



Bill Richardson  
Governor

**NEW MEXICO  
ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT**

*Office of the Secretary*

Harold Runnels Building  
1190 Saint Francis Drive (87505)  
PO Box 26110, Santa Fe, NM 87502  
Phone (505) 827-2855 Fax (505) 827-2836  
[www.nmenv.state.nm.us](http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us)



Ron Curry  
Secretary  
Jon Goldstein  
Deputy Secretary

April 21, 2009  
For Immediate Release

Contact: Marissa Stone, NMED Communications Director  
(505) 827-0314 or (505) 231-0475

**NMED's Environment and Energy Policy Coordinator Receives EPA Climate Protection Award at Kennedy Center**

*Sandra Ely is Recognized among World's Leading Climate Change Experts and Innovators*

(Santa Fe, N.M.) The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recognized New Mexico Environment Department Environment and Energy Policy Coordinator Sandra Ely for her outstanding work on climate change issues for the state and across the nation.

Ely, who received the EPA's Climate Protection Award, worked hard over the years to advance technical knowledge relating to greenhouse gas emissions and to promote best practices in clean energy and climate change policies. Ely received the prestigious award today at the Kennedy Center for Performing Arts in Washington, D.C.

"With this award, the EPA has recognized what New Mexico already knows- that Sandra is among the world's best when it comes to clean energy and climate change issues," Governor Richardson said. "Her innovative work has helped keep New Mexico a leader in this critically important field and will ultimately help create a prosperous future based on efficient and sustainable technology."

"Sandra's tenacity, humility and hard work have helped New Mexico become a model for other states in its climate change initiatives," said New Mexico Environment Department Secretary Ron Curry. "She assisted in building consensus across parties from diverse interests in New Mexico to arrive at solutions to combat global warming in our state."

EPA bestows the award on outstanding individuals, companies and organizations from around the world who advance climate science, slash energy consumption, invent technologies that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and inspire others to take action.

Ely played a key part in New Mexico's decision to become the first state in the U.S. to join the Chicago Climate Exchange, a greenhouse gas emissions reduction and trading program. She also facilitated the New Mexico Climate Change Advisory Group stakeholder process that identified ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in NM to 2000 levels by 2012, 10 percent below those levels by 2020 and 75 percent below those levels by 2050. Ely expertly managed facilitating that diverse group, which included government agencies,

industry, environment, energy and economic development. That group unanimously approved 67 of 69 recommendations to combat climate change in New Mexico.

Ely helps represent New Mexico on the Western Climate Initiative, which set an overall regional goal to reduce aggregate greenhouse gas emissions by 15 percent below 2005 levels by 2020. She provides technical expertise to that organization for the design and implementation of a regional cap-and-trade program. Ely also represents New Mexico on the EPA's Clean Energy-Environment State Partnership program. Through that program, she works with EPA to advance New Mexico's clean energy and climate change efforts and serves as a leader to other states interested in furthering those goals. She has also advised senior New Mexico state officials who provided testimony to Congress on New Mexico's energy and environmental policies, which serve as model programs for other states.

The EPA also recognized a number of leader states on climate issues with awards this year. Those states worked to develop and implement climate change policies during the past presidential administration when there was a lack of federal leadership on climate issues. Other awardees this year include the City of Berkeley, Calif., the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative and the California Climate Action Team.

The Climate Protection Partnerships Division of the EPA oversees the awards. That program, which was established in 1998, recognizes exceptional leadership, outstanding innovation, personal dedication, and technical achievements in protecting the climate. EPA, through the program, has awarded more than 150 individuals, companies, organizations, and government institutions from eighteen countries, including Australia, Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Costa Rica, France, India, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, South Korea, Sweden, United Kingdom, and the United States. Last year, fifteen individuals and organizations earned the award. EPA assembles an international panel of judges, which represent government, industry and nongovernmental organizations, to select the winners. For more information about the EPA awards, visit [www.epa.gov/cppd/climateawards](http://www.epa.gov/cppd/climateawards) .

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

###