



JUNE
2022

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% discount off the following reservations:

- Tickets to the Medora Musical
- Pitchfork Steak Fondue
- Bully Pulpit Golf Course

Lodging at any of the following:

- Elkhorn Quarters
- Badlands Motel
- Rough Riders Hotel

To make your reservations and claim your savings, call **1-800-MEDORA-1** and provide the discount code: **Touch2022**.

JUNE 19

Happy Father's Day

Slope Electric will be closed
Monday, July 4, 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.

Slope Electric Cooperative Inc.

OUTLOOK

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

In this issue:

- Power supply reports
- Manager's message: Unplug to be more connected
- Safety Starts with ME

Safety Starts with ME: **Brad Schmitt**

Summer is in full swing, and many welcome the opportunities to be outdoors and enjoy the warmer weather.

But summer months also make conditions right for dangerous storms. These potential weather events can cause destruction to our electrical system.

“Slope Electric crews are ready and standing by to respond, should power outages occur in our area,” said Brad Schmitt, an apprentice lineworker at Slope Electric Cooperative.

When major storms knock out power, Slope Electric’s line crews take all necessary precautions before they work on any downed lines.

“I would encourage you to also practice safety and preparedness to protect your family during major storms and outages,” Schmitt said.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency recommends the tips below as a starting point for storm and disaster preparedness, but you can visit www.ready.gov for additional resources.

- Stock your pantry with a three-day supply of nonperishable food, such as canned goods, energy bars, peanut butter, powdered milk, instant coffee, water and other essentials (diapers and toiletries).
- Confirm that you have adequate sanitation and hygiene supplies, including towelettes, soap and hand sanitizer.
- Ensure your first-aid kit is stocked with pain relievers, bandages and other medical essentials, and make sure your prescriptions are current.
- Set aside basic household items you will need, including flashlights, batteries, a manual can opener and a portable, battery-powered radio or TV.
- Organize emergency supplies, so they are easily accessible in one location.

In the event of a prolonged power outage, turn off major appliances, TVs, computers and other sensitive electronics. This will help avert damage from a power surge and will also help prevent overloading the circuits during power



restoration. That said, do leave one light on, so you will know when power is restored. If you plan to use a generator, make sure it’s rated to handle the amount of power you will need, and always review the manufacturer’s instructions to operate it safely.

Listen to local news or an NOAA Weather Radio for storm and emergency information, and check Slope Electric’s website for power restoration updates.

“After the storm, avoid downed power lines and walking through flooded areas where power lines could be submerged,” Schmitt said. “Allow ample room for utility crews to safely perform their jobs, including on your property.”

Advanced planning for severe storms or other emergencies can reduce stress and anxiety caused by the weather event and can lessen the impact of the storm’s effects.

“I hope we don’t experience severe storms this summer, but we can never predict Mother Nature’s plans,” Schmitt said. “At Slope Electric, we recommend that you act today, because there is power in planning. From our co-op family to yours, we hope you have a safe and fun summer.” ■

Manager's message:

Unplug to be more connected



Travis Kupper

“Almost everything will work again if you unplug it for a few minutes, including you.” Author Anne Lamott cleverly captures the benefits of unplugging in today’s device-driven, multitasking world. Keeping up with work, family and school activities or the latest trends on social media makes most of us feel

compelled to constantly check our devices.

Summer is a great time to take a family vacation, but it’s also a good opportunity to unplug from our devices and enjoy the great outdoors with family and friends. Research has shown that we all need downtime after a busy day to recharge – even though we may resist it. Take a moment to slow down and enjoy some peaceful hours away from technology.

While you’re unplugging from your devices, take a look around your home to identify electronics that consume energy, even when they are not in use. (This is known as “vampire” energy loss.) TVs, gaming consoles, phone chargers and computers are some of the biggest culprits.

Take time to recharge your relationships and be more present. Enjoy our surroundings with your family and friends.

Speaking of spending time outdoors, you can also enjoy energy savings by incorporating LED products and fixtures for outdoor use, such as pathway, step and porch lights. Many include features like automatic daylight shutoff and motion sensors. You can also find solar-powered lighting for outdoor spaces.

Save energy by keeping warm summer air outside where it belongs. Add caulk or weatherstripping to seal air leaks around doors and windows. You can also employ a programmable thermostat to adjust the settings a few degrees higher when no one is home.

In our connected world, we have forgotten how to slow down. We multitask and text. We check email, then voicemail, then Facebook. Do yourself and your family a favor. Put down the device and breathe the fresh air.

While Slope Electric can’t help you recharge your relationships, we can help you save money and energy by connecting you with our energy-saving programs and services. When you do plug back in, we’re just a call or click away. ■

Report from **THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Regular meeting held at the Slope Electric office in New England

- Approved agenda
- Approved minutes from previous meeting
- Heard co-general managers/CEOs update
- Heard CFO report
- Approved audited financial report
- Heard the attorney report
- Reviewed Basin Electric Power Cooperative report
- Reviewed board member reports
- Heard operation report
- Heard member relations report

Basin Electric Power Cooperative report

From Wayne Peltier, Basin Electric president, and Todd Telesz, Basin Electric CEO and general manager



The cooperative business model has served Basin Electric Power Cooperative and our members well for over 60 years.

The service we provide rural America is essential – reliable, affordable, responsible electricity. Together, we work hard every day, delivering on the commitment to our members. We are driven by technology and a fuel-diverse generation portfolio. We meet expectations for how we will serve our growing membership, and we have solid credit ratings from the three rating agencies.

That said, the value we provide our members as

an electric cooperative lies beyond the work we do to power the membership. Our history is full of relationships built and maintained, communities boosted and supported, and people who knit a colorful tapestry to hold our family together.

Each month, Basin Electric's directors come together around the boardroom table to discuss the challenges and opportunities that impact every member in our service territory. Their perspective on how this cooperative can serve our communities is local and homegrown; every one of our directors is an end-use consumer, elected by fellow members. Very intentionally, this governance creates a line from the end-use consumers turning on their light switch to making decisions about the wholesale generation and transmission side of the business.

Basin Electric's governance structure and the cooperative business model have guided us since our founding. It is central to the cooperative's very existence and drives the unique value we bring to the people we serve.

In this way, our governance has proven itself pure and effective. Our directors meet monthly, spending the time needed to understand the issues and decisions that come before them, and forming the trust that is helpful in having spirited discussions. They meet just as often with their member cooperative boards. They live in the same communities they are elected to represent and are personally invested in the decisions they make, because they know they will be affected right alongside their neighbors. They are accountable to and reside among the people who make up our membership of three million consumer-owners.

The Basin Electric team keeps the lights on for our consumer-owners, and products shipping out of the Great Plains Synfuels Plant across rural America make our board of directors proud.

Our team of employees understands the

members we serve are priority. Every decision we make is framed through the lens of the best interest of our members: the farmer in eastern Montana who needs reliable irrigation for his barley crop, the single mom in western South Dakota who needs affordable electricity to keep her family safe and secure, and the industrial facilities throughout our service territory that power their local economies. We're driven to serve all with a dedication to responsible energy sources.

Basin Electric has operated as a consumer-owned-and-controlled organization for more than half a century and has done so successfully by keeping a laser-focus on the member at the end of

the line. Our history of stewardship, innovation and adaptability is recorded not only in history books, but also in the lives our members have helped to change.

As we look toward our future, we know the foundation first set 60 years ago will continue to serve us. Basin Electric was built through good fortune and the grit found in necessity. Our geographical diversity, combined with the operational scale of our generation portfolio and transmission infrastructure and our financial strength, has positioned us well to successfully navigate the challenges and opportunities to come. ■

Western Area Power Administration report

by Lloyd Linke, senior vice president and Upper Great Plains regional manager



Lloyd Linke

As we enter a new normal following two years of historic events, Western Area Power Administration (WAPA) strives to rekindle and strengthen our relationships with customers, define a successful and relevant future and inspire a workforce ready to serve like our lights depend on it, all while

addressing some of the new questions before us as a federal organization and electric utility.

Today, the energy industry may feel, at times, chaotic, which is a feeling we are starting to get used to in what has been considered a staid and reliable profession. These changes bring new opportunities for WAPA to leverage additional benefits for our customers and continue ensuring reliable, affordable, renewable and clean hydropower and transmission services.

It is an exciting time to take the helm at Upper Great Plains (UGP) after nearly 40 years in the electrical power industry. I was raised in Bismarck, and obtained a bachelor's degree in electrical and electronics engineering at North Dakota State

University. I began my federal career at WAPA in 1983, holding several positions in maintenance, construction, power billing, marketing, and power and generation operations at UGP and the Alaska Power Administration. In September 1995, I accepted the administrator position at the Alaska Power Administration before returning to WAPA in May 1996 as the UGP maintenance engineering manager. Most recently, I was the UGP vice president of power operations in Watertown, S.D., before being selected as regional manager in July 2021.

At WAPA, we remain committed to our mission and vision in an evolving industry in partnership with our customers. Our organizational theme for 2022, "Reflect, Recharge and Resolve," illustrates our commitment to honor our legacy – including our 45th anniversary in December – renew our strategy and our connections, and move forward resolutely during this time of rapid industry change.

This year, we are focusing on critical issues, such as drought and increasingly severe weather conditions, grid reliability and resilience, and

CONTINUED ON PAGE C6

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workforce and strategic planning.

Delivering renewable, reliable and affordable hydropower to rural America is our core mission, and we face existential questions posed to us not only by systemic drought, but also by market volatility, security concerns and adverse weather conditions, like polar vortexes, extreme heat events, wildfires and increasingly severe storms. Without appropriate planning and mitigation actions, an ongoing drought could cause pressure on our power rates and may also impact reliable balancing authority operations, as hydropower is a critical contributor to grid stability.

We experienced a second consecutive dry and warm winter along much of the Missouri River Basin. According to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' April hydrology update, reservoir inflows are well below average, with seasonal runoff expected to be about 17.8 million-acre feet, or 69% of average. Coupled with low snowpack and a bad water year last year, the Corps anticipates that the seven mainstem dams will generate 7.2 billion kilowatt-hours (kWh) this year compared to the long-term average of 9.5 billion kWh. The hydrologic forecast also projects poor water conditions for potentially the next five years.

WAPA and UGP are not new to prolonged drought conditions in the Missouri River Basin, having experienced a decade-long drought at the beginning of the 21st century. We recognize now there will be less power available for surplus sales beyond our contractual obligations and will get a head start with customers on drought planning to stabilize our rates and costs, including adding a possible drought-adder component to our rate starting next year.

We are also beginning a formal rate process to implement new rates before the current ones expire Dec. 31. The new rates will be put into effect for a five-year period following a public process anticipated to begin in late spring or early summer.

This year, we will also focus on reliability and system resilience, continuing to mature our asset management, security, reliability-centered maintenance and aviation programs to effectively

and efficiently maintain, secure and modernize the grid. Part of this objective also includes seeking new partnerships and leveraging existing ones to explore implementing new protective technologies and hardening the system.

Another key priority is improving our organizational resilience. We will develop the workforce of the future, cultivating our upcoming leaders and ensuring the crucial core values and tenets of this organization remain intact during a time of employee transition and change. We are going to advance our safety-focused organizational culture, embracing inclusion, diversity, human performance improvement and just culture.

Many WAPA employees continued to report to the office throughout the pandemic, including the employees who maintain and operate the grid and their support staff. In April, we completed reentry for staff whose work can and has been done from home since March 2020. In this transition, we initiated a pilot program that permits eligible employees more telework options than before, increasing our ability to recruit and retain valuable staff while safeguarding our traditional high levels of customer service. We are excited to reopen our doors to visitors and return in person to the communities we serve.

Finally, we are embarking on an effort to develop a new strategic plan that will guide WAPA through 2030. Late last year, we conducted environmental surveys with customers, employees and other stakeholders, requesting them to identify internal and external opportunities and challenges. With this information, we are developing strategic themes and desired long-term results through 2030. We anticipate these themes and results to be shared in May for customer input and feedback.

WAPA and customers started this incredible journey to serve the West with federal hydropower, and we will continue to travel this road together into the future, through a new strategic plan and refocused priorities. In my tenure as UGP regional manager, I look forward to working with employees, customers and communities to strengthen these relationships for a valuable and relevant future. ■

Upper Missouri Power Cooperative report

by Jeremy Mahowald, Upper Missouri Power Cooperative general manager



Jeremy Mahowald

As cooperative owners, you have many expectations of your power supplier, and from every aspect of our industry, we aim to deliver. The world is changing and volatile, but it is our mission to keep your power stable, and keep it flowing efficiently, affordably and reliably.

Of course, we have continuous challenges to do this, whether it be the economic inflationary and supply chain pressures facing all Americans, or meeting world demands for a lower carbon power supply. We also have local needs in our Upper Missouri region in meeting our growth challenges in transmission and generation, while continuing to serve our predominant industries of agriculture and energy.

As the members of Slope Electric Cooperative own your cooperative, you, too, are also an owner of Upper Missouri in Sidney, Mont. We are a generation-and-transmission (G&T) power cooperative supplying power to Slope from sources at Basin Electric Power Cooperative and Western Area Power Administration (WAPA). We are owned by Slope, along with 10 other cooperatives in western North Dakota and eastern Montana. Upper Missouri, in turn, is one of the G&T district owners of Basin Electric, which is a “super” G&T.

We are mostly a “paper” G&T, with just three to five employees (three currently), and we benefit you, the members of Slope, in many ways.

One of these is with our regional representation of your local needs. You have an elected board member seated at the Upper Missouri table, Anthony Larson from Slope, who diligently represents your collective regional needs and interests. From Upper Missouri, you have representation at the Basin table with an Upper

Missouri board member, Allen Thiessen, from Lower Yellowstone who is also dedicated to this. And I do this as well, by closely collaborating with the distribution board members and managers, with the staffs of Basin and WAPA, and through several other affiliated national and statewide organizations.

Another way we benefit you is with a cost-of-service model. To the best of our ability, Slope only pays its fair share of expenses. It doesn't pay for facilities or services that do not impact Slope. Upper Missouri is also federally rate-regulated by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), which means our rates must also be deemed just and reasonable by FERC.

Upper Missouri serves the oil and gas industries of the Bakken region, which demands a great deal of power, planning and preparation to meet their growing needs. Oil and gas continues to grow at a moderate pace, though the rest of our membership is intending to add a phenomenal amount of load in the coming years. This consists of a wide variety of oil and gas-driven refinery and tertiary growth with our infrastructure, and we are also seeing a large influx of cryptocurrency and data center development in our region. This is causing considerable work in planning for generation-and-transmission needs, and deciding how the risks of building to all these large electric member consumers will be handled.

We are also closely monitoring the drought, and the impacts it will have on our agricultural members, and the diminished water levels in the Missouri basin reservoirs of Oahe, Sakakawea and Fort Peck that will impact our federal power prices in years to come. As I write this, we are in the aftermath of spring blizzards and ice storms with significant member damage. With the cleanup and restoration at hand, we're hopeful to continue to get less aggressive forms of moisture and

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begin to overcome our extreme drought conditions.

As part of your cooperative network, we are committed to your long-term success through power stability, reliability and long-term affordability. I

encourage you to contact Slope and to help us actively stand for the needs of our region or reach out to let us know how we can do better. Best wishes to the members of Slope. ■

LOOK UP. LOOK OUT.

POWER LINE SAFETY ON THE FARM



SAFETY TIPS THAT ARE ALWAYS IN SEASON

1. Know what's below. **CALL 811** before starting any digging project.
2. Always **USE A SPOTTER** to warn you of any dangers when moving equipment.
3. If you strike a **guy wire**, **NEVER REPAIR IT YOURSELF**. Call your local utility right away.
4. **WATER CONDUCTS ELECTRICITY**, so be careful when irrigating near power lines.
5. **Keep yourself and machinery AT LEAST 10 FEET AWAY** from overhead power lines.
6. **Be extra careful when operating sprayers, planters and cultivators. KNOW THE HEIGHT AND WIDTH OF YOUR FARM EQUIPMENT** to prevent accidental contact.

WHAT TO DO

IF YOU CONTACT A POWER LINE:

If a power line falls across or near your machinery while you are in it, stay inside and **CALL 911**. Tell bystanders to stay away. If you must exit, jump as far as possible, so no part of your body is touching the machinery when you land. **KEEP BOTH FEET TOGETHER** and shuffle or hop at least 40 feet away.



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