



Bill Richardson  
Governor

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**State Agencies to Hold Public Meetings in Alcalde and Cuba, N.M. on Governor Richardson's Efforts to Designate Outstanding National Resource Waters Statewide**  
*Designation Will be Sought for Rivers and Streams within National Forest Wilderness and Roadless Areas*

**WHAT:** The New Mexico Environment Department, Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department and Department of Game and Fish will hold public meetings on the state's efforts to designate Outstanding National Resource Waters (ONRWs). Governor Bill Richardson announced on Earth Day last year the state's intention to seek ONRW designation for surface waters within national forest wilderness and inventoried roadless areas in New Mexico. The Governor's initiative includes waters located in wilderness and inventoried roadless areas within the Greater Gila, Lower Canadian, Rio Chama, Upper Rio Grande, Middle Rio Grande, Upper Pecos, and Greater Sacramento watersheds. The meetings will provide an opportunity for the public to learn more about ONRWs, discuss concerns about proposed ONRW nominations, and get information about proposed ONRW designations in wilderness and roadless areas.

**WHY:** ONRWs are waters that receive special protection against degradation under New Mexico's water quality standards and the federal Clean Water Act. Waters eligible for ONRW designation include those that are part of a national or state park, wildlife refuge or wilderness areas, special trout waters, waters with exceptional recreational or ecological significance, and high quality waters that have not been significantly modified by human activities. ONRW designation provides the highest level of water quality protection in New Mexico. Designation benefits all users of the water, including any downstream users, by protecting against water quality degradation. ONRWs are often headwater streams that ultimately feed municipal drinking water systems and irrigation uses. Additionally, wildlife and aquatic species benefit from ONRW designation because headwater streams provide irreplaceable habitat.

**WHERE and WHEN:**

Alcalde area – From 6 to 8 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 7 at the Alcalde Community Center. To get to the community center, turn left off N.M. 68 onto County Road 41A (main Alcalde entrance), proceed about a third of a mile and the center is on the right.

Cuba area – From 6 to 8 p.m. Tuesday Jan. 13, 2008 at the Cuba Senior Citizens Center within the Cuba Village Office complex at 16 Cordova Street. To get to the Village Office Complex, turn east on Cordova just north of the Cuba Post Office. The center is on the right, about 1/4 mile east of Hwy 550

For more information, contact Marcy Leavitt at (505) 827-1758 or [Marcy.Leavitt@state.nm.us](mailto:Marcy.Leavitt@state.nm.us), or visit <http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us/swqb/onrw/index.html> .

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