



**SUSANA MARTINEZ, GOVERNOR**

Ryan Flynn, *Cabinet Secretary-Designate*

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## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **New Mexico Environment Department Issues Determination Of Substantial Public Interest And Public Hearing On Valley Meat Company Permit**

*Public Meeting Will Be Held to Allow Public Input Before Final Determination*

(Santa Fe, NM) - On July 17, 2013, the New Mexico Environment Department took administrative action on Ground Water Discharge Permit DP-236 for Valley Meat Company, LLC, (Valley Meat).

The Environment Department determined the draft permit issued on May 31, 2013 will require a public hearing. The permit request by Valley Meat seeks approval to discharge agricultural wastewater into surface impoundments in Chaves County, New Mexico.

A public hearing will ensure that all interested parties will have an opportunity to state their position on the permit. Currently, the Environment Department is working to set a date for the public hearing. The Environment Department will announce the date(s), location, and time of the public hearing once Valley Meat responds to dates proposed by the Environment Department.

Before making this determination, the department reviewed over 450 public comments submitted during the 30-day public comment period, which began May 31, 2013 and ended July 1, 2013. Because of the public response, and the substance of the comments received, Secretary-Designate Ryan Flynn determined the permit has generated significant public interest warranting a public hearing. This determination, authorized by regulation to be made by the Secretary of the Environment Department, will provide the opportunity for more extensive participation by the public.

“Horses are an important part of our state’s history and of our identity as westerners. The Environment Department has a duty to provide the public with an opportunity to express their views on this important issue before a final decision on the permit is made,” said NMED

Secretary-Designate Ryan Flynn. “The Environment Department will ensure the regulatory process is transparent and fair to all of the interested parties.”

The permit request has received widespread media exposure related to the nature of the proposed facility operations, primarily that of equine slaughter and processing. **PLEASE NOTE: The permit applies strictly to discharge of agricultural wastewater into surface impoundments in Chaves County, New Mexico.**

For more information, call NMED Communications Director Jim Winchester at (505) 231-8800 or the visit the Department’s website at [www.nmenv.state.nm.us](http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us).

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