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For More Information:
Jeffrey Cross, Executive Director
Valles Caldera Trust
505-661-3333

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NEWS RELEASE

Valles Caldera Trust Publishes Report to Congress

(Jemez Springs, NM) – The Valles Caldera Trust announces the publication of its *Report to Congress for Fiscal Year 2007* (October 1, 2006 through September 30, 2007). The annual report includes information on the Trust's operations, programs, activities and accomplishments. It also discusses the status of the Preserve's natural and cultural resources and goals for 2008.

The following are highlights from the report, which is available on the Trust's website (www.vallescaldera.gov):

- Over 12,000 people visited the Preserve in fiscal year 2007 (FY 2007), which was up 25% over FY 2006. The increase in visitation was largely due to increases in winter visitors and new programs for casual visitors.
- Total revenues collected in FY 2007 (\$749,957) were down 6% compared to FY 2006, but revenues from public recreation programs (\$554,289) were up 10% compared to FY 2006.
- Elk hunting was the highest revenue-generating activity earning over \$330,000. The Preserve hosted 268 hunters over 12 weekends; 76 hunters harvested 54 mature bulls for a 71% success rate.
- Fishing was the second highest revenue-generating activity earning over \$67,000. The Preserve hosted over 1,800 fishermen and offered youth and adult fly-fishing clinics.
- The Trust offered wild turkey hunts for the first time in 2007 with 16 hunters participating; revenues exceeded \$20,000.
- The Trust held four public meetings to gather information about access and use of the Preserve for recreation, education and other personal and cultural activities. Meeting participants valued the vastness, solitude, quiet and beauty, and made suggestions on activities they want the Trust to offer.

- Range conditions on the Preserve are good, with plant cover exceeding 98% in the valles. The Trust awarded a contract for the grazing program through a competitive process and 530 yearlings grazed on the Preserve.
- More than \$1.8 million in grant funding was committed to inventory, monitoring and research studies on the Preserve. The Trust uses this information in its decision-making processes.
- The Trust goals for FY 2008 include completing a business plan, completing an independent financial audit, completing an environmental assessment for forage management and finalizing the programmatic agreement between the Trust and the New Mexico State Historic Preservation Office.

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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