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Environment Department Issues Revised Draft Dairy Regulations, Announces Upcoming Stakeholder Negotiations

Regulations Include Additional Permitting Requirements for Dairies in New Mexico

(Santa Fe, NM) – The New Mexico Environment Department – based on feedback from public and advisory committee meetings around the state – issued a revised discussion draft of regulations that will govern requirements for the state’s dairies.

The department invites members of the public to review and comment on the revised discussion draft of dairy regulations.

“Our meetings with residents and stakeholders have been successful and we look forward to receiving feedback about the revised regulations,” said New Mexico Environment Department Secretary Ron Curry. “Dairy requirements are designed to protect our drinking water resources while also giving the dairy industry the upfront understanding of environmental requirements they requested.”

The regulations, which are available at <http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us/gwb/documents/RevisedDairyRegs.pdf> , include requirements for protective liners for wastewater storage lagoons and an early warning system of sentry wells to monitor and protect underground aquifers from pollution.

New regulations are required as a result legislation passed in the last session, Senate Bill 206. That bill created changes to the state Water Quality Act and requires the state Water Quality Control Commission to adopt regulations to identify requirements for the discharge of dairy wastewater to protect groundwater quality and provide the dairy industry with clearly identified requirements.

The department, which released an initial discussion draft of dairy regulations for public comment on May 22, held five meetings on the regulations in June in Hobbs, Clovis, Roswell,

Las Cruces and Los Lunas. The public offered feedback concerning the discussion draft at those meetings. Secretary Curry established also an advisory committee, which met three times in June and July to advise the NMED on appropriate dairy regulations.

Written comments on the revised discussion draft may be submitted to the department by e-mail at dairy.regs@state.nm.us , or mailed to “New Mexico Environment Department – Ground Water Quality Bureau, P.O. Box 5469, Santa Fe, NM 87502-5469.” Written comments must be submitted by Sept. 8.

The department will hold stakeholder negotiations from Oct.15 through Nov. 30. The department invites any stakeholders who wish to participate in the negotiations to contact the NMED by Sept. 8. Please contact Bill Olson, Chief of the NMED Ground Water Quality Bureau, at (505) 827-2919.

According to the regulation development schedule approved by the WQCC, a public hearing before the WQCC is scheduled to begin on March 9, 2010. Public notice regarding the public hearing and hearing participation is scheduled to be published by Feb. 1, 2010.

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

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