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LPEA Unveils 2025 Operational Plan: Securing Future Energy, Fire Mitigation, and Community Engagement at the Forefront

DURANGO, Colo. – January 22, 2025 – The La Plata Electric Association Inc. (LPEA) has unveiled its 2025 operational plan, marking the end of a five-year strategic plan and setting the stage for a new one, developed with input from community members and stakeholders. The updated strategy focuses on securing LPEA’s energy future with an emphasis on sustainability, reliability, and cooperative growth. Developed by LPEA leadership, this plan meets the region's evolving energy needs with innovative solutions, highlighting grid resilience, fire mitigation, and enhanced community engagement.

“This plan reflects LPEA’s commitment to writing our own energy story,” said LPEA CEO, Chris Hansen. “This is a critical year for our energy transition as we secure all the energy needed for our bridge period. We will focus on reliability and ensuring a smooth transition. LPEA is securing clean energy for our community and creating a model for rural areas to build more sustainable futures.”

The 2025 operational plan focuses on four key areas:

- **Securing Future Energy Supply:** Securing the energy needed for the future by signing contracts and making strategic investments in diversified, dependable sources, while keeping affordability and local partnerships in mind.
- **Ensuring Reliability and Resiliency:** Modernizing infrastructure to minimize outages and adapt to evolving energy demands.
- **Meeting North Star Targets:** Advancing sustainability through emission reductions, energy efficiency programs, and beneficial electrification (BE) integration, while continuing to deliver the reliable, high-quality service you expect from your cooperative.
- **Advancing Cooperative Growth:** Expanding member programs, fostering local partnerships, and driving economic development.

LPEA is also strengthening its commitment to wildfire prevention by prioritizing proactive mitigation strategies and investing in grid infrastructure upgrades. The cooperative is expanding fire prevention efforts which include risk assessments, creating defensible spaces, strengthening infrastructure and enhancing tree trimming in high-risk areas. The new clearing schedule along power lines and the use of advanced grid mapping tools and drones will further improve fire safety.

“Our role in wildfire prevention is critical, and as part of our 2025 operational plan, we are taking bold steps to protect our communities and infrastructure,” Hansen stated. “By expanding our fire mitigation



efforts and using advanced tools like drones, we are making significant strides in reducing risks. This shared responsibility, together with our members and community partners, will save lives and property and safeguard our future.”

A key component of the 2025 operational plan is expanded member collaboration and engagement. LPEA is committed to offering more opportunities for members to be involved in shaping the cooperative’s future. LPEA will host town hall meetings, listening sessions, surveys, member forums, the annual meeting, and monthly board meetings to gather input from members. Hansen also invites members to join him for informal “Coffee with Chris” sessions:

- **February 20, 10:00–11:30 a.m. at Pine River Library, Bayfield**
- **February 25, 8:00–9:30 a.m. at Smiley Cafe, Durango**
- **March 27, 8:00–9:30 a.m. at Rise & Shine, Ignacio**
- **April 8, 8:00–9:30 a.m. at Root House, Pagosa Springs**

By working closely with its members, LPEA aims to foster a stronger, more engaged community that drives the cooperative’s growth and success. Hansen will also provide monthly updates on the 2025 plan during LPEA Board of Directors meetings. To read the full operational plan, visit lpea.coop.

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About LPEA

LPEA is a member-owned, not-for-profit, electric distribution cooperative serving La Plata and Archuleta, with segments of Hinsdale, Mineral, and San Juan counties. LPEA is the fifth largest cooperative of 22 in Colorado, and aims to provide safe, reliable electricity at the lowest reasonable cost to its approximately 36,500 members. For additional information, contact LPEA at (970) 247-5786 or visit lpea.coop.