

**Environment Department****SUSANA MARTINEZ, GOVERNOR**Ryan Flynn, Cabinet Secretary
Butch Tongate, Deputy Secretary**NEWS RELEASE****March 14, 2016***NMED's mission is to protect and restore the environment and to foster a healthy and prosperous New Mexico for present and future generations.***Contact:** Allison Scott Majure, Communications Director
New Mexico Environment Department
505.231.8800 | Allison.majure@state.nm.us**New Mexico Calls on EPA to Reimburse \$1.5M
For Emergency Response Costs for Gold King Mine Spill's Downstream Impacts**

Santa Fe – On Friday the New Mexico Environment Department called upon the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to reimburse \$1,505,155 for short-term emergency response activities associated with the Gold King Mine spill. On August 5 an EPA work crew triggered the Gold King blowout near Silverton, CO that released three million gallons of contaminated water into a creek that flowed into the Animas, then San Juan Rivers. New Mexico's initial response and monitoring costs of \$1.5 million encompass 14 New Mexico state agencies, academic organizations, and communities.

"The communities of Farmington, Aztec, San Juan County, eight state agencies and boards, and three academic organizations from New Mexico universities, pulled together to immediately respond to the effects of last summer's Gold King Mine spill in New Mexico. These 14 entities have combined response costs of approximately \$1.5 million for our initial, short-term response activities which enabled Gold King Mine spill monitoring and response for New Mexicans," said New Mexico Environment Secretary Ryan Flynn.

Local and state emergency response staff, specialists, engineers, scientists, public servants, academics, and other New Mexicans teamed up to respond to and monitor the three million gallon toxic plume of metals-laced mine water that meandered through the Animas/San Juan Watershed, depositing heavy metals as it progressed. Some of the response and monitoring activities included: advance, crisis, and post-crisis sampling and testing of river water; sediment testing; agricultural ditch inventories and testing; public outreach; hundreds of private well tests; provision of potable water; drinking water systems' support; showering stations; monitoring equipment; etc.

Regional collaboration continues with New Mexico leading the [long-term monitoring plan](#) and the [preparedness plan](#) to address the melting of the spring snowpack which can increase turbidity and remobilize the Gold King Mine spill's metals which were deposited throughout the watershed last summer.

"We anticipate reimbursement for the short-term emergency response and monitoring costs of \$1,505,155 once EPA has had the opportunity to review the data that we compiled and transmitted to their Region 6 offices," said Secretary Flynn.

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