



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **Valles Caldera Trust Has New Executive Director**

The Valles Caldera Trust is pleased to announce that it has hired Dr. Jeffrey Cross as its new Executive Director.

Dr. Cross has 15 years' experience leading federal and regional resource management and science organizations. Prior to joining VCT, Cross was chief of resource management at Grand Canyon National Park and Director of the Grand Canyon Science Center. He was responsible for developing and implementing interdisciplinary resource management, monitoring, and research programs to protect the natural and cultural resources.

Among other accomplishments at Grand Canyon, Dr. Cross oversaw development of the Colorado River Management Plan, a recreational use plan for the more than 22,000 people who boat through Grand Canyon each year, and the largest and most controversial plan the park completed in the past decade. He also served on the Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Working Group and the Grand Canyon Overflights Working Group, stakeholder processes focused on resource management of complex systems.

The Science Center at the Grand Canyon manages natural and cultural resources for the 1.2 million-acre park, backcountry recreation planning, and environmental compliance. It has a staff of 60-85 and a budget of about \$3.5 million.

In accepting the position with the Trust, Cross said, "I'm very excited about joining the Valles Caldera Trust and look forward to the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead. The preserve is a special place that is rich in natural and cultural resources. I'm thrilled to be a part of this unique opportunity in public land management."

Valles Caldera Board Chairperson Tracy Hephner said, "We are pleased to have Dr. Cross join us. His strong resource management and science background will complement our goal of science-based adaptive management, and his experience in recreation and in managing large and complex organizations will help the Trust move toward its goals of public access and financial sustainability."

Cross earned a bachelor's degree in zoology from the University of Rhode Island, a master's degree in zoology from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, and a doctorate in fisheries from the University of Washington. He spent 10 years as a scientist doing research on fish biology and ecology before moving into resource management.

He has received several awards, including the Department of Commerce bronze medal for his work on a national fisheries habitat team, and the George Wright Society communication award.

The Valles Caldera Trust oversees the Valles Caldera National Preserve, formerly the privately owned “Baca Ranch.” The 89,000-acre property is located in the Jemez Mountains in northern New Mexico. It was purchased by the federal government in 2000 under the Valles Caldera Preservation Act. The property is known for its huge meadows, abundant wildlife, meandering streams, and remarkable scenery. The mission of the Valles Caldera Trust is to create a successful model of public land management that protects and preserves the Valles Caldera National Preserve’s unique values. Toward that end, the Trust will operate the Preserve as a working ranch; strive to become financially self-sustaining; meet varied needs of visitors; strive to utilize and steward the multiple resources of the preserve; and work collaboratively with our neighbors.

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