

The Valles Caldera Preservation Act, Pub. L. 106–248.

**100.2 Purpose.** To implement the comprehensive management of the lands, resources, and facilities of the Valles Caldera National Preserve and achieve the purposes of NEPA, it is necessary and appropriate to establish these procedures. It is the intent of the Trust and managers of the Preserve to:

(a) Integrate the principles and requirements of NEPA with the planning and decisionmaking processes of the Trust;

(b) Implement these procedures to make the NEPA process more useful to decisionmakers and citizens by eliminating unwanted paperwork and utilizing a wide variety of means to gain understanding of the human environment and natural resources of the Preserve and communicate this to the public;

(c) Ensure that environmental information is readily available in a variety of useful forms to decisionmakers and citizens before decisions are made, and ensure that environmental information is utilized to guide adaptive management during and after actions are taken; and

(d) Adopt these procedures in supplement to the regulations at 40 CFR parts 1500 through 1508, referred to as the CEQ regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of the NEPA.

## **101 Integration of NEPA with Planning and Decisionmaking of the Trust**

### **101.1 Purposes and Principles**

(a) The findings of Congress (Public Law 106–248, Title I, section 102) describe the unique character of the Valles Caldera. The purposes for management of the Preserve and the management authorities of the Valles Caldera Trust are described in Title I, section 105 and section 106 of Public Law 106–248. The comprehensive management of the lands, resources, and facilities of the Preserve is achieved through strategic guidance and stewardship actions authorized by the Trust's Board of Trustees.

(b) Citizens play a vital role in the overall management, use, and enjoyment of the Preserve.

(c) Monitoring and evaluation of stewardship actions, research, and detailed studies provide the public and the Trust with the basis for adapting on-going and future stewardship actions to achieve the goals of the Trust and the requirements of NEPA.

(d) Stewardship of the Preserve addresses all programs of the Preserve with the recognition that the whole is

greater than the sum of the parts.

Management of the Preserve is guided by the following management principles describing the values of the Trust and vision adopted by Board of Trustees on December 13, 2001:

(1) We will administer the Preserve with the long view in mind, directing our efforts toward the benefit of future generations;

(2) Recognizing that the Preserve imparts a rich sense of place and qualities not to be found anywhere else, we commit ourselves to the protection of its ecological, cultural, and aesthetic integrity;

(3) We will strive to achieve a high level of integrity in our stewardship of the lands, programs, and other assets in our care. This includes adopting an ethic of financial thrift and discipline and exercising good business sense;

(4) We will exercise restraint in the implementation of all programs, basing them on sound science and adjusting them consistent with the principles of adaptive management;

(5) Recognizing the unique heritage of northern New Mexico's traditional cultures, we will be a good neighbor to surrounding communities, striving to avoid negative impacts from Preserve activities and to generate positive impacts;

(6) Recognizing the religious significance of the Preserve to Native Americans, the Trust bears a special responsibility to accommodate the religious practices of nearby tribes and pueblos, and to protect sites of special significance;

(7) Recognizing the importance of clear and open communication, we commit ourselves to maintaining a productive dialogue with those who would advance the purposes of the Preserve and, where appropriate, to developing partnerships with them;

(8) Recognizing that the Preserve is part of a larger ecological whole, we will cooperate with adjacent landowners and managers to achieve a healthy regional ecosystem;

(9) Recognizing the great potential of the Preserve for learning and inspiration, we will strive to integrate opportunities for research, reflection and education in the programs of the Preserve; and

(10) In providing opportunities to the public we will emphasize quality of experience over quantity of experiences. In so doing, while we reserve the right to limit participation or to maximize revenue in certain instances, we commit ourselves to providing fair and affordable access for all permitted activities.

### **101.2 Terminology**

**Adaptive Management.** "Adaptive management" means adjusting stewardship actions or strategic guidance based on knowledge gained from new information, experience, experimentation, and monitoring results, and is the preferred method for managing complex natural systems.

**Environmental documents.**

"Environmental documents" include the documents specified in 40 CFR 1508.9 (environmental assessment), 1508.11 (environmental impact statement), 1508.13 (finding of no significant impact), and 1508.22 (notice of intent).

**Extraordinary circumstances.**

"Extraordinary circumstances" means conditions associated with a stewardship action that is normally categorically excluded and recognized as likely to create one or more outcomes that may significantly affect the human environment.

**Finding of no significant impact.**

"Finding of no significant impact" means a document by a Federal agency briefly presenting the reasons why an action, not otherwise excluded (40 CFR 1508.4), will not have a significant effect on the human environment and for which an environmental impact statement therefore will not be prepared. It shall include the environmental assessment or a summary of it and shall note any other environmental documents related to it (40 CFR 1501.7(a)(5)). If the assessment is included, the finding need not repeat any of the discussion in the assessment but may incorporate it by reference (40 CFR 1508.13).

**Goal.** "Goal" means a desirable condition of the Preserve sought by the Trust and/or a desirable condition as described in Public Law 106–248 or within the management principles adopted by the Trust (101.1(d)).

**Human environment.** "Human environment" has the same meaning as that described in the CEQ regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of the NEPA. "Human Environment" shall be interpreted comprehensively to include the natural and physical environment and the relationship of people with that environment. (See definition of "effects" in 40 CFR 1508.8.) This means that economic or social effects are not intended by themselves to require preparation of an environmental impact statement. When an environmental impact statement is prepared and economic or social and natural or physical environmental effects are interrelated, then the environmental