



Media Contacts

FLOYD ROBB
VICE PRESIDENT
COMMUNICATIONS AND
MARKETING SUPPORT
701.223.0441
frobb@bepc.com

DARYL HILL
MEDIA RELATIONS SUPERVISOR
COMMUNICATIONS AND
MARKETING SUPPORT
701.223.0441
dhill@bepc.com

News Release

www.basinelectric.com

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New co-op to boost renewable energy project development

Bismarck, N.D. – 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.

In an innovative effort to capitalize on all forms of renewable energy, electric cooperatives from across the nation have banded together to form the National Renewables Cooperative Organization (NRCO).

NRCO was organized in April 2008 following conversations at a National Generation & Transmission Managers Association meeting. Newly elected NRCO President Ron Harper, who is CEO and general manager of Basin Electric Power Cooperative, said discussions held at that meeting centered on ways electric co-ops could participate nationally in diversified alternative energy projects. He said the "tried-and-true" co-op tradition of banding together to achieve a common goal to benefit all members is the basis of NRCO's approach.

"This is truly a first-of-a-kind effort," Harper said. "I'm excited about the possibilities NRCO can offer to its members."

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.

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Harper says that electric cooperatives that do not have the opportunities locally to develop green resources such as wind, solar and biomass will be able to participate in renewable energy projects elsewhere 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.

During a May 22 meeting of NRCO developers, participants reviewed a draft business plan, project development plan, other business and financial matters. Officers elected for the 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.

"I am very pleased to have been elected to the transitional NRCO board," Harper says. "The people involved in creating NRCO are co-op family leaders who understand that together we can make a difference for all of us. NRCO promises to deliver real benefits to its members."

NRCO will hold its annual meeting every October.

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.

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NRCO members:

G & T Cooperatives:

Arkansas Electric Cooperative Corporation, Arkansas
Associated Electric Cooperative, Missouri
Basin Electric Power Cooperative, North Dakota
Big Rivers Electric Corporation, Kentucky
Brazos Electric Power Cooperative, Texas
Buckeye Power, Ohio
Dairyland Power Cooperative, Wisconsin
East Kentucky Power Cooperative, Kentucky
Hoosier Energy Rural Electric Co-op, Indiana
North Carolina Electric Membership Corporation, North Carolina
Oglethorpe Power Corporation, Georgia
Old Dominion Electric Cooperative, Virginia
PowerSouth Energy Cooperative (formerly Alabama Electric Cooperative, Alabama)
Rayburn Country Electric Cooperative, Inc., Texas
Seminole Electric Cooperative, Florida
South Mississippi Electric Power Association, Mississippi
Southern Illinois Power Cooperative, Illinois
Sunflower Electric Power Corporation, Kansas
Tri-State G & T, Colorado
Wabash Valley Power Association, Indiana

Distribution cooperatives:

Adams Columbia Electric Cooperative, Wisconsin
Jo-Carroll Energy, Illinois
New Hampshire Electric Cooperative, New Hampshire
Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative, Maryland