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**Missouri River Energy Services President and Chief Executive Officer receives American Public Power Association’s exceptional leadership award**

**Seattle, Washington, June 20, 2023** — Thomas J. Heller, President and Chief Executive Officer with Missouri River Energy Services, of South Dakota, received the Alex Radin Distinguished Service Award during the American Public Power Association’s National Conference in Seattle, Washington. The award is the highest award granted by APPA. It recognizes exceptional leadership in and dedication to public power.

Thomas’ career in public power and involvement with APPA dates to 1977, when he began working as an engineer with Moorhead, Minnesota Public Service. He earned the title of General Manager in 1985 before transitioning to the role of President and Chief Executive Officer with Missouri River Energy Services in 1992. During his time with MRES, Thomas exhibited exceptionally consistent leadership, as evidenced by 100% of MRES members renewing their power supply contracts four times during his tenure. Moreover, under Thomas’ leadership, the bond ratings for the Western Minnesota Municipal Power Agency were upgraded from Aa2 to Aa3, with a stable outlook, recognizing its sound financial policies, consistently strong liquidity, and debt service coverage. Further, he has ensured future capacity and improved resource diversity by overseeing the development of the Red Rock Hydroelectric Project, which began operation in June 2021.

Thomas has been consistently involved with APPA over the decades, attending and frequently presenting at conferences and meetings. Thomas has served on Boards of Directors for APPA, the Electric Power Research Institute, the National Hydropower Organization, the Midwest Electric Consumers Association, and the Minnesota Municipal Utilities Association, as well as the APPA CEO Climate Change and Generation Policy Task Force.

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*The American Public Power Association is the voice of not-for-profit, community-owned utilities that power 2,000 towns and cities nationwide. We represent public power before the federal government to protect the interests of the more than 49 million people that public power utilities serve, and the 96,000 people they employ. Our association advocates and advises on electricity policy, technology, trends, training, and operations. Our members strengthen their communities by providing superior service, engaging citizens, and instilling pride in community-owned power.*