



For Immediate Release:
November 8, 2013

East Texas, Northeast Texas Electric Cooperatives' Representatives Provided
Testimony at EPA "Listening Session" November 7 in Dallas

Nacogdoches—East Texas Electric Cooperatives, Inc. General Manager Edd Hargett, Wood County Electric Cooperative General Manager Debbie Robinson and Frankie King, President of Upshur Rural Electric Corporation and Northeast Texas Electric Cooperative, Inc., attended and testified at the EPA "Listening Session" in Dallas, Texas on November 7th. The EPA was seeking input and ideas from the public and stakeholders on Clean Air Act approaches to reducing carbon pollution from existing power plants.

Several individual East Texas cooperative managers spoke at the session in hopes of making clear their concerns regarding possible changes to current regulations on the usage of power plants for members' needs. While the EPA has not proposed new rules governing carbon from existing plants, it is anticipated the EPA will release a draft rule by June of 2014.

According to Edd Hargett, General Manager of ETEC, "Unfortunately, ETEC is currently facing a regulatory assault on its ability to provide economic power to its members. Compliance with existing and anticipated regulations of power plant emissions could cost ETEC approximately \$100 million dollars, which would translate to approximately \$30 on the typical residential customer's monthly electric bill."

Co-ops typically serve a rural membership outside of the urban areas of the state. Often such customers are expensive to serve, as they are far-flung and small in number. In their testimony at the EPA session, cooperative officials presented the unified message that many of their members/customers are living on fixed incomes, and have limited options for outside employment in their locales.

As Frankie King, President of Upshur Rural Electric Cooperative, testified, "Consumers have elected me and others to make sure their electric power needs are met reliably and as low a cost as possible. They are the people the President repeatedly claims to want to help the most. They are the poor people without meaningful jobs or no jobs at all, retired people on fixed incomes, the hard working middle class, farmers, ranchers and small business owners trying to scratch out a living month to month in very difficult economic times."

Consequently, electric cooperative customers are less likely to be able to support rate increases incurred by new regulations or requirements on existing power plants.

Representatives of East Texas electric cooperatives presented their testimony at the EPA session to urge federal regulators to avoid adopting new regulations that would greatly add to the cost of electric power for many Texans who cannot afford to pay higher utility bills.

“What would we like to see EPA do? First, consider the cost implications for electric consumers. Then, hold off on passing regulations that shut down coal plants before a proven and available technology is developed. Give utilities time to react to regulations to prevent the financial harm to our economy and the people we serve,” said Debbie Robinson, ETEC Board President and general manager of Wood County Electric Cooperative.

About East Texas Electric Cooperative

ETEC is a not-for-profit electric generation and transmission cooperative headquartered in Nacogdoches, Texas. ETEC’s mission is to provide low cost, reliable power to its approximately 320,000 member owners located in 46 East Texas counties. 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 Association, Sam Houston Electric Cooperative, Upshur Rural Electric Cooperative and Wood County Electric Cooperative. <http://www.etc.coop/index.html>.

About Northeast Texas Electric Cooperative

Headquartered in Longview, Texas, NTEC was founded in 1972. It is a not-for-profit electric generation and transmission cooperative with 140,118 members. Its member cooperatives are Bowie-Cass EC, Deep East Texas EC, Panola-Harrison EC, Rusk Co. EC, Upshur Rural EC, and Wood Co. EC.

Media Contact: Kristy Ozmun Public Relations, 512.474.1501, kristy@ozmun.com