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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Clayton Lake State Park and Dinosaur Trackways *Official Name Change Effective Today*

Santa Fe, NM – Today, Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department (EMNRD) Cabinet Secretary Sarah Cottrell Propst announced the official name change of Clayton Lake State Park to *Clayton Lake State Park and Dinosaur Trackways* at the Union County legislative luncheon in Santa Fe.

Renaming the park is part of EMNRD State Parks Division's *Next Generation of Adventure* campaign to enhance the visitor experience through improved access, upgraded facilities, and expanded partnerships. By adding "dinosaur trackways" to its name, EMNRD can better promote the park's most unique feature, bringing in new visitors and generating more outdoor recreation spending for the local economy.

"We have a world-class set of dinosaur trackways beside Clayton Lake that we should promote at every opportunity, starting with the park's name," said EMNRD Cabinet Secretary Sarah Cottrell Propst. "EMNRD and the local community worked together to develop the new name, and we look forward to welcoming even more visitors to the park in the future."

Cottrell Propst acknowledged the support of the Department of Cultural Affairs and Spencer G. Lucas, Ph.D., with the New Mexico Museum of Natural History and Science who has done incredible work through the years and continues to be an advocate for the significance of these dinosaur trackways. "The dinosaur trackways at Clayton Lake are one of only a handful of dinosaur track sites in public parks in the United States, so they are a remarkable natural history resource and an opportunity for public education," said Dr. Lucas.

Other government officials and agencies collaborated with EMNRD on the name change, including

the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish and New Mexico State Land Office – co-owners of the park – as well as Clayton Mayor Ernest Sanchez, Clayton City Manager Ferron Lucero, Clayton-Union County Chamber of Commerce executive director April Gallegos, the Union County Commission, and with many others.

A community event entitled “Adventure through the Ages” will be held from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, May 2, 2020, at Clayton Lake State Park and Dinosaur Trackways to celebrate the renaming of the park to reflect the importance of one of the largest dinosaur trackways in the United States.

Clayton Lake State Park and Dinosaur Trackways is an oasis in the rolling grasslands of northeastern New Mexico. Despite being established as a State Park in 1967, the tracks were not uncovered until 1982 when the lake overflowed and sediment was washed off the spillway. The State Park has more than 500 dinosaur tracks and is considered one of the most extensive dinosaur trackways in North America.

The dinosaur trackways are open to the public and the best times to view the tracks are in the morning and late afternoon for the best light. A sheltered gazebo and boardwalk trail along the trackways provide extensive information regarding the dinosaurs who traveled the sandy shores of an inland sea over 100 million years ago.

A \$5 day-use fee is required to enter the park. For park information, contact Mark Funk, Park Manager at 575-374-8808.



State Parks Northeast Regional Manager Jared Langenegger, EMNRD Cabinet Secretary Sarah Cottrell Propst, State Parks Director Christy Tafoya, Dr. Spencer Lucas, and Clayton Lake State Park and Dinosaur Trackways Park Manager Mark Funk.



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