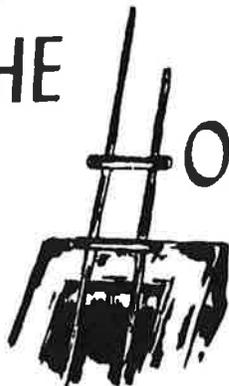


THE



OPI TRIBE

LeRoy N. Shingoitewa
CHAIRMAN

Herman G. Honanie
VICE-CHAIRMAN

June 29, 2012

Dennis Trujillo, Executive Director
Attention: Ana Steffen, Cultural Resources Coordinator
Marie Rodriguez, Director, Natural Resources
Valles Caldera Trust
18161 State Highway 4, P.O. Box 359
Jemez Springs, New Mexico 87025

RECEIVED

JUL 9 2012

VALLES CALDERA TRUST

Dear Mr. Trujillo,

Thank you for your correspondence dated June 11, 2012, regarding the enclosed Public Access and Use Plan/ Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Valles Caldera National Preserve. The Hopi Tribe claims cultural affiliation to prehistoric cultural groups in New Mexico, and in historic times the Hopi Tewa people traveled from New Mexico to First Mesa. Hopi Cultural Preservation Office supports the identification and avoidance of prehistoric archaeological sites, and we consider the prehistoric archaeological sites of our ancestors to be Traditional Cultural Properties. Therefore, we appreciate the Valle Caldera Trust's solicitation of our input and your efforts to address our concerns.

The Hopi Cultural Preservation Office has previously stated that we are interested in consulting on any proposal that has the potential to adversely affect National Register eligible prehistoric sites on the Valles Caldera National Preserve. We have reviewed the enclosed summary and we understand there would be direct impacts to archaeological sites present on the alternative locations being considered for development. The Plan states:

Alternative 2: 12 of the 13 archaeological sites on or near the proposed visitor contact station site have been determined to be eligible or recommended as eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). These are primarily agricultural features from the early Pueblo peoples.

Alternatives 3A and 3B: 10 of the 11 archaeological sites on or near the proposed visitor center site have been determined to be eligible or recommended as eligible for listing on the NRHP. These sites consist of lithic scatters...

Alternatives 4A and 4B: All of the 11 archeological sites on or near the proposed visitor center site have been determined to be eligible or recommended as eligible for listing on the NRHP. These sites consist of lithic scatters as well as ceramic pottery pieces not usually found at higher locations.

Dennis Trujillo
June 29, 2012
Page 2

Therefore, these alternatives are likely to adversely affect numerous National Register eligible prehistoric sites.

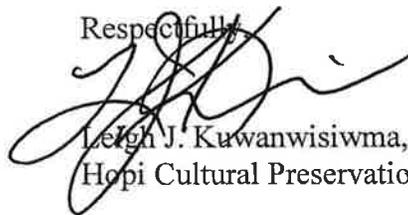
In addition, the Summary of Impacts demonstrates that these alternatives benefit visitor experience, socioeconomics, and environmental justice, while having moderate to major impacts to cultural and natural resources. Is the purpose and need of the Preserve to preserve natural and cultural resources, or to encourage visitation through infrastructure, facilities, and shuttle buses, adversely affecting natural and cultural resources? The Grand Canyon Preserve declared a century ago has resulted in the South Rim infrastructure today.

How does the Valles Caldera proposed to fund the alternatives? Will fees be imposed at the visitor portal?

We recommend reconsideration of the alternatives eliminated from detailed analysis, and support the No Action Alternative 1 in the Public Access and Use Plan/ Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Valles Caldera National Preserve. If any other alternative is implemented, please provide us with copies of the cultural resources surveys of the areas of potential effect and any proposed treatment plans for review and comment.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Terry Morgart at the Hopi Cultural Preservation Office at 928-734-3619 or tmorgart@hopi.nsn.us. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,



Leigh J. Kuwanwisiwma, Director
Hopi Cultural Preservation Office

xc: New Mexico State Historic Preservation Office