



NEWS RELEASE
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**PSC Presents Coteau Properties Company with Award
for Excellence in Surface Coal Mining and Reclamation**

BISMARCK, ND – The North Dakota Public Service Commission (PSC) presented the Award for Excellence in Surface Coal Mining and Reclamation to Coteau Properties Company today at the Lignite Energy Council's Fall Conference being held in Bismarck. The PSC's Reclamation Division recommended that Coteau be recognized for its recent reclamation projects that included the early removal and reclamation of many sedimentation ponds and the construction of post-mining stockponds and wetlands.

“A good reclamation project is extremely complex. The planning and work start years before the coal is mined and are not complete until years after,” said Commissioner Randy Christmann who holds the coal mining and reclamation portfolio. “In this case, Coteau Properties went beyond what is required by law to achieve the best possible hydrological landscape and they also likely advanced the completion time.”

Coteau's reclamation efforts involved the removal and reclamation of 33 sedimentation ponds from 2012 through 2015. In addition, Coteau constructed 11 stockponds and four wetlands as part of the process to reclaimed previously mined land. The projects conducted were completed on a permit area of more than 7,200 acres immediately south of Lake Sakakawea.

Staff noted in a memo to the Commissioners that “The collective time, skills and resources expended by the engineers, environmental specialists, planners, operations supervisors, and equipment operators to complete these projects on schedule was significant.” The successful completion of this lengthy list of water-related reclamation projects was a significant achievement and made use of approved alternative sediment controls to accelerate the pond reclamation process. The early reclamation of these sedimentation ponds may result in earlier final bond release of the reclaimed lands in the area.

The North Dakota Public Service Commission is a constitutionally created state agency with authority to permit, site and regulate business activities in the state including electric and gas utilities, telecommunications companies, power plants, electric transmission lines, pipelines, railroads, grain elevators, auctioneers, commercial weighing devices, pipeline safety and coal mine reclamation. For more information, contact the Public Service Commission at (701) 328-2400 or www.psc.nd.gov.

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