

# State of New Mexico

## *Office of the Governor*

**Bill Richardson**  
Governor

For immediate release  
February 1, 2007

Contact: Jon Goldstein  
(Santa Fe) 505-476-2248

### **Governor Richardson Supports \$11 Million in Needed Southern New Mexico Projects**

(Santa Fe, NM) – Governor Bill Richardson today highlighted his support for \$4 million in state funding for two needed projects in the southern Dona Ana County community of Sunland Park, \$1 million for solar-powered water meters at the Elephant Butte Irrigation District, and \$6 million to extended needed infrastructure to colonia communities.

“Dona Ana County is the fastest growing county in the state and Southern Dona Ana County is the fastest growing area,” said Governor Richardson. “This growth is positive, it means more jobs and more opportunity, but it also means more strain on your infrastructure. These projects will keep Southern Dona Ana County moving forward and extend services to residents.”

In the 2007 session, the Governor will support a \$3 million investment in a new sports complex to serve the people of Sunland Park and Southern Dona Ana County and a \$1 million investment in the City of Sunland Park’s water system to improve water delivery to this growing community. The Governor’s budget priorities also include a \$6 million capital investment in colonias infrastructure improvements. This will build upon what is already a successful program extending water and wastewater infrastructure to New Mexico’s neediest communities. And Governor Richardson today announced support for a \$1 million proposal to help equip the Elephant Butte Irrigation District with water meters and solar-powered reporting devices to help conserve precious water resources.

“Your sports complex will include a community center, swimming pool, basketball courts and soccer fields to help give your children positive after-school activities close to home,” Governor Richardson said today in a Las Cruces press conference. “Your water infrastructure improvements will help make sure your water system meets tough new federal arsenic requirements, and delivers clean, healthy water to residents. And, the colonias infrastructure funding will continue to protect the health and environment of citizens throughout Southern New Mexico.”

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, colonias are low income, unincorporated subdivisions located near the U.S.-Mexico border. They are characterized

by substandard housing, inadequate plumbing and sewage disposal systems, and inadequate access to clean water.

In 2006 Governor Richardson's Colonias Infrastructure Initiative distributed almost \$5.9 million to 15 colonias projects in New Mexico to address water, wastewater, street repair, and other needs. This state investment leveraged an additional \$27 million from other funding sources.

#30#