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March 12, 2007

## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **Valles Caldera Trust Publishes Report to Congress**

(Jemez Springs, NM) – The Valles Caldera Trust announces the publication of its annual Report to Congress for Fiscal Year 2006. The report includes detailed information on the Trust's operations, activities and accomplishments for the prior year. It also discusses the status of the Preserve's natural and cultural resources. The Trust's fiscal year began on October 1, 2005 and ended on September 30, 2006.

Highlights from the report, which is available on the Trust's website ([www.vallescaldera.gov](http://www.vallescaldera.gov)), include:

- ❖ Visitation and revenues were up in each of the past three years – from 7,500 visitors and \$517,461 in revenues in fiscal year 2004, to 9,938 visitors and \$794,844 in revenues in fiscal year 2006.
- ❖ Elk hunting was the highest revenue-generating activity earning over \$317,000 for the Trust. The Preserve hosted 249 hunters over 11 weekends; 59 bulls taken out of 73 permits for a success rate of 81%.
- ❖ Fishing was the second highest revenue-generating activity earning over \$60,000 for the Trust. The Preserve hosted 1,686 fishermen and offered youth and adult fly-fishing clinics.
- ❖ The Trust assessed the value and condition of 38 buildings on the Preserve. The total value of the buildings exceeds \$5 million and deferred maintenance exceeds \$1 million.
- ❖ More than \$1.2 million in grant funding was committed to the Trust for inventory, monitoring and research. The Trust incorporates information from these projects in its resource management decision-making process.
- ❖ The Trust conducted its first prescribed fire in the Valle Toledo in November 2005. The fire covered 1,600 acres of grassland and 150 acres of Ponderosa pine forest. Grass re-growth was rapid after the fire and the nutritional value of re-growing grasses was higher than unburned grasses.

- ❖ A comprehensive assessment of Preserve watersheds based on biotic and abiotic factors found that 9% are in high condition, 91% are in medium condition and 0% are in low condition. Watershed conditions have improved since the federal government purchased the property in 2000.

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. The ranch 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 Trust is to create a successful model of public land management that protects and preserves the unique values of the Valles Caldera National Preserve. Toward that end, the Trust will operate the Preserve as a working ranch; strive to become financially self-sustaining; meet the varied needs of visitors; strive to use and steward the multiple resources of the Preserve; and work collaboratively with our neighbors.

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