

MEDIA INFORMATION

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**SWEPCO, Electric Cooperatives Announce Coalition
to Support John W. Turk, Jr. Power Plant**

Arkansas Coalition for Affordable and Reliable Electricity (ACARE)

Little Rock, Ark. (March 8, 2011) Southwestern Electric Power Co. (SWEPCO) and Arkansas Electric Cooperative Corp. (AECC), today announced the formation of the Arkansas Coalition for Affordable and Reliable Electricity (ACARE), an alliance of Arkansas businesses, utility and cooperative members and community leaders who support the John W. Turk, Jr. Power Plant now under construction in Hempstead County.

ACARE's mission is to educate the citizens of Arkansas about the benefits of the Turk Plant to the economy and to meeting the state's future energy needs. The coalition has launched a website: <http://www.ArkansasAffordablePower.org>

"We formed this coalition to give a united voice to the businesses and individuals in Arkansas who support the Turk Plant," said Venita McCellon-Allen, SWEPCO president and chief operating officer. "Our members understand that the economic vitality of this region requires dependable and affordable electricity. That's why a majority of people in Arkansas welcome the construction of this plant and want its contribution to the economy."

Gary Voigt, AECC president and chief executive officer, said the Turk plant is a significant investment for the state's economy and cooperative members.

“This plant will be an important addition to AECC’s generation portfolio because it will help the cooperatives continue to fulfill our mission to provide affordable and reliable electricity to our members,” Voigt said.

SWEPCO is majority owner and constructor of the plant. AECC is a co-owner.

Former state Sen. Barbara Horn of Foreman will serve as executive director of ACARE. Horn served in the state House from 1993 to 2000 and state Senate from 2001 to 2010.

“Despite strong support from the local community, there remains a handful of critics who continue their efforts to halt or delay construction of the plant,” Horn said. “Members of ACARE will stand together to support the plant because they understand that halting construction would hurt the state’s economy, the future electricity supply and our reputation with other businesses planning to invest in Arkansas.”

The 600-megawatt, \$1.7 billion plant is approximately 56 percent complete with an expected completion date of late 2012. The plant will be one of the cleanest, most efficient coal-fueled plants in the United States, and the first of its kind in operation in the country. Using “ultra-supercritical” advanced coal combustion technology, the plant will use fewer resources and produce fewer emissions, including carbon dioxide, than any other coal plant in Arkansas. In addition, the plant’s design allows for the retrofit of carbon dioxide controls when that technology becomes available. The plant’s state-of-the-art emission control technologies will enable it to meet emission limits that are among the most stringent ever required for a pulverized coal power plant.

With more than 1,600 workers on the job site today, the Turk Plant construction already has boosted the economy of an area that doesn’t get a lot of investment, and it has come in the middle of a recession. There will be about 1,900 jobs at the height of construction, including hundreds of workers from Hempstead County and surrounding counties. The completed plant will create 110 permanent jobs. The project and associated economic development will produce an estimated annual payroll of \$9 million in southwest Arkansas and an additional \$3.9 million in annual school and county property tax revenues.

For more information about ACARE and the Turk Project, visit
www.ArkansasAffordablePower.org

About Southwestern Electric Power Company (SWEPCO)

SWEPCO provides reliable and affordable electricity to 114,000 customers in western Arkansas. SWEPCO's affordable rates have helped fuel some of the highest growth in the state – Northwest Arkansas and more recently the Texarkana area.

About the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas

The Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas serve about 490,000 members in Arkansas and surrounding states by providing them with reliable and reasonably priced electricity to power their homes, businesses and farms. The service areas of the 17 distribution cooperatives cover more than 60 percent of Arkansas' land area.

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