



For Immediate Release  
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## **Governor Bill Richardson Requests Special Rules for Oil and Gas Activity in Areas of Rio Arriba County**

SANTA FE – Governor Bill Richardson today directed the Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department’s Oil Conservation Division to propose new rules for portions of Rio Arriba County to protect water resources, human health, and the environment. This decision was prompted by recent oil and gas activity in Eastern Rio Arriba County that demonstrated the need to respect the unique hydrologic and cultural resources of this area.

“I have directed the Oil Conservation Division to develop requirements designed to protect our limited water resources and traditional water uses,” Governor Richardson said. “It is important that we identify and thoroughly scrutinize proposed drilling in highly sensitive areas like portions of the Chama Watershed.”

Rio Arriba County is no stranger to oil and gas activity with considerable development in the western half of the county. However recent exploration in the Rio Chama Water shed and the eastern half of the county have demonstrated the need to examine exploration and drilling practices as they apply to this area.

The Oil Conservation Division will immediately begin the process of formulating proposed regulations to implement the Governors directive. These proposals will then be presented to the Oil Conservation Commission which will begin the formal rule making procedures.