

**Office of Natural Resources Trustee****MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM, GOVERNOR**Maggie Hart Stebbins, Trustee  
Ralph Gruebel, Executive Director**NEWS RELEASE***For Immediate Release***February 17, 2021****Contact:** Maggie Hart Stebbins  
Natural Resources Trustee  
[Maggie.hartstebbins@state.nm.us](mailto:Maggie.hartstebbins@state.nm.us)  
505.231.7542**Office of the New Mexico Natural Resources Trustee Seeks  
Public Comment on Draft Cimarron Canyon Restoration Plan***Draft plan proposes projects to restore natural resources injured by 2016 Fuel Spill*

(Albuquerque, NM) — The New Mexico Office of the Natural Resources Trustee (ONRT) announced today that it is seeking public comment on its *Draft Cimarron Canyon Natural Resources Restoration Plan for the Fronk Oil Spill*. The draft plan presents restoration projects intended to compensate the public for injuries to fish and other aquatic natural resources resulting from a fuel spill into Cimarron River.

Four years ago, a Fronk Oil Company tanker truck carrying petroleum products overturned on U.S. Hwy 64, releasing approximately 1,100 gallons of unleaded gasoline and diesel fuel into a section of the Cimarron River located in the Colin Neblett Wildlife Management Area of the Cimarron Canyon State Park. Fronk Oil completed a clean-up of the spill in December 2017, under the direction of the New Mexico Environment Department. In December 2020, ONRT reached a settlement, pending court approval, in which the Fronk Oil Company agreed pay \$150,000 to implement restoration projects that benefit the natural resources injured, destroyed, or lost following the fuel spill.

As required by the Oil Pollution Act (OPA), restoration activities must produce benefits that are related to the injuries caused by the spill. ONRT has completed an evaluation of potential restoration projects and published the draft plan that includes details of projects under consideration and results of the evaluation. The final selection of restoration projects will be identified in a final restoration plan after ONRT has reviewed public comments.

**ACCESSING THE DRAFT RP:** The Draft Cimarron Canyon Natural Resources Restoration Plan for the Fronk Oil Spill is available at [https://onrt.env.nm.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/2021.02.17.Fronk\\_.RP\\_.pdf](https://onrt.env.nm.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/2021.02.17.Fronk_.RP_.pdf) or may be requested from the New Mexico Office of Natural Resources Trustee, 121 Tijeras Avenue NE, Suite 1000, Albuquerque, NM 87102, (505) 699-5083. A copy may also be viewed at the Cimarron Village Hall, 356 E 9th Street, Cimarron, New Mexico 87714.

The public comment period starts on February 17 and ends on March 19, 2021. Comments should be addressed to Ralph Gruebel, Office of New Mexico Natural Resources Trustee at [nm.onrt@state.nm.us](mailto:nm.onrt@state.nm.us) or at 121 Tijeras Avenue NE, Suite 1000, Albuquerque, NM 87102, and should reference: *Draft Cimarron Canyon Restoration Plan*. Comments must be received in writing on or before March 19, 2021 at 5:00 PM MST. For information on the Fronk Oil settlement, please visit <https://onrt.env.nm.gov/fronk-oil-spill/>

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*About Office of the Natural Resources Trustee (ONRT):* The ONRT is a state agency created by statute to ensure that New Mexico's natural resources that have been injured by the release of hazardous substances are restored for the full benefit of New Mexicans. The ONRT assesses injury to natural resources caused by the contamination and then seeks compensation from the responsible parties for restoration of those injured resources. The funds through settlements are used to restore, replace, or acquire the equivalent of injured, destroyed or lost natural resources and the services they provide. For more information about the ONRT, visit [www.onrt.state.nm.us](http://www.onrt.state.nm.us).