



BILL RICHARDSON
GOVERNOR

State of New Mexico
ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT
Office of the Secretary
Harold Runnels Building
1190 St. Francis Drive, P.O. Box 26110
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87502-6110
Telephone (505) 827-2855
Fax (505) 827-2836



RON CURRY
SECRETARY

DERRITH WATCHMAN-MOORE
DEPUTY SECRETARY

February 11, 2004
Immediate Release

Contact: Jon Goldstein, NMED Communications Director
Phone: (505) 827-0314

Public Invited to Free Workshop on Smoke Management in Ruidoso

(Santa Fe, NM) — In order to better familiarize the public with changes to the state's smoke management regulations and their long-term benefits to New Mexico's air quality, the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) is hosting a free workshop Tuesday, February 17 from 1:00 to 4:00 pm at the Ruidoso Convention Center in Ruidoso.

The New Mexico Smoke Management Program has been developed in response to federal and state air quality requirements, and applies to all vegetative burns of over 10 acres (or 1,000 cubic feet of pile volume). NMED, working with a diverse group of stakeholders including federal and state land managers, ranchers, farmers, and environmental interests, developed the Smoke Management Program over a six-month period.

"From Zozobra to ranchland, burning has a rich heritage in the State of New Mexico," said Sandra Ely, Chief of NMED's Air Quality Bureau. "For this reason we solicited input from a broad segment of New Mexico's burn community in developing this program. We feel that this has led to a fair and reasonable program that meets the needs of New Mexico's farm and ranch interests while keeping our air clean and healthy."

Air Quality Bureau staff will be available at the workshop to explain the program and respond to questions. Ranchers, farmers, contractors, employees of the U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Lincoln County, local municipalities, the State Forestry Division, local fire departments, the Sheriff's office, and other interested parties are all encouraged to attend.

For more information, contact Jon Goldstein, NMED Communications Director, at (505) 827-0314.

###