

**Oct. 13, 2008**

## **NRCO prepares for first annual meeting**

**Bismarck, N.D.** – The National Renewables Cooperative Organization will hold its first annual meeting Nov. 14, 2008, in Indianapolis.

“Representatives from NRCO's 24 members are expected to attend. It's an important milestone event for this young cooperative,” says Ron Harper, president of NRCO.

Since its formation in April 2008, directors for NRCO have taken several steps toward finalizing NRCO's cooperative status. The annual meeting will be the culmination of these efforts.

NRCO directors meet quarterly. A lot of work has been accomplished in a short amount of time. At their second meeting held recently in Indianapolis, directors selected a logo for the new venture (shown above); finalized organizational bylaws; established the structure for a permanent board of directors; adopted a mission statement (shown below); and began developing a website, which will be available at the annual meeting.

Harper said the logo's design is crisp and distinctive. “It reflects the fact that NRCO is focusing on all forms of renewable energy,” he said. Harper is also CEO and general manager of Basin Electric Power Cooperative, Bismarck, one of the founding NRCO members.

NRCO is an innovative effort by 24 electric cooperatives from across the nation working together to help develop renewable energy. When NRCO was first established, it had 15 transitional directors who were charged with getting the cooperative established. At the latest meeting, directors amended NRCO's bylaws allowing each NRCO member to have a seat on the board, Harper said.

“This is exactly what one of the cooperative principles is all about. Each member has a voice in the operation of the cooperative where they're a member,” Harper said. “The transitional board members have worked very hard; they should be commended.”

The NRCO bylaws limit the number of directors at 30. When NRCO grows to more than 30, Harper said the bylaws allow for membership districts to be established without compromising cooperative principles.

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NRCO is unique in another aspect – its headquarters will be virtual – at least for the next couple years. Harper said when NRCO selects an energy management company the new co-op will more than likely be located in the same place. The energy management company will coordinate the development of renewable energy projects across the country.

Harper explained that generating electricity from renewable resources is an important issue for electric cooperatives. But some areas of the country don't have the renewable resources that others do – the upper Midwest has more wind, for example, than the South. But the South has tremendous opportunities for solar and biomass development.

NRCO will help its electric co-op members participate nationally in diversified alternative energy projects. He said the “tried-and-true” co-op tradition of banding together to achieve a common goal benefiting all members is the basis of NRCO's approach.

To qualify for NRCO membership, entities must be generation and transmission cooperatives, unaffiliated distribution cooperatives, or partial requirements cooperatives that have the legal right to participate in wholesale electric markets. Members located in areas that may not have renewable resources can acquire renewable energy credits through renewable projects developed by NRCO – all of which will be new. For example, Harper says, a third-party vendor can come to NRCO with an alternative energy project. The NRCO board will review it and, if approved on its merits, open it up to participation by co-op members. “It's also a great way to extend co-op participation into new alternative energy markets,” he said.

Harper says electric cooperatives that do not have the opportunities locally to develop renewable resources such as wind, solar and biomass will be able to participate in renewable energy projects from across the United States through NRCO. “Also, some electric co-ops may choose to participate in NRCO renewable projects as partial fulfillment of renewable portfolio standards set by the states in which they serve. The goal of NRCO is to provide diversified alternative energy resource opportunities to electric co-ops nationwide,” he said.

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Officers elected for the NRCO transitional board of directors included:

- Ronald R. Harper, CEO and general manager of Basin Electric, North Dakota, president;
- Bill Berg, CEO of Dairyland Power Cooperative, Wisconsin, vice president;
- Joe Slater, CEO of Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative, Maryland, secretary; and
- Jim Compton, CEO of South Mississippi Electric Power Association, Mississippi, treasurer.

**Cooperatives Holding Transitional NRCO Board Seats:** Oglethorpe Power Corporation, Georgia; Old Dominion Electric Cooperative, Virginia; New Hampshire Electric Cooperative, New Hampshire; North Carolina Electric Membership Corporation, North Carolina; Brazos Electric Power Cooperative, Texas; Dairyland Power Cooperative, Wisconsin; South Mississippi Electric Power Association, Mississippi; Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative, Maryland; Sunflower Electric Power Corporation, Kansas; Associated Electric Cooperative, Missouri; Wabash Valley Power Association, Indiana; Buckeye Power, Ohio; Adams Columbia Electric Cooperative, Wisconsin; Jo-Carroll Energy, Illinois; and Basin Electric Power Cooperative, North Dakota.

**Other NRCO members:**

Arkansas Electric Cooperative Corporation, Arkansas  
Big Rivers Electric Corporation, Kentucky  
East Kentucky Power Cooperative, Kentucky  
Hoosier Energy Rural Electric Co-op, Indiana  
PowerSouth Energy Cooperative (formerly Alabama Electric Cooperative), Alabama

Rayburn County Electric Cooperative, Inc., Texas  
Seminole Electric Cooperative, Florida  
Southern Illinois Power Cooperative, Illinois  
Tri-State G & T, Colorado

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Associated Electric Cooperative, Missouri	Hoosier Energy Rural Electric Co-op, Indiana	Sunflower Electric Power Corporation, Kansas
Basin Electric Power Cooperative, North Dakota	North Carolina Electric Membership Corporation, North Carolina	Tri-State G & T, Colorado
Big Rivers Electric Corporation, Kentucky	PowerSouth Energy Cooperative (formerly Alabama Electric Cooperative), Alabama	Wabash Valley Power Association, Indiana
Brazos Electric Power Cooperative, Texas	Rayburn County Electric Cooperative, Inc., Texas	Adams Columbia Electric Cooperative, Wisconsin
Buckeye Power, Ohio	Seminole Electric Cooperative, Florida	Jo-Carroll Energy, Illinois
Dairyland Power Cooperative, Wisconsin	South Mississippi Electric Power Association, Mississippi	New Hampshire Electric Cooperative, New Hampshire
		Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative, Maryland

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