The Cooperative Difference

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1930 – 11% of farms had electricity
Depression limited development options
Growing population demanded better rural economy
1935 Executive Order created the Rural Electrification Administration
Congress formalized in 1936
Local cooperatives built system
First system in Wisconsin was Richland Electric in 1937

By 1945, today’s network of 24 Wisconsin cooperatives in place, 18 of which are served by Dairyland

520,000 residents served
Today’s Mission

“...we will work with our members to improve the quality of life of their customers and the economic and social well-being of the region.”

Politically, we work with members of both parties and strive to have a truly bipartisan working relationship.
Our Agenda Focus

- Economic growth
- Rural equity in programs, services
- Respect for the cooperative difference in regulation
- Recognition of low-income energy needs
Active Government Relations

- Four states and federal
- Work with Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Association and Cooperative Network
- Work with numerous partners in coalitions, from Customers First to Fair Rates for Wisconsin’s Dairyland
- Lobbying elected officials and agencies to represent member interests
Attracting, Training and Retaining Workers in Rural Areas

- Requires partnerships
  - Broadband
  - Local Business and community entities
  - Transportation
  - Child care
Dairyland Partnerships

- Support for schools (scholarships, capital campaigns, donations, etc.)
- Funding for regional transportation efforts
- Tourism and economic development organizations
- Natural resources
Comments and Questions