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N E W S R E L E A S E

Valles Caldera Trust Awards Option to Manage A Livestock Program for the 2007 Summer Grazing Season

(JEMEZ SPRINGS, NM) – Jack and Pat Hagelstein of Dexter, New Mexico have been awarded the option to manage a livestock program on the Valles Caldera National Preserve for the 2007 summer grazing season. The Hagelstein's proposal was selected from a total of four proposals submitted for the Valles Caldera Trust's consideration. A panel of seven, which included representatives from the Trust's staff and Board of Trustees as well as resource specialists from the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management, reviewed the proposals. The Hagelstein's proposal was unanimously selected based on five criteria that considered the economical, ecological and social benefits of the proposal and evaluated the soundness of the proposed management plan. While the Hagelstein's proposal did not include the greatest number of cattle or largest profits, it came in first place for providing a comprehensive plan to manage an ecologically sound cattle program that would guarantee a modest return of money to the Trust.

Jack Hagelstein grew up on a ranch. He has a degree in agriculture business and economics and now owns and operates the Comanche Hill Ranch. Jack and Pat Hagelstein and their children will be spending most of the summer on the Preserve managing 500 steer. Guy Glosson, well known in New Mexico through his workshops teaching low stress animal handling techniques, will assist the Hagelsteins. Craig Conley, Assistant Director of the Quivira Coalition will be contributing his expertise in ecology, monitoring and the application of planned grazing to achieve ecological benefits. The program will also support the Quivira Coalition's program to train and place professional range riders in northern New Mexico. This savvy group of collaborators is also interested in conducting educational workshops in association with this innovative summer grazing program.

Since 2002, the Trust has been operating seasonal livestock programs. These programs have provided opportunities for local ranchers to graze mother cows and their calves while resting home pastures and have also included programs to breed replacement heifers to high quality bulls to improve the quality of local herds. While these programs have benefited many small ranchers and proven ecologically sound, they have cost the Trust money to operate. Unlike the Forest Service or Bureau of Land Management, the Valles Caldera Trust is expected to become financially self sufficient from their operations, all while protecting and preserving the resources and beauty of the Valles Caldera National Preserve. The 2007 program will combine traditional and modern practices to create a program that is ecologically and economically sound, furthering the Trust's experiment in land management.

To view the winning proposal, visit the Trust's website, www.vallescaldera.gov. To learn more about the Quivira Coalition visit www.quiviracoalition.org. – END --