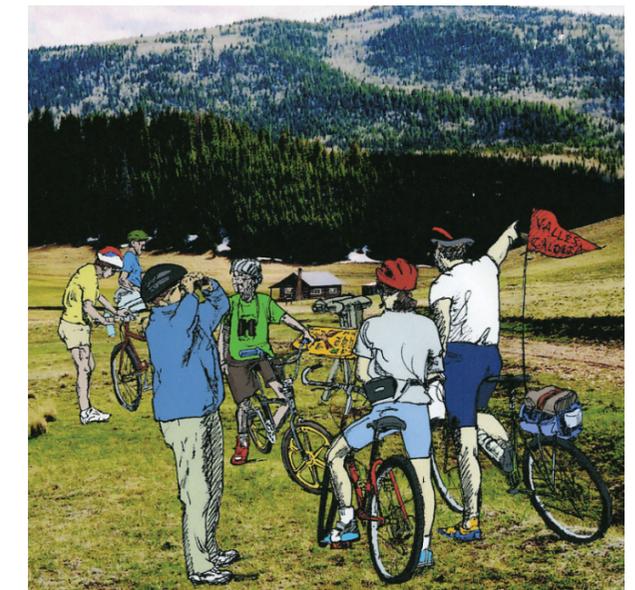
While these users are presently not served well, it can be expected that they will be a significant-to-major audience in the near future as the Preserve moves towards financial sustainability. An important characteristic of both audiences (many times they are the same audience) is that they may come to the area with little or no knowledge of the Preserve and with only limited available time for a visit. At present, the

Preserve can only offer them two hiking trails and some signage at pullouts along the Valle Grande.

Strategy:

To provide for a range of experiences:

- Increase exposure to message
- Attract new audiences
- Serve economic goals
- Develop activities and programs that are coupled with real learning and a special experience of the place; each experience becomes one of “intention,” not “convenience” or “whim”
- Ensure that there is niche differentiation from surrounding offerings
- Recognize that the Preserve doesn't need to be all things to all people.

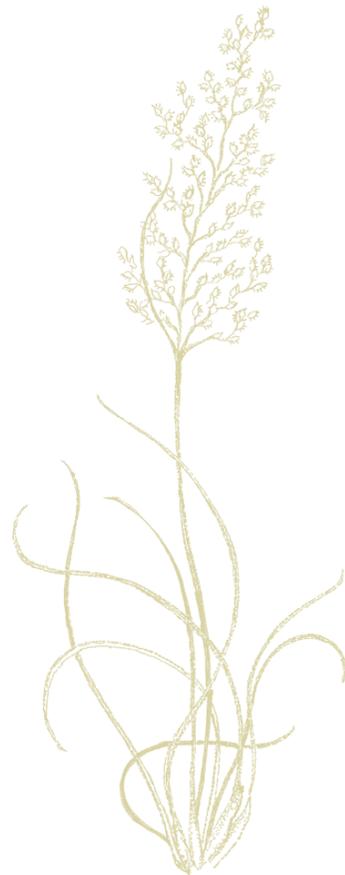






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5.5.1 Personal Programming

Personal programming happens both indoors and outdoors. Current programming generally follows traditional formats for guided events and does an excellent job of achieving interpretive objectives. The limitation of this or any style of personal interpretation is that it restricts participation to those who are comfortable with this style of free-choice learning.

Specialty tours offer expert-led tours; these are well-received and should be continued.

Additional interpreter-led group experiences could be offered with or without expert leaders, for instance:

- Equestrian guided rides
- Birding tours
- Archaeological digs
- Biking tours

Living history-based programming could be very well-received by users. This could take the form of first-person Interpretation (costumed role-playing) or third-person interpretation (costumed). This would bring the cultural history and on-going ranching story into a closer balance with the natural history of the Preserve in terms of subject matter for interpretation. Service Learning (on the job training) is currently taking place, and should continue to expand in scope.

As is the current intent, continue to encourage local communities to provide interpretive services regarding the traditional uses of the landscape. It is also desirable for some of the interpreters to be of Hispanic or Pueblo origin.

Encourage partnership arrangements with community groups for VCNP programming and community partnership ventures that use VCNP as a venue.

5.5.2 On the Site

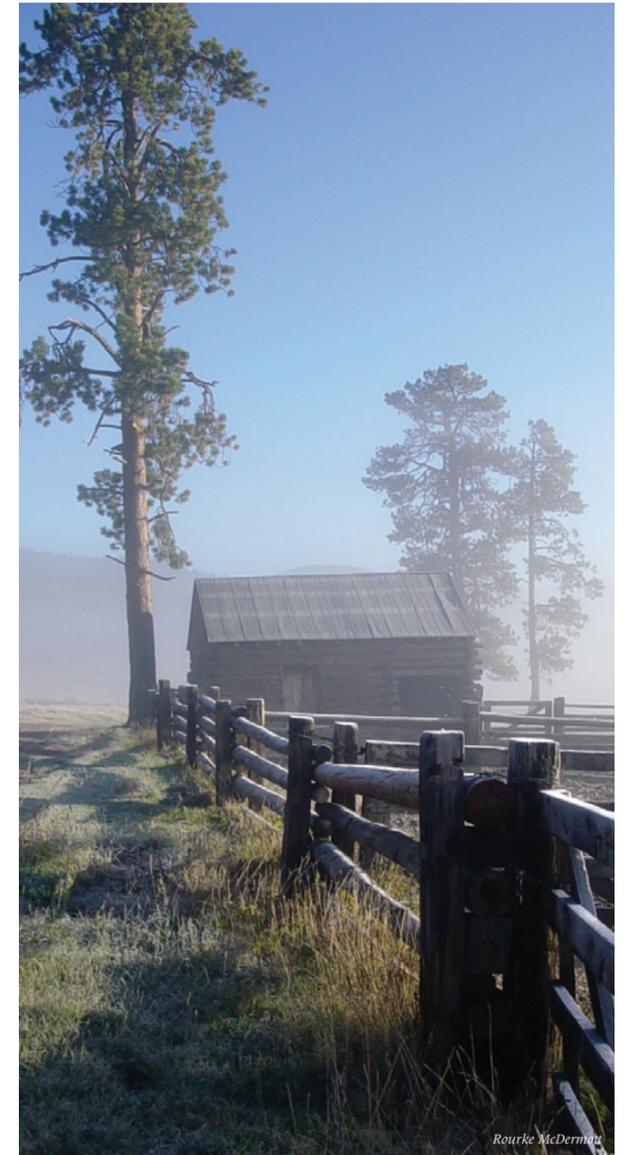
5.5.2.1 Graphics/Interpretive Stations

The term “graphics” is used to describe interpretive signs; “interpretive stations” refer to collections of graphics often displayed in a kiosk or platform and sometimes accompanied by 3-D objects or sculptures, or are directly associated with viewpoints, historic structures, or similar “real” things.

The present graphics used at the viewpoints along Hwy 4 should be replaced with graphics that better interpret the Preserve, its values and goals. This will probably entail three or four graphic panels, which could form a low aspect interpretive station if mounted on a low structure made of materials appropriate to the site and setting.

We do not consider that graphics or interpretation stations have a large role to play in the Preserve—particularly not in such a way as to be viewable from afar. Exceptions include structures, e.g., ranch buildings, San Antonio cabin, and movie sets, which could have graphics identifying their history and use, mounted inside the building.

All graphics should follow the ranching theme in design as should all interpretive stations and structures.



Rourke McDermott

5.5.2.2 Overnight Accommodation

Overnight accommodation on site could achieve a number of objectives:

Satisfy visitor requests. Existing recreation users have specifically identified the desire for accommodation as a means of enriching what otherwise is a short-term activity.

Enhance experiences. The depth of experience gained when it is possible to stay in a beautiful environment provides an immersion in place; visits based on only a few hours are often transitory in our memories.

Achieve interpretive goals. Establishing a “sense of place” is always more effective when the visitor has had the opportunity to experience the place alone and in context.

Valued-added recreation. Significantly higher revenues are generated by overnight accommodation than by short-term tours.

Increase return visits. If overnight accommodation is incorporated into extended touring experiences then users may return to complete the entire route over time.

Overnight accommodation can stand on its own as a value-added feature of any other experience on-site (e.g., fishing or hiking) and could be provided using existing facilities, such as the lodge in the Ranch HQ, bunkhouse along Redondo Creek and San Antonio cabin. An overnight visit could also form the core of extended experiences, such as hut-to-hut skiing, a caldera rim trail for hikers, or simply a night stay at the end of an existing hike or tour.

Implementing the latter option would require accommodation to be provided at other locations on the site. This could range in scale from simple tent platforms (in order to confine camping to specific locations), to small huts or cabins, to larger structures that could accommodate up to 12 people.

Considerations for overnight accommodation include:

- Size and aesthetics should be consistent with “working ranch” in the high-altitude, New Mexican context
- Siting, or location, should be out of the viewshed, and away from archaeological sites and important wildlife areas
- Means of access
- Wood smoke drainage into Valles
- Reversibility / portability: no structure should be put in place that cannot be easily removed

Opportunities:

- High-end individual / small groups
- Retreats
- Educational overnights for students and conferences
- Astronomy, bat surveys and other nocturnal research



5.5.2.3 Social Events

Special events, currently offered within the Preserve, include fly-fishing, adult and children’s fishing clinics, elk hunting and bugling seminars, and the 2004 bike-touring day. Opportunities exist for events that are primarily social in nature. Comments from local community individuals suggest there is less interest in specific activities than in having the chance to visit “the Baca” and exchange stories with others for whom this place has been, in some way, part of their lives or their parents’ lives.

Such events would attract many potential users, including those working on the site or there for educational reasons, as well as people who simply wanted to spend some time in this special place.

Social events could include:

- Hay rides
- Chuckwagon dinners
- Cultural celebrations
- Musical festivals

These could be combined into a single event or could be held at regular intervals. This is also a value-added opportunity with significant potential revenues. The Ranch HQ is probably the best location for these events, but other locations (e.g., an interpretive center or an open area in the southwestern portion of the Preserve) could also work.





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5.5.3 Facilities

Casual Visitor Needs

Our audience can be split into two basic groups: dedicated visitors who have extended time available and are prepared for recreational activities, and casual visitors who are likely on a restricted schedule and unprepared for extended experiences on the site.

The smaller dedicated audience is presently well served by programs and personal interpretation at the Preserve. These people would include ranchers, hikers, skiers, anglers, and others who have made arrangements ahead of time and are relatively well-informed about the Preserve.

Casual visitors, on the other hand, have very limited time for their visit. Many will have never visited the Preserve before. Most will have only a vague idea, if any, of the Preserve's experiential offerings. In many cases they will make a spontaneous decision to stop, because the power of the site has stimulated their interest and curiosity. With a limited time frame available and minimal personal preparations, it will not be practical for them to enjoy extended experiences on the site. A mix and intensity of media is needed for them in order to provide an adequate introduction to the story of the Preserve and a vicarious adventure.

Different interpretive techniques are required to meet the needs of the casual visitor; techniques that differ from what the Preserve is offering to the dedicated visitor at present. With the casual visitors' limited time horizon and "softer" commitment, the most effective interpretive methods are those that quickly communicate content beyond simple facts and figures while using technical and complex combinations

of media. Content that involves the complexity of environmental issues, and their underlying processes and meaning, for example, is unlikely to be well communicated with simple text and graphics to an audience unprepared to read a book on the matter. With indoor environmental controls, these interactive technical communications' solutions can be considered.

Media appropriate for outdoor interpretation is limited to text, graphics, and personal interpretation. Although kiosks and other durable shelters can be used outdoors as small interpretive nodes, exposure to natural elements and their sometimes remote locations limit the use of technical media solutions. Audio visuals, for instance, need the protection provided by indoor facilities. This is also true for artifacts or props, which rapidly degrade if outside without expensive forms of enclosure. All electronic media and electrical/mechanical interactives require power, an expensive option to provide outdoors. Even simple graphics and text need to be fortified to withstand vandalism, UV degradation and temperature changes for outdoor use.

This situation results in three issues unique to dealing with casual visits:

1. VOLUME

A high number of casual visits translates into a higher environmental impact, unless visitors are controlled and concentrated appropriately: parking should be organized and adequate, and located in an area that minimizes visual and environmental impact; security of circulation should be maintained, so access to the overall site is limited; and, an adequate number of restrooms needs to be provided.

2. TIME

Because a casual visitor has limited time available, he or she will be looking for experiences that communicate the big picture as quickly as possible. Any communications' program should convey the big picture and make emotional connections across a wide range of knowledge levels, ages and cultural backgrounds. The necessary mix of technical media to achieve this requires indoor environments for operation.

3. PREPAREDNESS

Most casual visitors to the Preserve will be unprepared for outdoor pursuits or physical activity. They will, therefore, need to experience the Preserve vicariously. If they do want to experience the Preserve during their stay, they will be ill-prepared for walking any distance. Many will require handicapped-accessible walkways and short looped trails. Our goal is universal access; we must examine all our facilities to achieve this. Who is "our"; is the goal of "universal access" the Preserve's goal?



Possibilities for Indoor Experiences

Many powerful interpretive techniques are only applicable in indoor settings because of their requirement for temperature and light control, and shelter from the elements. The range of indoor interpretive media suitable for effective and timely communications with a casual audience include:

- Multimedia theatrical presentations
- Cultural artifacts
- Interactive computers
- Electro-mechanical interactive devices
- Assorted natural materials and tools for observation
- Dioramas and recreated immersive settings
- Artwork
- Lab or craft skill demonstrations

Environments for Interactive Exploration



Multimedia Theatrical Presentations for Emotional Impact





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Dedicated Visitor Needs

For casual visitors, messages must be communicated quickly and in comfortable surroundings. For the dedicated visitor the challenges are quite different. Because the purposefulness of any extended visit is the result of previous awareness and interest, basic content and orientation likely will be unnecessary. More sophisticated information, which is responsive to individual interests and suited to higher levels of knowledge, will be necessary.

Dedicated visitors will come relatively prepared for physical excursions. Their expectations and demands for service will be higher than the casual visitor's, and their interests more targeted. Anglers will have high expectations for uninterrupted solitude and fishing success. Campers will expect functional services unrelated to interpretation. More "face time" will be required of staff for the dedicated user, and there will be requirements for overnight parking, transfer of vehicles for tours, and storage of equipment. A longer time on site means an appreciation of pre- and post-visit amenities including spaces to meet to share experiences, restrooms with changing facilities, and meeting spaces for orientation and debriefing.



Planning Strategies for Built Interpretive Facilities

Five issues need to be addressed in order to serve the needs of both casual and dedicated visitors groups, and the needs of staff for operations:

1. LOCATION AND SECURITY

There are two goals for locating any visitor facility on the Preserve. First, the visitor facility needs to be restricted to the periphery of the site in order to minimize its environmental impact and subsequent visitor impact. Second, it needs to be situated in such a way that access to the rest of the Preserve can be controlled. The further away the visitor facility is from the periphery (i.e., the closer it is to the Preserve's nucleus), the more difficult or expensive it becomes to limit access. Third, a location along the highway takes advantage of the Valle Grande vista's "stopping power." At this point in a casual visitor's journey, there is the highest motivation to stop and investigate. This decision point is the appropriate moment to provide directions and a "front gate" to any interpretive facility.

2. CONCENTRATION OF FACILITIES

The environmental impact of the casual public is to be minimized, yet the volume of short-term visits will be dramatically larger than at present. At the same time, operation of any visitor facility should be as efficient as possible.

Combined, these factors justify a physical concentration of interpretive experiences for both the casual and dedicated audiences, where the visitor facility also functions as a space to prime dedicated visitors and disburse them onto the site. Overall, the facility should be a "hub" for visitor orientation, interpretation and organization.

3. AMENITIES AND OPERATIONS

The requirement for the Preserve to operate on a sustainable basis in the future will demand that revenue opportunities are exploited and efficiencies of operation realized. Concentrating operations related to organization and handling of casual and dedicated visitors will contribute to controlling costs of running the facilities. Visitors can contribute to the revenue side of the operation if there are services or products they can pay for during their visit. Provision of food services, a gift shop, and the opportunity to sign up for tours, events and other dedicated visitor offerings are some examples. The key to the success of these amenities is the volume of casual visits that can be efficiently processed and the quality of the choices.

Interpretive components and visitor amenities would include:

- Adequate parking for day use and overnight security
- Shelter and lobby space for assembly of group
- Reception and information desks
- Gift shop and retail
- Food services
- Exhibits area
- Temporary exhibits area
- Interactive classroom areas
- Multipurpose auditorium/theater space
- Restrooms
- Administration
- Temporary tour vehicle parking and transfer
- Short loop trail for casual visitors
- Lounge/meeting area for dedicated visitors

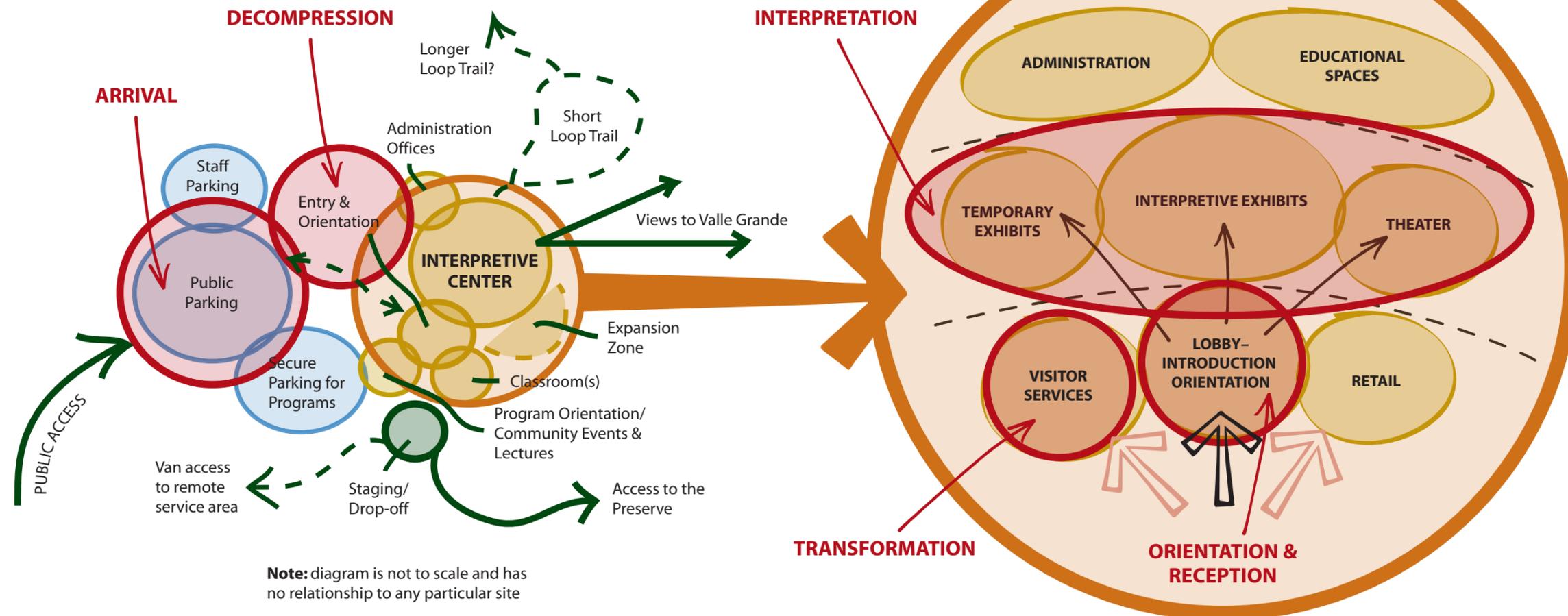
The optimal relationship between these components can be shown in the following diagrams:

Optimal Interpretive Facility Arrangement and Approach

This diagram shows the sequence and adjacencies of the functions normally provided at an interpretive facility. These relationship bubbles also include the need to control access to the site offerings for the more dedicated audience, and the provision for a limited site experience for casual visitors. These sequences and adjacencies have a very important impact on the functionality of the facility and the site, and on the visitor experience.

Optimal Arrangement of Internal Functions

Visitor flow within an interpretive facility should be considered as a series of access layers. The first layer would include all those amenities that visitors do not pay for. Access beyond is restricted to paid customers and staff. The last layer would include back-of-house functions and areas restricted to staff or special groups that require special access.





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Ideal Sequence of Experience

The workshops introduced an idealized sequence of experience that planning should strive to achieve. This sequence is referred to by the acronym “ADROIT” and includes the key components that provide a satisfying, enjoyable experience. This sequence list is annotated with definitions and with implications for services and infrastructure:

Arrival—plan and find your way to destination (interp facilities)

Decompression—collect your thoughts and leave the travel behind (interp facilities)

Reception—obtain tickets, your first interface with staff/volunteers (interp facilities, some programs/exhibits)

Orientation—find quick answers to how, where, when, what questions; information (interp facilities, programs/exhibits)

Interpretation—interact with methods of delivering messages/themes/content (interp facilities, programs/exhibits)

Transformation—say good-bye; make decisions based on your experience and/or share your experience, which may lead you to do other activities related to the experience and/or plan to come back (interp facilities)

4. AESTHETICALLY AND ENVIRONMENTALLY “SENSITIVE” DESIGN

Interpretive facilities can communicate some of the story through architecture and reflect many of the values of the Preserve. The building and its constructed landscape can aesthetically blend into the site and work to reinforce the visual experience

of the landscape. The design of the facility can also be completed in an environmentally sustainable manner as an example of “walking the talk.” Given the environmental goals of the Preserve, the design of any building on the site should convey examples of sustainability, providing interpretive content for the visiting public about how they too can walk more “lightly on the land” by taking these design lessons home.

Some examples of aesthetically-appropriate and sustainably-designed interpretive facilities are included here:

Appropriate to the Landscape

Rogers Pass Visitor Centre, British Columbia

Serves visitors to both Revelstoke and Glacier National Parks in Canada. The building simulates a CPR avalanche shed and settles nicely into its mountain context. Visitors are oriented to the Parks and learn the construction story of the CPR and previous battles with avalanches in Rogers Pass.

Local Architecture

Moose Visitor Center and Jenny Lake Visitor Center, Grand Teton National Park, Wyoming

Both facilities reflect the wood structures that are traditional construction materials in the area. Moose Visitor Center uses height to capture a sense of the dramatic landscape. Jenny Lake Visitor Center is a log cabin in design.



A Non-Building Hidden in the Landscape

The Naturealm Nature Center, Akron, Ohio

The nature center uses an earth-sheltered structure to moderate interior temperatures and its non-building concept emphasizes the site experience for the visitor.



Metaphor for Mammals in a Desert

Anza-Borrego State Park Visitor Center, Borrego Springs, California

A stone structure and a partially buried setting help the center remain cool in the desert heat. Most mammals are hiding in burrows or shady locations during the heat of the day—the period of highest park visitation by people.



Recycling

Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site Visitor Center, Montana

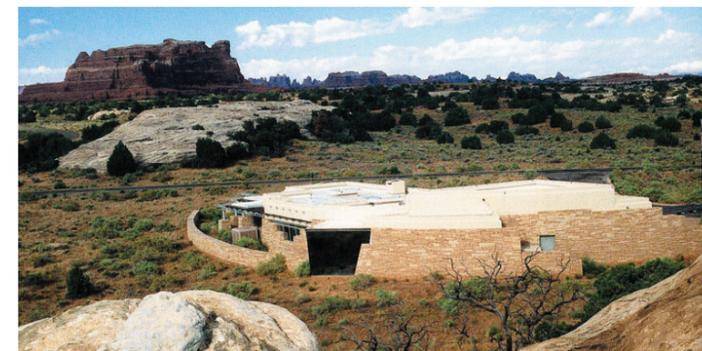
The visitor center is a renovated granary lending authenticity to the visitor experience. This photo shows it in 1935 performing its original role.



Old Design, Modern Technology

Needles Visitor Center, Canyonlands National Park, Utah

The contemporary design for an outdoor setting draws on 150 years of architectural history. Modern technologies and materials are applied to a traditional form in a way that honors the spirit of place and culture.





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5. FACILITY SIZE

The appropriate size for an interpretive facility is driven by the predicted volume of casual visitors, their expected length of stay and special program requirements for dedicated users. Casual visitors can be expected to stay from a 1/2 hour to 1 1/2 hours at any destination. A significant portion of this time will be spent enjoying the outdoors if the weather permits. The high volume of visits from the casual audience requires adequate space for easy circulation. Dedicated visitors will need less space because their numbers are relatively small, and much more of their time will be spent on site. However, areas for meetings, parking and transfer to tour vehicles need to be large enough to handle dedicated visitor groups during their time at the facility.

To give some idea of the scale of internal public space required for interpretive facilities and their related features, three regional examples are provided in the following table, ranging from small to large capacity. These will provide lessons from others and a context for planning any facilities.



	Small	Medium
Facility	<i>Walatowa, Jemez Pueblo</i>	<i>Bradbury Museum, Los Alamos</i>
Public Galleries	3,600 sq ft	8,000 sq ft
Role	Orientation Information Staging Area Small Exhibit Area Small Retail Area	Orientation Information Staging Area Medium Exhibit Area Small Retail Area Classroom
Fees	Free	Donation
Exhibits	Primarily graphic panels or other wall-mounted exhibits	Graphic panels plus some more complex, free-standing, interactive exhibits, e.g. topo model, small diorama, etc. Mini-theater with space for 20-30 people
Retail	Small – based on wall mounted display cases and/or freestanding displays for clothing - limited selection	Moderate space and selection
Capacity	150 people	350-400 people
Duration of Stay	15 minutes	1.5-2 hours
Staff & Volunteers	4 staff + 0 volunteers	7 full time / 10 part time + 0 volunteers

Large
<i>New Mexico Museum of Natural History & Science, Albuquerque</i>
65,000 sq ft
Orientation Information Staging Area Large Exhibit Area Large Retail Area Theater Classroom Feature
Admission Charge \$11 to \$16
Full range of exhibits possible including a large format theater that seats 1-2 busloads of visitors
Many of the experiences are immersive e.g. explore the jungle of roots and rootlets beneath the surface using large models reflecting the world a prairie dog would see
Large space with enough selection and customized items to become attraction for unique gifts for area residents
3,800 people
2 hours
160 staff + 200 volunteers

Potential Size Requirements for Valles Caldera Indoor Facilities

Estimates for facility size requirements depend on reliable statistics on potential visitation. Acquiring this information proved to be a significant challenge. Only the Jemez Mountain Trail Scenic Byway had reasonably current numbers. Extrapolation was necessary to estimate traffic past the Preserve. The decision was reached to not address this question because the results could be inaccurate and potentially misleading. This need would be met by a comprehensive feasibility study that should be undertaken prior to any public facility decision. A sense of the needs for the public gallery space at an interpretive facility can be concluded from the criteria for visitor experience included in the appendices of this report.

A proper calculation should take into consideration the potential market in detail and include, as part of an overall functional program, a complete analysis of functional requirements for dedicated visitors and administrative functions. The optimal-sized facility could then be analyzed for operational sustainability in terms of costs and potential revenues.

