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NEWS RELEASE

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COLORADO MINING COMPANIES RECEIVE STATE SAFETY AWARDS

The Colorado Mining Association (CMA) and the Colorado Division of Minerals and Geology honored six companies for outstanding health and safety practices at the state's coal mines. The winners were honored during an awards program held February 6 during the 106th National Western Mining Conference & Exhibition at the Hyatt Regency, Denver.

Stuart Sanderson, CMA President, told the award winners that "you exemplify the theme of this year's conference, **Colorado Mining: Good Business, Good Neighbors**, through your outstanding commitment to innovation and practices that have made Colorado mining companies leaders in protecting worker health and safety." Colorado coal mines experienced no fatalities for the third consecutive year and the injury rate among miners is lower than many other industries.

The **2003 Large Underground Coal Mine Award** went to **Blue Mountain Energy, Inc. Deserado Mine** (Rangeley) for efforts in reducing its lost time accident rate from 12.36 in 1997 to 3.80 in 2003 and working 374 days and 367,169 man-hours from August 22, 2002 through September 3, 2003 without a lost-time accident. The company overcame many challenges, including an inexperienced workforce and high turnover rate, as well as anomalies in the coal seam. In 2001, Blue Mountain began conducting its own MSHA training.

Bowie Resources LLC Bowie Number 2 Mine (Paonia) also won an award for outstanding health and safety practices at a large underground coal mine. The company reduced the mine's lost-time incident rate and the number of Mine Health and Safety Administration citations between 1998 and 2003 through a combination of initiatives and special efforts. These included greater involvement of the shift foreman and other

personnel, renewed emphasis on training, monthly communication meetings, and initiatives designed to foster a good safety attitude. Although the number of man-hours increased from 245,670 to 407,151, the lost-time incident rate decreased from 3.25 to 1.47. MSHA citations also dropped dramatically.

The Large Surface Coal Mine Award was presented to **Kennecott Energy Company and Colowyo Coal Company LP** for successful operations at the **Colowyo Mine** near Meeker. The company made outstanding efforts in reducing its lost-time injury rate from 2001-2003 from 1.47 to .26 by introducing the “TAKE 3” pre-task risk assessment program which is used as a tool to identify and control previously unrecognized hazards. This program means that employees are expected to stop, analyze the task, actively search for hazards and then apply controls to reduce or eliminate hazards prior to beginning work. Employees assign a level of risk to the task and select an appropriate response.

On the metals side, **Climax Molybdenum Company (Phelps Dodge)** won the **Large Underground Metal/Non-Metal Award** for operations at the **Henderson Mill** in Empire. Henderson, the world’s largest primary producer of molybdenum, achieved recognition for reducing the total recordable accident incident rate from 2.07 in 2002 to zero through November 2003 and accumulating over 300,952 man-hours without a reportable injury. Mill employees have reinforced the value of sharing near misses to heighten safety awareness and have improved the value of tailgate safety meetings by selecting a topic for discussion and brainstorming the potential safety considerations and hazards.

The **Medium Surface Metal/Non-Metal Mine Award** went to **Texas Industries (TXI) Boulder WAI No. 1 (Sand and Gravel) Mine**. The company was honored for decreasing its non-fatal days lost rate to zero in 2003 through the employee’s focus on safe production and attention to working safely. TXI has installed a safety council that meets regularly to brainstorm ideas and plans to make the site a safer workplace. Employees are strongly encouraged to report potential hazards. The safety department also completes a full safety audit and has developed financial incentives to ensure safety performance. Each month, the mine gives away a \$100 certificate and another \$100 is added for each month employees go without a lost-time accident.

Also achieving recognition was **Albert Frei & Sons, Inc. Wahlstrum Mine and Pit No. 8**. The company was honored for excellent safety records in 2002 and 2003, working over 194,879 man-hours during the period with a non-fatal days lost rate of zero. The pit is located in Henderson, north of Denver.

The Colorado Mining Association (CMA) is an industry association, founded in 1876 and incorporated in 1897, whose more than 560 members include producers of coal, metals and other minerals throughout Colorado and the west. The association also includes individuals and organizations which provide services, equipment and supplies to the industry, governmental officials, and others.