



## Explore it ... Adore it ... and Save!

In partnership with the Theodore Roosevelt Medora Foundation, Slope Electric Cooperative is once again making excursions to Medora more affordable for families. This summer, our members are eligible for a 15-percent discount off the following reservations:

- Tickets to the Medora Musical
  - Pitchfork Steak Fondue
  - Bully Pulpit Golf Course
  - Lodging at the Badlands Motel, Elkhorn Quarters and Rough Riders Hotel
- Members will receive a 20-percent discount at the Cowboy Hall of Fame.

To make your reservations and claim your savings, call 1-800-MEDORA-1 and provide the discount code **Touch2021**. When visiting the Cowboy Hall of Fame, provide the discount code **Touch2021** at the door. ■

Slope Electric Cooperative, Inc.

# OUTLOOK

116 E. 12th St. • New England, ND 58647 | 701-579-4191 • [www.slopeelectric.coop](http://www.slopeelectric.coop)

### In this issue:

- **Scholarship winners announced**
- **Power-supplier reports**
- **Board meeting minutes ... and more**



## Congratulations to Slope Electric's 2021 Scholarship Winners!

Slope Electric Cooperative's scholarship program is designed to recognize our youth's achievements and encourage the development of rural leadership in our region. Slope Electric is pleased to offer this program to our cooperative members. Congratulations to the scholarship winners!

1. Lauren Weishaar, Lemmon - Basin Electric \$1,000
2. Brady Senn, Bowman - Bowman County High School \$500
3. Mitchell Dalley - Hettinger High School \$500
4. James Klein - Lemmon High School \$500
5. Kaden Auch - Mott-Regent High School \$500
6. Waylon Kathrein - New England Public School \$500
7. Jeran Anderson - Scranton High School \$500

Each year, **Basin Electric Power Cooperative** provides \$1,000 to Slope Electric Cooperative to be awarded as a scholarship to a Slope member's graduating high school senior or college freshman. This year, Lauren Weishaar was chosen to receive this scholarship. She is the daughter of Shawn and Sarah Weishaar from Lemmon. Lauren plans to attend South Dakota State University and double-major in animal science and agricultural communications. In her application she wrote, "I will be able to directly advance my own, my family's and my community's western heritage.

After college, I am willing to return to my roots and help advocate for agriculture in western South Dakota." Her long-term goal is to become an ag journalist.

As part of our commitment to community and area youth, Slope Electric is pleased to also award one \$500 scholarship to a graduating senior from each of the high schools within our service area:

**Bowman County High School:** Brady Senn, son of Tyler and Melissa Senn. Brady plans to attend Dickinson State University and pursue a career in exercise science.

**Hettinger High School:** Mitchell Dalley, son of Caleb and Melinda Dalley. He plans to attend Brigham Young University and pursue a career in mechanical engineering.

**Lemmon High School:** James Klein, son of Vernon and Veronica Klein. James plans to attend Mitchell Technical Institute, and pursue a career in welding and machining.

**Mott-Regent High School:** Kaden Auch, son of Ben and Nadra Auch. He plans to attend University of Mary in Bismarck and study physical therapy.

**New England High School:** Waylon Kathrein, son of Kim and Allen Kohl and John Kathrein. He plans to attend Mayville State University.

**Scranton High School:** Jeran Anderson, son of Keith and Ann Anderson. At the time of magazine publication, Jeran was still determining his school and career path.



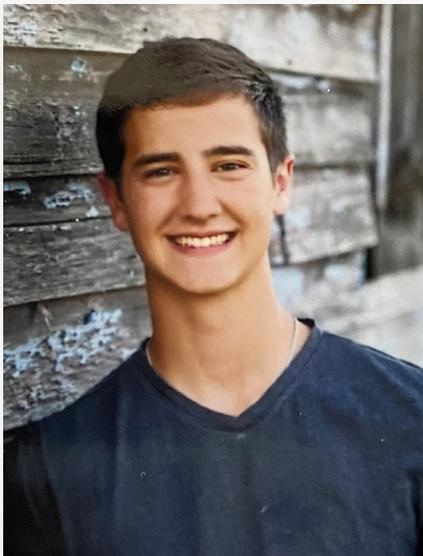
BRADY  
**SENN**



MITCHELL  
**DALLEY**



JAMES  
**KLEIN**



KADEN  
**AUCH**



WAYLON  
**KATHREIN**



JERAN  
**ANDERSON**

3C Construction and West Dakota Utility Services generously extended a \$500 scholarship to each of its owners this year, including Slope Electric. The intention of the scholarship is for students entering into the lineworker program or mechanic program at a certified vocational or technical school. We have incorporated this scholarship into our current scholarship program, which allows Slope to offer two more scholarship awards to our member-dependents. No qualifying applications were received. ■

## A message from your power supplier: **Upper Missouri Power Cooperative**

BY CLAIRE VIGESAA, GENERAL MANAGER

*(Editor's note: Upper Missouri Power Cooperative supplies 100 percent of the power distributed to Slope Electric Cooperative members. That power is generated by Basin Electric Power Cooperative and Western Area Power Administration. We asked Claire Vigesaa to update our members on what is happening at Upper Missouri.)*



**Claire Vigesaa**

Upper Missouri Power Cooperative (UMPC) was organized in 1957 to serve the transmission needs of rural electric cooperatives in eastern Montana and western North Dakota. Today, Upper Missouri provides service to 11 distribution cooperatives: six in eastern Montana, and five in western North Dakota including Slope Electric Cooperative. The 11 member-systems serve 77,714 meters to farms, ranches, homes and businesses in 37 counties, representing 54,762 square miles. Our service area spans east to west from Hysham, Mont., to the Missouri River near Washburn, and from the Canadian border to the South Dakota/Montana borders, serving an area equal in size to the state of Iowa or the state of New York.

Upper Missouri is a cooperative, governed by a board of 11, represented by one trustee from each member-system. Anthony Larson, Hettinger, is Slope Electric's board voice on the Upper Missouri board. We value Anthony's interest and participation in our business.

On behalf of Slope Electric, Upper Missouri purchases power from Basin Electric Power Cooperative and Western Area Power Administration (WAPA). As member-owners of Slope Electric, you'd be well aware of Basin Electric and its long-term investment in generation facilities that include coal generation by Beulah, and natural gas generation near Watford City and Williston. Upper Missouri sources 96 percent of its power supply from Basin Electric. The remaining 4 percent is sourced from WAPA, electric energy generated from hydro facilities on the Missouri River system like Garrison Dam.

Upper Missouri owns one transmission facility in Slope's region: the Little Missouri Substation on the Montana/North Dakota border. Montana-Dakota Utilities maintains the Little Missouri facility for us.

Although Upper Missouri has very few assets and only four employees, its region has very intense energy use. Upper Missouri billed more than 10,000 gigawatts of electricity in 2020. Upper Missouri has a commitment to what we call a Cost of Service model; the cost causer is the cost payer. That model has served the membership well, managing risk for each member-system regardless of size.

In addition to data collection, metering and power-supply aggregation work, Upper Missouri is subject to North American Electric Reliability Corporation compliance and Federal Energy Regulatory Commission rate oversight. Upper Missouri also supports its 11 member-systems through representation on several state, regional and national associations.

There has been a lot of change in the energy world the last five years. We've seen big swings in oil prices, huge increases in natural gas production, significant wind development, and pressure on our lignite-coal resources. In the big picture, our region is positioned well with large baseload coal, abundant and low-cost natural gas and wind resources. The "all-of-the-above" generation mix minimizes risk to the membership; for we know that in this climate, power supply availability isn't an option ... it is vital for life support.

While change is inevitable, we remain focused on providing reliable and affordable electric service. Our board of trustees has your best interest in mind as they meander a myriad of issues: members first! We take our commitment to accountability very seriously, knowing that Slope Electric Cooperative and you, its member-owners, pay the bill!

Though we are only a cog in a wheel, we must maintain an awareness that the cogs before and after us impact the wheel as well, that wheel being you, the member-owner. Our servant leadership cannot be selective, and we should not hold any cog in the wheel in higher regard than the member-owner. There will continue to be challenges and issues facing our industry, and we, as servant leaders, need to be nimble and able to quickly adapt to change for the sake of you, our member-owners. Thank you for your patronage. We look forward to a good year! ■

# A message from your power supplier: Basin Electric Power Cooperative

BY CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER AND GENERAL MANAGER PAUL SUKUT AND BOARD PRESIDENT WAYNE PELTIER

*(Editor's note: Basin Electric Power Cooperative generates the majority of the power purchased by Upper Missouri Power Cooperative and transmitted to Slope Electric Cooperative members. We asked Paul Sukut and Wayne Peltier to update our members on what is happening at Basin Electric.)*

## Keeping lines of communication open



**Wayne Peltier**

Democratic member control is what sets us apart from investor-owned utilities.

Critical decisions need to be made over the next couple years that will impact Basin Electric for the next 15 to 20 years, and discussion and debate are essential to making the best decisions we can. I believe the way we govern ourselves through democratic member control is important to these discussions.

Our board of directors met virtually for most of 2020 due to the COVID-19 global pandemic. While it is very important for people to be in the same room as they are making big decisions, this was a necessary precaution that we had to take to keep ourselves and our employees safe.

We chose to add meetings to our calendars in September, when we met in-person in South Dakota. Along with our regular monthly meeting, we held a strategic planning session for Basin Electric board and staff, a roundtable discussion with the District Class A managers, followed by staff holding a member managers meeting for all Class A and Class C managers.

We heard important feedback during those meetings. I know the managers who were involved were listening deeply.

Discussion and communication are important — whether we are meeting in person or on our computer screens. We will lead our cooperative into the future well, as long as we all keep lines of communication open.

## Building into growth



**Paul Sukut**

This cooperative couldn't have gotten through the COVID-19 pandemic without our employees.

Our essential employees have kept operations going on a daily basis through difficult conditions. Quarantines, social distancing, mask mandates, and working extra shifts are a new normal, and our power has been reliable the entire time. Our administrative employees have been successful working from home as well,

and I, along with the board, cannot say enough how much we appreciate everyone's perseverance and patience.

Commodity prices took a dramatic hit early in the pandemic, and the entire economy was affected. Our members in oil-producing regions are certainly seeing a slowdown, but as a whole our cooperative is still growing.

As we build into this growth, we try to take more of a look at resources that are low-carbon or no-carbon. We are responsible for delivering reliable, affordable energy to three million members across nine states. Many of our coal-based power plants have a lot of economic value on the books. We're trying to see what is the most efficient and effective way that we can write them off the books and be less reliant upon them. We are not planning shutdowns, because we need this generation for the next 15 to 20 years at least; this transition needs to be done in a responsible, carefully considered manner.

As we started doing some of our strategic planning over the course of the last year, one of the things the board asked us was to talk to our members. We conducted a study that resulted in more than a thousand pages of data. We learned that reliability and rates are number one and two concerns of our members, and the future of our largest subsidiary, Dakota Gas, is the third.

This knowledge helps us develop our strategy and communication going forward. The support of our board in this venture, and members who were willing to work with us to gather this information and communicate their perspectives and concerns, all that goes a long ways toward our strong alliance. We are in good financial shape with stable rates. I know we have a bright future, and I am excited to see what the future brings. ■

# A message from your power supplier: Western Area Power Administration (WAPA)

BY ACTING SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AND UPPER GREAT PLAINS REGIONAL MANAGER DAVE NEUMAYER



**Dave Neumayer**

## Achieving balance in a changing world

Uncertainty and upheaval have been constants over the past year, both in our society and industry. Succeeding as an organization in this environment requires strength, agility and perseverance.

That is why we selected “balance” as our theme for this year.

As we adapt and evolve in this energy frontier, one that now includes COVID-19, it will be critical for us to balance strength, resilience, unity and leadership, while also being mindful of our enduring mission, reliability, regional differences and collaborative culture with our customers.

WAPA’s organizational agility has allowed us to continue accomplishing our mission, even during the most challenging times.

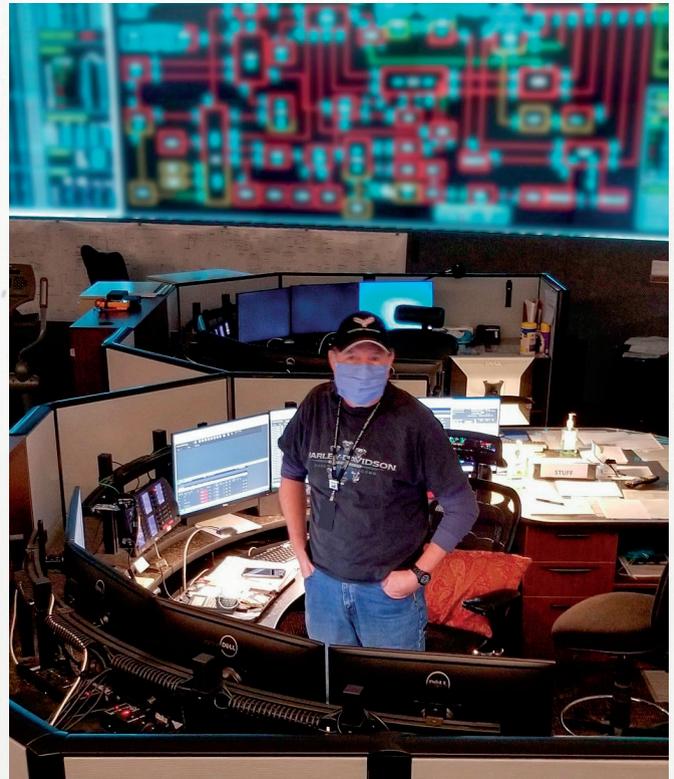
Now more than a year into our COVID-19 response, WAPA has helped lead the industry by evolving our operations to maintain the safety and health of our employees, regardless of whether they work in the office or on the front line.

Beginning in March 2020, we quickly maximized telework while sustaining productivity. We authorized home-to-work for craft employee vehicles, reducing the need for craft employees to congregate in offices and other facilities.

WAPA reconfigured operations centers to permit adequate social distancing for our on-site dispatchers; developed and tested sequestration plans to prepare dispatchers to live and work in isolated groups for two-week stretches; and established a Responsible Workplace Re-entry Plan that defines a safe, measured return to the office based on the best science available.

In parallel, we continued to focus on our core business priorities:

- Returning \$272.3 million to the Department of the Treasury, totaling nearly \$2.6 billion in the past eight years.
- Executing 98 percent of operations and maintenance work and 96 percent of capital projects.
- Keeping costs at just 1.3 cents per kilowatt-hour generated.



*WAPA’s Upper Great Plains region and the Corps worked together to maximize hydropower output and closely monitor the system. In coordination with WAPA operations and power marketing staff, the Corps boosted hydro production at morning and evening peak hours with up to 740 MW per hour in additional generation.*

- Introducing a workload planning initiative, the culmination of several process improvement efforts.
- Saving and avoiding more than \$113 million in costs through continuous process improvement.

In March, we bade farewell to our longtime Administrator and CEO Mark A. Gabriel, and welcomed Senior Vice President Tracey LeBeau to serve as interim administrator.

Selected by the U.S. Department of Energy, LeBeau brings more than 20 years of executive experience in management, clean energy and infrastructure development, public-private partnerships, utility business operations, and federal program and policy leadership.

LeBeau has served in numerous senior leadership roles at WAPA since 2014, including as senior vice president of the



Transmission Infrastructure Program, chief administrative officer and Desert Southwest regional manager. Before joining WAPA, LeBeau was a political appointee at the Department of Energy, standing up the Office of Indian Energy Policy and Programs and serving as its first director.

LeBeau will continue to lead WAPA's focus on our primary mission and advancement on important business priorities, including cost containment.

We also bade farewell to Jody Sundsted, senior vice president and Upper Great Plains regional manager, who retired in September. The process to fill this position is currently underway and should soon be complete.

## Mission and vision

In January, WAPA unveiled our refreshed mission and vision statements, providing a renewed sense of purpose and setting a clear direction for 2021 and beyond. In collaboration with customers, stakeholders and employees, the renewed mission and vision statements highlight the value WAPA places on relationships with customers and communities.

- Mission: Safely provide reliable, cost-based hydropower and transmission to our customers and the communities we serve.
- Vision: Empowering communities, securing a resilient energy future.

Safety is at the core of WAPA's refreshed mission statement. Only by consistent commitment to safety can WAPA and our customers succeed in fulfilling our respective missions.

Our new vision to empower communities with reliable, zero-emissions energy means driving economic development, providing a sense of security and protecting the environment.

## Winter storm Uri

When frigid temperatures hit the country in February, electric grids from Montana to Texas faltered. The Southwest Power Pool rolled blackouts throughout its 14-state power grid to avoid a disastrous outage.

While 21 WAPA customers experienced approximately one-hour outages over the course of two days, WAPA and the Army Corps of Engineers stepped up hydropower production and helped stabilize the grid.

WAPA also tapped our financial reserve strategy and purchased power on the spot market to meet contractual obligations. These critical measures and other takeaways — such as notifying customers immediately and gathering data on customer loads — will inform WAPA's response to future grid challenges.

## Reliable and resilient

As we strive to attain our vision for WAPA's future, the demands of reliability and resilience will shape our path ahead. Reliability is the confidence the lights will turn on when we need them.

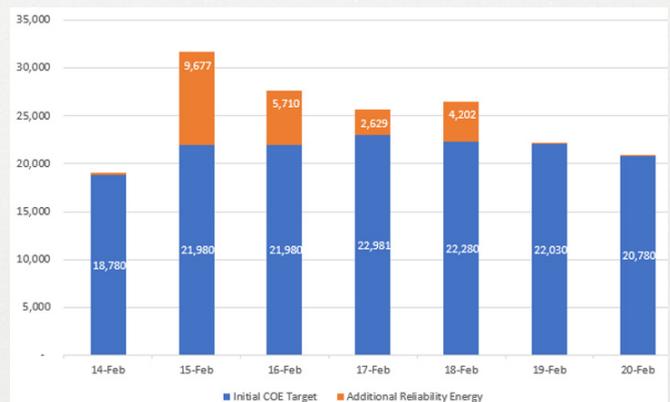
We operate a reliable system, weathering disruptions such as storms, wildlife interactions, vehicle accidents, routine maintenance and emergency situations. We do this with support from our customers and by concentrating on our reliability-centered maintenance and asset management programs. Our 10-year capital plans anticipate investing \$1.3 billion in our system over the next decade to ensure reliability.

Resilience is the ability to prevent, withstand and recover from disruptive threats and events — an important distinction from reliability as we balance our available personnel and funds.

This has been a difficult period not just with the pandemic, but with a record-breaking wildfire season across much of our territory that affected some of our infrastructure, particularly in Arizona and Colorado. Thanks to integrated vegetation management, we avoided what could have been a devastating year.

In an ideal world, we would invest more in resilience by hardening facilities, increasing redundant services, enhancing black-start capabilities, replacing wood with steel, increasing the movement of energy between the eastern and western grids and integrating artificial intelligence, machine learning and advanced technology solutions into grid operations.

With the support of our customers and communities, we can achieve balance in a changing world and make our way toward a successful and prosperous future. ■



WAPA worked with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Feb. 15 to 18 to increase generation from the Missouri River power plants to support the grid. This graph shows the additional hydropower that the Corps provided during Winter Storm Uri.

## Report from THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

APRIL 29, 2021

- Approved the agenda as presented
- Approved minutes of the March 22, 2021, Board meeting
- Approved three capital credit estate retirements
- Heard overview of auditor's report prepared by Brady Martz and Associates, P.C.; entered into Executive Session; accepted the audit as presented
- Co-General Manager/CEO Travis Kupper provided updates
- Reviewed West Dakota Utility Services/3C Construction update
- Heard power supplier updates
- Heard reports from Directors who participated in various meetings and classes
- Approved resolution for Paycheck Protection Program Loan Forgiveness application
- Completed required Form 990 questionnaire
- Tabled Board Policy 02-14 until the next meeting
- Held Bylaw amendment review
- Presented director awards for service
- Discussed 2021 Annual Meeting planning and approved members receiving a \$50 bill credit for attending the 2021 annual meeting
- Discussed upcoming meetings, director attendance and voting delegates
- Reviewed and accepted the March 2021 financials as presented
- Heard senior staff report
- Heard legal counsel report
- Held voucher review
- Reviewed director candidate information for NCSC
- Scheduled the next Board meeting for May 27, 2021
- Held Executive Session
- Adjourned



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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

### MANAGEMENT

Donald A. Franklund  
CO-GM/CEO

Travis Kupper  
CO-GM/CEO

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Become a fan of Slope Electric Cooperative to learn timely co-op news!

*Slope Electric Cooperative, Inc.,  
is an equal opportunity provider.*



**Slope Electric will be closed  
Monday, July 5, to honor Independence Day**

Slope Electric wishes our members a safe and Happy Fourth of July, as we celebrate our history and heritage! Line crews will be available in case of a system emergency or power outage by calling 701-579-4191 or 800-559-4191.