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EAST TEXAS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE SIGNS CONTRACT TO CONSTRUCT BIOMASS PLANT IN EAST TEXAS

NACOGDOCHES, Texas – East Texas Electric Cooperative (ETEC) announced July 27 that a contract has been finalized with North American Procurement Company (NAPCO) to develop a wood-fueled biomass plant in Woodville, TX.

The plant will be the first of its kind for the area, converting excess wood materials into renewable, carbon-neutral power for ETEC member cooperatives. When completed, the plant will have the capability of producing 50 megawatts of power.

“On behalf of ETEC, I’d like to thank NAPCO for their efforts to work with us on this innovative project,” said Ryan Thomas, chief financial officer for ETEC. “We’re delighted to invest money in our local economy while providing renewable energy for our members.”

ETEC plans to build the biomass plant adjacent to NAPCO’s existing operations in Woodville.

“In addition to bringing reliable, renewable power generation closer to our Cooperative members, this new facility will improve the availability of power following major outages such as those caused in recent years by Hurricanes Rita and Ike,” said Kyle Kuntz, chief executive officer of Sam Houston Electric Cooperative.

The plant will have a significant positive impact on the local economy, with over 250 jobs expected to be created during the construction phase and 25 full-time positions needed to operate the plant upon completion.

ETEC has licensed NAPCO, locally owned and operated in Woodville, as the provider of wood chips and other wood materials to fuel the plant. This partnership will create a market for the abundant wood by-products already available in the area. This should be beneficial for the local timber industry in these difficult economic times.

“We want to express our sincere thanks to Congressman Kevin Brady, Congressman Joe Barton and Senator Robert Nichols for their significant help on behalf of this plant and all of our energy issues,” said Edd Hargett, general manager of ETEC.

“I would like to thank the East Texas Electric Cooperative for their investment in Tyler County. Not only will this new wood chip burning plant bring much needed jobs to East Texas, it furthers the investment in alternative, renewable fuels when we need them the most,” said Congressman Kevin Brady, R-The Woodlands.

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State Senator Robert Nichols, R-Jacksonville said, "I am glad to support ETEC's efforts to provide renewable energy through the planned construction of a biomass plant in Woodville. Adding this plant that will utilize by-products of the timber industry is a plus for our economy and a great source of reliable power for our homes and businesses."

ETEC is made up of 10 not-for-profit electric distribution cooperatives: Bowie-Cass Electric Cooperative, Cherokee County Electric Cooperative, Deep East Texas Electric Cooperative, Houston County Electric Cooperative, Jasper-Newton Electric Cooperative, Panola-Harrison Electric Cooperative, Rusk County Electric Cooperative, Sam Houston Electric Cooperative, Upshur Rural Electric Cooperative and Wood County Electric Cooperative. ETEC's mission is to provide low cost, reliable power to its members.

For more information on ETEC, please visit <http://www.etc.coop>.