

## Linemen Appreciation Day: April 12, 2021

### NRECA Board Resolution (2015)

“Whereas linemen leave their families and put their lives on the line every day to keep the power on; Whereas linemen work 365 days a year under dangerous conditions to build, maintain and repair the electric infrastructure; Whereas linemen are the first-responders of the electric cooperative family, getting power back on and making things safe for all after storms and accidents; and Whereas there would be no electric cooperatives without the brave men and women who comprise our corps of linemen; Therefore be it resolved that NRECA recognize the Second Monday of April of each year as National Lineman Appreciation Day and recognize the contributions of these valuable men and women to America’s Electric Cooperatives.”



PHOTOS BY DEAN VOLK

Employees who work out of the Bowman outpost include (from left) Line Technician **Cody Braaten**, Outpost Foreman **Jeff Boynton** and Line Technician **Jon Lawhead**.



Employees who work out of New England headquarters include (from left) Senior Staking Technician **Andrew Sonsalla**; Line Technicians **Dusty Hoff**, **Mark Frank** and **Drew Madler**; and Apprentice Line Technician **Brett Obritsch**.

Slope Electric Cooperative, Inc.

# OUTLOOK

116 E. 12th St. • New England, ND 58647 | 701-579-4191 • www.slopeelectric.coop

### In this issue:

- Ensuring reliability as power supply tightens
- Save the date for your annual meeting
- Consider running for a position on the Slope Electric board of directors
- Addresses needed to mail capital credit allocation statements & checks
- Trimming trees improves system reliability
- RDFC grants available
- Meeting minutes and more



*Basin Electric Power Cooperative's Antelope Valley Station, located northwest of Beulah, can provide up to 900 megawatts of baseload generation daily. One of Slope's power suppliers, Basin Electric has a diverse resource portfolio that provides affordable, reliable generation to meet our members' needs. Coal baseload generation makes up 44 percent of Basin Electric's resource portfolio, while natural gas provides about 20 percent, wind provides about 20 percent, and other sources like recovered energy, oil, diesel and jet fuel, as well as market purchases, make up the remainder of the resources. Basin Electric believes in an all-of-the-above energy strategy, as it requires using all the resources to fill in the gaps and provide reliable energy delivery.*

## **A message from Slope Electric Cooperative ...**

# **Ensuring reliability as power supply tightens**

**A** complex network of electricity generators and tens of thousands of miles of electrical lines work together to ensure that enough electricity is available on the coldest winter morning and during the dog days of summer.

What happens when the demand for power overwhelms the ability to provide it? That's a particularly vexing question, given the transition taking place in how electricity is produced and shared across this network.

The key to meeting the energy needs essential to your quality of life is balancing electricity supply with demand. There is a complex web of facilities and organizations that work together to make it happen each day.

Regional transmission organizations coordinate, control and monitor the electric grid across several states in a region. Think of them as energy traffic managers on an interstate highway system, regulating the number of cars – in this case, electricity – and their destination.

Even so, on some days there is an imbalance in that system that leads to rolling power interruptions or blackouts — so-called “max-gen” events. In those cases, supply simply can't keep up with demand. In the Midcontinent region

comprised of 15 states, there were six max-gen events from 2006 to 2016. Since 2016, there have been 15, including three last July and August alone.

That's because power plants that generate electricity are being closed faster than new producers are coming online. In most cases, traditional large-scale power suppliers such as coal and nuclear plants are being closed and replaced by alternatives on a much smaller scale. This gap is closing more quickly despite the development of new natural gas-fueled power plants.

As more electric utilities pursue zero- or low-carbon initiatives by 2035 and beyond, this challenge will grow more complex. So, what's the answer?

Electric cooperatives and others in the energy sector will continue to develop renewable options and pursue new technologies. But absent new, large-scale alternatives and advances in energy storage, the stalwarts of today's energy fleet — coal and nuclear energy facilities — must continue to operate in many regions. In some, they remain the most cost-effective options for producing electricity. ■



# Save the date

## Slope Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting

June 3, 2021

Community Center, Reeder

- *Be an active and involved co-op member*
- *Vote to fill five positions on the board of directors*
- *Learn cooperative updates and industry issues — and how they affect your electric service*

## Nominating/Resolutions Committee

Slope Electric Cooperative's 76th Annual Meeting will be held Thursday, June 3, at the Community Center in Reeder.

Because an election was not held in 2020 due to the pandemic, there will be five Board seats up for election at the 2021 annual meeting: one director from Adams County, two directors from Hettinger County, and two directors from Slope County.

Three vacant Board seats will be up for election at the 2023 annual meeting (one from Adams County and two from Hettinger County), and two additional seats will be up for election at the 2024 annual meeting (two from Slope County).

The bylaws of Slope Electric Cooperative, Inc., state in Article IV, Section 4, directors can be nominated one of three ways:

- 1. Through the Nominating Committee.** The committee's first meeting was held Feb. 24 to review procedures, responsibilities and qualifications for directorship. The second meeting was held March 22 to nominate candidates and to approve resolutions.
- 2. Members can also be nominated by filing a petition with 15 signatures.** Filing must be done 30 days prior to the annual meeting on June 3 and posted at the office of Slope Electric.
- 3. Members can also be nominated from the floor at the annual meeting.** This method means your name will not be preprinted on the ballot, but it can be written in by your supporters. ■

The following members have been appointed by the board of directors to serve on the Nominating/Resolutions Committee for 2021:

- |    |   |                             |
|----|---|-----------------------------|
| 1. | Lynn Homelvig, 14406 65th St. S.W., Amidon, ND 58620      | 701-879-6385                |
| 2. | Kevan Stafne, 1106 7th St. N.W., Hettinger, ND 58639      | 701-853-2207                |
| 3. | Craig Silkman, 135 Hwy. 8 S., Hettinger, ND 58639         | 701-567-4626                |
| 4. | Michael Schneider, 7501 156th Ave. S.W., Rhame, ND 58651  | 701-279-6927 / 701-440-0576 |
| 5. | William Gion, 6360 99th Ave. S.W., Regent, ND 58650       | 701-690-7633                |
| 6. | Trevor Steeke, 8506 162nd Ave. S.W., Rhame, ND 58651      | 701-279-6859                |
| 7. | William Freymiller, 13606 84th St. S.W., Bowman, ND 58623 | 701-269-9370                |
| 8. | Robert Martin, 9309 Hwy. 21, Mott, ND 58646               | 701-824-2485 / 701-928-0298 |



PHOTO BY CARMEN DEVNEY

## The landscape of reliability

# Trimming trees keeps power flowing safely

**T**rees seem harmless on a normal North Dakota day. Add the wind gusts that frequently blow and top it with a strong spring storm — and those towering pillars can threaten your home’s power supply.

“Trees are a nuisance. They cause blinks and outages, and all kinds of problems,” says Slope Electric Cooperative Operations Manager and Chief of Staff Dean Volk.

Regular trimming of trees and brush along power lines helps cut down on the number of outages and blinks.

Electricity interruptions can occur when branches break and fall across power lines, or when trees tumble onto power lines. When strong winds blow, limbs growing too close to power lines may sway and touch the wires, causing “blinks” in power.

Slope Electric Cooperative is committed to providing safe, reliable and affordable electric service, and our tree-trimming program is one way we fulfill that mission. When time allows, Slope’s line technicians clear growth away from power lines to improve system reliability, and protect the public from downed lines that could still be energized and dangerous. During the busy construction season, Slope may hire contract trimmers as needed.

If a tree is growing underneath or near a power line, it should be cut down completely, Volk advises.

“We prefer to cut trees all the way down, because we don’t have time to keep coming back every four or five years to keep trimming a tree that’s under a power line,” he says.

On line patrol, crews look for foliage growing under lines, overhanging branches, leaning trees or other dangers that could pull a power line down under certain conditions.

Follow this rule of thumb when planting trees:

- 0 to 20 feet on each side of a power line: no trees or shrubs whatsoever;
- 20 to 60 feet on each side of a power line: no trees or shrubs that exceed 18 feet in height when full grown;
- 60 feet or more from a power line: no restriction.

If trees in your area are growing into power lines, please call Slope Electric at 701-579-4191 or 800-559-4191, or email [safety@slopeelectric.coop](mailto:safety@slopeelectric.coop).

Thank you, members! We appreciate you working with us to keep the public safe and improve the reliability of the power system. ■

## When danger looms

**S**prawling tree limbs look beautiful when covered with leaves, but what's hiding among those branches? If it's a power line, call Slope Electric to trim that tree before it causes a hazard or leaves you without power.

When a tree touches an overhead power line, danger looms. Children climbing that tree can get shocked or killed. When trees and brush come into contact with an energized power line, it can also cause a fire.

Remember ... when power lines are involved, leave the trimming to the professionals. ■

## Learning from history

Courtesy of Basin Electric Power Cooperative

**C**alifornia's deadliest and most destructive fire in history was the result of a utility's failure to keep power lines clear of trees or vegetation. The 2018 Camp Fire ravaged Northern California, killing at least 85 people, destroying nearly 19,000 buildings, and charring an area the size of Chicago. Total damage is estimated at \$16.5 billion.

Closer to home - in Basin Electric's service area - South Dakota's 2017 Legion Lake fire started in the Black Hills when a 35-foot tree fell across a power line owned by a non-cooperative utility. The fast-spreading fire burned 84-square miles before its containment.

All of these incidents demonstrate the importance of keeping the area around power lines clear. ■

## Plant the Right Tree in the Right Place

For more tips on smart tree planting in your community, contact your local electric cooperative or visit [www.ArborDay.org](http://www.ArborDay.org).

Trees beautify our neighborhoods, and when planted in the right spot, can even help lower energy bills. But the wrong tree in the wrong place can be a hazard... especially to power lines.

### LARGE TREES

Height/spread of more than 40 feet, such as:

- Maple
- Oak
- Spruce
- Pine
- Birch
- Sweetgum
- Linden

### MEDIUM TREES

Height/spread of 25 to 40 feet, such as:

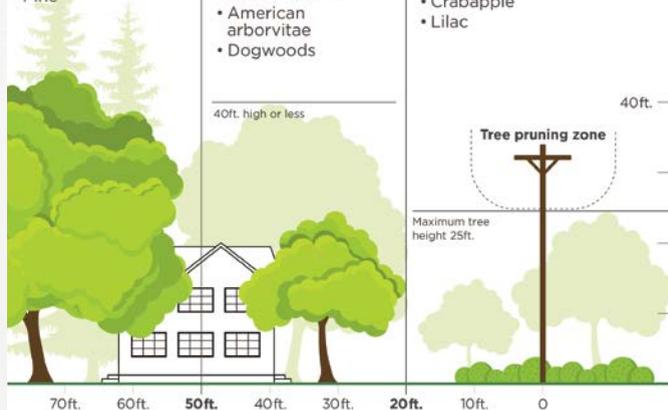
- Washington hawthorn
- Goldenrain tree
- Eastern redbud
- American arborvitae
- Dogwoods

### SMALL TREES

Avoid planting within 20 feet of power lines.

Height/spread of no more than 25 feet such as:

- Star magnolia
- Crabapple
- Lilac



Be safe! Always call 811 before you dig to locate any buried utility lines.

Source: The Arbor Day Foundation and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association



## BENEFITS OF TREE TRIMMING

Clearing trees and overgrown vegetation is vital to provide safe, reliable power to our members.

We clear certain areas in our service territory, known as rights of way, to:

- Keep power lines clear of tree limbs
- Restore power outages more quickly
- Keep crews and members of our community safe
- Reduce unexpected costs for repairs

Vegetation management improves service reliability for you - our members!

## Co-op member addresses needed

Slope Electric Cooperative, Inc., needs new addresses to mail members their capital credit allocation statements and/or capital credit check written last year.

The following list of Slope Electric Cooperative members and their current address on file (last known address) were mailed allocation statements and/or checks that were returned from the Post Office because it was, “not a deliverable address,” “unable to forward” or “attempted not known.”

If you know of a current address, please call the Slope Electric Cooperative office at 701-579-4191 or 800-559-4191.

## What are capital credits?

Slope Electric Cooperative is a nonprofit business. We exist only to provide goods and services to you, our members; not to make a profit for a shareholder or investor. Cooperatives are operated to provide at-cost electric service to their members.

When all the expenses are paid, the cooperative’s margins are credited to you in the form of capital credits. As the

financial condition of your cooperative allows, you are paid these capital credits. In the meantime, your capital credits are your equity in the cooperative.

Refunds are allocated based on the amount of business a member does with the cooperative — the more electricity used, the larger the capital credit check.

Shawn T. Arndorfer, Bismarck, ND  
 Steven Aubrey, West Plains, MO  
 Raymond Austby, Wibaux, MT  
 Dillon Breen, Bowman, ND  
 Sheri L. Breen, Bowman, ND  
 Luckey Cameron, Sheridan, WY  
 Joe Carpenter, Hobson, MT  
 L.C. Cassell, Bowman, ND  
 Robert W. Crawford,  
 Prescott Valley, AZ  
 L.D. Crooker, Rapid City, SD  
 Debbie L. Doest, Bowman, ND  
 Wilma J. Doll-Beckman,  
 New Salem, ND  
 Mark K. Erickson, Mandan, ND  
 Suzanna C. Erickson, Mandan, ND  
 David Foltz, Mott, ND  
 Val J. Friedt, Mott, ND  
 Herbert B. Gatzke, Newell, SD  
 Getz Contracting, Bowman, ND  
 Joseph Goldade, Lemmon, SD  
 Terry Greff, San Tan Valley, AZ  
 Robert Grossman, MD,  
 Palm Desert, CA  
 Tom E. Gunderson, Pollock, SD  
 Keith E. Hagen, Reeder, ND  
 Robert W. Hanson, Rozet, WY  
 Lee W. Hewson, Dickinson, ND  
 Brigitte Hintz, Bismarck, ND  
 George G. Holgard, Lemmon, SD  
 Donovan Hollis, Soap Lake, WA  
 Chism Holt, Cordel, Ok  
 Jim Huggins, South Heart, ND

Frank Hutto, Englewood, CO  
 Delmar D. Imhoff, Bismarck, ND  
 C R Kadrmas, Fargo, ND  
 Bruce G. Klein, Garrison, ND  
 Deanna Kramer, Langford, SD  
 Forrest D. Lanchbury, Sedona, AZ  
 Jeremy Losing, Bowman, ND  
 Jeff Lyles, New England, ND  
 Loren E. Mayer, Minot, ND  
 Chelsea McCreery, Kiowa, KS  
 Eileen Meggers, Rapid City, SD  
 Michael D. Merwin, Hettinger, ND  
 Betty Jean Mesling, Bismarck, ND  
 Ronda Miller, Bowman, ND  
 H A Multhaup Trustee,  
 New England, ND  
 Nelson Farms % Lelyn Nelson,  
 Spokane, WA  
 Victoria Nelson, Rapid City, SD  
 Derek Nordahl, Dickinson, ND  
 Bruce W. Olson, Minot, ND  
 Jordan Rustad, Bowman, ND  
 Chris & Becky Saylor, Hettinger, ND  
 Steven J. Saylor, Bowman, ND  
 Ron Schmaltz, Bowman, ND  
 Eugene Schultz, Wickenburg, AZ  
 Craig Seibold, Spokane Valley, WA  
 Sequel Energy, LLC, Billings, MT  
 Robert E. & Mary A. Shear,  
 Scranton, ND  
 Dave & Tana Smolnikar, Bowman, ND  
 Edith Steier, Dickinson, ND  
 Martha J. Stuber, Bowman, ND

Dr. R.C. Thom, Bowman, ND  
 Allan Tomac, Buffalo, SD  
 Leonard Torpen, Bowman, ND  
 Tri State Comm Inc., Bismarck, ND  
 Brad Wahl, Huntington Beach, CA  
 Robert Warbis, Hettinger, ND  
 Todd Wentz, Sheridan, WY  
 Gary White, Reeder, ND  
 Dana N. Wolf, Bowman, ND  
 Morris Zahn, Hettinger, ND ■

### Members, do we have your current contact information?

Please make sure Slope Electric Cooperative has your updated mobile phone number, email address and mailing address on file! If you plan to move, let us know your forwarding address. Your updated information will help us confer a capital credit check when the time is right.

Please call 701-579-4191 or 800-559-4191, or log into your SmartHub account, to update your information. If you do not have a SmartHub account, set one up at [www.slopeelectric.coop](http://www.slopeelectric.coop).

# Report from THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**FEB. 22, 2021**

*Meeting held at New England headquarters*

- Approved the agenda.
- Approved minutes of the Jan. 28, 2021, Board meeting.
- Approved 11 capital credit estate retirements.
- Approved special equipment for transformers.
- Co-General Managers/CEOs provided updates.
- Heard power supplier updates.
- Heard update on the North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives.
- Heard reports from Directors who participated in various meetings and classes.
- Discussed Operation Round Up board member update.
- Discussed Resolutions for the Nominating Committee.
- Reviewed RUS audit findings for the Construction Work Plan Audit.
- Reviewed and updated Board Policy 02-10 and 02-12.
- Discussed the 2021 Annual Meeting.
- Rescheduled the March Regular Board meeting to March 22, 2021.
- Discussed upcoming meetings, director attendance and voting delegates.
- Reviewed and accepted the executive summary of the financial report.
- Heard senior staff report.
- Heard legal counsel report.
- Held voucher review.
- Scheduled the next Board meeting for March 22, 2021.
- Held Executive Session.
- Adjourned.

## RDFC announces 2021 grant opportunities



Rural Development  
Finance Corporation  
*GROWING COMMUNITIES*

The Rural Development Finance Corporation (RDFC) announce it has approved a 2021 grant allotment of \$2,000 on behalf of Slope Electric Cooperative to be used to support community owned entities, non-profits and community-based projects.

### Guidelines

- Eligible projects: community owned businesses (café, grocery store, motel, other); community facilities (ambulance services, fire districts, recreation, hospital/clinic, community center, etc.); or community-based projects (school/youth projects, other) that benefit rural areas and lead to community betterment. New in 2021: RDFC does not provide funds for medical fundraisers or general operating costs.

- Matching funds: \$4 dollars of other funds to every \$1 of RDFC funds. Slope Electric will verify matching funds.
- Maximum/minimum grant amounts: The minimum grant amount is \$500; the maximum is \$2,000. The limit is \$2,000 on behalf of Slope Electric for 2021.
- Timeframe: Now through Dec. 31, 2021

### Process:

Call Slope Electric Cooperative at 701-579-4191 or 800-559-4191 or email [comments@slopeelectric.coop](mailto:comments@slopeelectric.coop) to visit about a specific project and determine eligibility.

If it meets the qualifications, the member should complete an application and submit to Slope Electric for consideration. From there, the application will be presented to the Slope board of directors for approval.

If approved, the grant application will be submitted to RDFC for final consideration. The RDFC board gives final approval on grant requests.

Once approved, a check will be made out to the recipient entity listed on the application and mailed to the RDFC contact person listed on the application. ■



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# THURSDAY, APRIL 22

Today – and every day  
– is Earth Day.

## 5 STEPS FOR SAFE DIGGING

Working on an outdoor project? Careless digging poses a threat to people, pipelines and underground facilities. Always call 8-1-1 first. Here are five easy steps for safe digging:





**Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.**

### 1. NOTIFY

Call 8-1-1 or make a request online two to three days before your work begins. The operator will notify the utilities affected by your project.

2-3

### 2. WAIT

Wait two to three days for affected utilities to respond to your request. They will send a locator to mark any underground utility lines.

### 3. CONFIRM

Confirm that all affected utilities have responded to your request by comparing the marks to the list of utilities the 8-1-1 call center notified.

### 4. RESPECT

Respect the markers provided by the affected utilities. The markers are your guide for the duration of your project.

### 5. DIG CAREFULLY

If you can't avoid digging near the markers (within 18-24 inches on all sides, depending on the laws), consider moving your project location.



**Slope Electric**  
Cooperative, Inc.  
Your Touchstone Energy<sup>®</sup> Cooperative

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New England, ND 58647-0338

Phone: 701-579-4191  
or 800-559-4191  
Fax: 701-579-4193

Email us:  
[comments@slopeelectric.coop](mailto:comments@slopeelectric.coop)

UNDERGROUND LINE LOCATES  
800-795-0555 or 811

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**SLOPE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS**

Lauren Klewin, President  
Steve Wegner, Vice President  
Anthony Larson, Secretary  
Jerome Caron, Treasurer  
Angela Carlson, Director  
HJ "Chip" Fischer, Director  
Dale Hande, Director  
Charlotte Meier, Director

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**MANAGEMENT**

Donald A. Franklund  
CO-GM/CEO

Travis Kupper  
CO-GM/CEO

[www.slopeelectric.coop](http://www.slopeelectric.coop)

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