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**Governor Bill Richardson & Natural Resources Trustee
Martin Heinrich announce improvements to Cebolleta Land
Grant Wastewater Treatment Plants**

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Contact: Martin Heinrich (505) 259-8155

Governor Bill Richardson and Martin Heinrich, the State Natural Resources Trustee, today announced a \$30,000 initiative to repair and improve wastewater treatment facilities at two sites on the Cebolleta Land Grant north of Laguna. Funding for this project was acquired as part of a settlement with SOHIO Western Mining Company stemming from alleged groundwater contamination at the SOHIO L-Bar uranium tailings facility. The goal of this project is to use settlement funds to protect local groundwater by upgrading liners, sewer lines and other infrastructure at the Bibo and Moquino wastewater treatment plants.

“This project will protect groundwater as well as the health of Seboyeta, Moquino and Bibo citizens,” said Governor Richardson. **“This is a positive development for our citizens and for the environment we all depend on.”**

“It’s great to be able to put this settlement to such a positive use for the Cebolleta Land Grant. The Land Grant has been great to work with and I look forward to helping them improve their wastewater facilities,” said Natural Resources Trustee Martin Heinrich.

This month, members of the Cebolleta Land Grant will begin preliminary work on the Bibo and Moquino plant upgrades, as well as their wastewater collection systems. **“We’ll be able to make much needed upgrades because of this partnership with the state. Our Land Grant members will provide some of the labor to make these improvements and the Trustee’s office will provide the capital. It’s really good news for us,”** said Earl Marquez, president of the Cebolleta Land Grant.

The Office of the Natural Resources Trustee (ONRT) is charged with the restoration of damaged natural resources, and if that is not possible then with the replacement of, or acquisition of, equivalent natural resources and their services, that were lost or impaired due to releases of hazardous substances. When possible ONRT accomplishes these goals through a cooperative process with the responsible parties as this frequently results in more timely restoration project completion.

Any questions regarding the funding and purpose of this project should be directed to Martin Heinrich (505-259-8155) with the Office of Natural Resources Trustee.

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