

Press release

An archaeological find dating back to the 11th and 12th centuries

Red Eléctrica and the Local Council of Ortuella present a full-scale reproduction of the Peñas Negras Mountain Iron Bloomery

- The Company has collaborated in the financing of the signage and full-scale reproduction of this archaeological site that is so deeply rooted in the mining tradition of the area.

Ortuella, 23 February 2021

The Mayor of Ortuella (Biscay), Saulo Nebreda, and Red Eléctrica's Delegate in the Basque Country, Antonio González Urquijo, today presented the full-scale reproduction of the site of the Monte de Peñas Negras Bloomery, an iron craft workshop from the 11th and 12th centuries. They were accompanied by the Councillor for Urban Planning, Accessibility, Housing and Heritage, Óscar Salicio, and by the archaeologist Javier Franco, representing the Basque Country Mining Museum, who is responsible for the discovery.

The site was discovered with the first archaeological excavations carried out between 2012 and 2013, which revealed the existence of a 'haizeola', type of ancient bloomery related to the process of smelting iron ore, an activity that was historically widespread in the area.

Subsequently, a new dig carried out in 2017 of the entire perimeter of the site made it possible to document the activity of the bloomery that had been found, recognise the value of this discovery and recommend the protection of the site.

Red Eléctrica has collaborated with the Local Council of Ortuella, by virtue of an agreement signed with the municipality in 2018, in the financing of the full-scale reproduction of the site and the posting of signage, as well as in the collection of information and documentation of this medieval iron bloomery.

The Mayor of the municipality wanted to "thank Red Eléctrica for its collaboration. This is the second occasion on which the company has subsidised a project belonging the Town Council of Ortuella and we hope it will not be the last, as we have more projects related to the historical heritage and natural capital of our town in which Red Eléctrica's collaboration would be very welcome".

For his part, the regional delegate, Antonio González Urquijo, highlighted that "Red Eléctrica's commitment to the conservation and protection of the historical and cultural heritage of the municipalities where the Company's infrastructure is located is one of the strategic lines of its 2030 Sustainability Objectives, which is aimed at contributing to society and generating shared value through partnerships with stakeholders involved, strengthening relations between the Company and the community".

The reproduction of the site can be visited in the vicinity of the Ekoetxea Meatzaldea-Peñas Negras environmental information and awareness centre, and will provide an insight into what the old mountain iron bloomeries dedicated to traditional iron craftsmanship in the heart of the mining area of Biscay used to be like.

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