

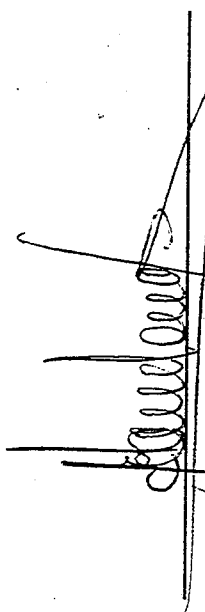
CHIHUAHUA-NEW MEXICO-TEXAS

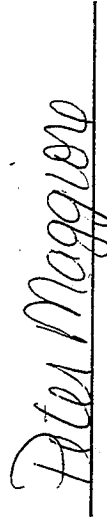
**Strategic Environmental Plan:
A Framework for Cooperation**

June 28, 1999

**Chihuahua-New Mexico-Texas Strategic Environmental Plan
A Framework for Cooperation**

June 28, 1999


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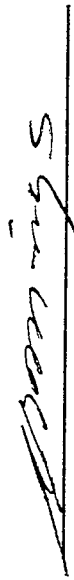

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Chihuahua-New Mexico-Texas Strategic Environmental Plan

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PREFACE

The Chihuahua-New Mexico-Texas Strategic Environmental Plan (the Tri-state Plan) is the result of a commitment made at the *Ten State Retreat: A Regional Approach to the U.S.-Mexico Border Environment* in Austin, Texas in November of 1996. It is the product of a series of meetings, and discussions among the leadership and staff of the Secretariat of Urban Development and Ecology for the State of Chihuahua (SDUE), the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED), and the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC). In particular, environment representatives from the three states met at the Ten State Retreat in Saltillo, Coahuila in October 1998, at a Western Governors' Association (WGA) working lunch in Ensenada, Baja California in May 1999, and at a Tri-state meeting in El Paso, Texas in June 1999.

The intent of the Tri-state Plan is to guide the cooperative efforts of these state environmental agencies into the next century. The Plan establishes a framework for ongoing cooperation by identifying some key strategies and specific actions for current administrations to implement this year and for new administrations to consider in the future. It should be seen as evidence of the commitment of each of the three states to work together for common environmental priorities.

This plan is part of a learning process undertaken by the U.S. and Mexican states sharing the international border and is not comprehensive. Because the three states only addressed issues in the jurisdiction of all three participating entities, the plan does not include all environmental priorities.

The SDUE, the NMED and the TNRCC will each appoint a liaison responsible for the coordination of activities under the Tri-state Plan. The liaisons will organize an annual meeting of the three agencies with the purpose of developing a twelve-month Tri-state action plan with a calendar of prioritized activities and mechanisms to ensure its fulfillment. Progress will be reported at the annual U.S.-Mexico Border Governors' Conference.

The goals of the Tri-state Plan are:

1. To guide effective interagency cooperation and make the best use of existing resources towards multimedia state priorities for environmental protection.
2. To serve as a basis to leverage additional and outside resources to support actions prioritized in this plan.

All three states will develop the following four strategies to meet their common interests:

- Exchange Information
- Facilitate Technical Exchange
- Coordinate Activities and Programs
- Support Existing Mechanisms for Addressing State and Local Priorities and Work Cooperatively with Counterparts in the Border Region.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The unique environmental conditions in the border region shared by the United States and Mexico provide challenges and opportunities to the states and local communities which comprise it. The state governments of Chihuahua, New Mexico and Texas share a commitment for a clean environment. Represented by the Secretariat of Urban Development and Ecology for the State of Chihuahua, the New Mexico Environment Department and the Texas Natural Resources Conservation Commission, these states have outlined specific objectives and areas for cooperation.

The Tri-state Plan is a result of a commitment made by representatives of the state agencies responsible for environmental quality and protection from Arizona, Baja California, California, Chihuahua, Coahuila, New Mexico, Nuevo León, Sonora, Tamaulipas and Texas at the *Ten State Retreat: A Regional Approach to the U.S. Mexico Border Environment* in Austin, Texas on November 18-19, 1996. The governments of each of the three states have maintained this commitment through electoral changes in each state. The objective of the Retreat was to exchange information and agree on actions supporting the environmental issues addressed at the XIV U.S.-Mexico Border Governors' Conference (BGC) on May 31, 1996 in Santa Fe, New Mexico. The state representatives agreed that the most effective way to improve the quality of the environment and to protect the health of the citizens in the border region is through transboundary coordination and collaboration involving state and local governments. The environmental officials from the ten states exchanged information regarding their jurisdictions, successful existing programs and issues facing their agencies. They then identified several areas of cooperation: pollution prevention; data exchange and cooperative information gathering; low cost community-based solutions to environmental problems; and technical exchange and strategy sharing. In a signed document (Appendix A), each of the ten states committed to working together with at least one neighboring state in the following six areas:

1. Establish programs for reduction, reuse and recycling, including water conservation.
2. Develop a border-wide electronic environmental information sharing mechanism, support development of Geographic Information System databases and pursue compatible methods and measures to enable information sharing.
3. Develop programs for volunteers (including professionals), and establish a recognition/awards system.
4. Collaborate with the maquiladoras and other industries as a source of technology and information exchange.
5. Develop state-to-state environmental strategic plans.
6. Develop and implement low cost and clean technologies.

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II. GOALS AND STRATEGIES

The goals of this Tri-state Plan are twofold:

1. To guide effective interagency cooperation and make the best use of existing resources towards multimedia state priorities for environmental protection.
2. To serve as a basis to leverage additional and outside resources to support actions prioritized in this Plan.

The three states agree to prioritize four strategies in their cooperative ventures:

- Exchange Information.
- Facilitate Technical Exchange.
- Coordinate Activities and Programs.
- Support Existing Mechanisms for Addressing State and Local Priorities and Work Cooperatively with Counterparts in the Border Region.

III. ACTION PLAN

STRATEGY 1: Exchange Information

The goals of Strategy 1 are to:

- i. enhance institutional capabilities;
- ii. exchange innovative environmental management approaches;
- iii. share training to broaden the scientific and technical knowledge of staff members, and
- iv. facilitate coordination among the three states in support of common environmental priorities.

▶ ACTIONS

- Develop compatible data collection and exchange methods.
- Exchange information on recognition and awards programs which encourage environmental excellence and contribution to communities, including: the Premio Chihuahua; the Green Zia Environmental Excellence Program in New Mexico; and the Texas Environmental Excellence Award.
- Inform counterparts of upcoming technical conferences in each state.
- Exchange information on transboundary movement of nonhazardous wastes.
- Make the Tri-state Plan available to the public on the Rio Grande Alliance website.
- Hold an annual Tri-state meeting to exchange information, evaluate progress, and identify next steps regarding strategies and actions outlined in this Plan.

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STRATEGY 2: Facilitate Technical Exchange

The goals of Strategy 2 are to:

- i. strengthen the operational framework by providing recommendations for procedures and resource requirements;
- ii. strengthen the institutional framework by improving capacity to conduct comprehensive inspections, enhancing staff productivity and promoting project coordination;
- iii. improve planning capabilities in the prediction of critical air pollution episodes and air emissions inventory development and in the attainment of industrial pretreatment and solid waste management goals;
- iv. improve the scientific base through specialized software management, quality assurance of environmental data and increased knowledge of health effects of environmental pollution;
- v. support pollution prevention efforts among industry;
- vi. promote the application of clean and low cost technology in small communities, and
- vii. expand technical training opportunities.

▶ ACTIONS

- Make technical opportunities for training in each state available to staff in the other two.
- Invite counterparts to participate in environmental conferences and information fairs, such as New Mexico's annual Environmental Conference, TNRCC's annual Solid Waste Options conference, and Chihuahua's Environmental Fair and Recycling Fair (Feria Ecológica y Feria del Reciclado).
- Identify appropriate technologies for applying solar energy to wastewater treatment.
- Facilitate training and technical support to the maquiladora industry.
- Leverage technical assistance for industries on pollution prevention; reduction, reuse, and recycling of wastes and water and energy conservation programs.
- Support public-private partnerships addressing industry and community needs on a regional basis, including the creation of an Advisory Board to support pollution prevention training and implementation among small, medium and large industry in the border region.

STRATEGY 3: Coordinate Activities and Programs

The goals of Strategy 3 are to:

- i. make the best use of state resources;
- ii. create opportunities to expand a border environmental alliance along the U.S.-Mexico border and maintain the momentum of the Ten State Border Environment Dialogue; and
- iii. enhance public awareness and participation in environmental matters.

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▶ ACTIONS

- Develop a Tri-state workplan once a year.
- Organize and celebrate a statewide Recycles Day on November 15, with special attention to the border region, including transboundary initiatives between local communities.
- Report progress to the Governors prior to the annual U.S.-Mexico Border Governors' Conference.

STRATEGY 4: Support Existing Mechanisms for Addressing Local Priorities and Work Cooperatively with Counterparts in the Border Region

The goals of Strategy 4 are to:

- i. leverage additional and outside resources to support actions prioritized in this Plan; and
- ii. support local environmental priorities.

ACTIONS

- Support local priorities of border communities at the Border Environment Cooperation Commission (BECC).
- Participate in, support and facilitate the work of the Joint Advisory Commission (JAC) for the prevention and control of air pollution in the Ciudad Juárez-El Paso-Doña Ana County airshed. The three states consider the JAC's structure and initiatives in the Paso del Norte region a model for bi-national cooperation.
- Develop relationships with counterparts in the environmental agencies of all ten U.S.-Mexico border states in forums including the "Ten State" meetings facilitated by the Western Governors' Association, and the Border Governors' Conference.

**OUTCOMES OF THE TEN STATE RETREAT:
A REGIONAL APPROACH TO THE U.S.-MEXICO BORDER
ENVIRONMENT**

The representatives of the State agencies responsible for environmental quality and protection for the States of ARIZONA, BAJA CALIFORNIA, CALIFORNIA, CHIHUAHUA, COAHUILA, NEW MEXICO, NUEVO LEON, SONORA, TAMAULIPAS and TEXAS came together for a "Ten State Retreat: A Regional Approach to the U.S.-Mexico Border Environment." This meeting was held in Austin, Texas on November 18 -19, 1996. These representatives of the ten States sharing the United States-Mexico border met to agree on actions supporting the environmental issues addressed at the XIV U.S.-Mexico Border Governors' Conference on May 31, 1996 in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

At the Retreat, the representatives agreed that the most effective and efficient means to improve the quality of the environment and to protect the health of our citizens in the border region is through coordination and collaboration. The overall objective of the Retreat was to integrate environmental programs in the border region through increased State-to-State cooperation. To further the Retreat's objective, the State representatives at the Retreat developed specific Joint Activities that represent a model of cooperation. With the assistance of the Western Governors' Association, a progress report on the Joint Activities will be presented to the Governors at the XV U.S.-Mexico Border Governors' Conference scheduled for June 5-6, 1997 in Torreón, Coahuila.

JOINT ACTIVITIES

The representatives of the States at the Retreat agreed that the following activities between the U.S. and Mexican border states will move us toward greater integration of environmental programs:

1. Establish programs for reuse, reduction, and recycling, including water conservation.
2. Develop a border-wide environmental information sharing mechanism, support development of Geographic Information System databases and pursue compatible methods and measures to enable information sharing.
3. Develop programs for volunteers (including professionals), and establish a recognition/award system.
4. Collaborate with the maquiladoras and other industries as a source of technology and information exchange.
5. Develop state-to-state environmental strategic plans.
6. Develop and implement low-cost and clean technologies.

APPENDIX A

Additionally, the state representatives identified other state-to-state activities in which two or more states are involved or which they may pursue in the future.

- Ensure wastewaters are treated, including the control of non-domestic discharges in municipalities, and improve the condition and coverage of treatment plants.
- Promote public education and outreach, including schools.
- Identify resources to implement environmental programs.
- Create and support regional centers of information.
- Develop recycling workshops.
- Leverage conventional and non-conventional resources and funds from both private and public sectors.
- Develop and implement "Train the Trainers" programs in all media.
- Develop personnel exchange programs.

JOINT REQUEST TO THE U.S.-MEXICO BORDER GOVERNORS

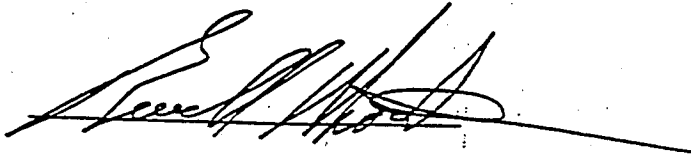
In addition to the Joint Activities, the State representatives at the Retreat agreed to recommend the following to the U.S.-Mexico Border Governors:

- At the next meeting of the U.S.-Mexico Governors' Conference include a session on environmental issues to which the leaders of both federal environmental agencies as well as representatives from the World Bank, the U.S. Department of Treasury, Mexico's Ministry of Finance, the U.S. State Department, and Mexico's Ministry of Foreign Relations will be invited. This meeting will serve to further a more meaningful participation by the states in the programs of the Border Environment Cooperation Commission, the North American Development Bank, the Commission for Environmental Cooperation, and Border XXI to increase the effective allocation of resources.
- Recognizing the uniqueness of the border area and that resources and environmental regulations are more effectively directed by regional and local entities, promote a refocus of resources to regionally and/or locally based solutions.
- To request a review of procedures to improve the efficiency by which World Bank funds are distributed to the Mexican states and, where applicable, raise environmental budget ceilings.
- To achieve sustainable development, promote on-the-ground environmental improvements. In addition, this important to protect NAFTA's historical precedent of including environmental concerns in international trade agreements.
- To promote the use of common technical terms and methods by federal environmental agencies.
- To continue to support the agreements reached at the previous Border Governors' Conferences.

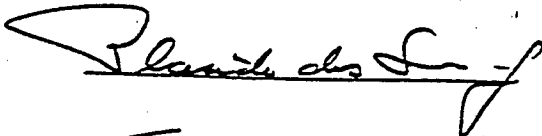
UNITED STATES

ARIZONA

Russell Rhoades, Director
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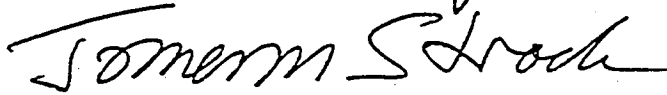


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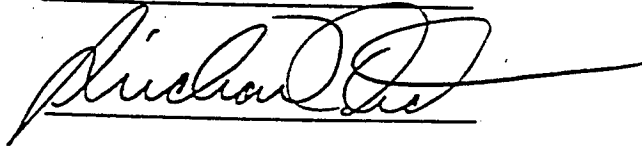


CALIFORNIA

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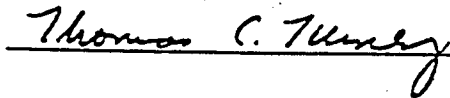


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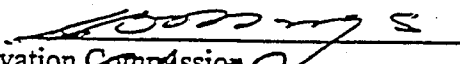


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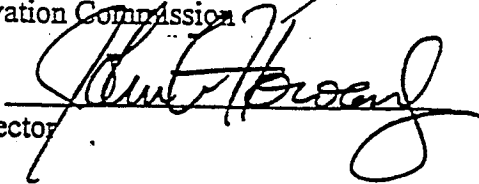


TEXAS

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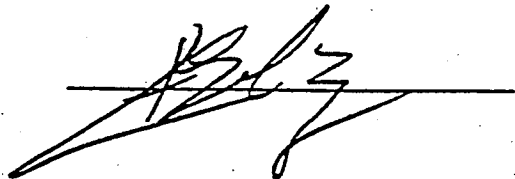
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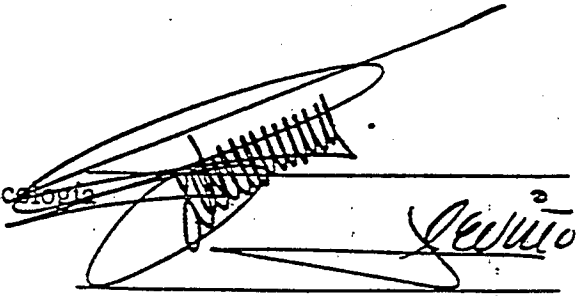


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CHIHUAHUA

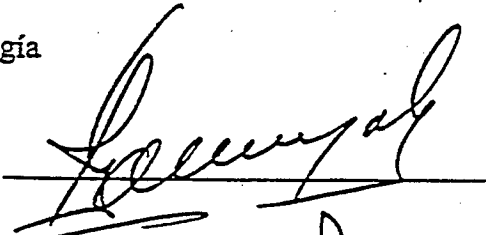
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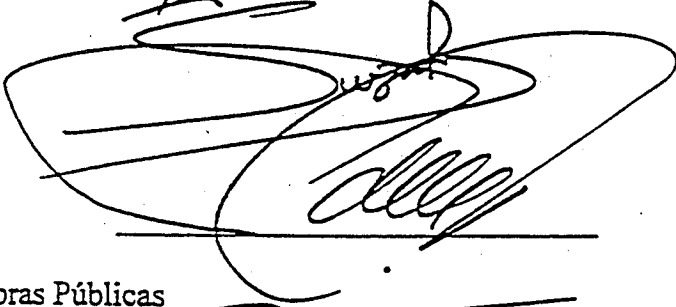
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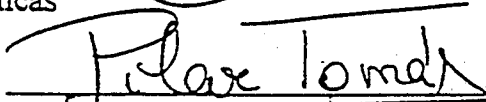


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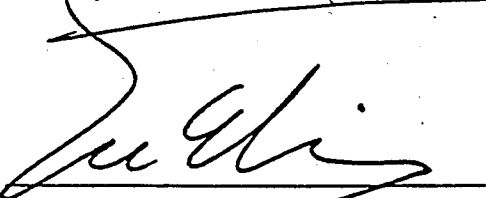


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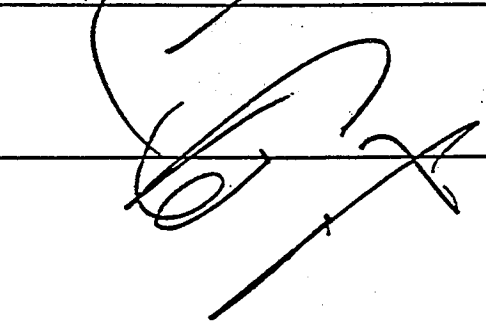
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