



NEWS RELEASE

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Cordova's Hap Symmonds lauded by Alaska electric utility industry award for leadership and advocacy

Harold "Hap" Symmonds, Chair of the Cordova Electric Cooperative (CEC) Board of Directors, received the Mason Lazelle Achievement Award from Alaska Power Association at its 58th annual membership meeting awards banquet August 6 in Soldotna, Alaska. The award is given by the Alaska electric utility industry to individuals who have made outstanding contributions to electrification efforts in Alaska.

Symmonds, the plant manager for Ocean Beauty Seafoods in Cordova, Alaska, was praised for his leadership of the CEC board and his advocacy for the electric industry, specifically for statewide and national lobbying efforts to have hydro power classified as a renewable and alternative source of energy.

According to Cordova Electric Cooperative CEO Clay Koplín, Symmonds' efforts to promote renewable energy resulted in the member-owned electric cooperative "receiving a precedent-setting exemption from the Green-E organization and the Environmental Protection Agency to certify CEC's Power Creek Hydroelectric Project as a renewable energy project." Koplín said the proceeds from the sale of green power from the project were used to purchase and distribute compact florescent light bulbs to members and to retrofit street lights with energy efficient LED (light-emitting diode) fixtures.

A director who has served on the CEC board in several leadership positions including Chairman, Symmonds is also credited by his cooperative for "creating a board culture of service to the membership," Koplín said. Fellow CEC director Mike Butler said, "Hap has been a vital contribution to our success for the past 15 years. He has led our organization through some extremely difficult times and, as a result of his leadership, Cordova Electric Cooperative has emerged as a successful example for all the state of Alaska."

Alaska Power Association, formerly known as the Alaska Rural Electric Cooperative Association, is the 58-year old statewide trade association for urban and rural electric utilities. It provides advocacy and program services to member utilities. APA members supply power to more than a half-million Alaskans in communities from Barrow to Unalaska and down the Inside Passage.

Mason Lazelle, for whom the APA award is named, was General Manager of Matanuska Electric Association in the 1960s, a time when cooperatives were helping communities establish central station service. Lazelle was very active in this effort. Under his leadership, the utility built generation and distribution facilities for villagers in Stony River and Unalakleet, and provided consultation for the community of Tyonek.

Lazelle disappeared Feb. 27, 1968 piloting a Cessna 185 on the way to Nulato and Unalakleet with fellow MEA employees Phil McRae and Alex Fuller. Four months later, a Bush pilot spotted the wreckage. It was determined that Lazelle, McRae and Fuller perished during their journey to help residents of remote Alaska villages have access to safe, reliable electric power.

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