

For Immediate Release

Feb. 26, 2020

Contact: Maddy Hayden, Communications Director
New Mexico Environment Department
505.231.8800 | maddy.hayden@state.nm.us

Susan Torres, Public Information Officer
New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department
505.476.3226 | susan.torres@state.nm.us

Tristanna Bickford, Communications Director
New Mexico Department of Game and Fish
505.476.8027 | tristanna.bickford@state.nm.us



State agencies monitoring spill in Black River

People, livestock should avoid contact in this area of the river at this time

The New Mexico Departments of the Environment (NMED), Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources (EMNRD) and Game and Fish (NMDGF) are investigating and monitoring a recent spill that occurred in the Black River between Malaga and Loving.

The state was notified by a nearby landowner on Monday of the accidental release of drilling mud into the river, around a half-mile west of Highway 285. The parties immediately cased the borehole after learning of the release in an effort to mitigate the spill. The release has caused increased turbidity (cloudiness) in the river.

At this time, NMED recommends that people in the area use caution and limit contact, including to pets and livestock, where the visible disturbance is noticeable in the water.

NMDGF conducted a basic water chemistry panel in the affected area and observed pH, dissolved oxygen, temperature and conductivity were within expected ranges under normal river conditions.

The responsible party, San Mateo Midstream, is also collecting water samples. Those results are pending laboratory analysis.

State personnel are on site evaluating the situation and aquatic life. No fish kills have been observed at this time.

NMED and EMNRD will require the responsible party to remediate the spill pursuant to state regulations and hold the responsible party fully accountable for any and all violations of state laws.

###