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New Mexico Environment Department Secretary Selects New Environmental Justice and Tribal Liaison

(Santa Fe, N.M.) Milton Bluehouse — who formerly worked in the Navajo Nation Office of Legislative Services — began his job this week as the New Mexico Environment Department's Environmental Justice and Tribal Liaison.

Bluehouse, who has outstanding qualifications and excellent references in New Mexico and nationally, has extensive tribal government and community experience as well as a thorough understanding of Environmental Justice in New Mexico.

"Milton Bluehouse has the skills to help the department integrate Environmental Justice into its departments and programs," said New Mexico Environment Department Secretary Ron Curry. "Milton's background in law, policy and community matters will help him achieve great success facilitating tribal and environmental justice issues for the department."

Bluehouse's responsibilities at the department include handling tribal and community Environmental Justice matters and working with the department's Border Coordinator, who deals with a variety of issues in the U.S./Mexico border region.

Bluehouse, who is a 2004 graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Madison Law School, advised standing committees of the Navajo Nation Council in his former job at the Navajo Nation. He has worked with tribal, federal and state governments and non-governmental organizations in various capacities. That work has included environmental issues, policy and legislation and intergovernmental relations.

"I am sincerely honored to be selected to work on Environmental Justice issues at the New Mexico Environment Department," Bluehouse said. "I look forward to working with New Mexico's Indian Pueblos, Tribes and Nations and New Mexico communities. Environmental Justice is an important issue for all New Mexicans."

The State of New Mexico and the Environment Department place great importance on Environmental Justice.

Governor Bill Richardson issued an Executive Order in 2005 (http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us/Justice/EO_2005_056.pdf) requiring all state agencies, departments, boards and commissions involved in decisions that affect environmental quality and public health to provide "meaningful opportunities for involvement to all people of race, color, ethnicity, religion, income or education."

That order also requires the public dissemination of information through translation of materials in languages other than English.

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