

**For Immediate Release**

**August 14, 2008**

President Approves Governor Bill Richardson's Request for Disaster Declaration for Lincoln & Otero Counties

SANTA FE- Governor Bill Richardson today was notified that President George W. Bush has declared a disaster in Lincoln and Otero counties due to severe flooding that occurred in July. The declaration makes federal assistance available to both counties to cover the costs of emergency work and the repair or replacement of disaster damaged public facilities and infrastructure, including roads and bridges. The administration denied the Governor's request for Individual Assistance, which provides funding to help individuals and households.

"This assistance is critical to help the affected communities in Lincoln and Otero counties continue cleaning up and rebuilding after these devastating floods," said Governor Richardson. "I am grateful for this declaration. However, I am deeply disappointed that it did not include individual assistance. I have instructed the Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHSEM) to review this decision and explore every possible option to obtain additional assistance for our citizens."

Federal disaster funding is provided on a 75%-25% federal-state matching basis. Governor Richardson originally declared a disaster in Lincoln and Otero counties, making state emergency funding available for this purpose.

More than 200 homes in the Ruidoso area were severely damaged or destroyed by the flooding, which was caused by the remnants of Hurricane Dolly. Hundreds of residents had to be evacuated, and more than a dozen bridges were washed out by the floodwaters. Businesses and agricultural land in the area were also damaged.

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