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**LPEA Welcomes Chris Hansen as New CEO**

DURANGO, CO – The Board of Directors of La Plata Electric Association, Inc. (LPEA) is excited to announce that Chris Hansen has been selected as the new Chief Executive Officer (CEO), effective November 12, 2024. This decision comes after a national search to fill the CEO position, succeeding interim CEO Graham Smith, who has been leading the organization since March.

“Chris’ extensive experience and commitment to sustainable energy make him the ideal leader for our cooperative as we navigate the evolving energy landscape,” said Ted Compton, LPEA Board President. “We were very fortunate to have Chris in our search pool and the board seized the opportunity to bring a leader of Chris’ caliber to LPEA. His energy industry background, vision for the future of electric utilities, and understanding of emerging opportunities will serve our members well.”

Hansen most recently served as a Colorado State Senator and the Executive Director of the Institute for Western Energy. With over 25 years of experience in the environmental and energy sectors, he brings a strong blend of technical expertise, policy knowledge, and management experience to his role. Hansen collaborated with renewable energy, electricity companies, and government agencies at all levels to enhance operational efficiency. His diverse background equipped him to tackle the challenges LPEA faces, especially during the energy transition.

"I am truly honored to lead LPEA as CEO and work alongside such a talented team," said Chris Hansen, LPEA CEO. "I look forward to building on the cooperative's strong foundation and driving innovation that delivers lasting value to our members, employees, and shareholders. Together, we will continue to lead our industry with purpose and passion."

Hansen holds an undergraduate degree in engineering from Kansas State University, a Master of Science from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), and a PhD in economic geography from Oxford University. While at Oxford, he was a research fellow at the Oxford Institute for Energy Studies, focusing on solutions for bringing renewable power to underserved rural areas in India.



“Not only is Chris a visionary leader, but he is also deeply passionate about our industry and values our cooperative culture,” Compton added. “We believe he will be instrumental in helping us navigate the challenges ahead. His dedication to cooperative values will ensure that LPEA continues to excel while remaining true to its roots.”

With Hansen's deep experience in leadership, LPEA is confident in his ability to lead the organization into its next phase of growth and innovation. Hansen's vision for the future, combined with his proven track record of driving operational excellence and community engagement, will be instrumental in advancing LPEA’s commitment to providing reliable, sustainable energy solutions to its members. The Board and the entire LPEA team look forward to working with Hansen as they continue to deliver value and foster long-term success for the cooperative and its stakeholders.

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