

VALLES CALDERA TRUST



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**VALLES CALDERA
NATIONAL PRESERVE**

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Valles Caldera Trust
2012 Report to Congress
Fiscal Year 2012

Valles Caldera Trust

Fiscal Year 2012 – Report to Congress

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Executive Summary

The Valles Caldera National Preserve is an 89,000-acre federal property in northern New Mexico, which was established in 2000 and assigned to be administered by the Valles Caldera Trust under a new and experimental management regime set forth in the Valles Caldera Preservation Act (Act) of 2000 (Public Law 106-248).

Based on formal and informal comments received over time from our stakeholders (including members of the public and congress) and input from our staff, we have developed a broad statement of purpose that identifies what we do, why and for whom:

The Valles Caldera Trust is an experiment in public land management, and is responsible for protecting and preserving the natural and cultural resources of the Valles Caldera National Preserve for present and future generations while being dedicated to sustainable public access and use.

The finances of the trust are comprised of federal appropriations, fees from recreational and resource use and private donations. The trust was under interim management of the Forest Service from inception through August 2, 2002, when management control was transferred to the trust's Board of Trustees. The Forest Service administered the finances of the trust through fiscal year 2003. The trust assumed full financial control of their accounts at the beginning of fiscal year 2004. Fiscal year 2012 (FY12) marked the tenth year under trust management. In this annual Report to Congress we are presenting information on the challenges and accomplishments of 2012, a discussion of the recent history under trust management and a forward look at the new strategic plan that will guide the trust through the year 2018.

All government agencies were required to complete or update existing strategic plans by February of 2012. The 2011 Report to Congress included the development and approval of the plan as an overarching strategic goal and objective. The trust fulfilled that goal with the publication of the Strategic Management Plan and approval by the Board of Trustees. The plan covers the period from 2012-2018 and specifically identified the following three strategic goals.

Strategic Goal 1: Public Access and Use

Encourage public understanding and enjoyment of the preserve, including the development of facilities and infrastructure to expand the capacity for visitors consistent with resource protection.

This goal reflects the priorities of both the public and congress for the management of the preserve and was identified as an important benchmark for management in the *2000-2015 Plan for Decreasing Appropriations*. The cornerstone of meeting this goal is the

development of capital improvements needed to expand public access and enjoyment of the preserve while protecting and preserving resources and values.

Strategic Goal 2: Natural and Cultural Resources

Restore and enhance the preserve's rich natural, cultural and historic resources for sustainable use and enjoyment by present and future generations of Americans.

The restoration and rehabilitation of the preserve's natural and cultural resources is critical for meeting the purposes and goals put forth by congress in the 2000 legislation. Understanding the changing patterns across 10,000 years of human use of the caldera provides a context for conceiving stewardship of the preserve. The last two centuries of human activity, including grazing, logging, road building and geothermal exploration have significantly degraded the preserve's natural resources.

Strategic Goal 3: Financial Sustainability

Establish a public-private model of administration to optimize revenues and develop philanthropy to support the preservation, enhancement and operation of the Valles Caldera National Preserve.

The goal of generating revenue, grants, and other sources of non-Federal funding, addresses the financial self-sufficiency goal set out by congress in the purposes and goals of the act. This goal will also assure the continued economic viability of education and other programs that enhance the benefits of public lands.

The State of the Preserve, a summary of the cumulative impacts of all past, present and reasonably foreseeable future actions affecting the preserve was completed late in calendar year 2012. We are also expecting to complete long-term, comprehensive plans for the restoration and management of our natural resources and the development of facilities in support of public access to the preserve. All-in all, 2012 signaled the transition from interim management marked by experimentation, inventory and planning to comprehensive management marked by implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Section I - Valles Caldera Trust Background

Overview

The Valles Caldera Trust is a wholly owned government corporation created by Congress to preserve, protect and enhance the unique landscape formerly known as the Baca Location No. 1 which was operated as a privately owned ranch for more than a century prior to its acquisition by the federal government in July of 2000. The preserve is comprised of 88,900 acres of National Forest System (NFS) land located in Sandoval and Rio Arriba counties in north central New Mexico. National Forest System land is typically managed by the United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. Delegating management of NFS land to a government corporation constitutes an experiment in public land management.

The trust finances operations through direct appropriation, revenue generated from lodging, hunting, recreational activities, special use fees, grants and donations. The Act also established an “experimental management regime” which incorporates “...elements of public and private administration in order to promote long term financial sustainability consistent with other purposes...” as enumerated in the Act. The Act further established a benchmark period for attaining financial self sufficiency – 15 fiscal years.

If the trustees believe that management goals under section 108 (d) of the Act have been met, but the trust has not achieved financial self-sufficiency as defined, they may submit to the Committees of Congress a recommendation to authorize appropriations through 2020. However, legislation pending in congress could bring an abrupt end to the trust and the experiment in public land management. Senate bill 564 (S-564) proposes the transfer of the preserve to the National Park Service (NPS). If S-564 is passed and signed into law the trust will be dissolved and the NPS will fund and manage the property.

The trust is considered an agency for the purpose of compliance with Federal environmental laws, including the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), but remains exempt from the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1600 et seq.). The trust is accountable to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the Government Accountability Office (GAO). The trust is required to submit annual reports to Congress, annual financial reports to OMB and the Department of Treasury, and to submit a State of the Preserve update every five years. The trust is subject to the Government Corporation Control Act (GCCA) and to the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA), updated in 2010.

Agency Goals

In addition to authorizing acquisition of the preserve as a demonstration area for an experimental management regime, the Act identified purposes for the acquisition which are directly tied to the management of the preserve:

1. Protect and preserve for future generations the scientific, scenic, historic, and natural values...including rivers and ecosystems, and archaeological, geological, and cultural resources;
2. Provide opportunities for public recreation;
3. Provide sustained yield management of the Baca ranch for timber production and domestic livestock grazing insofar as is consistent with the other purposes stated herein.
4. Incorporate elements of public and private administration to promote long term financial sustainability consistent with other purposes of the law.

In section 108, (d) the Act identified six goals for comprehensive management of the preserve:

1. Operation of the preserve as a working ranch, consistent with paragraphs (2) through (4);
2. The protection and preservation of the scientific, scenic, geologic, watershed, fish, wildlife, historic, cultural and recreational values of the preserve;
3. Multiple use and sustained yield of renewable resources within the Preserve;
4. public use and access to the preserve for recreation;
5. Renewable resource utilization and management alternatives that, to the extent practicable –
 - a. benefit local communities and small businesses;
 - b. enhance coordination of management objectives with those on surrounding National Forest System land; and
 - c. provide cost savings to the trust through the exchange of services, including but not limited to labor and maintenance of facilities, for resources provided by the trust; and
6. Optimize the generation of income based on existing market conditions, to the extent that it does not unreasonably diminish the long-term scenic and natural values of the area, or the multiple use and sustained yield capability of the land.

Organizational Structure

The trust is a wholly owned government corporation responsible for managing the preserve. The trust is staffed by Federal employees and governed by a nine member Board of Trustees (Board). Seven trustees are appointed by the President. The two remaining seats are ex-officio positions held by the Superintendent of Bandelier National Monument and the Supervisor of the Santa Fe National Forest. The first board was empanelled on January 10, 2001 and officially assumed management of the preserve in August of 2002. An executive director oversees an organization that includes directors of administration, enterprise, operations, natural resources, science services and other positions essential to operating this unique landscape.

Section II - Trust Administration

Budget and Finance

The annual budget of the trust is comprised of current FY appropriations (Treasury Account 1106), and revenue generated from operations (Treasury Account 5363). In addition to traditional expenditures such as salaries and benefits the trust is responsible for non-traditional agency operational costs e.g. the purchase of liability insurance. Since 2003, the trust has never had a claim filed against it, nor against the insurance company. Regardless, the premium has increased solely in response to increased visitation by the public. Should the trust's liability insurance actually sustain a valid claim, it is very likely that private liability insurance would thereafter be either unobtainable or unaffordable.

In 2009 the Board of Trustees recognized that additional, non-revenue producing costs and a reduced appropriation (\$500,000 decrease from 2009 to 2010) made the goal of financial self sufficiency impossible. The trust recommended modification of the self sufficiency requirement to a more realistic maximum "cost recovery" mandate to the congressional delegation. The challenging economic environment is expected to impact visitation revenue, and the trust's overall budget.

In 2012 the administrative team successfully transitioned from the pay band system to the GG classification, continued a review of administrative policies and successfully completed a 2011 audit with no significant findings.

The following table represents appropriations, revenues, and expenditures 2008-2012

Table 1 - Fiscal Year Budget summaries for 2008 - 2012

FISCAL YEAR	ANNUAL APPROPRIATIONS	ACTUAL EXPENDITURES	ACTUAL EXPENDITURES	PROGRAM REVENUES
ACCOUNT CODE	1106	1106	5363	5363
2008	\$3,691,500	\$3,631,398	\$59,366	\$691,570
2009	\$4,000,000	\$4,322,704*	\$585,302	\$609,219
2010	\$3,500,000	\$3,451,981	\$2,198,139*	\$709,227
2011	\$3,433,000	\$3,356,073	\$1,391,363*	\$795,110
2012	\$3,426,509	\$3,634,248	\$690,951	\$951,574

*It must be noted where expenditures exceed appropriations and revenues, funds unused from previous years (including those prior to FY 2007) dollars are carried over and placed in the treasury account during ensuing fiscal years. Such is the case in FY 2009 account 1106 expenditures and in account 5363 expenditures 2010 and 2011. It was FY 2010 when the trust approved use of revenue funds to lease, furnish and staff the Science and Education Center.

The following table represents the FY 2012 expenditure and revenue summary for the trust. The annual appropriation for FY 2012 was \$3,634,248

Table 2 - Fiscal Year 2012 Budget Summary

FY 2012	APPROPRIATION EXPENDITURES	REVENUE EXPENDITURES	REVENUES
PROGRAM	1106	5363	5363
ADMINISTRATION	\$1,358,416	\$0	\$28,819
FORESTRY FIRE MGMT.	\$41,040	\$0	\$0
FISHING PROGRAM	\$0	\$16,003	\$15,758
FACILITY RENTALS	\$0	9,364	\$41,250
HUNTING PROGRAMS	\$0	\$87,095	\$329,862
INVENTORY/MONITORING	\$54,241	\$0	\$0
INTERPRET/EDUCATION	\$0	\$130,370	\$27,085
PLANNING	\$374,992	\$0	\$0
OPERATIONS	\$534,628	\$0	\$31,508
RECREATION	\$0	\$98,470	\$32,455
STORE SALES, ADM	\$0	\$262,937	\$115,090
SPECIAL USES	\$0	\$32,030	\$121,060
COMMUNICATION/MKTG.	\$0	\$ 26,779	\$0
STEWARDSHIP COMPLIANCE	\$159,285	\$0	\$0
SPECIAL EVENTS	\$0	\$27,903	\$31,977
SCIENCE/EDUCATION	\$ 349,032	\$0	\$176,710
CFLRP Match	\$762,614		
ALL PROGRAMS	\$3,634,248	\$690,951	\$951,574

Liability Insurance

The trust does not have access to the permanent Judgment Fund (section 1304 of title 31, U.S.C.) for a claim, judgment or settlement. Consequently, the trust must purchase its own insurance for liability, vehicles, and volunteers. As the number of visitors and public programs increase the cost of insurance will continue to consume a larger portion of the trust's appropriated budget. In 2007 the cost was \$40,878 and more than doubled to \$83,800 in 2008. Premium costs continued to rise to a high of \$90,000 in FY 2012. Since 2003, the trust has never had a claim filed against it, nor against the insurance company; as such, the premium increased solely in response to increased visitation by the public. Should the trust's liability insurance actually sustain a valid claim, it is very likely that private liability insurance would thereafter be either unobtainable or unaffordable.

Section III - Performance to Goals

The history of the trust and its accomplishments is best illustrated by the annual performance to the goals and purposes of the act. In the following pages we have captured some of the major accomplishments during the last five years and attempted to show the progress the trust has made in those key areas. In effect the following pages provide a history of how the trust built the foundation from which it transitioned to a new strategic plan which was developed and initiated in FY 2012.

Strategic Goal 1: Public Access and Use

Encourage public understanding and enjoyment of the preserve, including the development of facilities and infrastructure to expand the capacity for visitors consistent with resource protection.

The first benchmark in our strategy was accomplished with the completion of the Public Access and Use Plan (PAUP) and Record of Decision in 2012. This goal was met with the signing of the Record of Decision on December 5, 2012. Planning continues on a variety of fronts as we continue to collect data from a number of sources including visitation.

Visitation

Tracking visitor numbers is a critical tool in both planning and managing a public resource such as the VCNP. Prior to 2011, visitor totals on the preserve were calculated by counting actual visitors who participated in an activity or visited one of our two staging areas. It was long suspected that visitation was greater than the earlier counts and public access planning required a more accurate assessment. In order to secure a more accurate account the trust purchased traffic counters and infrared trail counters and deployed them during the 2011 fiscal year. In 2012, the trust continued with the counting program developed in 2011.

The trust originally consulted with the National Park Service statistician to define protocols and ensure a visitor counting system that was consistent with those of other public land agencies. As a result the system now used provides a reasonable comparison of visitor counts with other public lands and will ultimately allow a better analysis of visitation patterns. The trust collected data from advanced counters at ten locations and cross checked them with random vehicle surveys. The raw data were analyzed and adjusted to account “non-reportable” employee activity and double counting. The visitation was up from this time last year.

The number of visitors at the VCNP during 2012 is reasonably estimated to be 110,785, up from 97,552 in 2011. The numbers do not include the estimated 150,000 visitors at the two NM Hwy 4 pullouts. Incorporating those visitor numbers and the 1.2 million people who

annually travel the NM Hwy 4 Byway, into a visitor's center plan will be critical to attracting more visitors and ensuring a quality experience.

The trust's Director of Operations, Dr. Tim Haarmann, managed the project and continues to monitor and collect data. Haarmann will continue to improve the system by making the necessary adjustments to ensure quality data.

Recreation

Beginning in 2002, the trust granted the public limited access to the preserve for recreational activities; in most cases, it has charged a fee for access to these activities. In the beginning, public recreation was confined to guided hikes or van tours. During the last 9 years the trust increased the number of activities, expanded to year round operations (open seven days a week) and instituted a robust marketing and advertising program that included radio, print, face to face and social media. Activities include:

- **Hunting.** The trust works with the New Mexico's Department of Game and Fish to award elk-hunting licenses. The program is the largest revenue producer. In 2007, the trust added a turkey hunt. Both elk and turkey habitats were affected by the Las Conchas Fire. However, hunt managers were able to make adjustments to maintain the integrity and quality experience of the FY 2012 elk and turkey hunts.
- **Fishing.** Originally a lottery based program fishing access is granted through reservation and on a first-come, first-served basis for unreserved reaches. In 2009 the trust began allowing anglers to drive their own vehicles to assigned stream reaches and in 2010 extended hours of operation. The Las Conchas Fire severely impacted the program which virtually ended for FY2011 when the fire began on June 26th. The programs returned on a limited basis in 2012 as fisheries continue recovery from the 2011 Las Conchas fire.
- **Hiking.** Visitors have been allowed to hike at the preserve since 2002, first in guided hikes, then on their own. The trust has increased the number of hiking trails to 14 and now has more than 54 miles of trails.
- **Other Recreational Activities.** The trust also offers horse-drawn wagon rides, sleigh rides, van tours, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, stargazing lectures, horseback riding, mountain biking, group tours and seminars, workshops, and special events including a marathon run and the Jemez Mountains Elk Festival.

Table 3 – Summary of accomplishments during 2008-2012 toward the goal of providing public access and use.

Recreation	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Increase Activities and Attendance	<p>Summer recreation expanded to seven days a week</p> <p>Hosted an open house to market facility rental opportunities</p>	<p>Fishing fees reduced to \$35 from \$50 on the East Fork. Anglers permitted to drive their own vehicles to the San Antonio reaches.</p> <p>Initiated Jemez Mountains Elk Festival</p>	<p>Marathon registration almost doubles to 535</p> <p>Elk Festival partnerships generate ~ 2k visitors.</p>	<p>Marathon registration reaches 760 which is a 42% increase over 2010</p> <p>Elk festival expanded to nine days marketing attracts 2k+ visitors</p>	<p>Run The Caldera with 625 runners generates \$24K in revenue \$6k in profit</p> <p>Elk festival draws more than 1500 visitors</p>
Increase Public Access and Revenue	<p>Visitation increases 23% to a record 15,238 with a 5% increase in revenue</p>	<p>Visitation increases by 2% but revenue decreases 11%</p>	<p>Visitation increases by 59% with a 15% increase in revenue</p> <p>Merchandise sales increase by 89% to ~\$104k</p>	<p>Despite fire visitation increases by 13% with an 8% increase in revenue</p> <p>Merchandise sales increase by 15% to ~\$120K</p>	<p>Visitation improves 13.6% to 110,785</p> <p>Overall revenues increase by 19.7%</p>
Improve Visitor Experience	<p>Upgrades to Casa de Baca Lodge and the Bunkhouse contributed to increase in lodging</p>	<p>A new 900 sq ft information center was purchase and installed at the Valle Grande Staging Area in Sept 2009</p>	<p>Total miles of hiking trails doubled to 54+</p>	<p>More accurate visitor counting program discovers 97,552 visitors which is almost 4X the ~25k visitors logged under the former counting method.</p> <p>Revenue per visitor drops to \$6.34 per visitor with the new visitor count</p>	<p>Added full time recreation planner to explore and expand recreation opportunities.</p>

Table 3 - Continued

Recreation	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Public Access and Use Planning	Initiated and assessment of market and revenue potential associated with public access and use of the preserve.	Initiated public access and use plan including additional public meetings Published NOI in Federal register to initiate PAUP scoping process	Developed alternatives for public access and use – alternative sites for development, scales of development and transportation methods, sought public comment.	Continued with environmental analysis of public access and use plan. The preserve was selected as a site for a national design competition sponsored by the National Park Service and Van Alen Institute. More accurate visitor count aids Public Access and Use Planning	PAUP completed and ROD signed

Strategic Goal 2: Natural and Cultural Resources

Restore and enhance the preserve’s rich natural, cultural and historic resources for sustainable use and enjoyment by present and future generations of Americans.

Two performance goals were identified in association with this strategic goal. The first was to *Move the condition of forests at a landscape scale towards a condition that, to the best of our collective knowledge, is sustainable and resilient in the event of natural disturbance.* We have been approaching the attainment of this goal at two levels – project and programmatic. At the programmatic level we have been completing preserve-wide systematic inventories and assessments and establishing preserve-wide ecological monitoring network. Based on the comprehensive approach to resource inventory and ecological monitoring, we are preparing a plan for the landscape scale restoration and stewardship of the preserve’s natural and cultural resources.

This plan was scheduled for completion in 2012, however; we pushed the target completion to FY 2013 allow us to adequately incorporate the impacts of the Las Conchas Fire and to focus our efforts on the completion of the public access and use plan.

Implementation

At the project level we have been treating (thinning and prescribed burning) strategic areas most at risk to wildfire and localized issues (roads and erosion) causing direct, adverse impacts to water quality and riparian habitats. Project level actions have continued in 2012. Highlights of this fiscal year have been collaboration with other agencies and organizations through the national Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP) and the regional Collaborative Forest Restoration Program (CFRP).

Working with our partners, including the Santa Fe National Forest, Bandelier National Monument, The Nature Conservancy, Jemez Pueblo, Los Amigos de Valles Caldera, WildEarth Guardians, and other agencies, organizations and individuals, we continued project level restoration activities including:

Forest Management

We completed treatment (biomass removal/utilization or prescribed fire) on over 1144 acres of high priority WUI acres. The trust collaborated with the Jemez Pueblo and T.C. Company through a Collaborative Forest Restoration Program (CFRP) grant to remove and utilize small diameter trees from 784 acres thinned in 2011. The CFRP grant supported the creation of the Walatowa Timber Industries, LLC, a joint venture between T.C. Company and Jemez Pueblo Development Corporation. The goals of the Walatowa Timber Industries, LLC (WTI) are to create economic development in the Pueblo of Jemez and the surrounding community while restoring the landscapes that contain Jemez Pueblo ancestral lands. Establishing this viable point of utilization is critical to achieving the goals of the CFLR and the 10-year strategy within the SWJML. Figure 1 and Figure 2 below show the thinning areas before and after treatment and depict the utilization of the small trees that were removed.



Figure 1 – Before and after photos of forest restoration projects implemented in 2012.



Figure 2 - Walatowa Timber Industries all products below were derived from forest restoration and post fire rehabilitation on the VCNP and Santa Clara Pueblo.

The VCT treated also treated 360 acres with prescribed fire within the SWJML. The burn area had been previously thinned; prescribed fire was used to kill dense ponderosa pine seedlings that were regenerating in the thinned areas as well as to clean up any residual slash.

We had prepared an additional 530 acres for thinning but were unable to award the acres through contract or agreement. While Congress exempted the VCT from federal procurement laws (16 USC 698v-3[b] 2000), the USDA Forest Service, the Albuquerque Service Center, will not pay invoices that are obligated by the VCT.

Riparian, Grassland Restoration and Post Fire Rehabilitation

We included the decommissioning of 3.4 miles non-system roads as a stewardship activity (goods-for-services) within forest thinning activities. The contractor used these non-system roads to access the project area as well as for skid trails and landing locations during operations. Following operations the roads were decommissioned by the contractor (drainage features were established and the road prism was obscured using slash, chips, logs and rocks). We also repaired 23 miles of our level III (suitable for low clearance vehicles) and 49 miles of our level II (suitable for high clearance vehicles). Much of this repair was aimed at roads that were significantly damaged by the erosion that followed the Las Conchas Fire such as the VC-13 Indios road depicted in Figure 3 below.



Figure 3 – Road VC-13, post fire erosion

Riparian and Grassland Restoration

We completed riparian and wetland restoration activities in several areas and removed and constructed fences to protect riparian and wetland areas. Working with Los Amigos de Valles Caldera and WildEarth Guardians we completed restoration work on 3.4 miles of stream corridor and restored approximately 5 acres of wetlands, which had been drained by historic infrastructure. Erosion control features constructed by Los Amigos included “Zuni Bowls” (Figure 4 below) constructed to slow the energy of water (reducing the cutting effect) and capturing the soil (healing the cut). These Zuni bowls were constructed by volunteers to reduce post fire erosion.



Figure 4 – “Zuni Bowl” constructed in the Valle Santa Rosa.

WildEarth Guardians constructed exclosures and planted native plant assemblages along the Rio San Antonio in order to re-establish woody riparian vegetation, ultimately improving water quality, stream condition and function, and aquatic habitats. Besides the exclosures designed to protect the young trees from browsing by elk, they also installed

protection around individual trees to protect them from rodents and even beaver who ventured in! The re-establishment of beaver is a long term goal of the project, if they move into prior to the vegetation becoming mature; the habitat will not be sustainable.



Figure 5 - Plantings of native trees and shrubs within a constructed enclosure on the Rio San Antonio

Through the grazing contract and various volunteer projects we constructed wildlife friendly fences which excluded cattle grazing from 7,254 acres of the Valle San Antonio protecting the Rio San Antonio from impacts by livestock. Working with volunteers organized by WildEarth Guardians, we removed sheep fence from the Valle Grande which had been impacting views and posing a hazard to wildlife (Figure 6 below). Working with the Great Old Broads of the Wilderness, we reconstructed paddock fences to exclude Jaramillo Creek and instead watered livestock through drinkers.



Figure 6 - Before and after fence removal in the Valle Grande

Noxious Weed Control and Eradication

The trust continued control and eradication efforts on Canada, bull and musk thistle and began control actions on oxeye daisy. Weeds were dug out of the ground by volunteers from the Native Plant Society; herbicide was applied by individual volunteers licensed for application in the State of New Mexico. All thistle populations are down to a few isolated occurrences. Goathead, a miserable non-native, invasive plant has all but been eradicated by alert staff simply grubbing any invaders they see. Cheatgrass is spreading on open roads as a result of road maintenance disturbance.

Inventory

When the preserve was acquired by Congress in 2000, very little information was available on the natural and cultural resources of the site. Much of the initial scientific effort was directed toward inventory studies of the preserve and, since 2002, trust staff and many outside collaborators have completed a new geology map, a new high-resolution soils map, a vegetation map, forest stand and condition maps, species inventories and distributions of plants, mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish, fungi/lichens, aquatic insects, and many groups of beneficial and pest terrestrial insects (e.g., beetles, grasshoppers, butterflies, moths, dragonflies, aphids, etc.). Watershed health, fish habitat and stream functioning condition have been assessed for the major watersheds on the preserve, and stream water quality has been quantified. To-date, trust archaeologists have discovered and inventoried over 652 cultural resource sites, with evidence of human use of the preserve and caldera obsidian deposits dating back 11,000 years. Archaeological inventories to date still represent less than 19% of the preserve's land area.

In 2012, the following inventories were completed on the preserve:

Biodiversity Inventory

In 2012, the trust continued collaboration with the USDA Systematic Entomology Laboratory (SEL, Beltsville, MD) and the Smithsonian Institution (SI, Washington, DC) for the inventory of beneficial and pest insect species on the preserve. Archived voucher collections of insect species found on the preserve are being stored in the SEL/SI collections, as well as in the preserve voucher collection in the Science and Education Center. This latter collection is used for assisting visiting scientists, as well as in educational activities for public school students to illustrate the enormous biodiversity on the preserve. New completed inventories in 2012 included surveys for spiders, moths and dragonflies.

Burned and Unburned Forest Stand Inventory (Las Conchas Fire Impacts)

In 2012, the Forest and Range Plant Ecology field team inventoried forest stand characteristics in areas burned in the Las Conchas fire, and in unburned “control” stands. These inventories documented the impacts of the fire on mixed conifer forests, and characterized the long-term monitoring plots used to assess ecological recovery following the fire.

Cultural Resources Program Inventories

Highlights for the work in 2012 include completion of a new record acreage of cultural resources survey: nearly 2250 acres completed in 2012. This included completion of nearly 100% of the Banco Bonito landform in advance of forest restoration. Other large survey projects this year include watershed projects in the San Antonio and Jaramillo valleys, recreation and forest restoration planning on Rabbit Mountain and in the Headquarters area, and ranch infrastructure improvements in the Posos valley.

Other CR projects in 2012 included an unprecedented amount of subsurface testing, including more than 110 shovel probes and 11 excavation units in advance of roads, livestock, and filming projects. Eight of these excavation units were dug at LA026919, a large obsidian quarry in Obsidian Valley where road improvements are needed within this significant archaeological site. This also marks the initiation of a multi-year collaboration with Earthwatch Institute. We hosted more than 30 US and international Earthwatch volunteers and completed the excavation work with revenues from Earthwatch and matching funds from the trust.

Monitoring

In FY 2012, the trust continued annual monitoring projects for rangeland forage production and utilization, forest ecosystem changes following thinning and mastication, stream water quality, stream discharge amounts, climate conditions, and elk and fish population dynamics throughout the preserve. Monitoring data in 2012 were collected from the stream gauging stations and flumes that were installed in 2008 on the four major watersheds of the preserve, so that future changes in water production to downstream villages, towns, Pueblos and cities can be quantified. Based on hydrologic research on the preserve, we anticipate that as the trust restores the many stands of second-growth, high density forests we will observe a concomitant increase in stream water flows to downstream communities, thereby enhancing the “ecosystem services” of the preserve.

In addition, the trust continued monitoring the effects of the Las Conchas Fire on the natural resources of the preserve. The Science Division team tracked changes in perennial streams (stream discharge, water quality, streambank stability, erosion, fish and aquatic invertebrates), forests (tree densities, species composition, size distributions, basal area, as

well as herbaceous plant diversity and cover, bare ground and litter coverage, birds, small mammals and a wide range of pest and beneficial invertebrates), and grasslands (plant cover and species distributions, birds, arthropods).

The trust also collaborated with the Santa Fe National Forest in monitoring the CFLRP-funded Banco Bonito/Southwest Corner prescribed fire and the San Juan Mesa prescribed fire impacts on vegetation and soils.

A systematic approach to monitoring produces opportunities to incorporate volunteers, and in 2012, the trust continued to offer range monitoring as an “Eco-tourism” event in partnership with the Sierra Club. The monitoring program relies on seasonal (spring and fall) measurements of plant biomass (forage for elk and livestock) to provide baseline data and a system of permanent and temporary monitoring sites to measure direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of programs and activities that occur on the preserve. In addition, volunteer citizens participated in fisheries monitoring by assisting preserve field biologists during electro-fishing sampling (catch-measure-release) in the major streams of the preserve, and in collection and identification of pest and beneficial insect species in grasslands and forests of the preserve.

The Cultural Resources team conducted several activities that follow up on the 2011 Las Conchas forest fire. They continued monitoring of seven post-burn soil erosion monitoring plots at Cerro del Medio. They also ensured fire preparation training, with five staff archaeologists “red-carded” to enable effective response to both prescribed fires (as in the SW Banco Bonito burn this year) and any unplanned ignitions that should occur.

Research

Research projects in the preserve continued at a high activity level, with 46 permitted projects in 2012, and outside (non-trust) funding increasing to over \$5.2 million (see figures below and detailed table on next page). Over the last ten years, the preserve has demonstrated its value as an outdoor laboratory and classroom, as well as a venue for testing various approaches to ecosystem restoration for streams, grasslands and forests. For the last four fiscal years, “outside” research funding (grants and contracts from other sources) has exceeded the annual Congressional appropriations to the trust, indicating that science, research training and education programs are important components of the preserve’s regional economic impact.

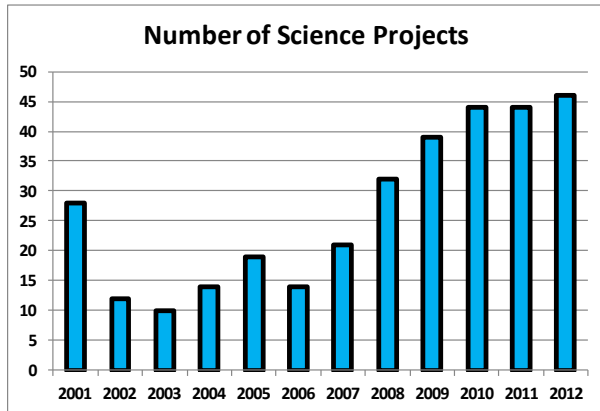


Figure 7- History of science projects

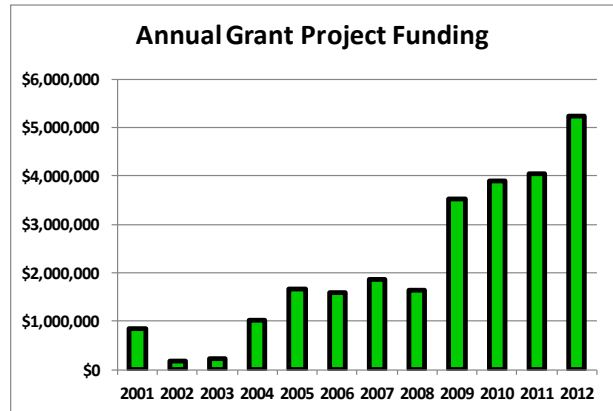


Figure 8- History of grant project funding

In 2012, the VCNP research projects addressed questions concerning topics such as climate change impacts on watershed hydrology, fire ecology, elk-predator interactions, carbon sequestration, biodiversity, and elk-livestock grazing. The University of Arizona’s “Critical Zone Observatory” grant (funded by the National Science Foundation) established its second “Zero-Order Basin” study area in the post-fire area of Rabbit Mountain, installing instruments to monitor climate, groundwater, and plant water use. The trust also hosted the fourth field season of the New Mexico EPSCoR grant, funded by NSF for \$3 million per year for 5 years. The preserve is one of the three field study sites for the project, and the major topic is to understand climate change on upland water resources in northern New Mexico. Project collaborators include all the New Mexico universities.

The Cultural Resources team also participated in a successful fire grant proposal awarded from the Joint Fires Science Program. This grant, funded at \$500,000 for a three-year period, is a multi-agency project (\$140,000 to the VCNP). Entitled “ArcBurn,” the team will study the effects of fire on archaeological resources, to create management tools to enhance interdisciplinary involvement in fire planning and response. Collaborators include the Rocky Mountain Research Station, USFS Missoula Fire Lab, Bandelier National Monument, Santa Fe National Forest, and the Forest Guild.

Valles Caldera National Preserve: 2012 Research Project List

<u>P.I. Name</u>	<u>Project Title (abbreviated)</u>	<u>Funding Source</u>	<u>Funding Amount</u>
Abeyta, Joe	The Effects on Water Quality Before and After the Las Conchas Fire	Volunteer	\$2,500
Aydelott, Timothy	PBS Educational TV production: Valles Caldera, A Grand Land Experiment.	NSF, VCT, NM Geol. Soc., Pierce Foundation	\$300,000
Belone, Tammy	Mercury Deposition Monitoring for Jemez Pueblo	EPA	\$17,000
Black, Michael	Climate Reference Network Station	NOAA	\$24,000
Bradley, Anne	Developing reference conditions for Jemez mixed-conifer forests and habitat for the Jemez Mountains Salamander	CFRP (USDA)	\$86,537
Bush, Janis	Wildlife herbivory impacts on Gambel oak stands	USDA	\$10,000
Carey, Madeleine	Mapping of current range of American pika in the Jemez Mts.	Tufts University	\$3,500
Chan, Stephen	AmeriFlux QA/QC lab intercomparison at Valles Caldera Mixed Conifer flux tower	DOE	\$20,000
Chorover, Jon	Critical Zone Observatory Program	NSF, Univ. Arizona, UNM	\$870,000
Coop, Jonathan	Tree seedling establishment in valles, VCNP	Volunteer	\$2,000
Cunningham, J.	Locate and photograph reported occurrences of accretionary lapilli in VCNP.	Volunteer	\$640
Davis, Don	Upper microscale-lower mesoscale, orographically induced precipitation anomalies during monsoonal flows in the Jemez Mountains	EPSCoR	\$0
Desilets, Darin	Development of snow-water equivalent methods	Sandia Nat. Lab.	\$100,000
Falk, Don	Dendroecology of the Valles Caldera National Preserve	U. AZ., USFS	\$3,000
Fawcett, Peter	Middle Pleistocene Paleoclimate Reconstructions from Valles Caldera Lake Sediments	NSF	\$220,000
Fettig, Stephen	Dispersal in gray-headed juncos; breeding bird surveys.	Volunteer groups	\$9,887
Gardner, Jamie	Geologic Mapping of Valles Caldera/Structural and volcanic evolution of Valles-Toledo caldera complex	Volunteer	\$10,000
Goff, Fraser	Geological investigations of the VCNP	Volunteer groups	\$80,000
Hoogland, John	Studies on Gunnison's Prairie Dog on the VCNP.	Univ. Maryland	\$35,300
Johnson, Terry	Monitoring of Bald Eagle Populations	Volunteer	\$2,500
Keller, Chick	Survey for Rare and Endemic Plants on VCNP	Volunteers	\$1,500
Lyons-Tinsley, Christina	Examining variability in Douglas-fire growth at a continental scale.	NSF & USGS	\$6,300
Matson, James	Stream water quality improvements via restoration	EPA	\$505,120
Matson, James	Stream habitat manipulation and beaver restoration	NM RERI	\$137,000
McWilliams, Steven	Stream Proper Functioning Condition (PFC) assessment	Volunteer	\$0
Menicucci, David	Study of trout movements on the Rio San Antonio and East	Volunteer	\$2,000
Michener, William	New Mexico EPSCoR Program	NSF	\$1,000,000
Parmenter, Robert	Monitoring for Forest Restoration (CFLRP)	USDA/USFS	\$224,000
Pelletier, Jon	Critical Zone Observatory Program - LiDAR Supplement	NSF, Univ. Arizona, UNM	\$51,000
Peterson, Liesl	Climate-change impacts on Pika Populations	U. CO, Nat. Geog. Soc.	\$34,000
Price, Relf	Inventory of Fungi and Lichens	Volunteer	\$50,000
Rahn, Thom	High precision O2 analyses for ecosystem carbon exchange studies	DOE	\$62,500
Roberts, Peter	Seismic monitoring of Valles Caldera using the Los Alamos Seismic Network (LASN)	DOE/LANL	\$330,000
Romig, Kirsten	Bryophyte survey of the VCNP	NMSU/USDA-ARS	\$13,677
Rowland, Mark	Arthropod assemblages of gopher tunnels at the VCNP.	Volunteer	\$2,270
Ryerson, Dan	Forest insect pest inventory	USFS	\$1,500
Sackett, Loren	Gunnison's Prairie Dog genetics and plague potential	Colorado Div. Wildlife	\$50,000
Solis, Alma	Beneficial and pest insect biodiversity survey	USDA SEL/SI	\$177,900
Stahlecker, Dale	Status of boreal owls in New Mexico	NMDGF	\$5,000
Swetnam, Tom	Long-term vulnerability and resilience of coupled human-natural ecosystems to fire regime and climate changes at an ancient Wildland Urban Interface	NSF	\$499,500
Szynkiewicz, Anna	Sulfur cycling during the volcanic and climatic evolution of Valles Caldera – A geochemical analogue for sulfate-mineral deposition on Mars	NASA	\$243,895
Thomson, Bruce	Watershed Assessment of San Antonio Creek	UNM Water Resource Prog.	\$17,000
Wearing, Helen	Triatomine vector and <i>Trypanosoma cruzi</i> parasite distributions: A pilot study.	UNM	\$4,000
Webb, Ryan	Investigation of Snowpack Albedo Reduction due to Aeolian Dust Settlement	Volunteer	\$1,500
WoldeGabriel, Giday	Paleoclimate investigations in the VCNP	DOE/LANL	\$8,000
Worthington, Reese	A survey of the Scarabaeoidea (scarab beetles) of the	Volunteer	\$3,200
		TOTAL (FY2012):	\$5,227,726
		46 Projects	

Table 4 – Summary of accomplishments toward the goal of protecting and preserving natural and cultural resources of the Valles Caldera National Preserve 2008-2012

Protect and Preserve	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Cultural Resources Inventory Monitoring	<p>Cultural surveys completed on 990 acres and</p> <p>Documentation/evaluation of 53 new sites and 69 revisited</p> <p>Initiated dendroglyph volunteer program.</p>	<p>Cultural surveys completed on 1742 acres.</p> <p>27 new sites were documented 35 revisited</p>	<p>Cultural surveys completed on 945 acres.</p> <p>65 new sites were documented and 39 revisited</p> <p>Initiated oral history interview program</p>	<p>Cultural surveys completed on 1550 acres.</p> <p>21 new sites documented and 137 revisited</p>	<p>Cultural surveys completed on 2245 acres. 16% of preserve now surveyed to current standards</p> <p>38 new sites documented and 82 sites revisited</p> <p>Initiated Earthwatch program excavations at LA026919</p>
Roads and Restoration	<p>NM Hwy 4 entrance construction completed</p>	<p>Planning in compliance with NEPA completed for restoration activities in San Antonio Watershed</p>	<p>23 miles of road maintenance completed and ADA upgrades to facilities completed</p>	<p>64 miles of road maintenance completed</p>	<p>72 miles of road maintenance completed.</p> <p>3.4 miles of non-system roads decommissioned</p> <p>Restored 5 acres wetlands and 3.4 miles of stream corridors</p>
Inventory and Monitoring	<p>Trust invested \$673k in inventory, monitoring and research</p>	<p>Trust invested \$660k in inventory, monitoring and research</p>	<p>Trust invested \$738,764 in inventory, monitoring and research</p>	<p>Trust invested \$419,636 in inventory, monitoring and research</p>	<p>Trust invested \$635,512 in inventory, monitoring and research</p>

Table 4 – Continued

Protect and Preserve	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Comprehensive Planning	Completed a comprehensive, quantified assessment of the existing condition and ecological departure of the preserve’s natural systems	Collaborated with partners to develop a 10-year strategy for forest restoration. Initiated planning and decision-making on the proposed Landscape Restoration & Management Plan.	Continued forest restoration planning and analysis incorporating changing condition brought about by the Las Conchas Fire.	Completed a preserve-wide forest inventory	Developed and received Board approval of a Strategic Management Plan through FY 2018.
Forest Thinning	Initiated planning on 500 acres forest thinning	Signed a decision to conduct prescribed burning in collaboration with Bandelier National Monument 730 acre on Bandelier and 230 acres on the preserve). Completed planning on 500 acres of forest thinning	Completed planning on two thinning projects: 185 acres and 380 acres. Expanded previous thinning project by 185 acres Completed 890 acres forest thinning.	Awarded a 380 acre forest thinning contract and 387 acre slash disposal contract.	Prepared 530 acres for thinning and treated 360 more acres with prescribed fire. Collaborated with Jemez Pueblo and private company on removal of thinned trees from 784 acres

Table 4 – Continued

Protect and Preserve	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Science and Education	The trust received 1.6 million of extramural funding for inventory, monitoring and research. 32 research projects were conducted on the preserve	The trust received \$3.5 million of extramural funding for inventory, monitoring and research. 39 research projects were conducted on the preserve Trust acquires new SEC to host and expand on education programs,	The trust received \$3.9 million of extramural funding for inventory, monitoring and research 44 research projects were conducted on the preserve SEC renovation completed and hosted education programs which generated \$62,000+ revenue.	The trust received \$4.1 million of extramural funding for inventory, monitoring and research 44 research projects were conducted on the preserve SEC hosted education programs which generated \$97.5K in revenue.	The trust received \$5.2 million of extramural funding for inventory, monitoring and research 46 research projects were conducted on the preserve SEC hosted education programs which generated \$175.4K in revenue.

Livestock program

Given that the Act requires keeping the preserve as a working ranch, grazing has been a central activity since the trust began. Over the years, the grazing program’s objectives, scope, and size have changed repeatedly, in response to annual scientific assessments of forage availability, as well as shifting directives from the Board. In addition, because the preserve is now federal land, continued grazing required completion of a NEPA environmental assessment. The trust’s ultimate goal is to create a long-term grazing program that is ecologically as well as economically sustainable. The trust has piloted a number of grazing programs during the early years until 2009 when, grazing took on a research emphasis intended to benefit local communities. A joint proposal presented by New Mexico State University, Jemez Pueblo and The New Mexico Beef Cattle Performance Association (NMBCPA) was selected because it included community, educational, economic and scientific elements that extend benefits beyond the borders of the preserve. The plan focused on the development of a high altitude performance testing facility for virgin bulls and replacement heifers. The program also developed a grazing plan to benefit both the natural resources and performance of grazing cattle and included local cattle growers from the Jemez Pueblo Livestock Association.

In addition to raising its cattle on the lush pastures of the Valles Caldera the Jemez Pueblo and its Livestock Association benefitted through a summer rest period of its pastures

which enhanced the condition of its grazing lands. The result was a healthier, stronger, and more profitable herd as well as a more resilient home rangeland.

The joint program ran for three consecutive grazing seasons through the summer of 2011. The 2012 grazing season was perhaps the most successful to date. The trust hosted a multi-faceted grazing program. Two separate grazing permits were issued this year: one permit was issued to Jemez Pueblo while the other went to New Mexico State University. During the 2012 grazing season, a total of 773 head of cattle grazed in large pastures away from riparian areas and away from the main recreation programs. The program involved many local cattle growers, an extension and research component, two youth ranch/beef camps, a conservation stewardship program aimed at resting tribal grazing land, and a collaborative effort with the US Forest Service to allow cattle grazing permittees displaced by last year's fire to graze on the Valles Caldera.

Table 5 - Summary of accomplishments during 2008-2012 toward the goal of providing sustained yield management for livestock grazing

Ranching	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Livestock Program	Trust ran its largest cattle operation ever w/ 1960 yearlings and a profit of \$58,172.	High altitude bull evaluation program included in grazing program	High altitude bull evaluation program included Jemez Pueblo and Navajo nation cattle growers.	High altitude bull program run for third consecutive year. 220 locally owned cattle participate Cattle grazing field day for local cattle growers provides education on bovine diseases 60 day field trial conducted to determine effectiveness of feed supplement.	High altitude bull research program runs for fourth year Conservation Stewardship on Tribal Land More than 70 local cattle growers participated in program USFS Permittees allowed to graze on preserve
MUSY Management	Trust completed an Environmental Assessment (EA) with a FONSI	Public comment completed on EA and decision implemented		National Youth Ranch Camp hosted by NMSU and VCT	Two, week-long Youth camps hosted

Strategic Goal 3: Financial Sustainability

Establish a public-private model of administration to optimize revenues and develop philanthropy to support the preservation, enhancement and operation of the Valles Caldera National Preserve.

The Preservation Act envisioned the timber, grazing, and recreational resources of Valles Caldera as potential generators of revenue that would put the trust on the path toward financially self-sustaining land management. Over its existence, the trust discovered it had no marketable timber, but has experimented with a number of grazing options and expanded recreational opportunities. Collectively, from 2008 through 2012, the trust's grazing, recreation, and other activities generated an annual average of about \$733,000 in gross revenues. Since its inception in 2000 through 2012, the trust received more than \$40 million in federal funding for an annual average of about \$3.35 million during the period.

Figure 9 tracks the program by program annual increase in revenue that reached a high of more than \$951,000 in 2012 which included a year-over-year 600% increase in commercial filming and still photography revenues. Figure 10 tracks visitation during the same period. Active visitors paid for an event or activity while casual visitors took advantage of free activities.

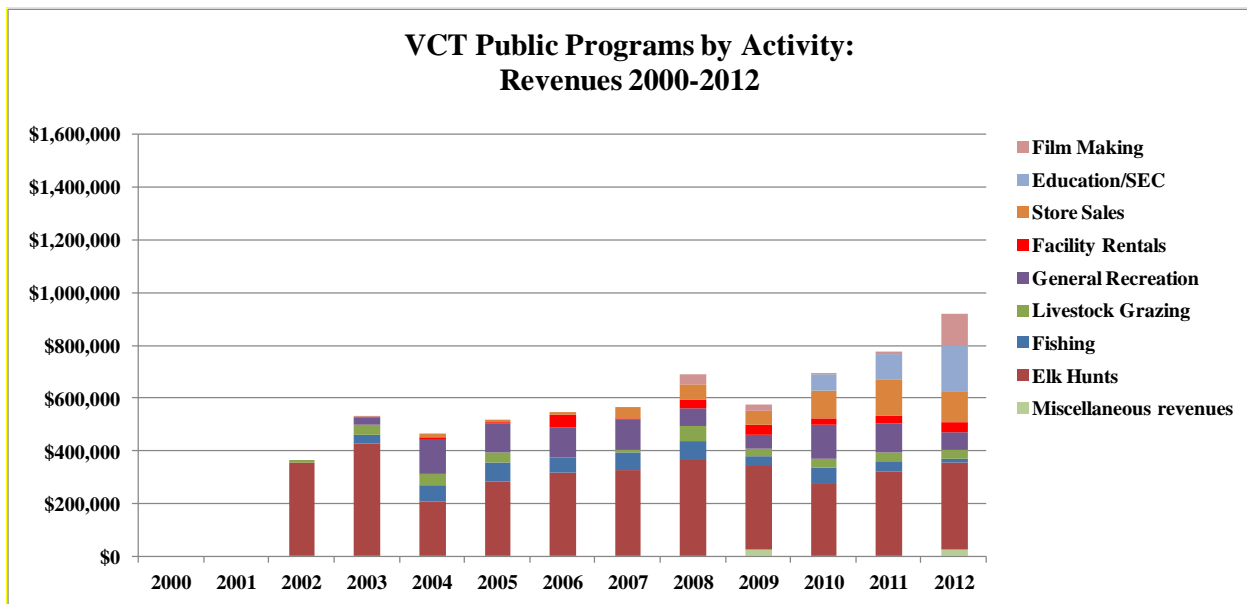


Figure 9- History of Public Program Revenues 2000-2012

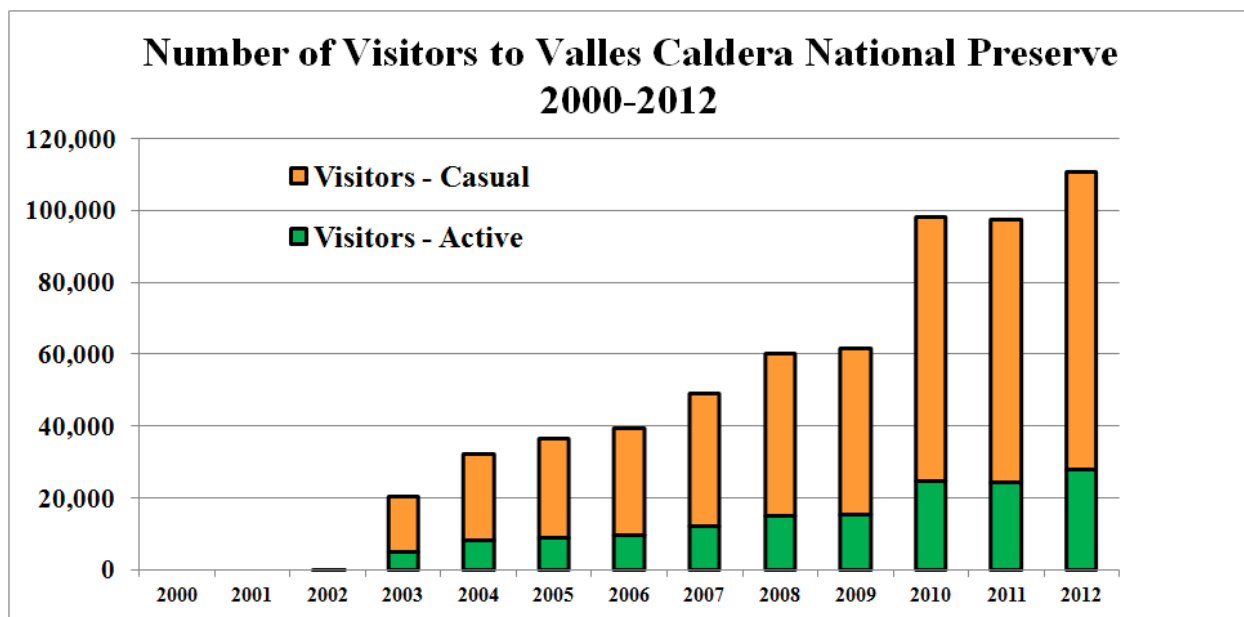


Figure 10- History of Visitation from 2000-2012

Volunteerism

Volunteers are the life's blood of the Valles Caldera Trust. The Los Amigos de Valles Caldera lead the way with multiple field contributions and are our editorial partners in the La Ventana newsletter. Los Amigos, Wild Earth Guardians and many others mentioned earlier perform the important, unheralded work of pulling fences, riparian restoration and other work that would be of considerable cost to the trust. In 2012 volunteers contributed a record 11,377 hours to the trust which offset \$247,905 of private sector costs to the agency.*

*Value of volunteer hours is calculated at \$21.79 per hour based on information found at: <http://www.volunteer.va.gov/apps/VolunteerNow/calculator.asp>

Marketing and Communications

Increased awareness generated from robust advertising and marketing campaigns begun in mid 2009 and carried through 2011 provided a foundation for increased social media participation and unpaid media interest. The focus on free media expanded to radio, web blogs and the social media output of Constant Contact, Twitter and Facebook were some of the innovative marketing techniques employed.

A big win was achieved with a three minute feature on the Valles Caldera just days before the Caldera Act Celebration week which played on several shows, reached more than 500,000 viewers at an advertising value of \$7,000. The appearance of Dennis Trujillo, Bob Parmenter and Dave Davis on the half hour long Weekend Edition radio program ran on

nine Cumulus Radio stations and garnered a companion news story that ran five times on KKOB-AM

Paid media including radio advertising was targeted to special events including the Elk Festival which hosted 2000+ visitors despite weather issues. Front cover play in the Los Alamos Visitors Guide, engagement with the State Tourism Department and attendance at trade shows and major events including the Balloon Fiesta and NM State Expo added to the number of impressions and face to face meetings.

The Interpretation and Education team lead by Kimberly DeVall played an important role in “spreading the word’ by staffing more than a dozen events that logged 5000 contacts. This does not include the many presentations, speaking engagements and face to face encounters by trust staff. These efforts enhanced popularity of the preserve and contributed to year over year increases of 13.6% in visitation and 19.7% in revenue.

Table 6 - Summary of accomplishments toward long term financial sustainability 2008-2012

Promote Financial Sustainability	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Employ Best Business Practices	Trust contracted with Entrix to develop a business plan to maximize revenues	Entrix report completed and published	IT extended to new facilities including SEC and Bridge House	<p>Began conversion from Pay band to GG pay system and classification.</p> <p>Conducted review of key administrative policies</p> <p>Local Internet service and bandwidth improved through upgrades to MPLS and EIA lines an installation of PBSX VLS system</p>	<p>Completed the conversion from pay band pay system to the GG pay system</p> <p>Continued the review of key administrative policies.</p>

Table 6 - Continued

Promote Financial Sustainability	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Conduct Financial Audits		Financial audits for year 2004-2008 completed. The audit reported 25 findings of which 15 were material found in the initial audit for 2004.	Financial audit for FY 2009 was completed with six findings of which one was material, and unqualified results.	Financial audit for FY 2010 completed. The audit reports six findings and unqualified results. It was the first audit w/o a material finding.	Financial audit for FY 2011 completed.
Marketing and Communications	Attended multiple trade show marketing events to promote fishing, elk hunting and turkey hunting	<p>Marketing and communication manager hired and advertising budget assigned</p> <p>Initial marketing/advertising effort generated 2 million impressions</p> <p>Attended multiple trade show marketing events to promote fishing, elk hunting and turkey hunting</p>	<p>Marketing/advertising expands to social media, regional /local print and radio.</p> <p>Combination of all media generates ~ 9 million impressions increases attendance by 59% and revenue by 15%</p> <p>Redesign and distribution of brochures features Super Volcano</p>	<p>Marketing and advertising expands to multiple radio outlets and local media</p> <p>Despite fire and media de-obligations impressions exceed 10 million</p> <p>Attended multiple trade show marketing events to promote fishing, elk hunting and turkey hunting</p>	<p>Marketing and advertising includes expanded social media presence</p> <p>Increased appearances on local radio, target media buys and free media added to impressions which numbered in the millions Despite reduced budget, increased multi media efforts and presence at major events contributes to 13.6% visitation and 19.6% revenue increases</p> <p>Attended multiple trade show/marketing events to promote fishing, elk hunting and turkey hunting</p>

Table 6 - Continued

Promote Financial Sustainability	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Income From Timber Operations			<p>Small diameter trees chipped on site and removed for landscaping material, eliminating slash disposal costs.</p> <p>Federal Grant (ARRA) funded forest thinning activities.</p> <p>Trust and SFNF awarded 35 million to fund forest restoration activities over 10-years.</p>		Partnership with Walatowa Timber Industries, LLC to remove thinned trees produces jobs and eventual revenue.
Commercial Photography and Filming Revenue	\$15,750	\$1,500	\$35,000	\$15,550	\$107,000

Section IV-Fiscal Year 2013 Goals

The following goals and metrics for FY 2013 are based on the Strategic Management Plan for the Valles Caldera National Preserve which was approved by the Board of Trustees in 2012.

Strategic Goal 1 – Public Access and Use

Encourage public understanding and enjoyment of the preserve, including the development of facilities and infrastructure to expand the capacity for visitors consistent with resource protection.

Public Access and Use – Performance Goals

Public Programs

Establish comprehensive programs and activities for recreation, interpretation, and environmental education.

- a. Establish sustainable outdoor recreational programs for hiking, camping, biking, equestrian, hunting and fishing, and
- b. Establish sustainable public programs such as livestock grazing by 2015.

FY13 Goal – Draft a long-term plan for the management of public access and use programs in time and space on the preserve tiered to the Public Access and Use Plan/EIS

- c. Ensure all public programs are available to a broad range of social and economic groups now and into the future.

FY13 Goal – Define the fee structure to include applicable discounts and free days for all public access and recreation programs.

- d. Establish permanent formal and informal educational/educational programs for all ages, and make available interpretive naturalist programs for all visitors by 2015.

FY13 Goal – Define formal and informal educational/interpretive programs for the preserve.

Capital Improvements

Initiate the planning and designing of facilities in support of visitors and public programs, administration, interpretation and environmental education

- a. Set a goal to design and build a permanent visitor center and administrative/education facility tiered to the Public Access and Use plan with associated capacities for supporting public programs by FY2015.

FY13 Goal – Initiate the process for survey and design of the visitor center

- b. Design and plan for permanent infrastructure and transportation system, including roads, trails, and ancillary facilities for public recreation, safety, and resource protection by (FY 2016).

Sustainability

Reduce greenhouse gas pollution, eliminate waste, improve energy and water performance, and leverage Federal purchasing power to support innovation and entrepreneurship in clean energy technologies and environmentally-responsible products.

- a. All new planned facilities will be “green” as defined by the Guiding Principles for Federal Leadership in High Performance and Sustainable Buildings. These buildings will employ integrated design principles, optimize energy efficiency, use renewable energy, protect and conserve water, have improved indoor environmental quality, and reduce the environmental impacts of materials.

FY13 Goal – Ensure future visitor center design incorporates “green” design.

- b. Reduce our “per-use” use of potable water in existing facilities by 10 percent over present.

Strategic Goal 2 – Natural and Cultural Resources

Restore and enhance the preserve’s rich natural, cultural and historic resources for sustainable use and enjoyment by present and future generations of Americans.

Natural and Cultural Resources – Performance Goals

Natural Resources Restoration and Stewardship

Move the condition of forests at a landscape scale towards a condition that, to the best of our collective knowledge, is sustainable and resilient in the event of natural disturbance.

- a. Complete the Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision for the restoration and stewardship of natural resources in FY 2013 and initiate restoration activities.

FY13 Goal – Complete the Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision for the restoration and stewardship of natural resources by the end of the 3rd quarter of FY13.

- b. Expand contracting capabilities to assist with restoration and rehabilitation activities, including “goods for services” contracts by 2013.

FY13 Goal – Develop a stewardship agreement with local businesses/enterprise

- c. Benefit local communities and businesses through direct and indirect income and jobs and non-monetary contributions now and into the future.

FY13 Goal – Develop a “stewardship” agreement with local enterprise(s)

- d. Thin 30 percent of dense, young forests and reduce the crown-fire potential by 30% by 2018.

FY13 Goal – Thin 500 acres in 2013

- e. Establish a transparent record of accomplishment and monitoring, including State of the Preserve reports in 2012 and 2017.

FY13 Goal – Report the accomplishments through the annual Report to Congress as well as with the USDA Forest Service annual report system.

Cultural Resources Protection and Preservation

Investigate, interpret, and restore the layers of human occupancy and use on the preserve.

- a. Programmatic agreement for NHPA Section 106 procedures and project level agreements in place for landscape restoration and public access and use programs with the State Historic Preservation Office and interested Tribal Governments by 2013.

FY13 Goal – Complete the programmatic agreements for Public Access and Use EIS when the Record of Decision is made and Landscape Restoration Programmatic Agreement when the Record of Decision is made. Complete a preserve-wide programmatic agreement by the end of FY 2013.

- b. Restoration/preservation actions are completed on at least two historic structures by 2015.

FY13 Goal – Define two historic structures and develop the funding strategy for both.

- c. Complete archaeological surveys on 30 percent of the preserve by 2018.

FY13 Goal – Complete survey on $\geq 2\%$ of the preserve.

- d. Public interpretation and education programs established by 2014.

FY13 Goal – Coordinate and integrate cultural interpretation/education programs with VCT education/interpretation coordinator.

Strategic Goal 3 - Financial Sustainability

Financial Sustainability Performance Goals

Revenue Optimization

Optimize the generation of income from public programs for access and use to the extent that it does not unreasonably diminish the long-term scenic and natural values of the area unduly exclude or limit public access to and enjoyment of the preserve.

- a. Achieve 100 percent cost-recovery for all expenses associated with revenue generating programs by the end of FY 2015.

FY13 Goal – Define the strategy for measuring cost recovery on all revenue programs.

- b. Achieve greater than 50 percent occupancy of lodging facilities by the end of FY 2015.

FY13 Goal – Achieve 30% or > occupancy on all revenue lodging facilities.

- c. Increase participation in public programs to 80 percent of capacity by the end of FY 2018 based on supporting infrastructure.

FY13 Goal – Define capacity for current public programs – strive for 50% or > occupancy on all programs.

- d. Assure customers will, on average, be satisfied with the quality of their visits and experience and the fees charged based on survey results.

FY13 Goal - Establish a customer satisfactory survey for all preserve public programs.

Philanthropic Support and Commercial Investment

Develop philanthropic support and commercial investment for the programs and management of the facilities, lands and resources of the preserve.

- a. Recover at least 50 percent of all costs for restoration and rehabilitation operational and monitoring costs through grants, donations volunteer efforts, and partnerships with non-governmental organizations.

FY13 Goal - Recover 50% or > of all costs for restoration/rehabilitation operational and monitoring. Provide documentation to confirm.

- b. Acquire 25 percent of design and build costs through philanthropic and commercial sources.

FY13 Goal - Complete the Environmental Impact Statement for a visitor center and ancillary facilities and improvements and initiate the process for survey and design of the visitor center through philanthropic sources.

Benefit Local Communities and Business

Contribute to the cultural riches and entrepreneurial efforts of the communities surrounding the preserve.

- a. Participate in local and regional tourism committees and partnerships.

FY13 Goal - Participate and track the levels of participation in local and regional tourism committees and partnerships.

- b. Have positive, measurable socio-economic impact at local and regional scales.

FY13 Goal - Develop a tracking method to measure socio-economic impacts at the local and regional scale.

- c. Increase the amount of stream discharge from the preserve through the Jemez Valley within restored watersheds by 10 percent by 2018.

FY13 Goal - Develop a model to demonstrate the amount of (water) stream discharge from the VCNP through the Jemez Valley by the use of instrumentation and log all data for verification.

Conclusion

Fiscal year 2012 was a year of challenges, renewal and redirection. The Las Conchas Fire that scorched 30,000 acres of the preserve in 2011 continues to have a profound impact on both the natural resources and business future of the Valles Caldera Trust. The pending legislation which called for the transfer of the management of the preserve to the National Park Service continued the uncertainty among employees and potential business partners. These challenges, combined with the uncertain economic future of the trust, will likely remain through FY 2013.

The trust staff met these and other challenges head on with a renewed dedication to the experiment in public land management. Their guide was a new Strategic Plan that takes into account the recent changes in the political, economic and ecological landscapes. The plan outlines the transition from interim management of the preserve to a more comprehensive approach and provides a strategic roadmap for management through FY 2018.

The transition will allow us to build on the successes of the early years and provide a direction to achieve the goals listed in the Valles Caldera Preservation Act of 2000. In conclusion, when one considers the natural, political and economic challenges that faced the agency during a year of transition, the accomplishments of the trust and the staff in 2012 were nothing less than outstanding.