Laboratory, Valles Caldera sponsor environmental science event

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LOS ALAMOS, New Mexico, July 9, 2009—How would you like to study environmental science in a million-year-old outdoor “classroom?” The Summer Environmental Science Program lets students explore a wide range of science-related topics in the Valles Caldera National Preserve, a vast collapsed volcanic crater ringed by pine-shrouded mountains.

The June 16 workshop is sponsored by Los Alamos National Laboratory and the Preserve. Now in its fifth year, the hands-on science event attracts increasing numbers of middle- and high-school students from Northern New Mexico tribal communities, said event coordinator Barbara Tenorio-Grimes of the Lab’s Government Affairs Office. The program aims to spark students’ interest in math and science, she said. There will be 70 students participating this year.

Scientists from the Lab, the New Mexico Environment Department, and the Valles Caldera National Preserve will volunteer their time to teach students about watershed

hydrology, water quality, wildlife radio telemetry, plant ecology, aquatic and terrestrial invertebrate biology, fish sampling, and Jemez geology.

“We are grateful to the scientists, who volunteer their time in addition to working their regular jobs, and to our other partners—Northern New Mexico College, the Eight Northern Indian Pueblos Education Department, and other tribal education and environmental program departments,” Tenorio-Grimes said. “We couldn’t do this without them.”

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