

May 20, 2009

Contact: Marissa Stone, NMED Communications Director

For Immediate Release

(505) 827-0314 or (505) 231-0475

Environment Secretary Tours Santa Fe National Forest's Jemez Ranger District to View Impacts to Surface Water and Soil from Illegal OHV Use

Environment Department Will Request EPA's Assistance in Addressing Issues

(Santa Fe, NM) New Mexico Environment Department Secretary Ron Curry recently toured the Jemez Ranger District of the Santa Fe National Forest to view impacts on surface water and soil that developed because of the unauthorized use of off-highway vehicles in the area.

Secretary Curry and Water and Waste Management Development Division Director Marcy Leavitt observed streams and numerous trails that have been severely damaged by the illegal use of those vehicles in prohibited areas.

“We have concerns about the damaging effects of off-road vehicle use on water quality and streams in the Santa Fe National Forest,” said New Mexico Environment Department Secretary Ron Curry. “We will continue to monitor those areas and request assistance from EPA to address concerns.”

Secretary Curry in a recent letter to the U.S. Forest Service (attached) asked that agency to address harm to human health and the environment caused by unmanaged motorized recreation. User-created roads and trails typically lack design elements and best management practices that reduce their impact on air quality, water resources and the ecosystem.

For more information, call Marissa Stone at (505) 827-0314.