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**November 5, 2009**

## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **Secretary Prukop Congratulates San Juan Coal Company's La Plata Mine *Recipient of a National Award for Exemplary Coal Mine Reclamation***

SANTA FE – Secretary Prukop applauded San Juan Coal Company's La Plata Mine operations for receiving a national award for exemplary coal mine reclamation from the Department of Interior's Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement. The La Plata Mine, located in northwest New Mexico, used the best technology currently available to control erosion and sedimentation and to achieve enhancement of wildlife habitat and related environmental resources.

"Bravo San Juan Coal Company," stated Joanna Prukop, Cabinet Secretary for New Mexico Energy Minerals and Natural Resources Department. "Their work to restore the contours of the land to its natural state enhances wildlife habitat and helps control erosion and sediment."

San Juan Coal Company's reclamation efforts provide for long-term stability and topographic diversity. The geomorphic-based reclamation creates stable, maintenance-free landforms. In addition, improved topographic diversity enhances wildlife habitat by creating windbreaks and security areas.

The New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department nominated the reclamation work at La Plata Mine. Their nomination was one of four mines nationwide to receive this honor. They received the award last week at a ceremony in Washington, D.C.

Since 1986, the Office of Surface Mining has presented awards to coal mine operators who have completed exemplary reclamation. A similar program for abandoned mine land reclamation began in 1992. The objective of the active mine reclamation awards is to showcase the nation's highest achievement in environmentally sound surface mining and land reclamation and to encourage the exchange of successful reclamation techniques.

See before and after photos below:



Gaining access to Seam 1 at Panel 5, Sundance Pit, in 2001



Topdressing lay-down underway at Panel 5 high wall reclamation, Sundance Pit, in 2008

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***The Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department provides resource protection and renewable energy resource development services to the public and other state agencies.***

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