

VALLES CALDERA NATIONAL PRESERVE



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VALLES CALDERA TRUST

State of New Mexico

Sandoval and Rio Arriba Counties

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Public Scoping Information

August 13, 2009

Stewardship Action:

Public Access and Use Plan

Stewardship Register

Public Access and Use

Public Scoping Document

Public Access and Use Plan

Table of Contents

Introduction

This public scoping document provides the key documents from our interactive website into a single PDF document. Documents have been organized in the following order:

Documents

1. Cover Letter
2. Workshop Flyer
3. Glossary
4. Guide for Sharing Comments Online
5. Access Narrative
6. Access Element Table
7. Capacity Narrative
8. Capacity Element Table
9. Activities Narrative
10. Activities Element Table
11. Development Narrative
12. Development Element Table
13. Financing Narrative
14. Financing Element Table
15. Values Narrative
16. Values Element Table
17. Overview Narrative
18. Map – Alternative A
19. Map – Alternative B
20. Map – Alternative C
21. Map – Alternative D
22. Map – Alternative E



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Date: August 13, 2009

File Code: PLAN2

Dear Friends,

The Valles Caldera Trust has initiated an online collaboration to engage the public in building alternatives for the development of the Valles Caldera National Preserve in support of public access and use of the Preserve for recreation, education, scientific study, commercial and other public purposes.

The “building blocks” for any alternative must address the following elements:

- **ACCESS** – How do you enter the Preserve? After entering, where can you go and how do you get there?
- **CAPACITY** – How many visitors can be accommodated on the Preserve on an annual, seasonal, or daily basis?
- **ACTIVITIES** – What types of activities and programs will be available?
- **DEVELOPMENT** – What types of facilities and infrastructure should be developed? At what scale should development occur and where should it be located?
- **FINANCING** – What are the capital investment requirements for various levels of development? What are the annual operating costs? How much of the annual operating costs can be recovered through revenues generated by programs and activities?
- **VALUES** - What do we value most about the Preserve? How may those values be affected by development?

The interactive site recently launched from the Trust’s website focuses on these elements and using narratives, maps, and tables, describes five levels of development for each. For your convenience we have prepared a single document containing the detailed narratives, maps and element tables available on the website. A glossary is also provided which includes definitions for acronyms and terms used in the narratives as well as a legend of the symbols used in the maps and tables.

We invite you to participate through our online site. Simply go to our website, www.vallescaldera.gov, and select the link from the home page. (Guidelines for submitting comments to the forum are included in this document.) You may also submit comments directly to the Trust via email: comments@vallescaldera.gov or surface mail: Valles Caldera Trust, P.O. Box 359, Jemez Springs, NM 87025. (Comments submitted through direct email will not be posted on the online forum). You are also invited to attend one of two public open house and group discussion events.

- September 14, 2009, 5:30-8:00 PM, Hilton Garden Inn, 5320 San Antonio Dr. N.E., Albuquerque, NM
- September 15, 2009, 5:30-8:00 PM, Santa Fe Community College, 6401 S Richards Ave., Santa Fe, NM.

Whether you choose to participate through the online forum, submit your comments directly, and/or attend a public open house, your participation is important. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

/s/Dennis Trujillo
Preserve Manager



Valles Caldera National Preserve

Public Access and Use Planning Open House

September 14, 2009

5:30 – 8:00 PM

Hilton Garden Inn
5320 San Antonio Dr NE,
Albuquerque, NM

September 15, 2009

5:30 – 8:00 PM

Santa Fe Community College
6401 S Richards Ave,
Santa Fe, NM

Open House & Discussion Public Access and Use

PLEASE JOIN US

From 5:30 – 6:30 we will host an open house where you can learn about the elements involved in public access and use planning and visit with staff and experts.

At 6:30 we will begin a series of small group discussions.

Access onto the Preserve, visitor capacity, programs and activities, development of facilities and infrastructure, financing, and the protection and preservation of resources and values will be the elements discussed.

For more information on public access and use of the Preserve for recreation, education, scientific study, commercial and other purposes, go to :
www.vallescaldera.gov. Select the link from our home page to open an interactive website.

GLOSSARY

Introduction

This document provides a helpful reference for interpreting the maps, element tables and narratives regarding planning for public access and use on the Valles Caldera National Preserve.

Acronyms

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ATV	All Terrain Vehicle
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
PAUP	Public Access and Use Plan
VCNP	Valles Caldera National Preserve (the Preserve)
VCT	Valles Caldera Trust (the Trust)

Icons

The following icons are used in the maps and tabular/iconic pages depicting *Access*, *Capacity*, *Activities*, *Development* and *Financing*

Access

	Staging Area
	Visitor Center
	Self Service Pay Station
	Level 4 two-lane, sedan, surfaced
	Level 3 single lane with turn out, sedan, gravel or surfaced
	Non-motorized Access (hiking, mountain biking or equestrian)
	ATV Access
	Snowmobile Access

Capacity

	25,000 Annual Visitors
	100 Daily Visitors

Activities

	Hiking
	Fishing
	Tours
	Picnicking



	Mountain Biking
	Horseback Riding
	Hunting
	Wildlife Viewing
	Camping
	Educational, Artistic, and Spiritual Pursuits
	Orienteering and Special Events
	Star Gazing

Development

	Visitor Center
	ADA Compliant Infrastructure and Facilities
	Shuttle Stop
	Parking
	Self Service Pay Station
	Staging Area
	Restrooms
	Food Service
	Snack Bar
	Lounge
	Picnic Area
	Sheltered Picnic Area
	Primitive Overnight Shelter
	Cabin
	Trail Head
	Trailhead with Mountain Biking Amenities
	Trailhead with Pedestrian Hiking Amenities
	Trailhead with Equestrian Amenities
	Showers
	Observatory
	Developed Campground
	Developed Campground w/RV Parking
	Equestrian Camping
	Equestrian Center
	Administrative Site
	Science and Education Center
	Conference Center



	Lodging/Dormitory
	Staff Housing

Financing

	\$5,000,000
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Terms

Access	How visitors enter the Preserve and travel in the Preserve once they enter.
Activities	The activities in which people may participate in on the Preserve.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Interest Activities 	Activities that do not require a deal of specialized skills or equipment to be enjoyed. Also activities that do not require a great deal of control over the environment or setting where they occur.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Interest Activities 	Activities that require specialized knowledge, skills, or equipment to be enjoyed. These activities often require a controlled environment and/or planning on logistical support by the Trust.
Capacity	The number of visitors that can be accommodated on the Preserve. May be considered annually or daily. This is not a literal number but an estimate based on averages.
Development	The construction of facilities and infrastructure in support of access and use.
Financially self sustaining	According to the Valles Caldera Preservation Act, the term financially self-sustaining means, “... <i>management and operating expenditures equal to or less than proceeds derived from fees and other receipts for resource use and development and interest on invested funds. Management and operating expenditures shall include Trustee expenses, salaries and benefits of staff, administrative and operating expenses, improvements to and maintenance of lands and facilities of the Preserve, and other similar expenses.</i> ”
Financing	The capital investment required to develop facilities and infrastructure, the annual operating costs associated with public access and use, and the expected annual revenues associated with any level of capacity.
National Environmental Policy Act	United States environmental law that established a U.S. national policy promoting the enhancement of the environment and also established the President’s Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ). Provides a legal framework for planning and decision making on public land.
Public Access and Use	Access to and use of the Preserve for recreation, education, scientific research, commercial, and other public purposes.
Road Maintenance Level	Maintenance level assigned to a road determined by the purpose and level of use.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level 5 	Roads that provide a high degree of user comfort and convenience. These roads are normally double-lane, paved facilities. Some may be aggregate surfaced and dust abated.



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level 4 	<p>Roads that provide a moderate degree of user comfort and convenience at moderate travel speeds. Most roads are double lane and aggregate surfaced. However, some roads may be single lane. Some roads may be paved and/or dust abated.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level 3 	<p>Roads open and maintained for travel by prudent drivers in a standard passenger car. User comfort and convenience are low priorities.</p> <p>Roads in this maintenance level are typically low speed, single lane with turnouts, and spot surfacing. Some roads may be fully surfaced with either native or processed material.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level 2 	<p>Roads open for use by high-clearance vehicles. Passenger car traffic is not a consideration. Traffic is normally minor, usually consisting of one or a combination of administrative, permitted, dispersed recreation, or other specialized uses.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level 1 	<p>Intermittent service roads during the time they are closed to vehicular traffic (but may be open and suitable for non-motorized uses). Basic custodial maintenance may be performed to keep damage to adjacent resources to an acceptable level and to facilitate future management activities. Emphasis is normally given to maintaining drainage facilities and runoff patterns.</p>
Scoping	<p>An early and open process used to determine the scope of issues to be addressed and for identifying the significant issues associated with a proposed federal action. Also an adjective prefacing early public meetings or information disseminated early in the planning process i.e., scoping meetings, scoping letters.</p>
Staging Area	<p>An area where visitors gather to participate in an event or activity. It may be staffed or unstaffed and may or may not include amenities or other development.</p>
Visitor Day	<p>One person-one day unit of measuring capacity and visitation. One person visiting for five days or five people visiting for one day are both equal to five visitor days.</p>



The Valles Caldera Trust Guidelines:

Promoting civility in an online public discourse

Welcome to our interactive web site; the portal to collaborative planning for public access and use of the Valles Caldera National Preserve.

Public involvement is a cornerstone of planning and decision making for public lands. This interactive website has been designed to invite you to participate in building alternatives for the development of the Valles Caldera National Preserve for expanded public access and use of the Preserve; probably the most important decision to be made regarding the management of the Preserve.

Participants in this process will be able to view the comments of others. This part of the process will be very powerful. It should inspire creativity and allow participants to build on each other's ideas symbiotically. It also has the ability to test an idea in a public venue.

While it is ok to have a negative response about an idea put forward by the Trust or another participant, it is not ok or constructive for that response to be personal. This online public forum is about the sharing of ideas and information rather than being right with one's ideology or winning an argument. This forum is not designed for debating abstract political philosophy or ridiculing others for their ideas or opinions.

Below is a set of simple rules to provide a foundation for online civility in order to promote effective public involvement.

1. Register – You must register prior to posting comments. Only your first name and city will be viewed by other participants. Posting with a pseudonym, anonymously or the use/theft of another person's identity is strictly forbidden and has special penalties described under Warnings #7.
2. Keep Topics within the Scope - Limit posts to topics related to public access and use planning. Posts outside the scope will not be posted.
3. Be Civil - No insults, name calling or inflamed speech. Personal one-on-one arguments, disagreements or personality conflicts are not appropriate on the public discussion forum. The Trust shall provide guidance to participants on what is appropriate and what is not allowed. Attempts at humor or sarcasm should be labeled ... ;-), :-), etc.
4. Keep it Clean – avoid offensive language and topics. The Trust reserves the right to determine if a comment contains offensive language. The participant will be contacted and provided the opportunity to restate their comment.
5. No Attacks or Threats - Personal attacks or public threats against the safety or security of participants are not allowed. The Trust will remove any such posts, the participant will be notified. If you receive private communication from another participant that causes you serious concern, you may communicate that to the Trust, but no action should be taken by the Valles Caldera Trust to intervene in private disputes among individuals.



If you feel you have privately received an illegal threat via e-mail you should contact the appropriate legal authorities. The Valles Caldera Trust is not responsible for any private behavior.

6. Private Stays Private - Forwarding private messages to the online forum is not allowed without the express permission of the original author. This includes private replies to public posts and other private or personal communication including e-mail communication with public officials who may or may not be forum members. Public officials and the Trust staff have equal participation rights and responsibilities in this forum - everyone is a citizen first.
7. Avoid False Rumors, You are Liable - Rumors of a personal nature are not allowed. Your posts must be accurate based on your full knowledge and never intentionally false. Unverified "grapevine" information of a public nature must be within a forum's issue-based scope to be appropriate. If in doubt about the appropriateness of a given topic, check privately with the Trust (comments@vallescaldera.gov) before posting. Otherwise, the Trust may remove your post. Further, via the forum itself, you must correct your previous expressions of fact or "known" information that you find later to be false or substantially incorrect. Exceptions include your assertions already publicly corrected or clarified by others in forum discussions. Corrections must be made within any daily posting limit or via the Trust if urgent. You and you alone are liable for the content of your own messages. The Valles Caldera Trust is not responsible or liable for the content posted to any technically unmoderated forum or moderated announcement service.
8. Right to Post and Reply – The Trust has established equal rights among all registered participants. You may only lose those established rights based on your actions, particularly rule violations. Only those who are registered participants may post directly. Any person or organization that is publicly mentioned in a forum post has a right to reply. In order to post a reply, the individual (or an individual representing the organization) must register..
9. Items Not Allowed in Forums - Commercial advertising, virus warnings from members, and chain letters are prohibited from all forums. Comments or complaints about forum management or complaints about member rule violations must not be posted to the main forum. Instead, direct such messages privately to the Trust (info@vallescaldera.gov).

Links to information which may help clarify the participant's point, provide an example of a participant's idea are acceptable, or open source data related to the topic.
10. Public Content and Use - By posting an original message, the message author agrees to allow the Valles Caldera Trust to distribute the message via the Internet and to include it in a publicly accessible online archive in perpetuity. While original message authors retain their personal copyright, they grant others the right to publicly quote portions of their message in any medium. With copyrighted material like newspaper articles, you may post quotations from articles or web sites with the source URL. "Fair use" of excerpts (not the full text) is encouraged well as the distribution of extended text from government produced content.

Comments not posted due to a violation of the guidelines will be retained in the administrative record for public access and use planning.



ACCESS

Introduction

The first element of access and use is access – How do you get onto the Preserve? Once on the Preserve where can you go and how do you get there? The key features of access on the Preserve are entry, motorized access, and non motorized access.

After reviewing this narrative and the maps, select the *Access* Element Tab to provide your comments and feedback. Refer to the glossary for a legend of the symbols used in the element table.

Alternative A – Current Condition

Entry

Currently most visitors arrange access to the Preserve remotely. Using the internet or telephone they learn about the Preserve and arrange for recreational access by making a reservation or competing for access through a lottery drawing. Access for scientific research, educational, and commercial activities, are arranged on a case by case basis.

Most visitors physically access the Preserve through the Valle Grande entrance, located at mile marker 39 off NM 4 (New Mexico State Highway 4). About 2.5 miles into the Preserve, visitors must stop at the Valle Grande Staging Area. The Valle Grande staging area is a staffed staging area which includes parking, portable toilets, and a visitor contact station. The contact station includes retail space and is housed in a portable building situated in a graveled lot adjacent to cattle shipping facilities. From the staging area visitors are further directed into the Preserve via a Trust operated shuttle or personal vehicle. Casual visitors (visitors that did not plan in advance to visit the Preserve) can often participate spontaneously in short tours or hikes originating from the Valle Grande staging area.

Visitors coming to the Preserve to engage in horseback riding or mountain biking must enter through the Banco Bonito staging area positioned at the southwest corner of the Preserve at mile marker 30. Banco Bonito staging area is a staffed staging area with parking adequate for horse trailers. A small (250 square ft.) portable building provides shelter, security, and communications for staff. Portable toilets and a water tank (for the horses) are the only other amenities. From the staging area equestrians and cyclists access more than 20 miles of trails mostly aligned along level 2 (maintained for high clearance vehicles) and level 1 (closed to motorized use) roads.

Motorized Access

Access to the staging areas is open; access beyond the staging areas is by permit only. Permitted visitors access their destination by driving (in a Trust operated shuttle or sometimes their personal vehicle) on a level 3 road. This level of road is maintained for travel by a prudent driver in a standard passenger car; user comfort and convenience are not considered priorities. A level 3 road is typically low speed, single lane with turnouts and native or aggregate surfacing. Approximately 50-100 miles of level 3 road provide access to fishing beats and hiking trails. Additional roads are maintained to a level 2 standard. Level 2 roads are open for use by high-clearance vehicles; passenger car traffic is



discouraged. Access on these roads is minor administrative or permitted use. Currently access for ATVs and snowmobiles is only for administrative use.

Non-motorized Access

There are approximately 50 miles of hiking trails on the Preserve. Currently these trails are all level 1 maintenance roads. Level 1 roads are generally closed to motorized use but some intermittent use may be authorized. When closed to motorized use, they may be suitable and used for non-motorized uses, with custodial maintenance.

Alternative B

Entry

Under Alternative B, most visitors would enter the Preserve through a full service visitor facility developed in proximity to the Valle Grande. The Valle Grande staging area would be eliminated under this alternative; the Banco Bonito staging area would be retained and upgraded to a permanent facility with improved amenities. While access could still be arranged remotely, the development of a visitor center would greatly increase casual access by travelers along NM 4.

Motorized Access

From the visitor center permitted access onto the Preserve would be upgraded to a level 4 road. A level 4 road provides a moderate degree of user comfort and convenience at moderate speeds. Most are double lane, and aggregate surfaced; some may be single lane depending on the expected level of use. This level 4 road would circumnavigate the Valle Grande providing about ten miles of comfortable sedan access for shuttle tours or personal vehicles. Permitted access to the interior of the Preserve would continue to be via the level 3 and level 2 roads currently in place. Level 4 access would be developed in the Preserve's southwest corner, south of NM 4 to access staff housing. Under this alternative no dedicated access for snowmobiles or ATV's would be established. This type of motorized access could be provided as part of a special interest event.

Non-motorized Access

Under this alternative the trail system would be expanded to an interconnected series of trails designed to support backpacking. About 75 – 100 miles of trails would access most regions of the Preserve including the caldera rim within the Preserve's boundary. Where possible, level 1 roads would continue to serve as trails with new construction occurring only as necessary.

Alternative C

Entry

Alternative C includes the construction of the visitor center as described under Alternative B. Additional access to the Preserve for hiking may be provided through self pay fee stations located on the Preserve's boundaries with the Santa Fe National Forest.



Motorized Access

Also as described under Alternative B, permitted access onto the Preserve from the visitor center would be upgraded to a level 4 road. The upgraded route would take visitors on a 20-40 mile loop through the interior of the Preserve.

Motorized access to staff housing would be developed as described under Alternative B. Under this alternative no dedicated access for snowmobiles or ATV's would be established. This type of motorized access could be provided as part of a special interest event.

Non-motorized Access

The interconnected trail system proposed under Alternative B would be enhanced by additional trails creating shorter loops for increased day hiking. The total trail system would be expanded to about 100 – 150 miles. Trails would continue to be on level 1 roads where possible with new construction only as necessary. Development considered under this alternative includes an equestrian center, necessitating an increase in horse friendly trails and trailheads for the increased equestrian access.

Alternative D

Entry

Alternative D also includes the development of the visitor center as described under Alternatives B and C and additional access through self service fee stations as described under Alternative C.

Motorized Access

Under this alternative motorized access would be the same as under Alternative C.

Non-motorized Access

Under this alternative, access through non-motorized trails increases to 150-200 miles with the addition of more trails suitable for shorter visits.

Alternative E

Entry

Access under Alternative E would include the elements as described in Alternatives C and D. Development under this alternative includes the construction of a science and education center, located south of NM 4, in the Preserve's southwest corner. Access to the center including parking would be required.

Motorized Access

Permitted access via a level 4 road would be extended with the development of 40-60 miles of level 4 roads. Level 4 roads would be developed in the southwest corner for motorized access to staff housing, operations and maintenance facilities, administrative facilities and the science and education center.

Non-motorized Access

Under this alternative 100-150 miles of non-motorized trails would be developed and maintained.



ACCESS

ACCESS ▼	ALTERNATIVE ►	A	B	C	D	E
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ACCESS: People could access the Preserve through a staffed staging area, a full service visitor center, or a self serve pay station. Numbers indicate each feature.

 Staging Area	2	1	1	1	1
 Visitor Center	NA	1	1	1	1
 Self Service Pay Station	NA	NA	1	2	2

MOTORIZED ACCESS: Roads are described by maintenance level; level 4 is a double lane hard surfaced road. Level 3 is a single lane gravel road with turnouts for safety. Numbers indicate miles.

 Level 4	NA	0-10	20-40	20-40	40-60
 Level 3	50-100	60-90	40-60	40-60	20-40

NON-MOTORIZED ACCESS: Trails for hikers, cyclists, and equestrians. Numbers indicate miles.

	25-50	75-100	100-150	150-200	100-150
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OTHER MOTORIZED ACCESS: Access for ATVs and snowmobiles

	Administrative	Special Event	Special Event	Special Event	Special Event
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CAPACITY

Introduction

Capacity – How many visitors can be accommodated by facilities, infrastructure, programs, and activities on an annual basis? How many can be accommodated on a daily basis?

Annual Capacity

Annual capacity which estimates the number of visitor days (one person for two days counts as two visitor days) served on an annual basis. This number is important for estimating revenue generation and other general statistics. However, annual capacity does not provide a true picture of the number of people on the landscape at any given time.

Daily Capacity

Daily capacity creates a picture of people visiting the Preserve on any given day. Daily capacity is a conceptual number that distributes annual capacity based on typical variability in seasonal use as follows:

- About 70 percent of visitation occurs during the summer recreation season. This season begins in May as the roads dry out and the temperatures reach pleasant levels and extends about 170 days into early fall.
- About 20 percent of visitation occurs during the winter recreation season which begins around the end of December or beginning of January. This season varies from year to year depending on snowpack, but generally stretches about 70 days.
- About 10 percent of visitation occurs between winter and summer. Access and use during this time is primarily by late season elk hunters, spring turkey hunters, and perhaps some researchers or hardy school children on field trips.

After reviewing this narrative, open the *Capacity* Element Tab and provide us with your feedback.

Alternative A – Current condition

The 2005 Interpretive Master Plan estimates the casual visitor market in the Jemez corridor to be about 600,000 visitors annually. Currently the capacity of the Preserve as determined by events and activities available (including recreation, education, scientific explorations and commercial access) is about 25,000 visitors annually or 4 percent of the potential casual market.

Table 1 displays the estimated current daily distribution of visitors based on an estimated annual capacity of 25,000 visitor days:

Table 1 - Daily visitation under Alternative A

Season	Weekend	Weekday
Summer	165	82
Winter	70	35
Off-season	15	7



Capacity to serve casual visitors, (those who spontaneously stop by, usually drawn in by the panoptic view of the Valle Grande from NM 4) is currently limited by the lack of facilities and infrastructure. Visitors are distributed across the Preserve in small groups (less than 20) or as individuals. Some special events such as marathons or organized mountain biking events may draw hundreds of visitors on a single day and distribute them through a limited road route. Weddings and other special uses may also concentrate a large number of visitors into a limited area.

Alternative B

Under Alternative B, capacity would quadruple, potentially capturing 15-20 percent of the casual visitor market. This dramatic increase is primarily attributed to the improvements in access especially the construction of a visitor center which will provide an opportunity for any individual, regardless of age or ability to “experience” the Preserve. The visitor center will combine the power of the landscape to draw visitors with easy access to potential casual visitor market.

Alternative B improves access to the casual visitor through the development of the level 4 road for a short scenic loop around the Valle Grande and expanded trails. The improved access increases capacity for offering special events that are in high demand such as eco-tourism, formal environmental education programs, and less formal school field trip opportunities. The improved access will also increase the capacity to host scientific study. Capacity would all be increased by the primitive and developed overnight opportunities.

Table 2 displays the estimated daily distribution of visitors for Alternative B based on an estimated annual capacity of 100,000 visitor days:

Table 2 – Daily visitation under Alternative B

Season	Visitors/day	
	Weekend	Weekday
Summer	659	329
Winter	280	140
Off-season	58	29

Alternative C

Another dramatic increase in capacity would occur under Alternative C to an estimated annual capacity of 150,000 visitor days, potentially capturing 25 percent of the casual visitor market. This increase in capacity is due to the development of primitive and full service overnight opportunities proposed under this alternative combined with the improved access into the interior of the Preserve with proposed development of 20-40 miles of level 4 road. This alternative also develops facilities to expand equestrian recreation opportunities on the Preserve.

Table 3 displays the estimated daily distribution of visitors for Alternative B based on an estimated annual capacity of 150,000 visitor days:

Table 3 – Daily visitation under Alternative C

Season	Visitors/day	
	Weekend	Weekday
Summer	988	494



Winter	420	280
Off-season	88	44

Alternative D

Under Alternative D annual capacity would be increased to 175,000 visitor days. This level of visitation reflects nearly 30 percent of the casual visitor market. Capacity is increased through the development and improved access as described under Alternative C. Further increases are due to additional development including the addition of equestrian amenities to developed overnight camping and full service lodging.

Table 4 displays the estimated daily distribution of visitors for Alternative D based on an estimated annual capacity of 175,000 visitor days:

Table 4 – Daily visitation under Alternative D

Season	Visitors/day	
	Weekend	Weekday
Summer	1153	576
Winter	490	245
Off-season	102	51

Alternative E

Alternative E increases annual capacity to an estimated 200,000 visitor days or one third of the casual visitor market and equaling the annual visitation of Bandelier National Monument. The increase is due primarily to further expansion in access to the interior of the Preserve with 40 – 60 miles of level 4 road established and the addition of full service luxury lodging. Scientific and educational capacity would be increased with the proposed development of a science and education center on site.

Table 5 displays the estimated daily distribution of visitors for Alternative D based on an estimated annual capacity of 200,000 visitor days:

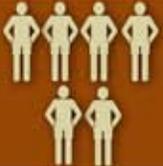
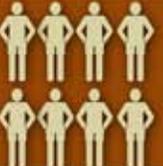
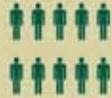
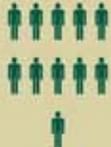
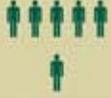
Table 5 – Daily visitation under Alternative E

Season	Visitors/day	
	Weekend	Weekday
Summer	1318	659
Winter	560	280
Off-season	117	58



CAPACITY

Capacity and Visitation

CAPACITY ▼ ALTERNATIVE ►	A	B	C	D	E
ANNUAL CAPACITY Number of visitor days that could be accommodated on the preserve annually					
 represents 25,000 visitors					
	25,000/year	100,000/year	150,000/year	175,000/year	200,000/year
AVERAGE SUMMER SEASON WEEKEND DAILY VISITATION (Weekend visitation—spring through fall)					
 represents 100 visitors	< 				
	165/day	659/day	988/day	1153/day	1318/day
AVERAGE SUMMER SEASON WEEKDAY DAILY VISITATION (Weekday visitation—spring through fall)					
 represents 100 visitors	< 				
	82/day	329/day	494/day	576/day	695/day
AVERAGE WINTER SEASON WEEKEND DAILY VISITATION (Weekend visitation—winter snow season)					
 represents 100 visitors	< 				
	70/day	280/day	420/day	490/day	560/day
AVERAGE WINTER SEASON WEEKDAY DAILY VISITATION (Weekday visitation—winter snow season)					
 represents 100 visitors		< 			
	35/day	140/day	210/day	245/day	300/day
AVERAGE OFF-SEASON WEEKEND DAILY VISITATION (Weekend visitation—late fall early spring)					
 represents 100 visitors	< 	< 	< 		
	15/day	58/day	88/day	102/day	117/day
AVERAGE OFF-SEASON WEEKDAY DAILY VISITATION (Weekday visitation—late fall early spring)					
 represents 100 visitors	< 	< 	< 	< 	< 
	7/day	29/day	44/day	51/day	58/day

ACTIVITIES

Introduction

Activities – What types of visitors will be served? What types of activities will be offered? What specific activities will be emphasized?

After reviewing this narrative and viewing the maps, select the *Activities* Element Tab to provide your comments and feedback. Refer to the glossary for a legend of the symbols used in the element tables.

Visitors

Visitors to the Preserve fall into a variety of categories as noted in the Interpretive Master Plan prepared for the Preserve in 2005. These categories include: recreation users, scientists and other researchers, students including adults upgrading their skills, Native-Americans undertaking spiritual and traditional practices, artists and individuals interested in artistic and spiritual pursuits, staff, and commercial users. These visitors can be loosely grouped as either casual, general interest visitors or special interest visitors. Casual visitors may not know much about the Preserve, may be first time visitors, or visitors who have not planned to visit the Preserve but were drawn to stop by the power of the landscape. Special interest visitors are those who plan their trip in advance and come to enjoy a specific experience. They may return regularly to participate in an ongoing activity, see something new, or revisit somewhere special.

Activities

In a similar fashion, activities can be loosely grouped as general or special interest activities. General interest activities are suitable for individuals or families. They may often be enjoyed spontaneously and do not require a great deal of specialized knowledge, skills, or equipment. General interest activities also do not require a great deal of planning, preparation or logistical support by the Trust. These types of activities do not require a strictly controlled environment or exclusive use of an area. Examples of general interest activities include common summer recreation activities such as hiking, camping, and fishing.

Special interest activities generally require some specialized knowledge, skills or equipment. They be enjoyed by individuals and families and are often pursued by groups or organizations. Special interest activities may also require a degree of control or exclusive use of the landscape in order to be successfully undertaken. The execution of these activities or events generally requires a greater degree of planning and logistical support by the Trust. Some examples of special interest activities include:

- Wildlife viewing requires skill and knowledge by the individual or a guide and is easily impacted by other activities, requiring a high level of control over the environment.
- Hunting is easily affected by other activities and can pose a danger, affecting other activities.
- Scientific research can require varying levels of control over the environment and often warrants exclusive use of an area for either the integrity of the research or to protect expensive instrumentation.
- Quality fishing, especially fly fishing.



- Orienteering requires exclusive or semi exclusive use over a landscape area, expert skills using a map and compass, and occurs as a group event with logistical support.

The activities likely to be available on the Preserve do not vary considerably between alternatives. Some alternatives will expand special use activities; others would expand general use activities mostly serving casual visitors. In addition, some alternatives include development that enhances particular activities.

Alternative A – Current Condition

Visitors

The current emphasis is towards the special interest visitor. Casual visitors who are not aware of the Preserve and do not know to visit the website or call the toll free information number are not well served. Each year the Trust has increased the activities available to our casual visitors consistent with existing development; still the lack of spontaneous options for exploring the Preserve remains the greatest complaint received from stakeholders. The controlled access, while frustrating to casual visitors, permits unique outdoor recreation, education and interpretive programs enjoyed by special interest visitors

Activities

Most activities on the Preserve are enjoyed by special interest visitors. These activities require reservations, a controlled environment, or need to be scheduled in space or time to avoid conflicts with other activities. Some of these activities include:

- | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| – Elk hunting | – Marathon | – Photography workshops |
| – Turkey hunting | – Mountain biking events | – Orienteering |
| – Fishing | – Youth and adult Fly fishing clinics | – Primitive tool making |
| – Equestrian | – Professional and educational tours | – Star gazing |
| – Mountain biking | – Artist events | – Hiking/guided hiking |
| – Group tours | | – Van tours |
| – Facility rentals | | |

Activities available to casual or general interest visitors include:

- Hiking
- Short van tours
- Cross country skiing

Alternative B

Visitors

Improved access, facilities, and infrastructure especially the visitor center will expand opportunities for casual visitors to enjoy hiking, picnicking, and tours via a shuttle or their personal vehicle. Ancillary development associated with the



visitor center including ADA compliant trails, overlooks, and interpretive stations offer an array of activities for casual visitors who often arrive with limited time to spend and without the intent or preparation required for an extended outdoor recreation activity. The overnight development proposed under Alternative B (a small campground with equestrian amenities and primitive overnight development) will greatly expand the Preserve's radius for attracting casual visitors.

Activities

This Alternative would expand the range of both general interest and special interest activities. This alternative does not further develop access into the Preserve's interior allowing the Trust the maximum control over access and activities in time and space; a key feature for enhancing special interest activities and increasing self guided and spontaneous access to special interest activities.

Alternative C

Visitors

Alternative C further increases access and opportunities appealing to casual visitors. Through the proposed developed campground which includes RV amenities and cabins, the Preserve is likely to draw general interest outdoor recreation visitors from local, regional and even national markets.

Activities

The Preserve wide development of trails in proximity to a large developed campground will provide hiking opportunities for all levels of ability and experience. With the increased capacity for staging provided through a full service visitor center, a greater variety of regularly scheduled tours and interpretive activities becomes feasible. Increased overnight capacity could warrant the development of night time interpretive activities and tours and including the development of a permanent astronomical observatory.

The distribution of both hiking and motorized access into the Preserve's interior could begin to reduce opportunities for special interest activities that require an undisturbed environment such as hunting, wildlife viewing and spiritual or artistic pursuits.

Alternative C introduces the development of a full service equestrian center, permitting the Preserve to provide horse rentals for trail riding or "working ranch" recreation activities. This type of facility would also create opportunities to develop special interest educational or interpretive programs related to both horses and cattle; appealing to visitors, universities, or industry audiences.

Alternative D

Visitors

This alternative continues the same range of activities for casual and general interest visitors as described in Alternative C. Alternative D further expands to draw the "western" and equestrian interest visitors.



Activities

In addition to the equestrian center, this alternative includes equestrian amenities for campers and proposes full service lodging with conference facilities. This type of development warrants further expansion of specialized tours and interpretive activities. The proposed development would also support corporate or family vacation packages that could include lodging and a variety of activities.

This alternative also includes the development of self service fee stations providing access to hikers from the Santa Fe National Forest. This access would draw day use hikers as well as backpackers visiting other areas of the Jemez Mountains.

This alternative expands tours, guided fishing, and group education and interpretive opportunities. Expanding these activities could further decrease the opportunities of special interest activities requiring a high degree of control over the environment such as orienteering, marathons, hunting, and artistic or spiritual pursuits. Weekday and off season days when visitation is generally lower would offer opportunities to cater to these special interest users. Activities that focus on elk (hunting, wildlife viewing) will be affected as increased Preserve-wide access influences the Preserve's elk population.

Alternative E

Visitors

This alternative does not include the development of a horse friendly campground and would not be as attractive for the equestrian visitor. The expanded access by level 4 roads, the development of lodging, conference facilities, as well as the science and education center would expand interest in the Preserve as a destination location for corporate retreats or packaged vacations that could combine lodging with organized outdoor recreation activities.

Activities

This alternative eliminates developed horse friendly camping and reduces the total miles of non-motorized trail while increasing motorized access and lodging. This level and type of development could support more guided recreational activities such as fishing and full service tours as well as general interest activities.



ACTIVITIES

This table uses a continuum to present the amount of general and special interest activities that would occur under the various scenarios of capacity and development.

ACTIVITY ▼ ALTERNATIVES ►

GENERAL INTEREST: General interest activities can be enjoyed by families and individuals spontaneously or by reservation. They do not require a controlled environment, extensive planning or logistical support by the trust.

 LEAST A B C D E MOST

SPECIAL INTEREST: Special interest activities require a controlled environment or extensive planning and logistical support by the trust. They may be suitable for individuals and families or for groups.

 LEAST E D C A B MOST

DEVELOPMENT EMPHASIS: These are activities that are being specifically developed under one alternative or another

 Primitive Overnight LEAST A C D E B MOST

 Observatory LEAST A B C D E MOST

 Equestrian Activities LEAST A B C E D MOST

 Equestrian Overnight LEAST A C E B D MOST

 Developed Overnight LEAST A B D E C MOST

 Full Service Lodging LEAST A B C D E MOST

DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

Development – What type of facilities and infrastructure may be appropriate for development on the preserve? At what scale and where should development be considered?

Development serves multiple purposes. It provides comfort and amenities; it facilitates the distribution of people and enhances public services and experiences. Perhaps most important, development protects the resources from the impacts of use. The type of development that occurs on the preserve affects and is affected by the capacity and the types of activities people can engage in. The categories of development being considered in public access and use planning include visitor services, trailheads, picnic areas, lodging, science and education facilities, and administrative facilities.

After reading this narrative and viewing the maps, select the *Development* Element Tab and submit your comments and feedback. The glossary provides a legend of the symbols used in the element table

Alternative A – Current Condition

Visitor Services

Most development on the preserve since federal acquisition has been in the form of temporary facilities put into place to support access. Development at the staging areas, the main points of access to the preserve, has consisted of temporary buildings without utilities or plumbing.

Trailheads

Two trailheads were developed adjacent to existing parking off NM 4, the equestrian/mountain biking trailheads originate at Banco Bonito staging area where there is parking and portable toilet facilities. Interior trailheads include signage and a portable toilet at the drop off points. No parking is available to allow personal vehicle access to trail heads. No amenities support visitors waiting for a shuttle pick up.

Picnic Areas

No developed picnic areas are currently located on the Preserve.

Lodging

Two of the existing facilities, the Casa de Baca Lodge and a bunkhouse provide overnight accommodations for groups. With shared kitchen, toilets, and showers, these facilities are not suitable for individual room rentals. Primitive camping is permitted to enhance existing recreational activities or project work. There are no developed campgrounds or primitive overnight accommodations to support camping as a standalone activity.



Science and Education Center

No permanent facilities are currently available to support science and education. Portable shelters are used to support formal events and researchers frequently use the current lodging facilities. Facilities to expand this program are currently being developed at the Jemez Springs administrative site.

Alternative B

Visitor Services

As described under *Access*, this alternative proposes the development of a full service visitor facility in proximity to the Valle Grande. Development would include parking, trails, overlooks, and interpretive facilities including kiosks and an amphitheater. This facility would provide a conduit onto the landscape, with the goal of impacting the hearts and minds of every visitor. This facility would offer opportunities to expand this introduction to any level of deeper knowledge and appreciation as desired by the visitor. Full services, restrooms and food service, allow casual visitors, who may not have prepared for an extended outdoor activity to enjoy an interpretive hike or vista and leisure to explore displays and media experiences. A permanent observatory would be established for night sky viewing.

The visitor center would include facilities for orienting groups or classes prior to heading onto the preserve for an interpretive tour or educational activity. The visitor center would replace the Valle Grande staging area. The Banco Bonito staging area would be enhanced to include restrooms and other amenities.

Trailheads

Under this alternative the Trust would develop four trailheads with parking or developed shuttle stops. Two trailheads would be developed to include picnic areas and restrooms based on the expected levels and type of use.

Picnic Areas

Eight picnic areas would be developed at trailheads and scenic overlooks. These areas could include sheltered group tables and restrooms depending on the level and type of use.

Lodging

Under this alternative the Trust would develop approximately 15 sites for primitive overnight use. Primitive overnight development could include a mixture of facilities including primitive cabins, yurts, sheltered platforms or permanent tents. Under this alternative a small (10-20 unit) developed campground would be developed in the southwest corner of the Preserve perhaps around El Cajete. This campground would include RV parking and amenities for horse camping (corrals, hitching posts).

Science and Education Center

Science and education could utilize the developed campground, temporary shelters or the current lodging facilities and be supported off site through the Jemez Springs administrative facilities.



Administrative Facilities

The full service visitor center would include administrative space. The development of permanent visitor facilities and increased year-round capacity on the preserve would warrant the development of permanent staff housing to enhance visitor safety, security, and services. Under this alternative, a small (10 room) dormitory for seasonal employees as well as six individual housing units for permanent staff would be developed.

Alternative C

Visitor Services

Alternative C includes the construction of the full service visitor center as described under Alternative B. In addition, would develop a self pay fee station on the east boundary of the preserve. Other major development includes an equestrian center that would provide horse rentals and facilities for ranch related recreation activities as well as clinics or demonstrations. This alternative also includes the development of a permanent observatory as described under Alternative B.

Trailheads

Under this alternative the Trust would develop four trailheads with parking or shuttle stops, picnic areas, and restrooms located at various trailheads. An additional four trailheads with parking or shuttle stops would be developed. The level of development at any trailhead would be based on the level and type of use. This alternative would also include the development of trailheads with horse amenities in proximity to the equestrian center.

Picnic Areas

Picnic areas including parking or shuttle stops would be developed in association with trailheads or scenic areas as described under Alternative B. This alternative would include two additional fully developed picnic areas based on the level and type of use.

Lodging

Under this alternative the development of a large (+/- 100 units) full service camping facility is proposed. This facility, located in the southwest corner of the preserve, would emphasize amenities for RV camping and developed cabins, as well as tent sites. The number of primitive overnight campsites would be reduced to ten under this alternative as capacity for general interest day use and motorized access increases in the interior.

Under this alternative the development of a small (20-30 rooms) full service luxury lodge on the periphery of the Valle Grande is being proposed.

Science and Education Center

Science and Education would be supported as described under Alternative B

Administrative Facility

Administrative development is proposed at the same scale as described under Alternative B.



Alternative D

Visitor Services

Under this alternative, a full service visitor center, a full service equestrian center as described under Alternative C would be developed. This alternative also proposes to develop a conference center and would add an additional self service pay station, an additional observatory, and an additional staging area. The large (100+/-) unit campground proposed under Alternative C would be expanded to provide equestrian amenities.

Trailheads

Under this alternative the Trust would develop four trailheads with parking or shuttle stops, four fully developed trailheads with restrooms and picnic areas, and four fully developed trailheads with equestrian amenities.

Picnic Areas

Picnic areas would be developed as described under Alternative C.

Lodging

As previously mentioned under *Visitor Services* this alternative expands the large developed campground to include equestrian amenities. Approximately ten sites would be developed for primitive overnight use. In addition to the luxury lodge proposed under Alternative C, a larger (+/- 50) moderately priced lodge with a modest conference facility would be constructed on the periphery of the preserve in proximity to either the Valle Grande or Banco Bonito entrances.

Science and Education Center

Under this alternative a full service science and education center and campus would be developed at the southwest corner of the Preserve, south of the Banco Bonito entrance.

Administrative Facilities

The complexity of development under this alternative would warrant on site development of administrative offices as well as a facility to support maintenance and operations. Dormitory rooms to provide seasonal accommodations for staff would be expanded from 10 rooms to 50 rooms under this alternative.

Alternative E

Visitor Services

A full service visitor center, a full service equestrian center, a conference center, self service fee stations, observatories, and visitor staging areas would provide a broad array of access and services as described under Alternative D. This alternative would not include the services for equestrian camping provided under Alternative D.

Trailheads

Under this alternative the Trust would develop four trailheads with parking or shuttle stops, six trailheads that also include picnic areas and restrooms, and two that provide equestrian amenities.



Picnic Areas

Four picnic areas with parking or shuttle stops and eight with group shelters and restrooms and would be developed as described under alternative D

Lodging

Alternative E would include the full service lodging and developed campground as described under Alternative D, but would eliminate the equestrian campground. Approximately ten sites would be developed for primitive overnight use.

Science and Education Center

Under this alternative a full service science and education center and campus would be developed at the southwest corner of the Preserve, south of the Banco Bonito entrance.

Administrative Facilities

The complexity of development under this alternative would warrant on site development of administrative offices as well as a facility to support maintenance and operations. Dormitory rooms to provide seasonal accommodations for staff would be expanded from 10 rooms to 50 rooms under this alternative.



DEVELOPMENT

FEATURE ▼	ALTERNATIVE ►	A	B	C	D	E
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VISITOR SERVICES: Development specific to access or activities. Numbers indicate each feature.

Self Serve Pay Stations	NA	NA	1	2	2
Observatory	NA	1	1	2	2
Staging Area	2	1	1	2	2
Visitor Center	NA	1	1	1	1
Conference Center	NA	NA	NA	1	1
Equestrian Center	NA	NA	1	1	1

TRAILHEADS: Trailheads provide a point of access, interpretive and safety information, and serve to protect resources at the entrance to a trail. Development may vary depending on level and type of use. Numbers indicate each feature.

Trailhead with parking	2	4	4	4	4
Trailhead with parking, restrooms, and interpretive	NA	2	4	4	6
Trailhead with parking and interpretive	1	NA	2	4	2

PICNIC AREAS: Development at picnic areas includes parking or shuttle stops and tables. Sheltered tables and restrooms may be included depending on the level and type of use. Numbers indicate each feature.

Picnic area with parking	NA	4	4	4	4
Picnic area with parking and restrooms	NA	4	8	8	8

LODGING: The development of overnight lodging varies from primitive overnight structures, to developed campgrounds including cabins and units for RVs or tents, to full service lodging. Numbers indicate sites, units, or rooms.

Primitive Overnight (sites)	NA	15	10	10	10
Developed Overnight (units)	NA	10	100	100	100
Equestrian Overnight (units)	NA	10	NA	100	NA
Group Lodging (rooms)	30	30	30	30	30
Lodging (rooms)	NA	NA	NA	50	50
Luxury Lodging (rooms)	NA	NA	20	20	20

SCIENCE CENTER: Facilities would be developed to host formal science and education programs on the Preserve. Numbers indicate each feature.

Science and Education Center	Off-site	Off-site	Off-site	1	1
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ADMINISTRATIVE FACILITIES: Increased administrative development would be commensurate with increased visitation and development of visitor facilities. Numbers indicate each feature.

Operations and Maintenance Site	Off-site	0	0	1	1
Administrative Site	Off-site	0	0	1	1
Dormitory Rooms	Off-site	10	10	50	50
Individual Housing Units	NA	6	6	6	6

FINANCING

Introduction

Financing – What are the capital investments required for development? What are the annual operating costs? What is the potential for recovering annual operating costs through revenues generated by public access and use?

One of the goals put forward in the Valles Caldera Preservation Act is financial self sufficiency. Financial self sufficiency is described in the simplest form – income meets or exceeds operating costs, including all overhead and indirect expenses. July 2015 is the benchmark date for attaining financial self sufficiency. As the natural resources of the Preserve are inventoried and evaluated, it becomes increasingly more apparent that the past extractive use of natural resources and the past neglect of facilities and infrastructure present a debt of deferred maintenance and management needs not fully understood when the Preserve was acquired.

One potential source of revenue stems from the value of the Preserve for recreation, education, science and commercial use based on its appeal to the hearts and minds of people. The most tangible of these assets is in the amount of money people will pay to access the Preserve and participate in activities and events.

This section of the website explores several factors relating to financing the management of the VCNP:

- The capital investment over a ten year period to develop the facilities and infrastructure required to attain a level of use and support various types of activities
- The potential annual revenue from access and use of the Preserve
- Become financially self sustaining based on an annual operating budget and anticipated revenues

The revenue projections include some level of donation but do not reflect a complete analysis of the Preserve's ability to generate funding as a nonprofit.

After reviewing this narrative, open the *Financing* Element Tab and provide us with your comments and feedback.

Alternative A – Current Condition

Under this alternative approximately \$2,000,000 in capital investment would be required over a ten year period to address current deferred maintenance needs. The Trust's current annual operating budget is about \$4.2 million, with about \$.7 million being recovered through current revenues (fees and donations). If the Trust continued at the same general operating level, estimating an annual budget of \$4 – \$4.5 million and a recovery rate of 15-20 percent, the Trust would continue to require \$3 - \$3.5 million annually from Congress or other funding source to continue to provide the current level of access and use of the Preserve.

Alternative B

Implementation of Alternative B would require about \$43 million in capital investments for the construction of the visitor center, ancillary development of facilities and infrastructure, as well as addressing current deferred maintenance. The annual operating budget under this alternative is expected to be about \$6.6 million. The Trust could expect to



recover over 60 percent of its annual needs with yearly revenues expected to reach about \$4 million. An estimated \$2.6 million would need to be appropriated from Congress or other sources.

Alternative C

The capital investment required over ten years to implement Alternative C is estimated at \$88 million. This alternative would require an annual operating budget of nearly \$10 million and would be expected to recover about \$7 million or 80 percent of its annual expenditures through fees and donations. Nearly \$3 million or 20 percent of the annual operating costs would be to be appropriated from Congress or another source

Alternative D

The capital investment required over ten years to implement Alternative D is estimated at \$142 million. This alternative would require an annual operating budget of nearly \$12 million but would be expected to recover about 99 percent of those costs through revenues, requiring less than one percent of its needs to be subsidized.

Alternative E

Alternative E would require an investment of \$143 million in capital investments over ten years and have an annual operating budget of \$12 million. This alternative is expected to generate revenues that exceed annual operating costs by about \$ 0.1 million.



FINANCING

Capital Investment and Financial Self Sufficiency

	A	B	C	D	E
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CAPITAL INVESTMENT: This reflects the investment required in capital improvements over ten years

\$ = \$5,000,000	< \$	\$\$\$\$\$ \$\$\$\$\$	\$\$\$\$\$ \$\$\$\$\$ \$\$\$\$\$ \$\$	\$\$\$\$\$ \$\$\$\$\$ \$\$\$\$\$ \$\$\$\$\$ \$\$\$\$\$ \$\$\$	\$\$\$\$\$ \$\$\$\$\$ \$\$\$\$\$ \$\$\$\$\$ \$\$\$\$\$ \$\$\$\$\$
	\$2 million	\$43 million	\$88 million	\$142 million	\$143 million

TOTAL ANNUAL OPERATING EXPENSES: Annual budget

Annual Budget	\$4.3 million	\$6.6 million	\$9.9 million	\$11.9 million	\$12.1 million
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FINANCIAL SELF SUFFICIENCY: The percent of annual operating expenses that can be recovered through revenues generated through public access and use

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % Recovered % Subsidized 					
\$ Recovered	\$.7 million	\$4.0 million	\$7.0 million	\$11.8 million	\$12.1 million
\$ Subsidized	\$3.6 million	\$2.6 million	\$2.9 million	\$.1 million	\$0

VALUES

Introduction

“What do you value about the Valles Caldera National Preserve? What do you want to preserve for your children and grandchildren?” These were two of the questions put to participants in a public workshop series held in 2007. In response participants identified 225 statements of value (after eliminating exact duplicates). These statements could be reasonably grouped into six categories: 1) Aesthetics 2) Experience 3) Natural Resources 4) Cultural/historical Resources 5) Activities 6) Preservation

The Valles Caldera Preservation Act directs the Trust to protect and preserve the “...scientific, scenic, geologic, watershed, fish, wildlife, historic, cultural, and recreational values of the Preserve;”

In 2001, the Valles Caldera Board of Trustees adopted ten management principles to ensure that key values were incorporated into all management actions. These principles are as follows:

- 1) We will administer the Preserve with the long term in mind, directing our efforts toward the benefit of future generations.
- 2) Recognizing that the Preserve possesses a rich sense of place and qualities not to be found anywhere else, we commit ourselves to the protection of its ecological, cultural, and aesthetic integrity.
- 3) We will strive to achieve a high level of integrity in our stewardship of the lands, programs and other assets in our care. This includes adopting an ethic of financial thrift and discipline and exercising good business sense.
- 4) We will exercise restraint in the implementation of all programs, basing them on sound science and adjusting them consistent with the principles of adaptive management.
- 5) Recognizing the unique heritage of northern New Mexico’s traditional cultures, we will be a good neighbor to surrounding communities, striving to avoid negative impacts from Preserve activities and to generate positive impacts.
- 6) Recognizing the religious significance of the Preserve to Native Americans, the Trust bears a special responsibility to accommodate the religious practices of nearby tribes and pueblos, and to protect sites of special significance.
- 7) Recognizing the importance of clear and open communication, we commit ourselves to maintaining a productive dialogue with those who would advance the purposes of the Preserve and, where appropriate, to developing partnerships with them.
- 8) Recognizing that the Preserve is part of a larger ecological whole, we will cooperate with adjacent landowners and managers to achieve a healthy regional ecosystem.
- 9) Recognizing the great potential of the Preserve for learning and inspiration, we will strive to integrate opportunities for research, reflection and education in the programs of the Preserve.
- 10) In providing opportunities to the public, we will emphasize quality of experience over quantity of experiences. In doing so, while we reserve the right to limit participation or to maximize revenue in certain instances, we commit ourselves to providing fair and affordable access for all permitted activities.



While development can serve to protect and preserve resources from potential impacts of public use, at some point public use and the associated level of development begin to impact the very values which draw visitors to the Preserve. Balancing the protection and preservation of the Preserve's natural and cultural resources and values with the public's desire to enjoy, learn about and study those resources and values is a key issue in public use and access planning.

After reviewing the maps and narratives we hope you will open the values element Tab and tell us what you value most about the Preserve and how you believe development for public use and access will affect what you value.



VALUES

VALUES ▼ ALTERNATIVE ► A B C D E

We have ranked each alternative in order based on how well each value is protected relative to the other alternatives tell us what YOU think!

Aesthetics	4	5	3	1	2
Experience	5	4	3	2	1
Natural Resources	4	5	3	1	2
Cultural and Historic Resources	4	5	3	1	2
Public Access and Use Activities	These values are addressed in detail under "Activities"				
Preservation	4	5	3	1	2

Overview

Introduction

The trust has developed a range of conceptual alternatives for access and use of the preserve for recreation, education, scientific, and commercial activities on the Valles Caldera National Preserve (VCNP). These alternatives each address five individual elements including *Access, Capacity, Activities, Development, and Financing*. These alternatives are called “conceptual” because they describe these elements in a general way. Based on the input we receive during the scoping process we will refine each element of these conceptual alternatives for detailed analysis. This refinement process would hopefully narrow the range of alternatives from five to perhaps only two or three. It could result in mixing and matching elements from the current range of alternatives or developing a completely new alternative.

This overview summarizes each alternative. Overviews providing greater detail for each element are also provided.

Alternative A – Current Condition

Currently the trust manages public access and use of the preserve under an “interim program”. The purpose of the interim program was to provide immediate access to the public as mandated by the Valles Caldera Preservation Act and to gather information for development of a comprehensive plan for access and use. The interim program uses existing facilities and temporary facilities established in areas of the preserve previously disturbed and therefore not significantly affected by public use.

Permanent improvements have included the reconstruction of the main point of entry onto the preserve and deferred maintenance on a portion of the interior road system. The main point of entry onto the preserve, now known as the *Valle Grande Entrance*, is off NM 4 (New Mexico State Highway 4) at mile marker 39. The entrance was reconstructed to meet state highway transportation standards for access and egress based on the current volume of traffic. Deferred maintenance activities have been limited to bringing the existing main arterial roads to a maintenance level 3. This is the most basic level for providing safe access for a prudent driver operating a sedan, van or other low clearance vehicle. This maintenance level is a single-lane with turn-outs and gravel surface. Deferred maintenance activities included the reconstruction of lead outs and other drainage features including culverts which had not been properly constructed or had quit functioning due to lack of maintenance. Modern techniques such as the installation of multi level culverts and inclusion of permeable fill were used to mitigate current disruptions to the movement of water across the valles.

The lack of development has limited access to “casual” visitors or those who spontaneously stop by the preserve with no particular activity or destination in mind. Instead the trust has developed a niche offering of “special interest” activities not provided elsewhere in the region or even typically offered on public land. These special interest activities require some degree of advance planning and logistical support by the trust. There is also a greater level of control over the environment necessary to ensure a high quality experience. For example, hunters must win access through a lottery drawing and attend a mandatory orientation session prior to the hunt and have semi exclusive access to a designated hunting area. In addition, other activities that may interfere with hunting are limited in time or place to avoid conflicts. This is quite different from the surrounding Santa Fe National Forest where a hunter draws a license of a

large area and has open access anywhere in the area including some private land parcels. This open access is shared by hundreds of others. The exclusive hunting experience enjoyed on the preserve for as low as a \$25.00 lottery ticket compares to the expensive, exclusive hunting offered on private lands.

Similarly running, mountain biking, or orienteering events; artistic or spiritual pursuits, wildlife viewing, bird watching, outdoor clinics, scientific research and environmental education all benefit through the controlled access. The benefits to special use activities are often over shadowed by the lack of access to casual visitors who desire to spontaneously participate in general recreation activities, especially hiking. In fact, a special interest group, Caldera Action, originally dedicated to preserving ecological integrity and expanding public access has now cited turning management of the preserve over to the National Park Service in order to increase casual access for general interest activities, especially hiking, as their primary mission.

The current capacity of about 25,000 visitors annually would remain the same. This number represents less than 5 percent of the potential market for casual visitors. Capital investment requirements would be limited to addressing deferred maintenance needs and annual operating costs would remain about 4.3 million with an expected recovery of 15-20 percent or \$.6 - .9 million annually.

Alternative B

Under Alternative B a full service visitor facility in proximity to the Valle Grande would be developed. This visitor center would be supported by ancillary facilities and infrastructure including ADA compliant access to overlooks, interpretive trails, and group areas suitable for hosting interpretive programs. The VGSA would be eliminated under this alternative. BBSA would be retained and upgraded to a permanent facility with improved amenities. While access could still be arranged remotely, the development of a visitor center would greatly increase spontaneous access by for casual visitors.

Under this alternative the trail system would be expanded to an interconnected series of trails designed to support backpacking. An estimated 75-100 miles of trails would access most regions of the preserve including the caldera rim within the preserve's boundary. Where possible, level 1 roads would continue to serve as trails with new construction occurring only as necessary.

Alternative B would support an annual capacity of about 100,000 visitor days or about 16 percent of the potential market of casual visitors. Daily visitation on a peak summer weekend day would be about 650 visitors.

This alternative also supports overnight development such as a small (+/- 20 unit) campground and the development of primitive overnight camping to enhance recreational use on the preserve. Development of visitor facilities and expanded trails would greatly expand access for casual and general interest visitors. However, motorized access to the preserve remains limited and annual operating costs are still expected to be relatively low. Back country access is expanded for longer hikes including overnight hiking. However no additional access is created outside NM 4, retaining the ability to control access in time and space, preserving the ability to continue providing special interest activities such as hunting and wildlife viewing and hosting special events.

Under this alternative no dedicated access for snowmobiles or ATV's would be established. This type of motorized access could be provided as part of a special interest event.

This alternative would require a capital investment of \$44 million and annual operating costs would run an estimated \$6.6 million, with an expected recovery of 61 percent or \$4 million.

Alternative C

Alternative C includes the construction of the visitor center as described under Alternative B. The road maintenance level would be improved on about 20-40 miles of interior road. The trail system would be expanded to provide shorter routes for increased day hikes, warranting the development of self serve pay stations to access the preserve from its shared boundary with the Santa Fe National Forest or Bandelier National Monument.

The interconnected trail system proposed under Alternative B would be enhanced by additional trails creating shorter loops for increased day hiking. The total trail system would be expanded about 100 - 150 miles. Trails would continue to be on level 1 roads where possible with new construction as necessary. Additional access to the preserve for hiking may be provided through self pay fee stations located on the preserve's boundaries with the Santa Fe National Forest. Under this alternative no dedicated access for snowmobiles or ATV's would be established. This type of motorized access could be provided as part of a special interest event.

Annual capacity under this alternative is estimated at 150,000 visitor days or 25 percent of the potential casual visitor market. The average capacity on any summer weekend is estimated at nearly 1000 visitors.

Development under Alternative C includes the development of a large (+/- 100) unit campground with cabins and RV hook-ups. A small (+/- 20 rooms) luxury lodge is also proposed under this alternative along with a full service equestrian center.

The increase in the numbers and distribution of visitors would favor expanding general interest activities and providing some of the special interest activities that do not require exclusive access to large areas, such as fishing and other outdoor skill activities, on a regular or even daily basis. Special interest activities that require exclusive or controlled access such as hunting, wildlife viewing, or scientific research, may occur somewhat less or be limited in time or place under this alternative.

Equestrian activities would be a focus for development under this alternative. The equestrian center would provide for seasonal horse rentals offering visitors the opportunity to trail ride or participate in working ranch activities.

About \$88 million capital investments would be required in capital investment to implement Alternative C. Annual operating costs are estimated at just under \$10 million, with annual revenues estimated at \$7 million, reflecting an estimated cost recovery of 79 percent.

Alternative D

Access under Alternative D would be similar as under Alternative C. This alternative includes the greatest expansion of the preserves trail system to 150-200 miles in total. Capacity would be estimated at 175,000 visitors annually with a peak daily (weekend summer) visitation averaging nearly 1200 visitors. This reflects a capture of about 29 percent of the potential market of casual visitors.

This alternative continues to expand general interest and equestrian related activities while further limiting special interest activities requiring control over the environment such as hunting and wildlife viewing. The development of

more exterior points of access would further distribute general access activities favoring these types of activities over special interest activities

This increase in capacity is based on the development of mid-level lodging with meeting or conference facilities and the addition of developed camping with horse amenities. The increase in the trail system would warrant additional self service fee access and increasing amenities throughout the preserve such as parking or shuttle stops, picnic areas, trailheads, and of course restrooms.

Alternative D would require a \$143 million investment in capital improvements over 10 years and incur \$11.9 million in annual operating costs. Annual revenues would be estimated at \$11.8 million; recovering 99 percent of annual operating costs.

Alternative E

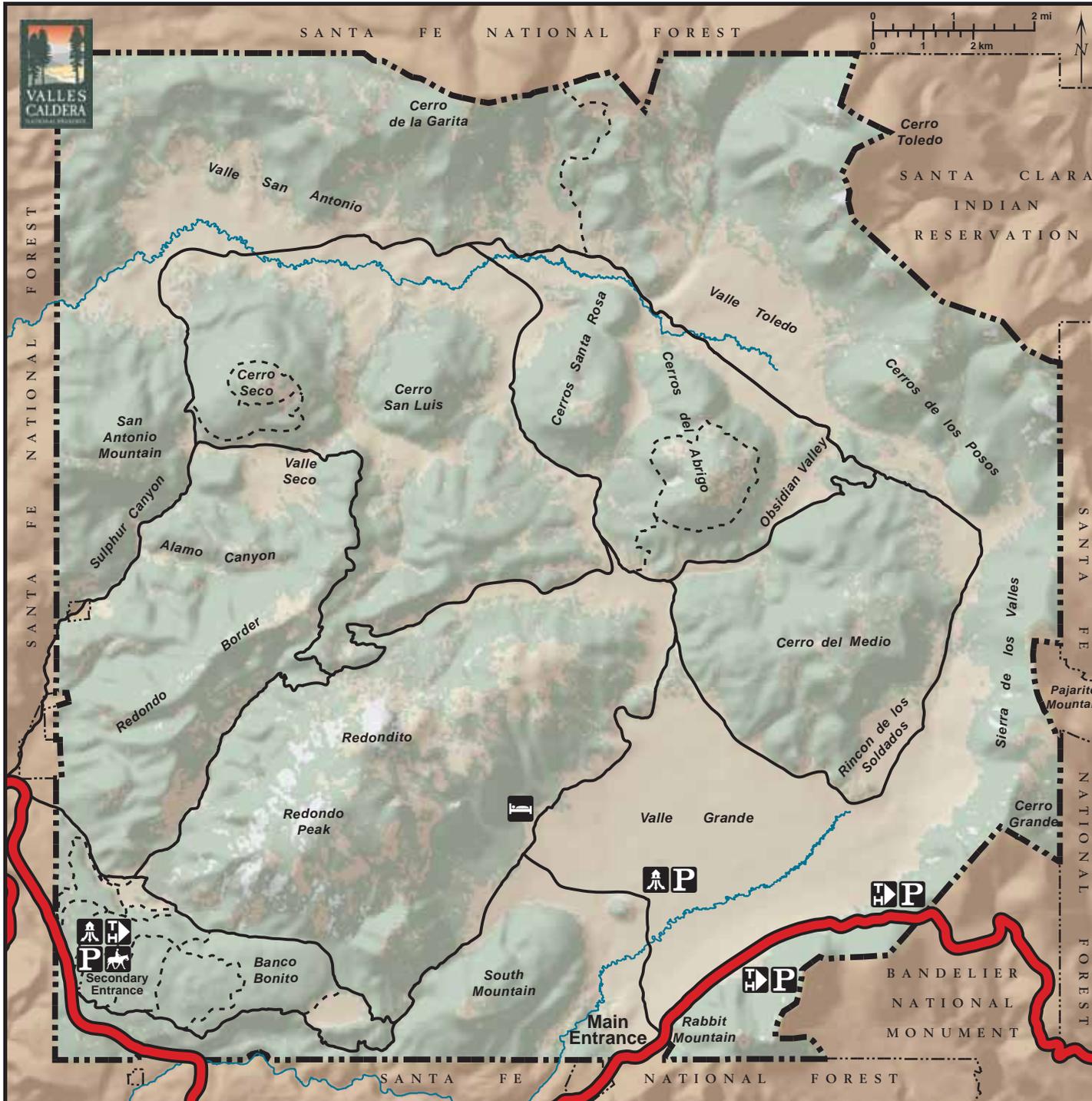
Access under Alternative E would include the elements as described in Alternatives C and D. Permitted access via a level 4 road would be extended with the development of 40-60 miles of level 4 road accesses. Access specifically for science and education programs would be developed in the southwest corner, south of NM4 (across from BBSA).

Capacity under Alternative E is estimated at 200,000 visitors annually, capturing one third of the potential market for causal visitors. A peak summer weekend day could see average daily visitation more than 1300 visitors.

This alternative would not include a developed equestrian campground, but would retain the equestrian center. The development of formal science and education programs would be emphasized under this alternative with the development of an education and science center. However, long term field research projects could be limited in time or place due to the expansion and distribution of access throughout the preserve.

Overall the alternative optimizes general use activities through the development of lodging and increasing access into the preserve's interior.

This alternative would require capital investments of \$143 million over 10 years, have an expected annual operating cost of 12.1 million, and would expect to recover 100 percent of those annual costs.



PAUP Scoping Alternative A

Access

-  Scenic Byway - Highway 4
-  Level 3 Road (50-100 miles)
-  Non-motorized Trails (25-50 miles)

Development

-  Trailhead
-  Parking
-  Horse Trail
-  Lodging
-  Staging Area



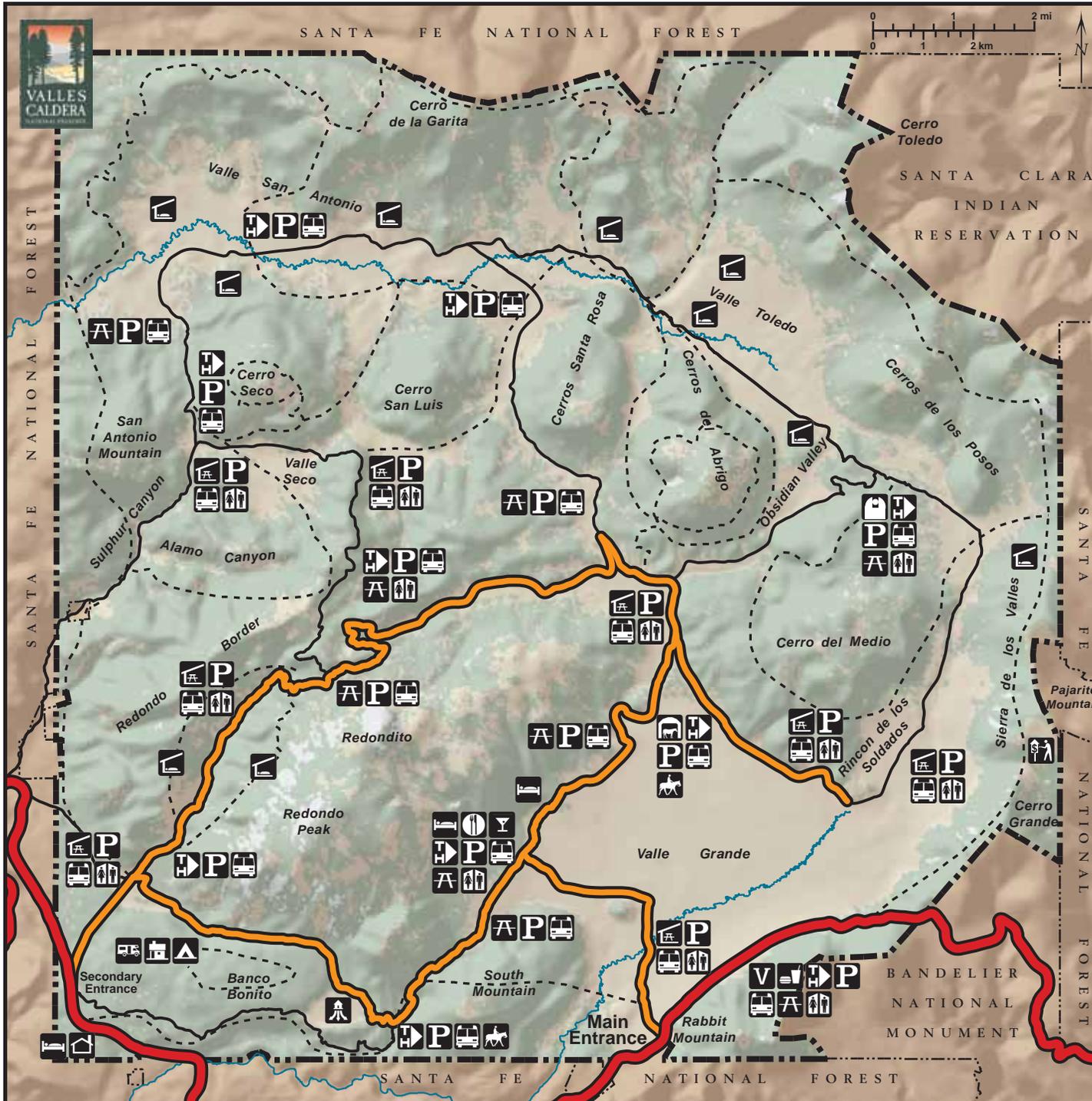
PAUP Scoping Alternative B

Access

-  Scenic Byway - Highway 4
-  Level 4 Road (10-15 miles)
-  Level 3 Road (60-80 miles)
-  Non-motorized Trails (75-100 miles)

Development

-  Trailhead
-  Parking
-  Shuttle Stop
-  Picnic Area
-  Restrooms
-  Horse Trail
-  Picnic Shelter
-  Primitive Overnight Site
-  RV Park
-  Developed Campground
-  Equestrian Overnight
-  Lodging/Dormitory
-  Observatory
-  Staging Area
-  Visitor Center
-  Snack Bar
-  Staff Housing



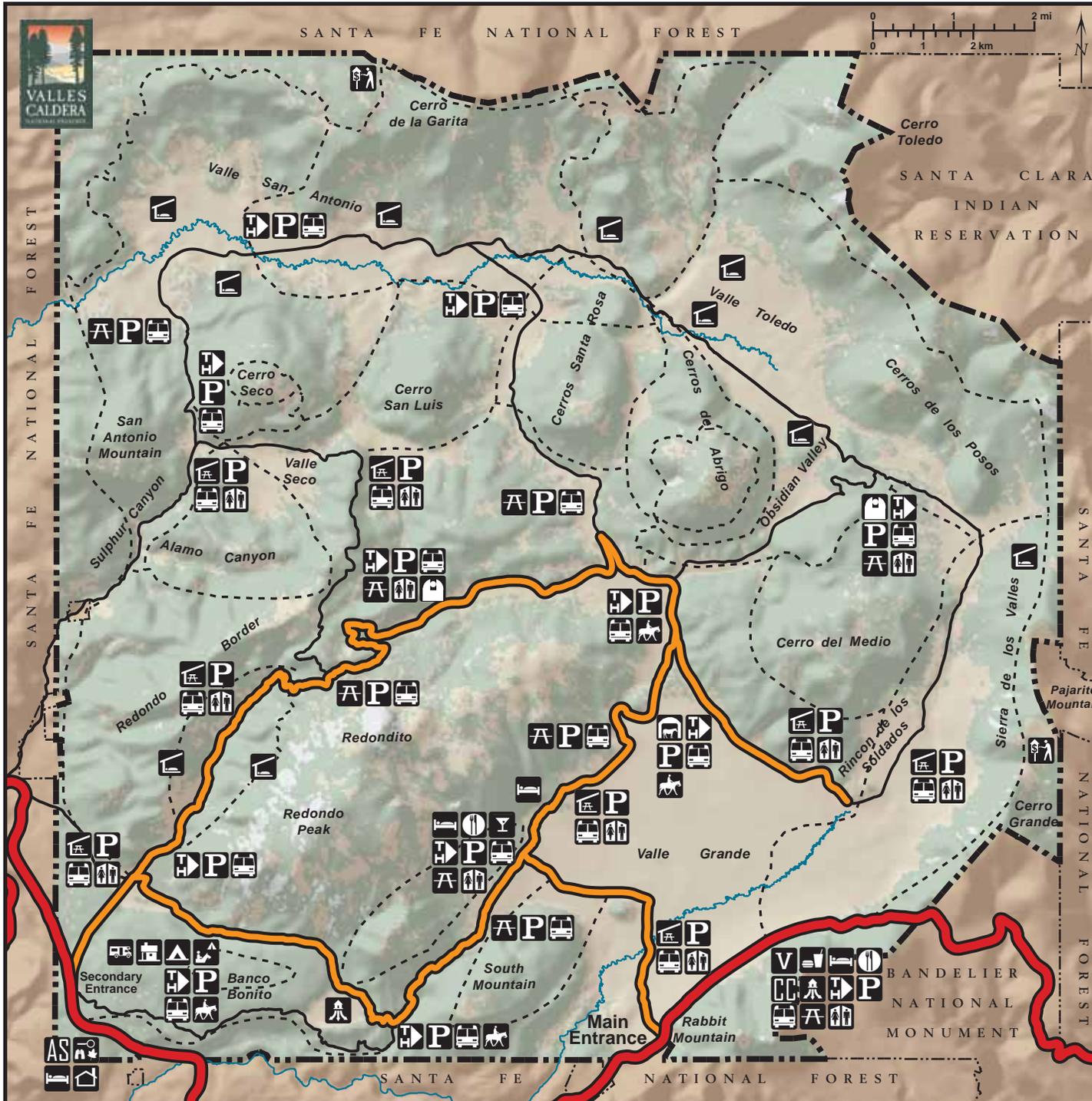
PAUP Scoping Alternative C

Access

-  Scenic Byway - Highway 4
-  Level 4 Road (20-40 miles)
-  Level 3 Road (40-60 miles)
-  Non-motorized Trails (100-150 miles)

Development

-  Trailhead
-  Parking
-  Shuttle Stop
-  Picnic Area
-  Restrooms
-  Horse Trail
-  Picnic Shelter
-  Primitive Overnight Site
-  Cabin Rental
-  RV Park
-  Developed Campground
-  Lodging/Dormitory
-  Food Service
-  Lounge
-  Observatory
-  Staging Area
-  Visitor Center
-  Snack Bar
-  Self Service Pay Station
-  Equestrian Center
-  Staff Housing



PAUP Scoping Alternative D

Access

-  Scenic Byway - Highway 4
-  Level 4 Road (20-40 miles)
-  Level 3 Road (40-60 miles)
-  Non-motorized Trails (150-200 miles)

Development

-  Trailhead
-  Parking
-  Shuttle Stop
-  Picnic Area
-  Restrooms
-  Horse Trail
-  Picnic Shelter
-  Primitive Overnight Site
-  Cabin Rental
-  RV Park
-  Developed Campground
-  Equestrian Overnight
-  Lodging/Dormitory
-  Food Service
-  Lounge
-  Observatory
-  Staging Area
-  Visitor Center
-  Snack Bar
-  Self Service Pay Station
-  Conference Center
-  Equestrian Center
-  Science and Education Center
-  Administrative Site
-  Staff Housing

