

Animas-La Plata Permanent Operating Facility Receives LEED "Gold" Certification

The Animas-La Plata Project permanent operating facility, located in Durango, Colo. was awarded LEED Gold certification by the U.S. Green Building Council under the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design for new construction rating system. LEED Gold is the second highest level of achievement within the LEED certification program.

LEED is a green building certification program that recognizes best-in-class building strategies and practices. To receive LEED certification, a building project must satisfy prerequisites and earn points to achieve different levels of certification. The prerequisites for achievement in LEED building certification includes: sustainable sites, water efficiency, energy and atmosphere, materials and resources, indoor environmental quality, innovation in design and regional priority credits. The facility is the third building within Reclamation to receive LEED certification and the first building in the Upper Colorado Region to receive LEED certification.



Animas- La Plata Project LEED Certified Permanent Operating Facility

LEED is the foremost program for the design, construction and operation of green buildings. Over 44,000 projects are currently participating in the commercial and institutional LEED rating systems, comprising over 10.3 billion square feet of construction space in all 50 states and 135 countries. More information on the USGBC can be found at: <http://www.usgbc.org/>.

The facility was also designed and built to be in compliance with federal "Guiding Principles" for sustainable and high performing buildings. Executive Order 13423, sec. 2 (f) require federal agencies to design and construct new building construction and major renovations to meet the guiding principles. Fifteen percent of an agency's buildings greater than 5,000 gross square feet must be in compliance with the guiding principles by 2015.

A sustainable building assessment was conducted on the facility in April 2014. Although LEED certification and the guiding principles do complement each other, the guiding principles are more stringent. The facility is still waiting on the results of the assessment and if found to be 100 percent compliant with the guiding principles, the facility will be the first building in UC Region to achieve full compliance in support of the UC Region in meeting it's 15 percent goal as required by Executive Order 13423.

Design and Construction of the facility was funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The project was designed by Janet Wiley Architects PC, Durango, Colorado and constructed by the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe's Weeminuche Construction Authority of Towaoc, Colorado. All construction activities were overseen by Reclamation's Four Corner's Construction Office.

Ed Warner, Western Colorado Area Manager said, "Receiving Gold LEED certification is a great honor. The success of this project is due to the hard work of many individuals in the Animas-La Plata Operation, Maintenance and Replacement Association, Denver Technical Center, Four Corners Construction Office, Upper Colorado Regional Office, Weeminuche Construction Authority, and Western Colorado Area Office."

The facility is located adjacent to the Durango Pumping Plant, part of the Animas-La Plata Project. It will provide office and shop space for the Animas-La Plata Operations, Maintenance, and Replacement Association. The facility includes several unique features including: the use of natural and LED lights, a passive solar wall, and radiant heating.