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EPA, New Mexico Announce New Website Detailing Draft White Paper on Oil and Natural Gas Wastewater, Recycling and Reuse

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DALLAS – (Nov. 9, 2018) The State of New Mexico and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) have released a draft white paper which addresses state and federal regulatory management of produced water, along with opportunities to treat and reuse the water to help alleviate water scarcity issues across the state. The white paper is now available for public review and input.

In July 2018, the New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department (EMNRD); Environment Department; and the Office of the State Engineer entered a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the EPA. The purpose of the MOU is to assess and clarify the existing regulatory landscape related to the way produced water from oil and gas extraction activities may be reused, or as appropriate treated and made available for non-oil and gas applications in New Mexico.

EMNRD has created a website (<http://www.emnrd.state.nm.us/wastewater/index.html>) to detail progress being made and facilitate stakeholder input with links to the signed MOU and the draft white paper. Comments may be submitted to renewablewater@state.nm.us until December 10, 2018.

“This is an important step forward in assessing all available resources, to provide safe water to water-scarce communities in New Mexico,” said EPA Office of Water Assistant Administrator David P. Ross. “The work we are doing in collaboration with New Mexico promotes our goal of re-visioning wastewater as a resource.”

“As the third largest oil producing state in the United States, New Mexico is producing a lot of oil and even more water. Our effort to clarify the state and federal regulatory landscape dealing with produced water will facilitate greater produced water reuse and recycling and in turn help relieve the growing demand on the state’s water resources,” said EMNRD Secretary Ken McQueen.

The State of New Mexico and the EPA anticipate finalizing the draft white paper by the end of 2018.

For more about EPA’s work in New Mexico: <https://www.epa.gov/nm>

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