

**Valles Caldera Trust**  
**Minutes of the Public Meeting – March 14, 2008**  
Hilton Garden Inn  
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Board Members Present

William Keleher, Chair  
Stephen Henry, Secretary  
James Gosz  
Tracy Hephner  
Daniel Jiron  
Raymond Loretto  
Brad Traver

Staff Present

Jeffrey Cross, Executive Director  
Will Breedlove, IT Specialist  
Debbie Boggess, Administrative Officer  
Pam Dale, Human Resources  
Marc Jarvis, Recreation Supervisor  
Berta Pantoja Administrative Assistant  
Bob Parmenter, Preserve Scientist  
Ana Steffen, Cultural Resource Coordinator  
John Swigart, GIS Specialist  
Darren Toya, IT Technician  
Dennis Trujillo, Preserve Manager

I. Welcome and Introductions

Chair William Keleher called the meeting to order and welcomed attendees. Keleher introduced new Board Member Brad Traver representing Bandelier National Monument. Jeff Cross also introduced new staff members: Will Breedlove, Marc Jarvis, John Swigart, and Darren Toya.

**Approval of Agenda**

Keleher asked the Board for approval of the agenda. **Member Raymond Loretto moved and member Dan Jiron seconded the motion. The agenda was approved.**

**Approval of Minutes**

Keleher asked the Board to approve the minutes from the December 11, 2007 meeting. **Member Jim Gosz moved and member Tracy Hephner seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.**

## II. Board Business

### **Approval of Executive Session**

Keleher asked the Board to approve the option of conducting an executive session if needed.

**Member Jiron moved and Loretto seconded. The motion was passed.**

## III. Operations

### **FY2008 Budget**

Debbie Boggess, Administrative Officer, presented an update on the FY2008 budget. She noted that the Trust received an appropriation of \$3,750,000 in January 2008 and had a carryover of \$587,009 from prior years. Boggess explained that the Trust had expended 21% of its FY2008 budget as of the end of February. She said that expenses are lower in the winter months and will pick up in spring and summer. Boggess also reviewed the revenue account, which has a balance of \$2,687,492.

### **Business Plan**

Cross informed the meeting that the Trust received 12 responses to its request for proposals (RFP) to develop a business plan and a contract has been awarded for about \$200,000. The business plan should be completed by September 2008. The plan will help the Trust develop the public access and use management plan. Cross said that NEPA compliance will be required to implement it.

## IV. Existing Programs

### **2008 Livestock Grazing Program**

Dennis Trujillo, Preserve Manager, and Bob Parmenter, Preserve Scientist, presented their 2008 grazing and forage analysis. Parmenter described the process for determining forage availability, which is the basis for estimating livestock capacity. He stressed that high levels of precipitation in the past two years increased forage biomass to record levels in the fall. After accounting for 25% forage decomposition over the winter, Parmenter estimated that there will be enough forage for 2115 steers for four months this spring and summer. All of this information will be presented in the *Range Readiness Report* in late May.

Trujillo informed the meeting that the Trust received six proposals in response to the RFP for the 2008 domestic livestock operation. Applying the criteria developed for proposal review resulted in the contract award to Gary Morton of Las Vegas, N.M. Morton will bring 2000 yearlings onto the Preserve in June. He commented that he was privileged to have the opportunity to provide good stewardship of this important resource.

### **East Fork Fishing Program**

Trujillo and Parmenter presented the proposal to allow fishing access for the first time on a 7.5 mile stretch of the upper East Fork of the Jemez River and a 2.5 mile segment of the Rio Jaramillo. They presented the five years of fish population counts and water quality on which the proposal is based. The proposal allows 10 anglers/day (\$50/angler /day) using a first come first served reservation system. Any remaining open slots will be allocated by lottery on that day at the Valles Grande Staging Area. Four slots will be available to guides (\$125/guide/day). Other components of the program include requiring single barbless hooks and guide certification.

Full program details will be posted on the Trust's Web site. Trujillo estimated potential gross revenues of \$80,000.

*Comments: Member Hephner asked about options for groups in which only a portion receive a permit that day. (Response: Other reaches of the East Fork in the Santa Fe National Forest are available for fishing). An attendee asked if specific segments will be assigned. (Response: No). Jeff Lyon, Santa Clara Pueblo asked if cutthroat trout are being considered for reintroduction. (Response: The Trust is considering restoration of habitat, but there is no staff proposal to reintroduce cutthroat trout at this time). David Menicucci, attendee, and Ron Lowman, New Mexico Trout Unlimited, expressed concerns about the impact of cattle grazing on riparian areas. (Response: Requisite personnel will be available to monitor and move cows. Also, on-going vegetation monitoring evaluation studies will also be conducted).*

### **Interim Overnight Camping**

Trujillo advised the meeting about the new Environment Assessment (EA) on Interim Camping is posted on the Trust's Web site for public comment. The EA focuses on overnight camping for existing administrative and recreational activities and does not include any new facilities. An alternative will be selected after the close of the comment period.

### **Wild Turkey Study**

Parmenter discussed the new turkey study that will assess range, habitat, migration patterns, and reproduction/predation rates. The study began in October 2007 and staff and volunteers are trapping, banding, and attaching transmitters to 80 turkeys. Two turkeys have been trapped and banded thus far.

### **Jemez Mountains Science Symposium**

This symposium is being revitalized with a meeting planned for March 28 at the Santa Fe Community College from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. At the symposium, scientists and resource managers will discuss a range of studies in the Jemez Mountains, including geology, soils, climate, hydrology, biology, etc. The meeting is free and open to the public.

### **Cultural Resources**

Ana Steffen, Cultural Resources Coordinator, reported on key cultural resources activities and noted that full details are available in the recent Report to Congress. In 2007, 1200 acres were surveyed and 67 new archeology and historic sites were documented. In total, 6600 acres have been surveyed - about 7.5% of the Preserve. She also explained that 100% of the main roads have been surveyed.

Steffen provided highlights of recent activities. The survey of Rabbit Mountain (130 acres) found two sites with ceramic artifacts dating from 1540-1700 as well as New Deal era artifacts. The University of New Mexico (UNM) Department of Archeology -OCA Excavation LA 26917 mitigated road maintenance on the VC02; the final report is due in the spring. Current endeavors include collaboration with Rocky Mountain Research Station (RMRS) to study community views regarding fire, grazing, and access. The UNM Department of Archeology will host a Field School on the Preserve in the summer of 2008. Finally, the Jemez Mountain obsidian sourcing project is investigating the geographic distribution of artifacts using Jemez Mountain obsidian.

Steffen also mentioned the availability of two documents: *Documentation and Preservation of VCNP Historical Structures* and the *RMRS Land Use History* (available on the Trust's Web site).

#### V. New Programs

##### **Wetlands Restoration - Proposed Stewardship Action**

Cross and Trujillo presented a request to the Board for authorization to continue planning for wetlands restoration on the Rio San Antonio and in Alamo Canyon. This planning follows field surveys conducted in 2007. Proposed activities include reducing erosion risks, watershed rehabilitation, stream restoration, and restoration and protection of the unique wetland in Alamo Canyon. An EA will be developed after the planning options are identified. **Member Hephner moved to authorize the planning activities and preparation of the EA; member Stephen Henry seconded the motion. The motion was passed.**

#### VI. Report on Coring in Valle Grande

UNM professor Peter Fawcett of the Planetary Science Department presented the findings from the 2004 drilling project. Core samples that span two mid-Pleistocene glacial cycles (550,000 – 350,000 years before present) were collected. Samples from this period are rare and, importantly, the Valle Grande records correlate with findings from Antarctica and the ocean floor. Fawcett reviewed his team's techniques for dating the core and then highlighted key insights. He noted that there are wetter and dryer phases during the interglacial periods relating to geographic movements of the summer monsoons. These results may inform our understanding of future climate cycles.

*Comments: An attendee asked if the data mean that climate change concerns are irrelevant. (Response: No, this just sets the natural baseline variation). Member Jim Gosz wondered if additional pollen data will be available. (Response: Yes). Steffen asked how the data would vary if water in the lake in the caldera was frozen. (Response: The results would be similar but with fewer diatoms in the clay).*

#### VII. Public Comment

Keleher invited public comment and there was none.

#### VIII. Adjournment

Chairman Keleher adjourned the meeting at 3:30 p.m.