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**Research Support Facility Site Infrastructure at the National Renewable Energy Laboratory Will Test Sustainable Landscape Rating System**

Denver, CO, May 26, 2010 — The Sustainable Sites Initiative™ (SITES™) announced the selection of the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Research Support Facility (RSF) at the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) as one of the first landscapes to participate in a new program testing the nation's first rating system for green landscape design, construction and maintenance.

The Research Support Facility (RSF) will join 150 other pilot projects from 34 states as well as from Canada, Iceland and Spain as part of an international pilot project program to evaluate the new SITES rating system for sustainable landscapes, with and without buildings. Sustainable landscapes can clean water, reduce pollution and restore habitats, while providing significant economic and social benefits to land owners and municipalities.

SITES, a partnership of the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA), the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center at The University of Texas at Austin and the United States Botanic Garden, selected the Research Support Facility based on its many environmentally friendly elements. These sustainable practices include improving storm water quality and reducing runoff through the application of various porous pavement technologies; the creation of habitat and open space and the reduction of water demand through the use of native and adapted plant materials; as well as, the reduction of energy and resource consumption through the use of recycled and regional materials.

Brian Nicholson, LEED AP, RNL, said of the Sustainable Sites Initiative, "I am thrilled to see NREL's Research Support Facility selected for the Sustainable Sites Initiative, one of the nation's first rating system for green landscape design, construction and maintenance. This Sustainable Sites Initiative challenges designers to go beyond current standards of

sustainability, to think about our sites in the long term and better understand how they perform and how to optimize that performance”.

“NREL is focused on sustainability and having the RSF selected to be part of the quintessential project that will create a rating system for green landscaping is another exciting opportunity for us and others to lessen our impact on future generations,” NREL Director of Sustainability Frank Rukavina said.

The DOE’s RSF at NREL joins the Smithsonian Institution’s African American History & Culture museum, a New Orleans project to absorb storm water on the streets of the Lower Ninth Ward flooded during Hurricane Katrina, and other projects that include academic and corporate campuses, public parks with hundreds of acres, transportation corridors and private residences of less than one acre.

The Research Support Facility was designed by RNL and constructed by Haselden Construction. The 32-acre site was developed to demonstrate Department of Energy’s commitment to sound environmental management that serves as an example to others and supports NREL’s sustainable energy mission. Like the other pilot projects, the site will test the point system for achieving different levels of site sustainability on a 250-point scale, and the performance benchmarks associated with specific credits within the *Guidelines and Performance Benchmarks 2009*. The site’s other sustainability features include an integrated campus shuttle network and extensive bike rack stations, widespread use of cooler reflective pavements, onsite energy creation and the innovative use of onsite materials for retaining walls.

SITES will use feedback from this and the other selected projects during the pilot phase, which runs through June 2012, to revise the final rating system and reference guide by early 2013. The U.S. Green Building Council, a stakeholder in the Sustainable Sites Initiative, anticipates incorporating the guidelines and performance benchmarks into future iterations of its LEED® Green Building Rating System™. More information is available at: <http://www.sustainablesites.org>. For general media queries about SITES, go to: <http://www.sustainablesites.org/news/>.

About the Sustainable Sites Initiative

The Sustainable Sites Initiative (SITES) is an interdisciplinary partnership led by the American Society of Landscape Architects, the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center at The University of Texas at Austin and the United States Botanic Garden to transform land development and management practices with the nation's first voluntary rating system for sustainable landscapes, with or without buildings. As these guidelines become the accepted practices by professionals and nonprofessionals alike, they will transform the ways we design and build on the land, creating landscapes that nourish life for generations to come. For more information, visit www.sustainablesites.org.

Haselden Construction provides construction services and delivers sustainable projects throughout the intermountain West. The company builds a diverse range of projects including office, education, healthcare, mountain resort, gaming, and municipal facilities. Haselden is ranked in the Top 10 regionally and Top 400 nationally by McGraw Hill Construction. For information, please visit www.haselden.com.

RNL is a global, full-service design firm specializing in sustainable, integrated design. Founded in 1956, **RNL** offers a continuum of design services, including architecture, interior design, landscape architecture, urban design and planning. **RNL** is headquartered in Denver and has additional offices in Phoenix, Los Angeles and Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. For more information, please visit www.rnldesign.com.

NREL is the U.S. Department of Energy's primary national laboratory for renewable energy and energy efficiency research and development. NREL is operated for DOE by the Alliance for Sustainable Energy, LLC.

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