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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SOUTH MISSISSIPPI ELECTRIC ROLLS OUT TWO MORE SOLAR POWER SITES

COAHOMA ELECTRIC, DELTA ELECTRIC ARE OPERATIONAL AND GENERATING ELECTRICITY

(March 23, 2016) – South Mississippi Electric (SME) today celebrated the first solar power generation facilities in the Mississippi Delta with a joint ribbon-cutting event for sites at Delta Electric Power Association and Coahoma Electric Power Association.

Coahoma is headquartered in Lyon, and Delta in Greenwood, where the event was held. Both facilities are operational and generating electricity.

The smaller-scale installations of 100 kW or less are among five such facilities that SME has announced it would construct and operate. Hattiesburg-based SME is a generation and transmission cooperative providing electricity to 11 distribution cooperative members, which include Coahoma and Delta. All cooperatives are owned by their members.

Not-for-profit cooperative SME unveiled plans in June 2015 to build the facilities and begin operations in first quarter 2016. Coahoma and Delta both agreed to provide land for the facilities, which are located next to their respective headquarters. The pair joins Coast Electric in Kiln and Singing River Electric in Lucedale as operational facilities, as the two Gulf Coast cooperatives held their solar facility dedications last week.

Solar is considered one of the leading forms of green, or environmentally friendly, energy. Panels are used to collect sunlight that is converted into electricity.

“South Mississippi Electric is in the solar power generation business,” said Jim Compton, SME’s general manager and CEO. “Our members have expressed a strong desire for renewable energy to be a larger part of our generation mix. Today we took another step toward accomplishing that goal, but not the last.”

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Each of the solar sites is approximately one-half acre in size and contains 378 panels. These smaller sites will allow SME and its members to better determine optimum location, best technology and proper configuration for larger, utility-scale facilities.

The events were attended by elected officials, business leaders and chamber members.

“Coahoma Electric continually strives to make our communities better places to work and live, and to improve the quality of life of our members,” said Keith Hurt, general manager of Coahoma Electric. “Solar power will provide an environmentally friendly source of electricity and one of our principles is concern for the community, and this benefits everyone.”

Coahoma Electric serves 8,500 members located in northwest Mississippi. Delta Electric provides electricity to more than 28,000 meters.

“Solar will enable South Mississippi Electric to diversify their energy generation and lessen the impact to our members of a price increase from any one source,” said David O’Bryan, general manager at Delta Electric. “The addition of solar to our energy mix makes sense, because Mississippi is the beneficiary of plenty of sunshine. This is just a win-win.”

SME plans a solar site at Southern Pine Electric in Taylorsville and is studying the feasibility of adding additional facilities. SME, with assistance from the National Renewable Cooperative Organization, spent several months studying various options and researching proposals for construction of the facilities.

Atlanta-based Hannah Solar was selected to construct and oversee the projects.

Additionally, SME has announced a partnership with Origis Energy USA for a large solar facility in Lamar County. The 52-MW location will be built and operated by Origis. SME has committed to purchase all electricity generated at the site.

SME provides electricity to 423,000 customers across 55 counties in the state. The company has a diverse energy portfolio that includes natural gas, coal, nuclear, hydropower and solar.

“We believe that sunny days are ahead for the company and our members,” said Compton. “Our cooperatives are committed to the betterment of our ratepayers, their communities and their environment. This is just the first of many positive steps we expect in 2016.”

For more information about South Mississippi Electric or future updates on this project, please visit www.MyElectricCooperative.com.

About South Mississippi Electric and the Power of 12: The Power of 12 is South Mississippi Electric and 11 electric cooperatives working together to provide safe, reliable and affordable power from the Delta to the Coast. These 11 electric cooperatives own and maintain approximately 56,900 miles of distribution lines and provide service to approximately 423,000 homes and businesses throughout 55 counties.

