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 H.R. 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 staff have been working diligently with our congressional delegation 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