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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**PRESIDENT BEGAYE STATEMENT ON COLORADO OFFICIALS DISPUTING EPA  
CLAIMS**

Window Rock – President Russell Begaye today released the following statement on reports that Colorado officials are disputing claims made by the EPA regarding the Gold King Mine Spill. The Associated Press obtained a letter from Mike King, executive director of the Colorado Department of Natural Resources, to the EPA asserting that the agency was not telling the truth when it said state regulators approved a plan to unplug the abandon mine:

"The Gold King Mine Spill culturally and economically devastated the Navajo people. Colorado officials now claim that the EPA has not been truthful regarding the events leading up to the spill. If true, these allegations further undermine the EPA's credibility and supports our calls that an independent federal department lead efforts to correct and remedy the harms caused by the spill.

"How can we trust the EPA to keep its word and address this crisis? The Navajo people have been waiting for months for the full and fair recovery we deserve. It's past the time for the Administration, federal agencies and all responsible parties to step up and make the Navajo people and the Navajo Nation whole for the serious harms caused by the Gold King Mine Spill."

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