

State of New Mexico

Office of the Governor

Bill Richardson
Governor

For immediate release
5/2/03

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GOVERNOR BILL RICHARDSON OFFERS STATE HELP TO ELEPHANT BUTTE

SANTA FE - Governor Bill Richardson met today with the mayors of Elephant Butte and T or C to discuss options for state assistance to the area.

Governor Richardson issued the following statement during a news conference in Santa Fe:

New Mexico's in a drought. When I took office in January we were faced with some tough decisions. It's going to take leadership - at the state and local levels - to find solutions we can all live with during these arduous times. We won't prosper with communities fighting against communities.

The reality is - there is not enough water. We have 11,500 farmers in middle Rio Grande and 8,500 New Mexico farmers in the Hatch and Mesilla valleys who also depend on water.

However, I am committed to making sure Elephant Butte gets the state help it needs. I am joined today by the mayors of Elephant Butte and T or C. They have convinced me that they are prepared to work with the state to do what it takes to make this a successful season at the lake.

Even in 1977, when water levels were at their lowest levels, Elephant Butte still attracted nearly 2-million people.

But we also have to look at the long-range economic vitality of the region. That's why it's imperative that we send front-line help to Elephant Butte. I will send top officials from the Economic Development Department, Tourism, State Parks and Energy & Mineral Services Department.

Elephant Butte is our premier lake resort. We need to reassure the public that Elephant Butte is open and ready to serve the public during the summer months. It's time to look ahead, and focus our energy on making the best of a drought that is affecting every New Mexico community.

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