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Layne Christensen Drillers Reach Trapped Miners in Chile

It's a Joint Effort of Layne Christensen and Latin American Affiliate Geotec

MISSION WOODS, Kan., Oct. 10, 2010 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- "Plan B" worked. Winning the three-way race to reach the 33 miners trapped in Chile since Aug. 5, drillers from Kansas City-based Layne Christensen Co. broke through at 8 a.m. Saturday.

"This success required the extra special knowledge and skills only our team could provide," said Dave Singleton, water resource division president for Layne Christensen.

About two weeks after the collapse, Layne's Latin American affiliate Geotec Boyles Bros. brought in a Schramm T130 tophead drill. Layne also sent in two drillers, Jeff Hart and Matt Staffel, who had been drilling water wells in Afghanistan to support U.S. troops stationed there. Assisting the drillers were two Spanish-speaking drilling helpers, Doug Reeves and Jorge Herrera, from Layne's western region in the U.S.

Working as a team, Layne and Geotec drilled a 5-inch hole nearly 2,300 feet, reamed it to 12 inches and finally to 26 inches in diameter ? large enough to accommodate the "Phoenix" rescue capsule. A cheer went up as families and rescue workers joined in a celebration when the drill broke through. "I'm on top of the world," Hart told a TV reporter.

It took the drillers 33 days to reach the 33 miners. "Had Layne and Geotec not been there, it probably would have taken until Christmas for 'Plan A' or 'Plan C' to break through," Singleton noted. "We cut more than two months from the original estimate."

"It's a first for our company to be involved in a rescue effort like this," added President and CEO Andrew B. Schmitt. "It's also noteworthy that we're celebrating our 15th anniversary with our Latin American affiliates," he said. In 1995 Layne merged with Christensen Boyles Corp. and became the joint-venture partner with the Boytec group of companies in Latin America.

Now in its third century of operations, Layne started in 1882 as a water-well drilling company in the Badlands of South Dakota. Headquartered in Mission Woods, Kan., a Kansas City suburb, the Nasdaq-traded company operates worldwide, providing products and services for the water, mineral, construction and energy markets.

The Layne Christensen Company logo is available at <http://www.globenewswire.com/newsroom/prs/?pkgid=3466>

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