



**Findings of No Significant Impact
for the
Valles Caldera National Preserve
Interim Grazing Program**

Valles Caldera National Preserve
Sandoval County
May 20, 2003
Affirmed January 26, 2004

Findings of No Significant Impact

Considering the site-specific environmental analysis documented in the Valles Caldera National Preserve Interim Grazing Program Environmental Assessment (as amended), I have determined that this is not a major Federal action that will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment; therefore, an environmental impact statement is not warranted. Beneficial and adverse direct, indirect and cumulative environmental effects discussed in the Environmental Assessment and Amendment have been disclosed within the appropriate context and will have little intensity. This determination is based on the following factors:

- This action will have neither significant beneficial nor adverse effects. Sufficient information has been disclosed in the analysis to make a reasoned choice between alternatives and no significant impacts to the human environment have been identified. Information gained during the 2002 program through monitoring and ranching logistics supports the conclusions expressed in the analysis indicating that no significant effects occurred and none are anticipated.
- This action will not significantly affect the public health or safety. All proposed activities are in compliance with relevant Federal, State and local laws, regulations, and requirements designed for protection of the environment. The proposed actions will not exceed New Mexico State water and air quality standards.
- The effects of this action are neither uncertain nor involve unique or unknown risks. The action and effects are based on sound land and rangeland management philosophy and techniques.
- There will be no significant adverse impacts to unique areas or resources, parklands, wetlands, floodplains, prime farm land, range lands, or wild and scenic rivers. No significant effects are anticipated to any ecologically sensitive or critical areas.

- This action will not cause significant effects when considered individually or when considered cumulatively. Nor will this action result in establishing a precedent for future actions.
- There will be no significant adverse impacts to historic or cultural resources. Properties that are eligible or potentially eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places were located during previous cultural resource surveys in the project area. Site avoidance and site monitoring recommendations are identified in the heritage resource report for this project (SFNF Report 2002-10-024). This report recommends heritage resource clearance; the project will have "no adverse effect" to cultural resources. This project is in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, in consultation with the New Mexico State Historic Preservation Office. The VCNP has also conducted consultation with local Native American communities who were interested in the project but did not have significant cultural or traditional concerns.
- The decision will not likely cause highly controversial environmental effects because controversy in this context refers to cases where there is a substantial dispute as to the size, nature or effect of the actions, rather than opposition to its adoption. There have been no substantial disputes as to the size, nature or effects of this action.
- There will be no expected significant irreversible or irretrievable commitment of resources. There will be no significant direct, indirect or cumulative effects to soil, water, fisheries, or wildlife resources or other components of the environment. The analysis of cumulative effects considered past, present and reasonably foreseeable future actions on the VNCP.
- Biological Evaluations (BEs) for Proposed, Endangered, Threatened, and Sensitive wildlife have been completed and are located in the Stewardship Register. The BEs indicated that the proposed project, as amended, will have no significant affects or impacts to any Proposed, Endangered, Threatened and Sensitive species. All mandatory terms and conditions have been incorporated into this project.
- The proposed action will not significantly affect aquatic systems and recreational fisheries. The effects that will occur are based on sound aquatic conservation and resource principals for the benefit of recreational fisheries.
- This Federal action has been conducted in a manner that does not exclude persons (including populations) from participation in, deny persons (including populations) the benefits of, or subject persons (including populations) to

discrimination because of their race, color or national origin, as directed by Executive Order #12898.

Anyone concerned about the Findings of No Significant Impacts on this project is encouraged to contact me prior to contesting this decision. It may be possible to resolve the concern or misunderstanding in a less formal manner. For further information on the Amendment to the Interim Grazing Strategy please contact me a (505) 661-3333 or write to 2201 Trinity Drive, Suite C, Los Alamos, NM 87544.

Decision

Based on the Environmental Assessment Completed in August of 2002, the amendment completed in 2003, data collected during the 2002/2003 grazing seasons, as well as the associated project record and Finding of No Significant Impact; it is my decision to continue the Interim Grazing Strategy through the 2004/2005 grazing seasons.

Dennis Trujillo

Preserve Manager

Date