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Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department

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News Release

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35th Anniversary Celebration at Rio Grande Nature Center State Park

Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for Sandhill Crane Viewing Platform

Albuquerque, NM: Rio Grande Nature Center State Park celebrated their 35th Anniversary Friday with a ribbon-cutting ceremony to officially open the new Sandhill Crane Viewing Platform, newly acquired artwork, and the improved design and landscape of the overflow parking at the Park.

Park Superintendent Beth Dillingham recognized the public and private partnerships with the Friends of Rio Grande Nature Center, Kapner Estate, and the Lumpkin Foundation, whose generosity funded the construction of several components at the RGNC. The newly acquired artwork funded by Art in Public Places was also featured.

“Rio Grande Nature Center State Park is the embodiment of partnership. This park saw nearly 219,000 visitors last fiscal year and our partners help us to serve these visitors with great programs and support,” said Christy Tafoya, Director of NM State Parks. She added: “We are so thankful to our donors whose generous contributions made these projects happen.”

Albuquerque is an Urban Bird Treaty City. This prestigious designation is part of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s Urban Conservation Treaty for Migratory Birds. Members of the Albuquerque Urban Bird Coalition were on hand to highlight the migration of cranes into the park and will describe the importance of places like Albuquerque and surrounding areas as stopover sites for migratory birds as well as year-round avian residents.



RGNC Park Superintendent Beth Dillingham, Doris Ing, Kristen Duquette-LeFevre, Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department Cabinet Secretary Ken McQueen (background right), and Anne Sparks look on as John Sparks unties the ribbon for new wildlife viewing platform at Rio Grande Nature Center State Park in Albuquerque. Generous donors included the Friends of Rio Grande Nature Center State Park, the Kapner Estate, and the Lumpkin Foundation who donated \$40,000 in honor of Sparks and his late wife Mary Lee (photo by Beth Wojahn).

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The Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department provides resource protection and renewable energy resource development services to the public and other state agencies.

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