FINAL PRESS RELEASE

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Missouri Cooperative Abandons New Coal Plant
In Favor of Clean Energy

Kansas City—Today, Associated Electric Cooperative, one of the nation’s largest and most respected rural electric cooperatives announced they are “postponing indefinitely” their plans to build a massive new coal-fired power plant near Norborne in Northwest Missouri. Associated Electric will pursue wind, energy efficiency and clean-burning natural gas instead.

The Sierra Club which has been working with Concerned Citizens of Carroll County to educate local residents about the dangers of coal and the benefits of clean energy heralded this announcement. Sierra Club has been represented throughout its advocacy by the Interdisciplinary Environmental Clinic at Washington University School of Law. For the past two years the groups have maintained an open and frank dialogue with Associated Electric officials to encourage them to turn to clean energy alternatives.

“With today’s announcement that they are abandoning their coal plans in favor of clean energy Associated Electric is taking a giant step forward in our collective fight to stop global warming,” said Melissa Hope, Organizer with the Missouri Sierra Club. “Associated Electric was the first in Missouri to embrace wind power and today they vault into the ever growing ranks of electric providers moving beyond coal.”

“Today’s announcement is the latest breaking news in a tidal wave of progress as our nation transitions from nineteenth century coal technology to a modern and clean 21st century clean energy economy,” said Bruce Nilles, Director of Sierra Club’s National Coal Campaign. “Four years ago the country was considering plans to build as many as 160 new coal-fired power plants and today AECI brings the total number of plants abandoned or defeated to 63. And all indications are that this trend is accelerating as costs of coal skyrocket and the nation focuses its attention on global warming solutions.”

In the past month three major Wall Street Banks announced they were turning against new coal plant investments because of global warming concerns and the federal government abandoned plans to build a prototype “clean coal” plant because of skyrocketing costs.

Associated Electric is owned by, and provides wholesale power to, six regional and 51 local electric cooperative systems in Missouri, northeast Oklahoma and southeast Iowa that serve more than 850,000 customers. In the past two years Associated Electric has become the wind energy leader in Missouri among all electric providers, including municipal and investor owned utilities.
The Sierra Club National Coal Campaign is working to ensure that coal is mined responsibly and burned cleanly across the country. The campaign is fighting to stop the construction of dirty new coal plants and direct the proposed investments into energy efficiency, renewable resources and other clean alternatives.