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## *Strategic relationship formed to target geothermal technology*

ANADARKO, OKLA. -With aspirations of increasing geothermal technology across Oklahoma, Western Farmers Electric Cooperative (WFEC) and Geo-Energy Services (GES) recently formed a strategic relationship for the development of a proactive marketing program. This alliance should satisfy some cost-justification gaps for individual cooperatives, with “shared” services as the primary premise.

WFEC was first approached by Geo-Energy Services, based in Littleton, Colo., during a planning event hosted by the International Ground Source Heat Pump Association (IGSHPA). Mark Faulkenberry, senior manager, member relations at WFEC, made a presentation at this event focusing on hurdles that needed to be addressed before geothermal technology could be utilized on a large scale basis within the state.

“Toward the end of WFEC’s recent Geo Validation project with Cooperative Research Network (CRN), which began in 2013, it became evident that there were several hurdles that we needed to cover. One of the gaps was the inability of several of our distribution cooperatives to justify costs. Plus, the inability of finding personnel with the unique skill set required to manage and oversee a proactive geothermal marketing program, was also a factor,” Faulkenberry explained.

Following WFEC’s presentation, Trey Austin, president of GES, indicated that his organization had interest in working with WFEC to help overcome the obstacles encountered with the past program.

“WFEC’s groundbreaking GoGoGeo program offered customers an unprecedented incentive to take advantage of this green technology through their local Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives,” Austin pointed out.

Through this relationship, GES will be assisting each participating distribution member system in the development of a custom business plan designed to determine what services and/or rebates the cooperative deems justifiable for their members. Once a cooperative opts to move forward, GES, as an engineering firm specializing in geothermal technology, will completely oversee the development and implementation of a personalized program.

“The strategic relationship between WFEC and GES has afforded the ability to hire personnel with boots on the ground every day in Oklahoma proactively installing, marketing and commissioning new and retrofit geothermal HVAC installations all across the state in rural areas,” commented Faulkenberry.

“This unique ‘shared services’ concept provides professional marketing & engineering expertise to WFEC members in rural areas at an affordable price,” Faulkenberry added.

“Geo-Energy Services is thrilled to be a part of this innovative opportunity for WFEC members. It is always our vision to give homeowners the best possible solution for utility savings and decreased environmental impact,” commented Austin.

Faulkenberry also noted that this relationship provides the required measurement and verification (M&V) used to justify the incentives being offered to obtain the resulting demand & carbon reductions that such a program offers.

“Our overall goal is to work with participating member systems to achieve 1,000 geothermal installations per year, with the target of reducing 30 megawatts of peaking capacity by 2020,” Faulkenberry said.

“Our Geo-Energy Services team is excited to be involved in this endeavor - the first of its kind to bring geothermal technology to the customer through the utility sources. We, at GES, see this as a model program, putting WFEC and Touchstone Energy<sup>®</sup> Cooperative members at the national forefront of this type of demand-side management.

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*Geo-Energy Services, LLC (GES) is a Native American owned company with a combined 45 years of experience in the GeoExchange industry. Clients include homeowners, architects, building owners, facility managers, engineers, contractors, ESCO companies, and regional global partners. Geo-Energy Services' specialized technical capabilities on GeoExchange systems enables them to remain knowledgeable on the latest applicable geothermal heat pump technologies, practices and regulations.*

*Western Farmers Electric Cooperative (WFEC) is a generation and transmission (G&T) cooperative that provides essential electric service to 22 member cooperatives, Altus Air Force Base and other power users. These members are located primarily in Oklahoma and New Mexico, with some service territories extending into portions of Texas and Kansas. Now in its 74th year of operation, WFEC has six generating facilities, located at Mooreland, Anadarko and Hugo, Okla., and Lovington, NM, with a total power capacity of more than 2,400 megawatts (MW), including hydropower allocation and other contract power purchases. WFEC owns and maintains more than 3,700 miles of transmission line to some 272 substations and 59 switch stations.*