



State of New Mexico

Office of the Governor

Bill Richardson
Governor

For immediate release

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4/13/04

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Governor Bill Richardson asks President Bush for Formal Emergency Declaration

SANTA FE - Governor Bill Richardson today sent a letter to President Bush asking that he formally declare a Major Disaster for the State of New Mexico to free up federal money to help cover the costs related to last week's weather-related disasters across the state.

The Governor sent the request to the White House immediately following a preliminary survey of damages by joint, federal, state and local emergency management officials.

Governor Richardson last week declared a State Disaster in Eddy, San Miguel, Mora, and Bernalillo Counties as a result of damage from severe storms that hit the state starting April 2. Those counties are eligible to receive \$1.5 million in state assistance to help cover cleanup costs. But because initial damage estimates have climbed to more than \$2 million statewide, Governor Richardson decided to ask the President for additional help from the federal government.

"I have determined that this incident is of such severity and magnitude that effective response is beyond the capabilities of the State and the affected local governments and that supplementary Federal assistance is necessary," Governor Richardson wrote in the letter to the President.

The Carlsbad Irrigation district was also severely impacted, including multiple levee breaches. Severe damage in Bernalillo County included numerous large sinkholes impacting utilities and major roads and washouts and mudslides impacting other major roads. Widespread damage to power utilities occurred in Mora and San Miguel Counties, including broken power poles, water outages, and large areas of isolated residents.

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