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June 8, 2006
Immediate Release

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Environment Department Secretary Ron Curry to Deliver Opening Remarks at Chicago Climate Exchange Annual Meeting

(Santa Fe, NM) — New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) Secretary Ron Curry has been asked to deliver the opening remarks at the annual meeting of the Chicago Climate Exchange in Chicago on Tuesday.

Governor Bill Richardson recently made New Mexico the first state in the nation to join the Chicago Climate Exchange, an emissions reduction and trading program. Governor Richardson has also set aggressive statewide greenhouse gas emission reduction targets.

“It is truly an honor for New Mexico to be recognized from among so many forward-thinking institutions and it is because of Governor Richardson’s unrivaled leadership on this issue that we are,” Secretary Curry said. “His vision and commitment to addressing global climate change has put New Mexico in the national spotlight as an example of how state policies can fill the leadership void created in Washington. Through energy policies the Governor has introduced in the last three years, New Mexico is demonstrating that it is possible to cut greenhouse gas emissions, provide incentives for clean energy and generate economic development and jobs at the same time.”

NMED is currently finalizing an emissions inventory for New Mexico government operations that will determine whether the state will need to buy emission credits. Secretary Curry will talk about New Mexico’s efforts to lead by example and how the inventory will be used as a tool for determining where the greatest energy efficiencies in state operations can be achieved for cost savings and emissions reductions.

“We think New Mexico can serve as a model for how the public sector can successfully cut its greenhouse gas emissions and hope to bring other New Mexico municipalities and industries into the Chicago Climate Exchange as members, as well,” Secretary Curry said.

The Chicago Climate Exchange (CCX) is the world’s only greenhouse gas emissions trading program. Members of the initial phase of the program are required to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions 4 percent by December 2006 or buy credits to offset emissions. New Mexico became the first state in the nation committed to being a member when Governor Bill Richardson signed a commitment letter to join in September. The Chicago Climate Exchange includes about 150 members including industry

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(IBM, DuPont, Ford Motor Co.), a number of universities, and municipalities (Chicago, Oakland, Boulder, Portland).

In inviting Secretary Curry to speak, Paula DiPerna, Executive Vice-President of the Chicago Climate Exchange, remarked: "As the first state to join the world's only global emissions trading system, let alone the only such system in the United States, New Mexico occupies an especially honored place at the Annual Meeting." Chicago Mayor Richard Daley gave the opening remarks at last year's annual meeting.

Information on the Chicago Climate Exchange is available online at www.chicagoclimatex.com and details on New Mexico's efforts to curb greenhouse gas emissions can be found at www.nmclimatechange.us.

For further information, contact Adam Rankin, NMED Communications Director, at (505) 827-0314.

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