

Thursday, August 9, 2012

Washington – U.S. Senators Jeff Bingaman, Tom Udall and Congressman Ben Ray Luján announced today that more than \$5 million in federal assistance relief is being made available for Santa Clara and Cochiti Pueblos in an effort to prevent catastrophic flooding in the area.

Santa Clara Pueblo will receive \$4,107,862 in addition to more than \$11 million that was provided by FEMA last month. Cochiti Pueblo will receive \$1,298,291 in federal funds. These vital funds will allow the pueblos to remove and dispose of sediment and debris from retention ponds and in restoring them to pre-disaster condition following the Las Conchas Fire in 2011.

“Santa Clara and Cochiti pueblos are still struggling in the aftermath of last year's devastating Las Conchas fire. This federal funding is an important investment in protecting the pueblos from flooding,” Bingaman said.

“A year after fires and floods swept through and destroyed their forests and canyons, Santa Clara and Cochiti Pueblos have continued to anxiously await the arrival of proper disaster relief funding,” said Udall. “I am happy FEMA has responded to our requests and is taking the necessary steps to quickly release this much needed funding.”

“These critical funds are vital to the ongoing recovery process at Santa Clara and Cochiti Pueblos,” Luján said. “I am pleased that FEMA has provided significant resources that will help these communities prevent devastating flooding, and I hope the State of New Mexico will release the funds without delay.”

Last month, the New Mexico officials wrote a letter to Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar, FEMA Administrator William Fugate and Assistance Secretary of the Army Jo Ellen Darcy asking that federal funding dedicated for flood mitigation and restoration efforts be swiftly released to Santa Clara Pueblo. The latest federal funds will be made available to State of New Mexico administrative agents, who will then distribute the money to the pueblos.

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