

Sen. Jeff Bingaman

Joint Hearing on Animas Legislation; S. 2508

Wednesday, June 7, 2000; 2:30 pm

- * **Mr. Chairman, I'd like to thank you for bringing this bill forward. It represents a lot of hard work by many people in New Mexico and Colorado, as well as you and your staff to craft a resolution to the many controversies surrounding the Animas project.**

- * **I think we may be on the threshold of success in finally settling the water rights of the Ute Mountain and Southern Ute Indian tribes and providing additional water resources for communities in the Shiprock, Farmington, and Durango areas.**

- * **This concept, now known as "Animas Lite," has:**
 - Mitigated or avoided all of the major environmental stumbling blocks for this project; and**
 - Greatly reduced the Federal Cost.**

- * **Also, Secretary Babbitt has endorsed the concept of a project on the scale, and with the physical components contemplated in this bill.**

- * **While the Administration has raised a couple of concerns about the bill as it is now drafted, I think we can work through them. I would like to work with you to see if we can't resolve these items and get a bill that pass quickly through this Congress and be signed by the President.**

- * **I truly think we are in best position to see construction start on the Animas Project that we've ever been in, and I want to work with you to see this move forward.**