



15 January 2009

CONSERVATION MINISTER SEES SHOWCASE MINE

Conservation Minister Tim Groser says after a visit to the Pike River Coal mining site that the company has set a new environmental standard for mining, with a 'showcase' development high in the Paparoa Ranges on the West Coast.

"Pike River Coal has shown it is possible to undertake a full-on commercial activity with significant economic benefit to the West Coast and the country – and still safeguard the outstanding natural environment it is working in."

The underground mine, with a total surface footprint of just 13 hectares, has been developed on land managed by the Department of Conservation.

Mr Groser says not only is Pike River Coal meeting its commitments under the company's access agreement with the department, but it is also adding real value to the environment through conservation and predator eradication programmes.

He was accompanied on the visit by senior Department of Conservation staff, including Chief Executive, Al Morrison.

The department recently awarded Pike River Coal a certificate recognising "the environmental consideration it has demonstrated" in establishing its mine.

Pike River Coal's chief executive, Gordon Ward, says the Minister's visit was encouraging recognition for the major efforts made by the company, in close working relationship with the Department of Conservation, to protect an outstanding natural environment.

Further information:

Gordon Ward +64 4 494 0190
Chief Executive and Managing Director

Peter Whittall +64 3 769 8400
General Manager, Mines

The Pike River mine, about 50 kilometres northeast of Greymouth, is opening up New Zealand's largest known deposit of hard coking coal. The mine is expected to produce an average of one million tonnes a year for at least 18 years once hydro-mining commences in mid 2009.

Pike River shares are quoted on the NZSX and the ASX under the code "PRC"