

Valles Caldera will always hold a special place.

Human beings probably first moved into the Jemez Mountains about 12 or 13 thousand years ago. It was richly settled by Pueblo Indians in the 13th and 14th centuries, and some of the largest pueblo ruins in the country can be found there. But by the time the Spanish arrived the Pueblo Indians had largely abandoned the mountains, except for seasonal hunting, to build their pueblos along the Rio Grande. The land passed from Mexican to American ownership through the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848.

Baca Location No. 1 was carved out of public land in 1860, to settle a land claim by the Cabeza de Vaca family. Comanches had run the Cabeza de Vacas off their gigantic Las Vegas land grant, and the Mexican government subsequently regranted the land to others. But the American courts found the original grant legal, and to settle it the Baca heirs were given the right to choose an equivalent amount of land elsewhere in the Southwest. No fools, their first choice was the Valles Caldera, hence the name Baca Location No. 1. (There is a Baca Location No. 2 in eastern New Mexico and other Baca locations in Colorado and Arizona.) The first survey indicated the Baca Location No. 1 comprised 99,289 acres.

While the rest of the Jemez remained public, this vast in-holding changed hands several times in the late 19th and early 20th century. In 1962, a young Texas oilman and entrepreneur from Abilene, James P. ("Pat") Dunigan, heard about the ranch and snapped it up for \$2.5 million, out from under the nose of the federal government, which had been trying to buy it from the previous owner. Dunigan was primarily interested in the Baca's potential for geothermal energy extraction and cattle grazing.

The Dunigan family spent every summer thereafter on the ranch, riding, working cattle, camping and going on field trips with environmental and geological organizations. According to his son, Andrew, it was these summers that changed the way Dunigan thought about the land: "The longer he owned the property," Andrew said, "the more he came to realize just what a unique natural asset it was—that its value was enhanced through conservation rather than development or resource exploitation."

As a result, Dunigan made many changes that greatly improved the health of the land. He undertook a long and expensive lawsuit against the New Mexico Timber Company to terminate its logging of the Baca, which had scarred many hillsides with roads and clearcuts. He halted serious overgrazing by reducing the cattle load from 12,000 to 5,000 head. He also successfully fought the Public Service Company of New Mexico's ill-advised OLE plan to run high-tension transmission lines through the Jemez, which would have cut through the Cerro Toledo highlands, one of the most remote and beautiful parts of the ranch. A prescribed burn program helped maintain the balance between grasslands and forests.

Dunigan's efforts created, among other things, a superb habitat for elk. In mid-century, 107 elk from Jackson Hole and Yellowstone had been introduced in the Jemez Mountains. The elk population grew rapidly. It stands at 8,000 today, many of which summer on the Baca's 30,000 acres of grasslands.

According to his family, Dunigan often expressed his hope that the land would end up going to the American people. In late 1978 he began discussing the sale of the ranch to the federal government, but the negotiations ended when Dunigan unexpectedly died in 1980. The Dunigan family reopened discussions with the government in 1997, but they fell apart in early 1999 over issues of confidentiality.

"But there was a realization on everyone's part," says Andrew, "that we had come a long way and that this was such an important thing that it was worth putting aside our differences." This they did, and the Dunigan family and the government agreed on a price. Final negotiations are in progress, and Congress has made steps to appropriate the funding. The Baca acquisition enjoys strong support from almost every organization in the state concerned with land issues, from the Northern New Mexico Stockmen's Association to the Sierra Club. It has the backing of the New Mexico Congressional delegation from both parties, as well as the Clinton administration. Most importantly, it has the strong support of the people of northern New Mexico. This time around, it seems likely that the deal will go through.

The Baca is a magical place, one of the most extensive high-mountain grasslands in the United States. It is a land of deep fir forests shrouded in morning mists; of sweeping meadows dotted with elk and mule deer; of aspen groves that turn the hillsides gold in the fall; of high mountains echoing with the whistling cry of bald eagles; of clear streams alive with jostling trout. Mountain lions, bobcats, pine martens and black bears prowl its mountain slopes. It hosts a number of rare species, including one found only in the area, the Jemez Mountains salamander. It is also a land of hot springs, obsidian beds, Indian ruins and historic buildings—including several decaying movie sets.

The conversion of the Baca to public ownership will involve an experiment unique in the history of public land management. The Baca will become a trust wholly owned by the federal government, called the Valles Caldera Trust. It will remain a working cattle ranch, so far as that is consistent with the preservation of wildlife, scenery and recreation. Within 15 years it is supposed to become self-sufficient financially. The exact details will be worked out by a board of trustees drawn from groups that normally hate each other: ranchers, conservationists, National Park and Forest Service employees, financial experts, game and fish managers, archaeologists, biologists and commodity industry representatives.

Denise McCaig, the Baca acquisition coordinator for the Forest Service who was instrumental in seeing the deal through, called the arrangement unique and challenging. "Having representatives from these different interests could be helpful, but it could also create difficulties. If they can come to this working toward a common objective, it will be good. But if they come to the position working from their own self-interest, they will have problems." She laughed: "Oh yeah, it will be an interesting experiment."

It has the potential, if it works, of becoming a model for cooperation among normally antagonistic groups concerning other public lands.

Over the years, many people have looked longingly over the barbed wire fence that separates N.M. 4 from the Valle Grande and wondered when they would ever have a chance to explore this splendid country. Even after the land goes into public ownership, it will be two years at least before the details of access and use can be worked out by the trustees. When that happens, this magical landscape, born in fire and violence, will finally be opened to the American public.

HONORING THE AMERICAN JAZZ MUSEUM

HON. KAREN MCCARTHY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 15, 2000

Ms. MCCARTHY of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, today the Smithsonian Institute will honor the American Jazz Museum located in Missouri's Fifth District. The American Jazz Museum, previously known as the Kansas City Jazz Museum, is the first museum in the world devoted exclusively to jazz. The gallery showcases the often difficult plight and rare successes of one of America's first original art forms.

The museum, which opened in 1997, is housed in a modern 50,000 square foot complex at the historic 18th and Vine district in Kansas City. Once inside, visitors find interactive exhibits and song samples which tell the story of jazz and its musicians in words, pictures, and sounds. Last year, the complex was visited by more than 350,000 visitors who came from all parts of the city, county, and world to relive the golden age of Kansas City jazz in the 1920's and 1930's. In this era, legendary Kansas City musicians such as Charlie "Bird" Parker, Count Basie, and Jay McShann developed swing and spread the popularity of jazz across the land.

Not only does the museum educate those who come in from the street to learn about jazz, but it also offers 4 symposia each year to learn about a specific jazz musician or topic. These conferences are attended by musicologists and music lovers from around the world. Past symposia have studied Parker, Miles Davis, and the recent revival of swing music. I encourage my colleagues to take a cyber tour of the museum at <http://americanjazzmuseum.com>.

In addition to educating its visitors, the museum has led to a revitalization of the historic area once home to several jazz clubs. The museum itself operates the Gem Theater to showcase today's up and coming musicians. There are now several other clubs and restaurants in the area, with a new commercial and residential complex scheduled to open within the next year. A once deserted urban neighborhood has returned to the days of people streets and late night music as a result of the success of the American Jazz Museum.

A grant from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the Doris Duke Foundation helped the Museum create JazzNet to establish an endowment and support organizations that preserve and present Jazz nationwide. The museum has applied for other grants for various projects including an academic analysis on the lives of jazz musicians. The study would determine working and living conditions of artists in four major cities, and the research team would identify areas in which support for jazz musicians will be most beneficial in furthering their work.

In three short years, the American Jazz Museum has become an impressive institution. It educates its visitors, entertains in its theater, analyzes the music and its musicians, and revitalized a deserted downtown area. Because of all these accomplishments, the American Jazz Museum is most deserving of special recognition from the Smithsonian Institute, and I congratulate them and wish them continuing success.