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#### ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE MODIFIES OUTAGE PROCEDURES

April 4, 2011 [Port Orford, OR]: At last week's regular meeting, the Coos-Curry Electric Cooperative, Inc. (CCEC) board of directors was updated on system damage and outages that occurred as a result of the winter storm that hit the southern Oregon coast a couple of weeks ago. The cooperative experienced widespread outages that affected virtually all areas and approximately 2,200 members, with the most damage in the Agness, Coquille and Carpenterville Road areas. Members started reporting outages just after lunchtime that Sunday, March 13<sup>th</sup> as the high winds, with gusts reported as high as 80 to 90 mph, and driving rain pounded the coastline. All crews were immediately called out and worked through the night and into the next day with only short rest periods to repair the damage. Members in the Agness area had a planned outage a couple of days later so crews could remove a tree that was leaning dangerously close to a power line.

"We do a really good job of responding to outages and working virtually non-stop to restore power," General Manager/CEO Roger Meader told the board, "but in this latest storm, we realized we could do a much better job of communicating internally and with our membership." Meader told the board that staff had revised internal procedures that outlined responsibilities and expectations for outages that occur during business hours as well as those occurring during non-business hours.

Outages occurring during business hours are reported to one of the cooperative's business offices and a member service representative notifies the appropriate operations personnel. The representative also notifies the general manager/CEO, engineering manager, marketing and member services manager, operations managers, all member service representatives and the cooperative's after hours and emergency call center, Cooperative Response Center, Inc. (CRC). As new information is received, the representative provides updates to everyone on the outage notification list.

Each week, one of eight employees with on-call supervisor responsibilities is available during non-business hours to coordinate outages. CCEC's telephones are switched over to CRC during non-business hours so members calling to report outages may call any area office or the toll-free number and speak with a representative. CRC call center representatives have access to CCEC's member database and log the time and location of outages as they are received. CRC then contacts the cooperative's on-call supervisor and the supervisor dispatches the appropriate crew or crews. "This is where we can do better," Meader said. "In the future, when we have widespread outages like we had a couple of weeks ago, the on-call supervisor will also notify our operations manager and me; and I will, in turn, contact our marketing and member services manager so we can provide some form of communication to our members."

"While we won't know exactly what time power will be restored, once we get crews on site, we can determine if it's going to be one-half hour or several hours," Meader said, "and I believe that's what members are looking for." The cooperative will utilize traditional forms of communication such as radio, news updates and CCEC's website. In addition, CCEC will make sure CRC has updates so representatives have the most up-to-date information when answering calls from the membership. "We have our share of communication challenges here on the southern Oregon coast, especially when outages occur on a Sunday afternoon," Christine Stallard, marketing and member services manager told the board. "But I've already made contact with some of our radio stations and as is so typical of rural areas, they are very open to working with us to get

the word out, regardless of when we need to do so.” Stallard told the board that she would be updating the media list and exploring solutions such as Facebook and Twitter. “Perhaps one of the best solutions is to utilize the same automated telephone call system we now use for collections,” Stallard said. Once outages are reported and logged, a list of affected members may be generated from the customer information system’s database. “Once we have a list of members and their telephone numbers, we record a message about the outage, send the information to the automated telephone service and the member receives an automated message about the outage,” Stallard continued. Stallard pointed out that accurate telephone numbers in the cooperative’s customer information system is key to making this solution effective. Members are encouraged to take a moment to call the office and verify the information on file.

“We are committed to providing excellent customer service to our membership,” Meader said, “and we hope these changes to our outage procedures will prove how serious we take that commitment.”

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#### About Coos-Curry Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Coos-Curry Electric Cooperative, Inc. (CCEC) was founded in 1939 by a group of Coos County, Oregon, residents who wanted electricity in their area. Today, the nonprofit cooperative has approximately 14,000 members, over 17,000 meters in Coos, Curry, and Douglas Counties, and 1,626 miles of line, including 52 miles of transmission line between Gold Beach and Brookings. CCEC serves the rural populations east and south of Coos Bay in Coos County, a portion of Douglas County and all of Curry County except for the town of Langlois. Headquartered in Port Orford, Oregon, CCEC has area business offices in Port Orford, Coquille, Gold Beach and Brookings.