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Secretary Curry Issues Statement on Environment New Mexico Report

New Mexico Environment Department Secretary Ron Curry issued the following statement regarding the Environment New Mexico Report:

"The strides the Richardson administration has taken toward protection of New Mexico's water quality are undeniable. We implemented the first two Outstanding National Resource Water designations in the state, we've made the first investment (\$2.3 million) in river rest projects in state history, we've successfully argued before the state court of appeals to preserve protection of the state's ephemeral waters including those that emanate from LANL, and we've made huge strides toward clean water act primacy. Governor Richardson also supports and I have testified before a congressional committee in favor of the Clean Water Restoration Act. We've been extremely aggressive in this area. Until the Richardson Administration took office, the state had made little formal effort to pursue National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Primacy.

We continue to pursue this through community outreach and education.

The lion's share of New Mexico's exceedances in this report are due to one facility: the Ruidoso WWTP. Ruidoso has been out of compliance since the mid-90s under EPA's watch. However, due to the actions of NMED, there is has been great progress in eliminating phosphorus contamination in the Rio Ruidoso. We recently succeeded in bringing the communities to the table to sign an enforceable settlement agreement that puts them on the road to compliance within the next 37 months. If it were not for the efforts of the Environment Department, there would no progress in resolving this issue.

This has been a long time coming, but our efforts will directly result in a cleaner Rio Ruidoso.

New Mexico is home to world class trout streams and some of the most well-known and scenic rivers in the nation and we are constantly at work to protect these rivers from pollution.

We will continue to be diligent in our efforts to protect New Mexico's streams."

For more information, call Marissa Stone at (505) 827-0314 or (505) 231-0475.

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