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Agusan 'tree for life' gets P2.3-M

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By MIKE N. CRISMUNDO

BAYUGAN III, Rosario, Agusan del Sur — The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) here commended Philsaga Mining Corporation for its meritorious endeavor and contribution to President Arroyo's "tree for life" program in this land-locked Agusan del Sur province in Northeastern Mindanao region.

The DENR also awarded a certificate of commendation to the mining firm for supporting the government thrusts and programs, being one of the adopter of the "Green Philippines Project" through the "Adopt-A-Mountain" and Adopt Mining Forest Program.

The commendation to Philsaga was signed by Northeastern Mindanao DENR Regional Executive Director Edilberto S. Butser, Agusan del Sur Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officer Sixto C. Badua, and Binawan Community Environment and Natural Resources Officer Euliquio M. Bade Jr.

The commendation was personally received by Philsaga President Retired Army Col. Samuel C. Afdal during a simple ceremony here.

As thus developed, Philsaga pledged to allocate a P2.3 million fund for the establishment, maintenance and protection of the tree plantation for a period of three years within the Alfred Spring Watershed Reservation located within San Andres in Binawan town, this province, said Bade.

Initially, the mining firm has already released P300,000 to the Binawan environment and natural resources office, and another P200,000 to the San Francisco, all of this province, Bade said.

He also said that the DENR, Patina, San Francisco, Binawan and Philsaga forged a memorandum of agreement to join hands to conduct tree planting activities, preservation and protection of the watershed along the southern part of the province.

"The contribution of Philsaga Mining is a big help to the project of President Arroyo and Environment Secretary Lito Atienza's 'tree for life' and 'Green Philippines Project' program," said Bade.

Meanwhile, Afdal said the company is committed to help the government, especially the poor and far-flung villages and indigenous people in the province and neighboring areas.

"This is our commitment to help the people," added Afdal.

On the other hand, the government's "service on wheels" program is still in progress even in far-flung areas in Agusan del Sur, said Bade.

Under its "Handog Titulo" project in Sta. Josefa town held the other day, at least 69 land titles were distributed to poor residents, he added.