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PRESS RELEASE

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Electric Cooperatives Find Common Ground

PIERRE – South Dakota’s electric cooperatives gathered in Pierre Jan. 10 and 11 for the South Dakota Rural Electric Association’s 77th annual meeting. During the meeting, the 325 cooperative leaders, which represented each of the state’s 31 electric cooperatives, heard presentations that focused on a variety of topics of concern to the state’s electric cooperatives.

On Thursday, cooperative directors attended a session on attracting and retaining employees and using generational mentors. They also had updates on national issues from staff from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

A state legislative update was held prior to the evening’s Legislative Dinner, which saw more than 440 people attend.

“Throughout our history, we know that cooperatives succeed when we unite on that common ground,” said SDREA board president Don Heeren of Parker.

“Our Co-op Day at the Capitol on Feb. 20 will provide an additional occasion for co-op members, directors and employees to get to know our lawmakers and become more familiar with the legislative process,” said SDREA general manager Ed Anderson.

Gov. Kristi Noem spoke to the group on Friday morning and the noon luncheon speaker was Sen. Mike Rounds.

During his comments, Rounds said, “You serve a huge and significant portion of the entire state. Can you imagine what the quality of life would be in South Dakota if it wasn’t for the rural electric... Think of how many families would see their children wanting to return to the farm if we didn’t have that quality of life.”

Board Reorganizes – Following the meeting, the board of directors held its re-organizational meeting. Southeastern Electric director Don Heeren of Parker was re-elected as the association’s president while Grand Electric director John Long of Red Owl was re-elected as the association’s vice president. Kingsbury Electric director Richard Abrahamson of Oldham was re-elected secretary of the association and West Central Electric director D.J. Mertens of Kennebec was re-elected as the association’s treasurer.

About South Dakota’s Electric Cooperatives – South Dakota’s electric cooperatives provide electricity to more than 120,000 homes, farms and businesses in the state, averaging only 2.5 consumers per mile of line.

SDREA is a member-owned, member-controlled association of 31 electric cooperatives in South Dakota. SDREA is devoted to unifying, promoting and protecting the interests of member electric cooperatives in South Dakota by providing leadership, training, communication, legislative representation and other member services.