



**THE
NAVAJO
NATION**

55-17
Navajo St.
PRESIDENT
JOE SHIRLEY, Jr.
VICE PRESIDENT
FRANK J. DAYISH, Jr.

DEC 18 2006

Honorable Bill Richardson, Governor
Office of the Governor
490 Old Santa Fe Trail
Room 400
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Dear Governor Richardson:


The Navajo Nation remains committed to implementing the historic San Juan River Basin in New Mexico Navajo Nation Water Rights Settlement Agreement. Section 5.2 of the Settlement Agreement provides that Congress must enact federal legislation necessary to implement certain provisions by December 31, 2006. Although Senator Bingaman and Representative Udall introduced legislation on December 7, 2006, (S 4108 and HR 6436), Congress has since recessed and it was not possible to meet the December 31, 2006 deadline. Section 5.2 of the Settlement Agreement also provides that the date for enactment of federal legislation shall be extended if reasonably necessary to provide Congress additional time to consider and act upon the legislation. Since we signed the Settlement Agreement in April 2005, our staffs have been working diligently with our congressional delegation staffs to revise the federal legislation and we look forward to continued involvement in the legislative process next year. Because the legislation must be re-introduced next year, during the next Congress, it is appropriate to extend the December 31, 2006 enactment deadline to allow Congress sufficient time to consider and act upon the legislation.

Likewise, it is appropriate to extend the other milestones in the Settlement Agreement accordingly. Section 401(f)(1)(a) of the federal legislation contains deadlines that extend the benchmarks provided for in the Settlement Agreement by two years. An extension of two years is appropriate and will allow us to work with our congressional delegation to develop the political support necessary to enact legislation. At an appropriate time, we can formally amend the Settlement Agreement, subject to the approval of the parties, to conform to any changes made in the authorizing legislation, including any changes in the milestones described in the Settlement Agreement.

Thank you for your continued work on this important Settlement Agreement.

Sincerely,

THE NAVAJO NATION


Joe Shirley, Jr., President


Louis Denetsosie, Attorney General