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Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

NEWS RELEASE

February 27, 2011

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Lincoln Electric Cooperative names new General Manager

EUREKA – After months of conducting a nationwide search to fill the top post for Lincoln Electric Cooperative, the board of directors has named V. Ray Ellis, Jr., (Ray) as the new General Manager to replace LEC's longtime General Manager, Michael Henry, who will be retiring in May, 2011. Ellis was unanimously selected after two days of intensive interviews with five highly qualified finalists from all over the country. He will assume his duties April 11, 2011.

Ellis, 53, is currently employed as the General Manager for both the Okanogan County Electric Cooperative & Okanogan County Energy, Inc., (their propane subsidiary) in Winthrop, WA. He has 25 years of cooperative utility experience, the last 5 as the General Manager of both companies. He began his career with Okanogan County Electric Cooperative 25 years ago as a lineman for 10 years and also served as engineering manager, service technician, and meter man, before being named as the cooperative's General Manager in 2006. He is also on the Board of Directors as Vice Chair of the Pacific Northwest Generation Cooperative (PNGC), and is scheduled to assume the Chairmanship of PNGC beginning October, 2011.

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Ellis' responsibilities included developing entire budgets for both companies, analyzing and forecasting energy and customer growth, developing various rate schedules, devising long term work plans and providing leadership for 21 employees. He has been involved in developing power contracts with PNGC and as a sitting board member holding the office of vice chair (soon to be chair) it has allowed him to be in a position to help determine the strategic focus and direction of PNGC, which is Lincoln Electric's power supplier.

Raised in the Winthrop, WA area, Ellis graduated in 1982 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in geography from Eastern Washington University. He is also a 2008 graduate of the NRECA Management Internship Program at the University of Wisconsin, and a 2005 graduate of NWPPA's frontline leadership sessions.

Ellis' wife, Tammie, also a native of Winthrop, WA, holds a degree in education and a Masters Degree in Literacy from Eastern Washington University. She is currently teaching. They have 3 grown children, Ryan, 29; Kali, 26; and Jay, 25.

Ellis stated, "Lincoln Electric feels like an extremely good match for me and my wife. I understand the working of small utilities and find it challenging and gratifying to work with staff and a board to find answers to the energy needs of its members. In researching and visiting LEC, I have noticed a commitment to the community that promotes economic growth that benefits everyone. LEC is a well-managed organization and I would like to continue in that tradition and, along with the staff and board, help guide LEC into the future. A small rural area is where my wife and I have lived and choose to live and we look forward to becoming an active part of the Eureka community. I enjoy and encourage member involvement in all aspects of the cooperative, including customer service, community responsibility and the cooperative vision. I will make myself available to the employees, the board, the community and the cooperative members we serve."

“We are extremely pleased with the field of well-qualified candidates that we interviewed. As the representatives for our consumer members, we have the important fiduciary responsibility to select the best qualified manager for our cooperative; and we take that job quite seriously,” said Tina Taurman, board president. “Ray possesses the attributes we were looking for in dedication to the cooperative principles, sound management practices and exceptional people skills. We are very excited to have Ray as our new General Manager and look forward to exciting and challenging times ahead.”