

English: Energize the Dialogue

INVOKING THE SUCCESSFUL PUBLIC-PRIVATE partnerships of Franklin Delano Roosevelt and the legacy of the “New Deal,” Glenn English, CEO of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, called on government to work with consumers to achieve national climate change goals.

“In the 1930s, when Roosevelt initiated the ‘New Deal’ the president didn’t say: You people go out and provide electric power all across the country while the rest of us sit on the fence and determine what penalties will be assigned if you don’t meet these goals. No, President Roosevelt said we need a partnership between government and the people,” English said.

Before an audience of nearly 9,000 electric cooperative leaders assembled in Anaheim, Calif., for the Association’s 66th annual meeting, English observed that whoever is elected president this fall will face a tremendous challenge. Crafting and enacting policies to meet our nation’s climate challenge will consume many of the new president’s first 100 days, he said. But like Roosevelt whose “New Deal” morphed from ill-defined campaign rhetoric into a coherent set of policy initiatives – not over-night but over a decade – the new president will have

time to implement the new plan.

“The components of that plan however, will not be fully in evidence until well after he or she takes office,” he said.

English encouraged co-op leaders to energize their local members, to empower co-op consumers and begin a dialogue between elected officials and electricity consumers.

“The cooperative principles require that we educate and inform the membership,” said English. “We have a responsibility also to provide elected officials the information they need to make good decisions and effective policy.”

“Policy-makers must be called upon to answer the tough questions,” said English. “Consumers need straight answers about the current state of technology, capacity and cost. Co-op consumers recognize that balancing electricity needs and environmental goals will be difficult. They want to know how much this is going to increase their electric bills and what elected officials will do to make it affordable.”

The co-op chief warned that America risks returning to a time when electric service was a privilege enjoyed only by the wealthy.

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Above: South Dakota Youth Leadership Council representative Kevin Loker of Mitchell works in the Congressional Action Center at the NRECA annual meeting. **Opposite:** NRECA CEO Glenn English urged cooperatives to involve their members.

“That would be wrong,” said English. “Creation of a consumer class for which electric power is an unaffordable luxury should not be a legacy of climate change policy.”

He held co-op consumers out as a bulwark against such an outcome and challenged co-op leaders in attendance to engage their member owners.

“I’m talking about engaging 40 million people in 47 states. You,” he said of the crowd, “are the key to awakening this sleeping giant. You are the key to making certain that consumers truly understand the implications and the threat to their future if our elected officials don’t get the right answers and don’t have a plan.”

More than 9,000 representatives from cooperative electric utilities across the nation attended the NRECA annual meeting and expo, Feb. 22-27, at the Anaheim Convention Center, during which they will NRECA’s legislative and organizational agenda for 2008. NRECA is the national service organization that represents the nation’s more than 900 private, not-for-profit, consumer-owned electric cooperatives, which provide electric service to more than 40 million people in 47 states.

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Rossow Joins National Financial Cooperative Board

Dwight Rossow, a Selby, S.D.,- area farmer and a director for Cam Wal Electric Cooperative in Selby, joined the board of the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation during the financial cooperative’s annual meeting in March in Anaheim, Calif. Rossow was elected by cooperatives in South Dakota, North Dakota and Minnesota to represent Region 6 on the CFC board.



CFC is a not-for-profit finance cooperative that serves the nation’s rural utility systems, the majority of which are electric cooperatives and their subsidiaries. With more than \$18 billion in assets, NRUCFC provides its member-owners with an assured source of low-cost capital and state-of-the-art financial products and services.

Formed in 1969, CFC is a privately owned, non-governmental organization that provides state-of-the-art financial products to its members.

CFC’s consolidated membership was 1,544 as of May 31, 2007. Member organizations in 49 states, the District of Columbia and two U.S. territories included 899 electric utility systems, 513 telecommunications organizations, 66 statewide and regional service organizations and 66 associates. CFC is guided by a board of directors that represents 10 geographically defined districts and the electric cooperatives’ national trade association. Each district is represented by two directors. There is also one director, elected at-large, who serves as the Audit Committee financial expert. The board members, who are elected from the ranks of cooperative utility management and their elected directors, set policies, establish programs and develop strategies for CFC.

CFC operates from its corporate headquarters in Herndon, Va., with a staff of 218 employees (as of May 31, 2007), including 16 regional representatives located throughout the United States. CFC’s staff have extensive finance and rural utility management experience. In addition, CFC manages and funds the Rural Telephone Finance Cooperative (RTFC), an organization that provides financing to the rural telecommunications industry. CFC also manages and funds the National Cooperative Services Corporation (NCSC), an organization that delivers specialized financing services to electric cooperatives to supplement the financial services of CFC. With a full-service approach, CFC is committed to providing its owners with timely and reliable financial and business management solutions in a complex and changing utility environment.

West Central’s Reed Presides at Federated Meeting



West Central Electric Cooperative General Manager **Steve Reed** of Murdo, S.D., presided over Federated Rural Electric Insurance Exchange’s annual meeting held in March in Anaheim, Calif. Reed is the chairman of Federated’s board of directors and represents Region 6 on the board. Region 6 is comprised of South Dakota, North Dakota and Minnesota.

For the past 45 years, Federated Rural Electric Insurance Exchange has been the leading provider of property and casualty insurance for rural electric utilities in 40 states. Federated is unique because it was created to provide a stable insurance market specifically for the rural utility market. The primary goal was to provide long-term coverage availability and service at a reasonable cost.

In 1999, Federated made the transition from a stock-owned company to a reciprocal exchange, which means it is as close to being a cooperative as the insurance industry will allow. Federated’s member insureds have a voice in the company through the 20-member board representing the 10 NRECA regions. Cooperative members also share in the margins of the company, in keeping with cooperative principles.

In addition to traditional coverage programs for electric utilities, Federated provides financial protection for a growing number of telephone systems and the diverse commercial activities of its member insureds. All business is produced on a direct basis through internal staff and all underwriting, claims services and administrative functions are handled in-house.