



**State of New Mexico**  
*Office of the Governor*

**Bill Richardson**

Governor

**Governor Richardson Issues Statement on  
Proposed Desert Rock Energy Facility**

For Immediate Release  
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I am gravely concerned about the potential environmental impacts of the proposed Desert Rock Energy Facility. I firmly believe, as currently proposed, the Desert Rock Energy Facility would be a step in the wrong direction.

I received the results of a scientific review done by the New Mexico Environment Department of the draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the Desert Rock Energy Facility. The EIS fails to adequately address a number of the State's serious concerns. As planned, this new facility will adversely impact air quality, exacerbate existing environment problems, and negatively impact scarce surface and ground water resources. Because Desert Rock has potential statewide impacts, I called

for additional hearings on the draft EIS to be held in Albuquerque and Santa Fe. Per my direction, the New Mexico Environment Department has submitted tough comments to the Bureau of Indian Affairs outlining these serious concerns.

Each new conventional coal plant built without significant carbon dioxide controls is a step backwards and does not move us towards a future of more safe and efficient energy use.. The estimated 12 million tons of carbon dioxide emitted each year from the Desert Rock Energy Facility would increase New Mexico greenhouse gas emissions by about 15 percent, making my aggressive greenhouse gas reduction goals difficult – if not impossible – to meet.

I believe we need to be moving forward, toward new carbon capture ready technologies for power generation, not back to the old dirty coal plants of the past. My administration has taken steps to ensure that any new coal-fired power plants built in New Mexico include the latest carbon clean gasification methods, making up to \$60 million dollars in tax credits available for coal plants that capture at least 60% of carbon emissions.

I hope that the Navajo Nation considers these important concerns of the State and strives to address them. I respect the sovereignty of the Navajo Nation and the rights of tribal governments to determine their economic futures and to pursue positive change within their communities. I understand the dire economic conditions and high unemployment rates on the reservation and respect the Navajo leadership's courage and commitment to bettering the lives of its citizens. While each sovereign may disagree or have concern regarding the other's action, it should not pose a barrier to communicating and discussing those concerns on a government-to-government basis.

To that end, I am directing high-level representatives from my Administration to conduct formal discussions with the Navajo Nation to ensure that the State's concerns regarding this project are understood and considered at this critical stage of the process.

## Global Climate Change Efforts

- On Feb. 26, 2007 signed 5-state Western Regional Climate Action Initiative MOU with Governors of California, Arizona, Oregon, and Washington committing to set regional greenhouse gas reduction goal and establish regional market-based mechanism for achieving the goal  
[http://www.governor.state.nm.us/press/2007/feb/022607\\_01.pdf](http://www.governor.state.nm.us/press/2007/feb/022607_01.pdf)
- Led the nation in becoming the first state to join the Chicago Climate Exchange to state reduce greenhouse gas emissions.  
[http://www.governor.state.nm.us/press/2005/sept/091605\\_1.pdf](http://www.governor.state.nm.us/press/2005/sept/091605_1.pdf)
- Created a Climate Change Advisory Group and stakeholder process to develop recommendations for achieving emissions reduction targets – that effort lasted a year and a half.  
[http://www.governor.state.nm.us/orders/2005/EO\\_2005\\_033.pdf](http://www.governor.state.nm.us/orders/2005/EO_2005_033.pdf)
- Mandated some of the toughest greenhouse gas reduction targets in the country. The Climate Change Advisory Group process and recommendations – started implementing some of their recommendations, including commitment to adopt California clean tailpipe standards.  
[http://www.governor.state.nm.us/orders/2006/EO\\_2006\\_069.pdf](http://www.governor.state.nm.us/orders/2006/EO_2006_069.pdf)
- Joined the largest national effort to take action in global climate change, which measures, tracks, verifies and reports greenhouse gas emissions.  
[http://www.governor.state.nm.us/press/2007/may/050807\\_01.pdf](http://www.governor.state.nm.us/press/2007/may/050807_01.pdf)

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