



# NEWS RELEASE

US DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR ■ BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
NEW MEXICO STATE OFFICE ■ 1474 RODEO RD ■ SANTA FE, NM 87505  
Hans Stuart ■ External Affairs Chief ■ 505.438.7510 [office] or 505.660.0164 [cell]

May 6, 2004

**For Additional Information**  
Hans Stuart 505-438-7510

## **BLM Director Kathleen Clarke Awards Federal Grant to Sandoval County to Help Launch Innovative Waste Conversion and Recycling Project**

BLM Director Kathleen Clarke today presented the Sandoval County Commission with a grant for \$250,000 to help build an environmentally friendly, state-of-the-art waste conversion and recycling project.

The money supplements County funds and a \$390,000 appropriation from the New Mexico Legislature to construct a closed, “in-vessel” biosolids composting plant. The \$800,000 facility will economically process green waste, manure, and wastewater into fertilizer and other soil enhancement products. The conversion/recycling plant will be located at the Southern Sandoval County Regional Landfill on Idalia Rd, west of NM 528.

“This project will help Sandoval County meet several goals of President Bush’s Healthy Forest Initiative, which is to restore healthy landscapes and watersheds,” said Clarke, who noted that some of the waste destined for the plant will include beetle-infested pinon trees from public lands in the county. “I congratulate our partners for their shared vision and hard work in finding a cost-efficient means to deal with organic wastes.”

County Commission Chairman Daymon Ely said the project will greatly extend the life of the County’s landfill by allowing recycling of wood products, leaves and grass clippings, animal manure and other reusable waste products that normally are buried in the landfill.

“We will be using proven technology that is neighborhood-friendly,” Ely said. “We are delighted to partner with the BLM and the State in this effort to convert wastes into usable products.”

Sandoval County will use the NaturTech Composting System provided by Renewable Carbon Management of Saint Cloud, Minn. Similar systems are in use at a dozen locations around the world, including a food waste composting project at the Whidbey Island Naval Air Station in Washington. RRT Design and Construction of Melville, NY, will provide engineering services.

- more -



In the facility, high-nitrogen materials such as lawn clippings and manure and high-carbon wastes like leaves and wood products will be shredded and mixed together in closed containers. The mix will decompose for 15 to 20 days and then cured for another 30 days before being available as soil enhancement products.

The process uses computerized control systems to deliver precision volumes of air to composting digesters. Odors are controlled in the closed-system with the aid of a containerized biofilter. In the initial phase, Sandoval County will install a wood waste grinder, dish screen, auger mixer, five NaturTech Composting Digesters and a biofilter.

During a planned second phase, the plant will add additional composting digesters and biofilters, and process biosolids or sludge from wastewater treatment facilities, according to Mike Foster, the County's assistant director for solid waste.

Foster said wastewater treatment solids are typically 'digested' in a liquid state – a complex and expensive process. In the new plant, biosolids or sludge generated by waste water treatment plants will be dewatered and treated by enclosed composting, a technology that costs about a third the price of conventional treatment.