

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 3, 2024

Contact: Jerrid Williams
Director of Communications and Public Affairs
jwilliams@socorroelectric.com

SOCORRO ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE SELECTS NEW CEO/GENERAL MANAGER

Socorro, New Mexico – The Board of Trustees of Socorro Electric Cooperative (SEC) has selected Manuel Gonzales as the new CEO/General Manager of SEC to replace Joseph Herrera who left the cooperative this past September. Manuel will be relocating to the Socorro area from Wilcox, Arizona and is expected to report for work at SEC by early January.

Manuel will bring a wealth of electric distribution cooperative experience to SEC. He has nearly 29 years of experience in the cooperative industry, all at Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative in Willcox, a medium-sized distribution cooperative with approximately 190 employees. There he was progressively promoted through various divisions of the cooperative and ultimately served in the capacity of its Vice President of Technical Services. Along the way he continued to pursue his education, culminating with a Master of Science in Organizational Leadership from Arizona State University. In addition to his service to those communities served by the Sulphur Springs Valley Cooperative, Manuel has also served our country with a combined total of almost 25 years in the military, including active duty and the Selected Marine Corps Reserves, where he achieved the rank of Sergeant Major and served in three overseas deployments supporting combat operations. Board President Leroy Anaya commented on Manuel's selection indicating, "the Board was seeking a general manager that would unite SEC as a team with a common set of values and goals to serve our members and community with exemplary service. We truly believe Manuel is that leader, and we are excited to have him at SEC and in the community."

Manuel's selection culminates an extensive search for the new general manager that began this past fall. With the assistance of the National Rural Electric Cooperatives Association, Executive Search group, a national search was conducted. The recruiting process resulted in numerous qualified candidates for the position. President Anaya indicated that "because of the depth of the candidate pool, the Board was afforded the luxury to look beyond just experience and qualifications in order to find the right individual." During the final phase of the process, the Board spent nearly 4 hours with each finalist over a two-day period, getting to know them as a person, not just a candidate. NRECA consultant Dave Luttrell spoke with Manuel following his selection and reported to the Board, "he told me that he was excited and honored to be selected for this position and is looking forward to serving the members of SEC."