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News Release

**GOVERNOR BILL RICHARDSON ANNOUNCES SETTLEMENT WITH BURLINGTON
NORTHERN AND SANTA FE RAILWAY TO CLEANUP ALBUQUERQUE SUPERFUND SITE.**

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Governor Bill Richardson and Natural Resource Trustee Jim Baca have announced a settlement agreement under which the Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway (BNSF) will cleanup the AT & SF Albuquerque Superfund Site. The settlement was reached in a cooperative effort with BNSF, the Department of the Interior-Fish and Wildlife Service, and the New Mexico Office of Natural Resource Trustee. The agreement specifies that BNSF will fund a \$1.1 million restoration of groundwater and wildlife resources in the region. BNSF will also reimburse New Mexico, EPA and DOI for all costs incurred in the pursuit of the settlement.

The site is currently part of the Environmental Protection Agency's Superfund Program. Immediate cleanup has been conducted for surface contaminants, and a long-term groundwater cleanup project is to be conducted under the oversight of the Environmental Protection Agency and the New Mexico Environment Department.

Governor Bill Richardson said, "This cooperative process has been a winner for all involved. We have managed to stay out of costly litigation while ensuring this site is cleaned up, and the groundwater and habitat restored at no additional expense to taxpayers. I want to thank all of the Federal and State Agencies who worked closely together on this case and I wish to congratulate BNSF on being responsive and helpful in this settlement."

State Natural Resource Trustee Jim Baca added, "Our fellow trustees at the Federal level, the Department of Justice and BNSF worked together in good faith to reach this agreement. It is fair for everyone involved. We will be announcing soon some possible restoration projects for groundwater and wildlife in the vicinity of Albuquerque's South Valley."

"This was a win-win situation for the natural resources and BNSF," stated H. Dale Hall, Regional Director, of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Southwest Region, who is acting as Authorized Official for the Department of the Interior. "Through BNSF's contributions, the natural resource trustees will facilitate a restoration project that provides benefits for all wildlife, especially migratory birds."

EPA Region 6 Administrator Richard Green praised both BNSF's commitment to such an important cleanup and the extraordinary coordination between Federal and State agencies involved in the settlement.

The BNSF's predecessor, The Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway Co., operated a wood treatment plant at the Site from approximately 1908-1972. These operations resulted in contamination of soil and groundwater at the Site with creosote and other contaminants. The city of Albuquerque pumps water from the contaminated aquifer for its public water supply.