State of New Mexico

Office of the Governor

Bill Richardson
Governor

June 29, 2009

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
U. S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Room 200
Washington, D.C. 20250

RE: Request for Secretarial Disaster Designation

Dear Secretary Vilsack:

Pursuant to your Secretarial authority, I write to request you designate a natural disaster area in the State of New Mexico to include the Counties of Otero, Lincoln, De Baca, Roosevelt, Lea, Eddy, and Chaves, as primary counties and Dona Ana, Torrance, Guadalupe, Quay, Curry, Sierra, and Socorro, as contiguous counties. This request comes as the result of damages incurred following a prolonged and severe drought and high winds that occurred from October 1, 2008 to present and continue.

All these counties in New Mexico have suffered significant physical and production losses to agriculture due to high temperatures, high winds, and prolonged lack of precipitation. Hay, pasture, and forage crops have been most acutely affected. Also, as a result of the drought, extreme fire danger exists across these counties. These drought conditions are forecasted to continue well into the coming months.

Your consideration in this very urgent matter is greatly appreciated. John Wheeler, Director of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, is my designated Governor's Authorized Representative. If you have any questions or require any additional information please do not hesitate to contact me or Mr. Wheeler at (505) 476-1051.

Sincerely,

Bill Richardson

Bill Richardson
Governor of New Mexico

cc: Brenda Archuleta, Acting State Executive Director, New Mexico State FSA
Miley Gonzalez, New Mexico Agriculture Secretary