



Valles Caldera National Preserve New Mexico

The Nation's Newest National Preserve



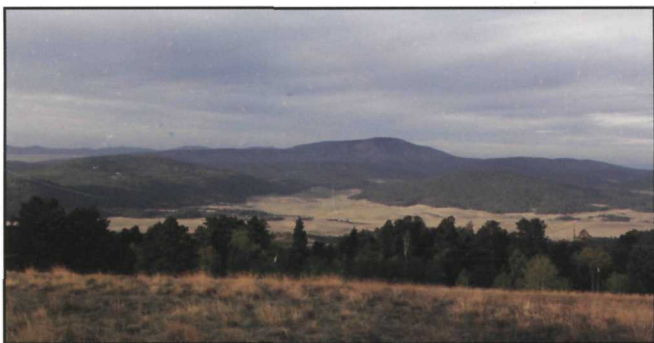
Overlooking the Valle Grande in Valles Caldera National Preserve

Among the newest additions to the National Park System, the 89,000-acre Valles Caldera National Preserve encompasses a dormant volcano that possesses exceptional value in illustrating and interpreting massive explosive volcanic eruptions, caldera formation, and the functioning of active geothermal systems. Its distinct topographic mosaic of expansive valley meadows, or *valles* (va-yes) in Spanish, lush forested volcanic domes, meandering valley streams, and old growth Ponderosa pine groves are in striking contrast to the arid New Mexico landscape at lower elevations.

Patient observers can spot numerous wildlife species such as elk, coyotes, prairie dogs, black bears, bald and golden eagles, wild turkeys, and other migratory birds. History buffs can travel back in time and experience the pre-agricultural hunter-gatherer heritage and learn how the legacy of early Spanish and Mexican settlement in the region transformed the present-day American Southwest.

Recreational activities include hiking, mountain biking, equestrian riding, fishing, scenic drives, as well as crosscountry skiing and snowshoeing in the winter. Valles Caldera National Preserve enchants visitors with its stunning natural beauty and rich human history.

Open daily except on Thanksgiving day and Christmas day. Seasonal hours of operation vary, so please contact us prior to your visit. Visitor services are limited. Please come prepared with food, water and other essentials.



View from the north rim of the caldera

Begin Your Journey

Start at the Valle Grande Contact Station, via the unpaved entrance road off NM State Route 4, near mile marker 39. Personal vehicle access beyond the Contact Station into the backcountry is by permit only when seasonal and road conditions allow.

Directions

- From Albuquerque, NM (2 hours)- Take I-25 North and exit onto US-550 West. Turn right onto NM-4 East and follow to park entrance near mile marker 39.
- From Santa Fe, NM (1.5 hours)- Take US-84/285 North and exit onto NM-502 West. From here you can travel through Los Alamos or White Rock. Take NM-4 West to park entrance near mile marker 39.



For park information:

Valles Caldera National Preserve
P.O. Box 359
Jemez Springs, NM 87025
(575) 829-4100, ext. 3
www.nps.gov/vall
GPS Lat: 35.857 Long: -106.491