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NEWS RELEASE

Stimulus Funding Headed to Valles Caldera National Preserve \$750,000 Funds Two Projects

Jemez Springs, N.M. --- Two separate awards from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act will be used to strengthen 900 acres of Valles Caldera National Preserve (VCNP) forest and reduce fire hazard. The Redondo Canyon Forest Management Project will tap \$600,000 to thin approximately 600 acres of dense conifer forest from the western boundary of the (VCNP), east and northeast into Redondo Canyon. The plan will follow the initial mechanical treatment with a prescribed fire (a controlled burn). Thinning will not only reduce risks to wildfire, forest diseases and insects but also help land managers gain a better understanding about the affect of forest density on our forests ability to capture and store water. The project will include the University of Arizona, UNM, NM Tech, Penn State University, the University of California, the University of Colorado, and the University of Nevada. Other collaborators will be the California Jet Propulsion Lab and the National Center for Atmospheric Research in Colorado.

The second investment will be made in the continuation of New Mexico Highway 4 Hazard Reduction Project. The (VCT) will resume thinning and prescribed fire activities within a 300 acre area that is a source of frequent human caused fires adjacent to NM 4, State Highway and scenic byway. The \$150,000 outlay will reduce the fire threat to the nearby community of

Sierra Los Pinos, the VCNP and reduce the associated risks to fire fighter safety. As a scientific endeavor it will add to our database of information about the effectiveness of various treatments on wildfire hazard reduction, improved wildlife habitat and forest health.

Both projects will contribute to the local economy through contract hires and the opportunity to market small diameter lumber harvested from the forest. Contracts or agreements to perform thinning activities are expected to be let in the spring of 2010 after planning and decision making is complete. Interested contractors should sign up to the Trust's mailing list to keep informed about contracting opportunities. To sign up, visit the Trust's website, www.vallescaldera.gov and select "Mailing Lists" from the top left corner. After entering your email address you will have an opportunity to select areas of interest. Check "Contracting with the Valles Caldera Trust".

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