

Northwest Public Power Association **BULLETIN**

CELEBRATING 75 YEARS
NWPPA
Northwest Public Power Association
June 2015
Volume 69, Number 6

Utilities and customers are embracing
community solar — is your utility next?





12



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On the cover: Alaska Power & Telephone Company just connected its new utility-scale 24-kilowatt solar array in Eagle, Alaska, to the grid on May 20, 2015. Though it is not right for every utility for different reasons, more and more utilities are embracing community solar. Inside, Clark Public Utilities and Benton PUD tell their experiences of having their current projects met with off-the-charts demand from their customers.

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The *Bulletin* is a publication of Northwest Public Power Association, a regional organization of diverse utilities. The membership is made up of utility districts, electric cooperatives, municipalities, and crown corporations in Alaska, British Columbia, California, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington. We are also a trade association for nearly 300 companies, individuals, and organizations affiliated with the electric power industry.

Opinions expressed in single articles are not necessarily policies of the Association. For permission to reprint articles, write or call the associate editor.

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Celebrating our past with an eye on the future



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NWPPA members celebrated 75 years in style in Anchorage

Thank you to the over 300 attendees — representing 92 utility members and 59 associate members — who attended NWPPA’s 75th Annual Conference and Membership Meeting in Anchorage, Alaska, May 17-21. It was our diamond anniversary celebration and what a celebration it was! Attendees, sponsors, speakers, and vendors all came together to help us *Celebrate our past with an eye on the future.*

“It was the best one yet!” said Clatskanie PUD’s Don Hooper. “Keep up the good work, NWPPA!”

Many came to town early to take in the beautiful sights of Anchorage, while others arrived early to attend either the Government Relations Committee meeting or one of two pre-conference classes (*Robert’s Rules of Order* or *Enterprise Risk Management*) that were held on Monday at the Egan Civic and Convention Center.

The conference started with welcomes from Alaska Mayor Dan Sullivan, Alaska Power Association Executive Director Crystal Enkvist, and Alaska Senator Lisa Murkowski. Then Nest Director of Energy Products Ben Bixby spoke about the future, specifically about being in front of the industry and connecting without wires. Bixby knows a thing or two about staying in front of the industry: at only 24, he co-founded MyEnergy, an energy usage software app; six years later, he sold the company to Nest; and just last year, in 2014, Google bought Nest for \$3.2 billion.



Ben Bixby

“Tuesday’s sessions were all good, relevant, contemporary presentations, but the Ben Bixby presentation, as an outside industry perspective, was the most useful for me,” said Clay Koplín of Cordova Electric Cooperative.

The other speakers throughout the rest of the conference also received high marks from attendees. Attendees especially liked Riverside Utilities’ Girish Balachandran’s presentation on how we treat our customers because they will affect the future of our industry.

“Girish’s presentation was both enlightening and terrifying,” said Thad Ballard of Wells Rural Electric Company.

This year’s sessions all centered around looking ahead to the future of the industry from many different viewpoints, whether that be from the Pacific Northwest, California, Alaska, or Canada. Panel discussions served as effective vehicles to have many different voices heard regarding a single

topic, and they were also very popular with attendees. (Presentations from the annual meeting can be found on www.nwppa.org under View Conference Presentation Materials in the Members Only Resources area.)

“I liked the panel discussions from our peers within the electric industry,” said Paul Rogers from Kittitas PUD. “They were very informative.”

On Tuesday afternoon, NWPPA announced the 2015-2016 board of trustee officers and elected six new board of trustee members; and on Wednesday afternoon, NWPPA presented a variety of industry awards and awards of appreciation. (See pages 4 and 5 for more information.)

However, the time in Anchorage wasn’t all work. On Wednesday evening, attendees enjoyed the President’s Reception honoring outgoing president Ken Weiss; the reception included gravity-defying demonstrations of World Eskimo-Indian Olympic games introduced by Ben Frantz of Barrow Utilities & Electric Cooperative. NWPPA’s Anniversary Diamond Gala dinner and a presidential hand-off to Dick Morris of Trinity Public Utilities District, NWPPA’s 2015-2016 president, followed the reception. Illusions presented by Hart Keene, previously seen on *America’s Got Talent*, capped off the evening.



World Eskimo-Indian Olympic games demonstration.

As always, the conference wouldn’t be as successful without the generous support of our sponsors. This year, 20 businesses came forward to sponsor various events — such as breakfasts, refreshment breaks, and entertainment — throughout the conference. Thank you to all of them!



Ben Frantz

Mark your calendars now to join us for the 2016 Annual Conference and Membership Meeting at the Tulalip Resort in Marysville, Wash., May 15-18, 2016. We hope to see you there! **NWPPA**

NWPPA honors 2015 Annual Award winners

On May 20, at our 75th Annual Conference and Membership Meeting in Anchorage, Alaska, NWPPA presented the following awards to individuals within the public power community.

Paul J. Raver Community Service Award
This award honors an individual or company who has demonstrated superior leadership in the betterment of cities, states, or regions.

Sid Morrison was appointed to the Energy Northwest Executive Board in 2001 by the board of directors. He served as a committee chair from 2003 to 2006, and currently presides as the Executive Board chair, a position he has held since 2006. During Morrison's tenure, Energy Northwest accomplished a lot, including completing and expanding the Nine Canyon Wind Project; completing a solar demonstration project (White Bluffs Solar Station); and achieving a 20-year license renewal on the nuclear power plant (Columbia Generating Station).

NWPPA President's Award
This award honors outstanding service and work on behalf of the industry and the Association.

NWPPA honored both Bill Dearing of Grant County PUD (Wenatchee, Wash.) and Harry Hewitt of Tillamook PUD (Tillamook, Ore.).

Since graduating with an electrical engineering degree in 1978, Dearing has had the opportunity to support the public power industry in a variety of positions and roles, including most recently leading a team in an industry effort to clarify and improve the definition of the Bulk Electric System (BES) for NWPPA's members and Grant County PUD. Dearing worked at Chelan County PUD upon graduation in 1978 until 2004 when he then moved to Grant County PUD.

Harry Hewitt was elected to the Tillamook PUD Board in 1997. He has served as president about every five years since joining the board. He has served as president of OPUDA for one year and is currently finishing up a six-year stint on the NWPPA Board of Trustees. He has been very active in NWPPA's Government Relations Committee and was a regular attendee in the NWPPA/NCPA Federal Legislative Rally each spring.

John M. George Public Service Award
This award honors policymaking officers of a member system that have demonstrated remarkable service to public power.



(L-R) Ken Weiss, NWPPA's outgoing board president, stands with award winners Sid Morrison, Bill Dearing, Harry Hewitt, Kevin Owens, and Bill Nordmark.

Senator Tim Sheldon has been a long-time friend and advocate of Washington state's public utilities. He has been intricately involved in the public power community over the last several decades. From 1999 to 2002, Sheldon served as a PUD commissioner at Mason PUD No. 1 in Shelton, Wash. In 2003, he was appointed to serve on the board of Energy Northwest, where he is currently a member of the Executive Board.

Distinguished Service Award
This award honors individuals who have served the interest of public power and NWPPA in an outstanding manner.

NWPPA honored both Bill Nordmark of Golden Valley Electric Association (Fairbanks, Alaska) and Kevin Owens of Columbia River PUD (St. Helens, Ore.).

Nordmark began his service on the GVEA Board of Directors in 1995; he served as vice chairman from 2005-2006, and chairman of the board since 2007. Over the past 20 years, GVEA directors have moved forward with numerous major infrastructure projects, including the Northern Intertie, Healy Clean Coal Plant, Battery Energy Storage Systems, North Pole Expansion Project, Eva Creek Wind, and most recently the restart of the Healy Unit 2.

Owens began his career at Columbia River PUD as general manager in January 2004. At that time, the PUD was working to recover from the financial toll of the 2001 energy

crisis. He saw opportunities to streamline operations, improve the PUD's financial condition, and plan for the future. And during his 11-year tenure, he did just that. At the end of 2014, PUD residential customers were enjoying rates that were 34-percent below other local private power providers.

Life Membership Award

This award honors retiring or retired policymakers and managers from member utilities for work performed on behalf of public power.

This year there were five recipients: Ted Coates of Tacoma Public Utilities (Tacoma, Wash.), Randy Cornelius of Orcas Power & Light Cooperative (Eastsound, Wash.), Neal Harth of Wasco Electric Cooperative (The Dalles, Ore.), Steve Klein of Snohomish County PUD No. 1 (Everett, Wash.), and Dave Sabala of Douglas Electric Cooperative (Roseburg, Ore.). **NWPPA**



Ken Weiss presents Life Membership Awards to (top L-R) Ted Coates and Randy Cornelius; (center) Neal Harth; (bottom L-R) Kathleen Vaughn (for Steve Klein) and Dave Sabala.

2015–2016 NWPPA Board officers, trustees announced

On May 19, 2015, at its 75th Annual Conference and Membership Meeting in Anchorage, Alaska, the NWPPA Board of Trustees introduced Dick Morris of Trinity PUD (Weaverville, Calif.) as the 2015-2016 NWPPA Board of Trustees president. Morris will serve a one-year term as board president. (See page 6 for a Q&A with NWPPA's newest president.)

At the meeting, the board also announced the following officers:



Dick Morris



Alex Love



Steven Taylor



Jackie Flowers

- First Vice President Alex Love of Nelson Hydro (Nelson, B.C.)
- Second Vice President Steven Taylor of Mason County PUD No. 1 (Shelton, Wash.)
- Secretary/Treasurer Jackie Flowers of Idaho Falls Power (Idaho Falls, Idaho)
- Immediate Past President Ken Weiss of Clearwater Power Company (Lewiston, Idaho)

Along with the officer announcements, the membership re-elected three trustees for second three-year terms: Clay Koplín of Cordova Electric Cooperative (Cordova, Alaska), Doug Hardy of Central Montana Electric Power Cooperative (Great Falls, Mont.), and Ron Holmes of Wasco Electric Cooperative (The Dalles, Ore.). In addition, John Foutz of the City of Seward Light & Power (Seward, Alaska) was elected to fulfill Chris Brewton's second three-year term, and Delores Stegeman of Tacoma Public Utilities (Tacoma, Wash.) was elected to fulfill Ted Coates' second three-year term.

The following six individuals were elected by the membership to serve a first three-year term on the Board of Trustees: Ann Congdon of Chelan County PUD (Wenatchee, Wash.), Marc Farmer of Clatskanie PUD (Clatskanie, Ore.), Brad Sawatzke of Energy Northwest (Richland, Wash.), Bill Rambo of Peak Measure (Spokane, Wash.), John Sloan of Golden Valley Electric Association (Fairbanks, Alaska), and Clay Smith of Northern Wasco PUD (The Dalles, Ore.).

NWPPA's Board of Trustees consists of 40 individuals from member utilities across the Western U.S. and Canada.

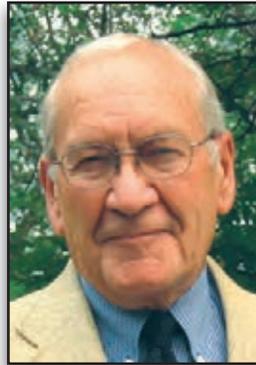
NWPPA

Q&A with NWPPA's new president, Dick Morris

On May 19, 2015, at their 75th Annual Conference and Membership Meeting in Anchorage, Alaska, the NWPPA Board of Trustees elected Dick Morris to be the 2015-2016 NWPPA Board of Trustees president. Morris will serve a one-year term as board president.

“Whether a large or a small utility, each of us has an equal voice in NWPPA,” said Morris. “Coming from a small utility, I was honored to be asked to serve as your president this year, our 75th.”

Morris, a fifth generation resident of Trinity County, chaired the committee that formed Trinity PUD in Weaverville, Calif., in 1981. Since its formation, he has been on the PUD Board of Directors and currently serves as the vice president of the board. He also currently serves as vice president of the Snyder-Highland Foundation Board, which helps further the arts. Previously, he served as president of the California Retail Hardware Association.



cost of service will be challenging for us politically; and managing our rights-of-way over federal lands has become more difficult as the Endangered Species Act has imposed more restrictive treatment regimes. These rights-of-way have been viewed by some as intrusions on the federal landscape when, were they adequately maintained as additional fuel breaks, our transmission and distribution corridors could be valuable assets in the containment of wildfire.

NWPPA: What do you see as the current challenges of the industry?

Morris: Our industry and our customers are being asked to support more and more the costs of integrating intermittent resources. This minefield will not be easily navigated. Also the departure of our baby-boomer workforce from the industry will require serious attention, which NWPPA certainly is attending to.

NWPPA: As president, what are your goals for NWPPA for the upcoming year?

Morris: As we celebrate 75 years of service to our customers, we are blessed with a skilled executive director and a dedicated staff at NWPPA. We have a board of trustees eager to help NWPPA and to improve life in their communities. My goal is to serve all of them well as we work to remain relevant, stay strong financially, and grow our membership.

NWPPA: What is your fondest NWPPA memory/moment?

Morris: Early into my association on the board I was touched by the willingness of board members and staff to help us through a difficult management transition at Trinity. I will always value the insight they provided and the outcome that resulted.

NWPPA: Any hobbies outside of the public power world?

Morris: We have a herd of kids, grandkids, and great grandkids — need I say more? My wife Sandy and I love the Trinity Alps Wilderness. We don't backpack any longer but enjoy our horses and mules that allow us access to the back country. We manage our gold-rush-vintage buildings in historic downtown Weaverville and still distribute newspapers throughout Trinity County. Music has been an important part of my life and I'm pleased to play in several groups in the area. **NWPPA**

NWPPA: Since joining the NWPPA Board in 2008, how have you seen NWPPA grow and improve?

Morris: Certainly our training capability has grown and been remarkably responsive to the increasing needs of our members. But most dramatic to me has been the willingness of NWPPA to engage in — and respond to — the legislative and regulatory challenges our members face.

NWPPA: How has public power changed in the last 10-15 years?

Morris: The business has become much more complex and the rate of complexity is increasing more rapidly. This requires constant attention due to the persistent threats to local oversight and our ability to serve our customers.

NWPPA: What have you learned from your time on the Trinity PUD Board that you will use as NWPPA's board president?

Morris: The best outcomes grow out of joining with talented people willing to share diverse perspectives.

NWPPA: What do you see as the current challenges at Trinity PUD?

Morris: Attracting and keeping talented staff are critical; adjusting our rate structure so it more closely matches our

Communication entries due this month!

Calling all member utility communicators! If you have not yet submitted your entries for the 22nd Annual NWPPA Excellence in Communication Competition, please be aware that you only have a few weeks left to do so. All submissions must be postmarked by Friday, June 26, to be eligible for the contest.



Winning Excellence in Communication entries will be honored at the awards banquet at the Northwest Communications & Energy Innovations Conference (NIC) on Tuesday evening, September 15, at Harveys Lake Tahoe in Nevada. In addition, one utility will come away with the prestigious Tom Hougan Award for Overall Excellence in Communication. Please remember that the 2015 competition honors communication pieces created and distributed last year in 2014; communication materials from 2015 will be disqualified.

If you have not received a Call for Entries brochure, you can download a PDF of the brochure from our website under the Members Only Resources tab. If you have questions about the brochure or contest, please contact Brenda Dunn at brenda@nwppa.org. **NWPPA**

A piece of NWPPA history: What's in a name?

Since its inception, NWPPA has striven to maintain its focus on our members — continuously reshaping its educational delivery and content to ensure it meets the needs of our members. The reshaping process includes updating the names of our educational offerings as the industry changes around us. Due to the ever-constant changes in the industry, several of NWPPA's core events have seen their fair share of name changes.

NWPPA began holding its annual Accounting and Finance Workshop in 1947. This was one of the Association's earliest flagship classes and it was offered for nearly 60 years until its final year in 2006. During that time, the workshop went through several name changes, the final one being the Finance, Accounting, Rates and Economics (FARE) Workshop. However, it also had some of the lengthiest names, such as the Accounting, Finance, Information Systems, Rates, and Economics Conference — a.k.a. AFIRE — as it was called in the 1990s; or the Customer Service, Human Resources, Accounting and Finance, Rates and Economics, and Services Conference — a.k.a. CHART — as it began to be called in 2001.

However, no NWPPA event has gone through more name changes than the communications and energy efficiency conference known as the NIC. NWPPA first began hosting the event in 1954, then known as the annual Power Use Section Meeting. In 1970, the planning committee changed the event's name to the Electric Marketing Section, but just four years later it was again changed, this time to the Electric Marketing and Public Relations Conference. In the 1990s it was known as the Consumer Services Conference, and by 1999, the name Northwest Innovations Conference (the NIC) came about. The most recent name change came about in 2011 when the planning committee changed the name to the Northwest Communications & Energy Innovations Conference. Despite the longer name, long-time members and staff still refer to it as the NIC.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, NWPPA offered a three-part Management Internship Program, which later morphed into one of today's most popular offerings: the Certification in Front Line Leadership. This certification is made up of four mandatory classes and two optional ones, and classes often sell out. NWPPA graduated its first class of front line leaders in 2000.

In 2007, the long-running Hazardous Materials Task Force changed its name to the Environmental Task Force (ETF); the ETF is still going strong today and meets three times per year.

And most recently — in fact just this past month! — the name of the long-standing Northwest Wage & Hour group changed to the NWPPA Labor and Employee Relations Group. **NWPPA**

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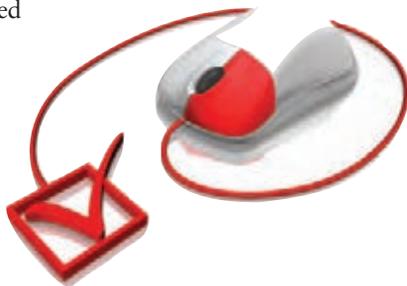


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2015 GM, director survey results now available

Members may now access the results of the 2015 General Managers Compensation Survey and the 2015 Directors, Commissioners, and Other Elected Officials Annual Compensation Survey. Survey results are posted online at www.nwppa.org in the Members Only Resources section under View Compensation Surveys on the left-hand menu, and can only be accessed by NWPPA utility member general managers and HR senior management. If you are having trouble accessing the results, please contact Brenda Dunn at brenda@nwppa.org. **NWPPA**



Don't forget to find the !

In each 2015 issue of the *Bulletin*, we will be hiding one diamond graphic (like this one ) somewhere in the magazine. For each issue, we will select a random person who has emailed the correct page and location to the associate editor at brenda@nwppa.org. The winner will be notified by the end of the month and receive a gift card from NWPPA.

May's diamond was on page 31 in Homer T. Bone's jacket pocket.

Congratulations to May's winner: Sam Eastman from McMinnville Light & Power in McMinnville, Ore. **NWPPA**



A look back at public power

50 years ago — 1965

With the addition of a 40-ton steel gate dropped into the diversion tunnel, progress was made on the Culmback Dam, part of the Snohomish County PUD's Sultan River Project (Wash.) ... The *Oregonian* newspaper complimented Tillamook PUD on its picture book prospectus of Tillamook County ... Fall River Rural Electric Cooperative reduced the rates for security lights so that a 175-watt mercury vapor light cost \$3.75/month and a 400-watt one cost \$5.00/month (Idaho) ... Copper Valley Electric Association used a \$917,000 REA loan to purchase and install two 600-kilovolt diesel generating units, and construct 60 miles of distribution line (Alaska).

25 years ago — 1990

Eugene Water & Electric Board introduced a pilot program to give a \$400 rebate to customers who install a solar water heater (Ore.) ... Clallam County PUD selected Alan Drew as district superintendent (Wash.) ... Pacific Power & Light said it "wants to be considered as a potential buyer" for West Oregon Electric Cooperative ... The Sacramento Municipal Utility District's request for proposals for 1,000 megawatts drew 84 notices of intent to bid (Calif.) ... The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers developed a computerized turbine blade controller that was estimated to increase generator power production by about 1.5 megawatts.

5 years ago — 2010

The National Hydropower Association (NHA) honored Chelan County PUD as one of three Outstanding Stewards of America's Waters for 2010 (Wash.) ... Clearwater Power Company installed a wind turbine and solar panels at their headquarters in Lewiston, Idaho, as part of their net metering demonstration project ... Northern Wasco County PUD announced the promotion of Jim Johnson to assistant general manager; Johnson continued to serve as the PUD's chief financial officer as well (Ore.) ... Larry Bryant retired from Kootenai Electric Cooperative after more than 30 years of service in the electric cooperative industry (Idaho). **NWPPA**



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July and August 2015

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FRONT LINE LEADERSHIP #1: SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Who Should Attend: Front line supervisors and managers, and those front line employees who will be transitioning to a supervisor or manager role in the near future.

Overview: This is the first in a series of four sessions leading to a Credential in Front Line Leadership from NWPPA; it is also the prerequisite for *Front Line Leadership Session #3: Personalities & Attitudes in the Workplace*. Participants will be introduced to situational leadership as taught by the Ken Blanchard Companies and will evaluate their own leadership styles through a self-evaluation. They will learn a common vocabulary for leadership and understand the differences between successful and effective leadership.

JULY 8-9, 2015 — RICHLAND, WASH.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONALS WORKSHOP

Who Should Attend: Administrative assistants, executive assistants, department secretaries, records retention staff, and clerks to the board.

Overview: This workshop will focus on several areas of interest, including time management strategies; energy updates on national issues of importance; QuietSpacing and power processing your email; smart grid and disintermediation; travel arrangement and event planning; enterprise content management; Sharepoint; and project management.

JULY 8-9, 2015 — PORTLAND, ORE.

NEW! 964.1, COMMUNICATING THE NEW ENERGY LANDSCAPE

Who Should Attend: Cooperative policy makers and CEOs.

Overview: The emergence of distributed energy resources (DER) technologies is giving consumers more choices than ever before. Electric cooperatives are well positioned as consumer-owned organizations to be their members' trusted partner in navigating the opportunities, risks, and benefits of solar and other emerging technologies. This course discusses the top DER technologies, policy issues, and questions that co-ops must be prepared to discuss with their members.

JULY 14, 2015 — GLENEDEN BEACH, ORE.

IT SECTION MEETING

Who Should Attend: NWPPA utility and associate members who are involved in the information technology aspects of their organizations.

Overview: Join your colleagues from throughout the region for this convenient, one-day meeting that features a tour of the NoaNet Network Operations Center (NOC), a fiber management demonstration, and roundtable discussions.

JULY 15, 2015 — SPOKANE, WASH.

NWPPA LABOR AND EMPLOYEE RELATIONS GROUP (formerly NORTHWEST WAGE AND HOUR) QUARTERLY MEETING

Who Should Attend: Members of the NWPPA Labor and Employee Relations Group: general managers, labor relations managers, and human resource professionals.

Overview: These meetings are opportunities for its members to discuss issues relevant to labor relations within public utilities. The meeting includes a presentation on a current topic of interest and roundtable discussions on contract negotiations (excluding rates and percentages), grievances, arbitrations, and employee relations topics. Tara Maynard, records coordinator at Grays Harbor PUD, will

talk about HR records retention best practices. See page 11 for more information.

JULY 17, 2015 — VANCOUVER, WASH.

NEW! VIOLENCE PREVENTION SKILLS: STAYING SAFE AND SECURE AT WORK

Who Should Attend: Anyone who potentially may need to deal with violence on the job in the office or in the field including customer engineers, foremen, line superintendents, safety personnel, and customer service representatives.

Overview: Every utility can be hurt by workplace violence and angry customers. This two-day class will help you identify potential violence before it occurs and arm you with skills to deal with conflict, uncomfortable situations, and personal safety. After the second day, you will have a clear understanding of how to reduce and prevent violent situations. Bring your questions, concerns, and fears as they will all be addressed. It's a serious topic but be prepared to laugh, be interactive, and have fun! Real-life scenarios and case studies are woven into this fast-paced, interactive, two-day course.

JULY 28-29, 2015 — SPOKANE, WASH.

FRONT LINE LEADERSHIP #1: SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Who Should Attend: Front line supervisors and managers, and those front line employees who will be transitioning to a supervisor or manager role in the near future.

Overview: This is the first in a series of four sessions leading to a Credential in Front Line Leadership from NWPPA; it is also the prerequisite for *Front Line Leadership Session #3: Personalities & Attitudes in the Workplace*. Participants will be introduced to situational leadership as taught by the Ken Blanchard Companies and will evaluate their own leadership styles through a self-evaluation. They will learn a common vocabulary for leadership and understand the differences between successful and effective leadership.

JULY 28-29, 2015 — SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH

ELECTRIC UTILITY SYSTEM OPERATIONS

Who Should Attend: For engineering; operations; safety; purchasing; information technology; regulatory and rates; customer service; public relations; legal; and accounting employees.

Overview: This popular two-day course presents a clear understanding of the technical heartbeat of the utility by providing employees with a comprehensive understanding of electric utility system operations, including generation (fossil fuel, hydro, and nuclear generation), transmission, and distribution (down to 120v/240v residential connections). You will learn how all key pieces of equipment in the system are built, how the equipment operates, and how the equipment functions in the overall operations of a utility system.

JULY 29-30, 2015 — SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH

POWER SUPPLY WORKSHOP

Who Should Attend: Power supply professionals; general managers and CEOs; policy makers; finance and rate department managers; and government and public affairs professionals.

Overview: The 2015 NWPPA Power Supply Workshop is designed by power supply professionals to update you on current issues and topics that are important to the West. Managing and planning for

power resources and costs have never been more challenging given the prospect that your utility's retail rates could exceed the cost of other providers in the near future. At this workshop we will cover the challenges and opportunities of serving customers with offerings and prices that meet their expectations.

AUGUST 3-4, 2015 — VANCOUVER, WASH.

FRONT LINE LEADERSHIP SESSION #5: SUPERVISING UNION EMPLOYEES

Who Should Attend: Operations directors, managers, line superintendents, labor relations professionals, and human resource managers who supervise union employees and deal with stewards and officers of the union. (This is an optional course in the Front Line Leadership Certificate Program.)

Overview: The MARC Union-Labor Relations program increases the skills and confidence of front-line supervisors to serve as management's front-line representatives in dealing with employees, stewards, and officers of the union. Additionally, top-level managers are trained to delegate and support front-line supervisors. The MARC program provides a well-organized format to produce uniform interpretation of the contract, rules, and policies, which reduces inconsistencies in dealing with employees. It also ensures that union procedures with proper documentation are consistently followed in handling grievances, providing job performance counseling, administering disciplinary action, and making job promotion decisions.

AUGUST 3-5, 2015 — SEATTLE, WASH.

DISTRIBUTED GENERATION FOR THE UTILITY FINANCE PROFESSIONAL

Who Should Attend: Chief financial officers; senior-level finance and accounting managers; strategic planning leaders; and risk managers.

Overview: Distributed generation and micro-grid technology is a topic that has recently grown in significance for customers, developers, and utilities. The ability for all classes of customers to self-generate power and become prosumers offers challenges and opportunities to utility companies. Heralded by some industry leaders as leading to a "death spiral" for the traditional utility model, others see distributed generation and micro-grids as an opportunity to combine generation, distribution, and customer benefits.

AUGUST 4-5, 2015 — RICHLAND, WASH.

EMPLOYER COLLECTIVE BARGAINING TEAM PREPARATIONS

Who Should Attend: General managers, operations managers, members of the employer bargaining team, and chief negotiators. We recommend that you send more than one team member to this class.

Overview: You will gain valuable and practical knowledge about the three phases of collective bargaining: preparation and defining the range/scope of negotiations; bargaining over issues (both non-economic and economic) and packaging of all remaining issues; and package offers, offer variations, final offer, and achieving agreement or implementation of the final offer.

AUGUST 6-7, 2015 — SEATTLE, WASH.

NEW! SAFETY CULTURE CONFERENCE: WHY, WHAT, AND HOW

Who Should Attend: Policy makers, CEOs, general managers, and senior management.

Overview: A sustainable safety culture starts with executives understanding why and how to be visibly committed to safety. This event will bring safety leaders in the utility industry together to share lessons learned to educate and engage executives on the development and sustainability of safety culture excellence.

AUGUST 12-13, 2015 — VANCOUVER, WASH. NWPPA

Mark your calendars to attend! **NWPPA Northwest Communications & Energy Innovations Conference**

"Diamonds Are Forever — Bonding at the Lake"



September 13-16, 2015 • Harveys Lake Tahoe

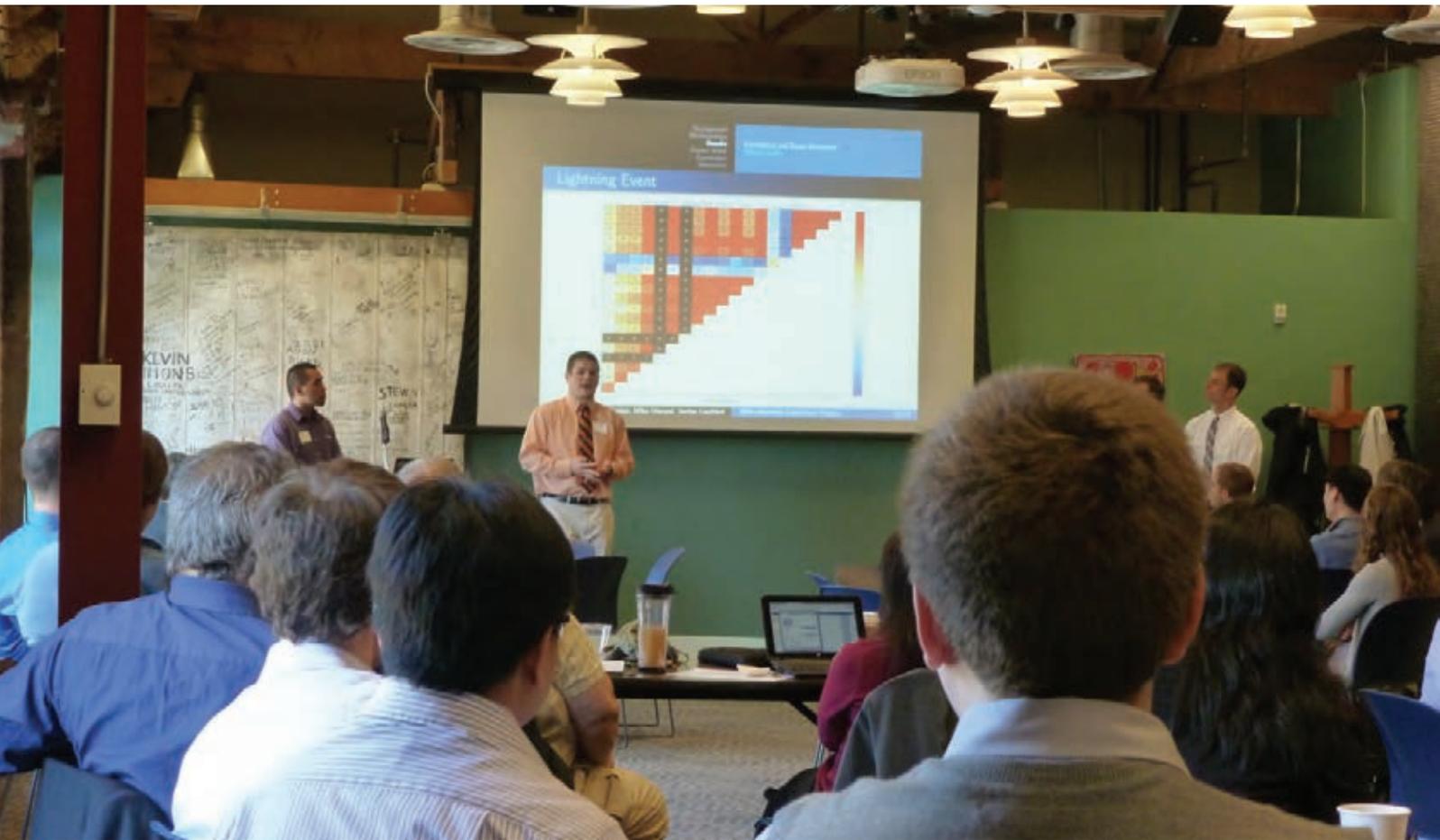
NWWH unveils new name, same great service

Due to antitrust concerns, discussions within the Northwest Wage and Hour Services (NWWH) group have shifted over the past few years. Originally a forum for exchanging information on wages and benefits, today the group focuses on sharing concerns about labor and employee relations.

The NWWH Steering Committee discussed this issue at some length and recommended that the group's name be changed to better reflect the current focus. In the Annual Survey of Northwest Wage and Hour Services, 93 percent of survey respondents agreed with the committee and supported the proposed new name: NWPPA Labor and Employee Relations Group. The NWPPA Board of Directors Executive Team has now approved the name change, making it official! Going forward, Northwest Wage and Hour Services (NWWH) will now be the NWPPA Labor and Employee Relations Group. No other revisions have been made to the membership. **NWPPA**

by Joel Scruggs

New program preps Northwest college students for careers in energy



Students from Oregon State and Portland State universities share their findings as part of a new program that explores solutions to industry challenges. Photo provided by BPA.

Attracting new talent is a key challenge facing the utility industry. Last year, over half of the respondents to an American Public Power Association survey reported that more than 20 percent of their workforce would be eligible to retire in the next five years. And 43 percent indicated that engineering positions will be the most difficult to fill.

“It’s clear that one of the most significant challenges facing public power continues to be the loss of expertise and recruiting new talent,” said NWPPA Executive Director Anita Decker.

So the Bonneville Power Administration has rolled out a new program designed to get more young people engaged.

“We’re giving students an opportunity to explore solutions to real-world technical challenges in the electric utility industry,” said BPA Administrator Elliot Mainzer.

The program, known as the Northwest Energy Experience (NW Energy XP), pairs teams of university students and faculty across various disciplines with BPA subject-matter experts in special study projects.

“NW Energy XP gives students insight into key issues and opportunities in the industry today,” said Johanna Brickman, director of collaborative innovation for Oregon BEST, an independent nonprofit organization that administers the program and is focused on advancing clean-technology R&D in the Pacific Northwest. “The ideas and solu-

The program, known as the Northwest Energy Experience (NW Energy XP), pairs teams of university students and faculty across various disciplines with BPA subject-matter experts in special study projects.



tions they work on are directly applicable. And we're pleased to see how this program helps develop talent for the industry while building relationships across disciplines, universities, and utility industry experts."

The program awards funds for tuition, as well as a project stipend, to eight students each year. The projects are designed to be completed in one or two terms.

Since its launch last spring, about 16 students from the Oregon Institute of Technology, Oregon State University, Portland State University, and Washington State University Vancouver (WSU) have worked on five different topics with inter-university teams. They've studied synchrophasor data analysis; distribution generation modeling; technology roadmapping of electric vehicle charging; wave power and hydropower; the optimization of hybrid electrical systems with consideration to climate modeling; residential load through cost-effective energy-efficient design; and power conversion. The projects have drawn students from eight different departments and disciplines, including electrical engineering; mechanical engineering; power engineering; civil engineering; environmental engineering; engineering and technology management; renewable energy engineering; and computer science.

Tony Faris, an electrical engineer and synchrophasor data expert at BPA, worked with a team of students from the Oregon Institute of Technology and WSU to find hidden value in archived synchrophasor data. Synchrophasors, or phasor measurement units, are devices that transmit precise current, frequency, and voltage readings, giving operators a wide-area view of a power system.

After sifting through 35 gigabytes of data, the team made a discovery.

"They identified signatures or patterns in our synchrophasor data stream that were being produced when (electrical) faults occurred," Faris explained.

Scott Wallace, an associate professor at WSU's School of Engineering and Computer Science in Vancouver, said the

real-world element is a big draw to students. "There's a big difference between simulated and real data," Wallace said. "And NW Energy XP was a great opportunity to work with an industry partner, get our hands on real data, and explore some preliminary ideas and solutions."

The program also includes workshops for defining future study topics and an annual conference where scholars, faculty advisers, and subject-matter experts present their research and select topics for the next round.

"Engaging with students and building stronger relationships between universities and the industry is beneficial, both now and in the future," Faris added.

BPA and Oregon BEST are looking to grow the program and include more Northwest utilities, industry partners, and universities.

"This is a unique opportunity for others in the industry to get involved and attract top talent to our workforce," Mainzer said.

Interested parties can visit www.bpa.gov/go/NWEnergyXP or contact Johanna Brickman (jo.brickman@oregonbest.org or (503) 725-9641). **NWPPA**

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About Oregon Best

Founded as the Oregon Built Environment & Sustainable Technologies Center Inc. in 2007, Oregon BEST is an independent non-profit organization that nurtures clean technology innovation, sustainability, and economic prosperity for Oregon. Oregon BEST provides leadership and leverages its expertise, resources, and relationships to achieve impact beyond its scale. **NWPPA**

by Jeff Marshall

From the old days to new ways

Exceeding consumer expectations through technology requires a lot of ground work

Consumers grab their smart phone to access their power account. With a few taps of the finger, they can pay their bill, examine their consumption history, or be alerted to electrical outages. When did these conveniences go from fictional to actual? The infrastructure required to make this possible doesn't happen overnight and it doesn't happen without careful planning, training, and timing. This is the story of how one small electric co-op made the jump from yesterday to tomorrow.

In 2009, Clearwater Power staff held their semi-annual strategic planning meeting. Consumer expectations had been climbing and technology was advancing. The co-op staff set a series of goals aimed at increasing their quality of service by taking advantage of new and emerging technologies. Specific goals included collecting better meter data, improving outage management, and increasing cyber security. External goals (for consumers) included improving payment options, improving online access to consumption data, and providing outage information. In order to fulfill their lofty goals, the co-op staff faced these questions: Is there a suitable technology to accomplish all of these goals? And if so, how do we implement it efficiently?

Technology investment (stage I)

Sometimes, adopting a new form of technology can backfire if it proves incompatible with other systems or if support becomes unavailable. Knowing when to take the plunge into new technology requires a keen eye, open ears, and access to a network of people you can trust. Peer review may be the best resource for decision makers. Clearwater Power's staff reached out to individuals in the industry to hear first-hand experiences of how different sys-



TWACS metering

tems worked together.

One thing was for certain, any upgrade would begin with metering; all other technologies would be dependent on accessing real-time data and two-way communication with the electric meters. That meant implementing a fully automated metering infrastructure (AMI). At that time, the service area was using a mix of different meters; most meters

were mechanical and there were some automated meters (AMR.) After reviewing different AMI technology from several vendors, Clearwater Power chose the TWACS metering system from Aclara. The TWACS (two-way automated communication system) used a power line carrier to communicate, which was considered to be more practical and more reliable for use in the co-op's low-density and mountainous service territory. The meters record data every hour and send that data back to the co-op once each day. They are critical in pinpointing outages and can be purchased with remote disconnect/reconnect switches, drastically reducing truck-rolls and windshield time. Obviously a full meter change-out is a large and expensive undertaking; fortunately, Clearwater Power was able to take advantage of federal stimulus money in 2009 and used those funds to help offset the expense.

Technology investment (stage II)

The next step was to find a single, scalable software solution that fit all of the goals outlined in the strategic plan. Gone were the days of having one software for metering and another for billing and another for mapping plus hand-written work orders. Integration was now key. As the search for enterprise software progressed, each department

was tasked with itemizing their specific duties and procedures, particularly anything that was uncommon. Some things were a firm requirement, like propane billing, Internet billing, and capital credit allocations. For things the software handled differently, the question became: Is it better to customize the software or change procedures? In most cases, procedures were changed to fit the software; in a few cases, custom programming was required.

Another important factor was long-term support. Clearwater Power had adopted a little-known enterprise software suite in 1998. Within a few years of adopting the software, the provider went out of business. From that time, it was up to internal IT to perform software development and maintenance.

Given those goals, not surprisingly, the market was not teeming with viable options. Ultimately, iVUE from NISC was selected. As the new software replaced the old, it took cooperation from Engineering, Member Services, Operations, Accounting, and Information Technology. Each department spent weeks training in preparation for the change.

Implementation

As the meter change neared completion, the new software was implemented. First, it was adopted by accounting, followed by purchasing, inventory, CIS/billing (which includes the online portal and mobile app), work orders, GIS mapping, and finally outage-management. During this time, consumers were alerted to any changes that would affect them. In most cases, this meant an expansion of available services like seeing their usage data online. In other cases it meant changes to existing services like budget billing.

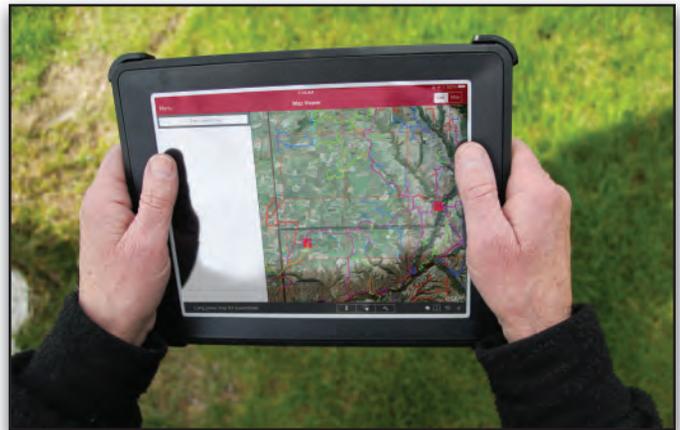
Each department trained continuously and had to temporarily straddle dual systems. The transfer felt more and more complete as each day employees found themselves using the old systems less and less until it was all but forgotten.

Future plans

The next major goal is to make pre-paid metering available to those members who choose it. Before going to pre-pay, the co-op wanted to implement an integrated voice response system (IVR) so members could pay over the phone after hours. Since the phone system was due for replacement, a new IP phone system was installed. The new



Pay or prepay online via a smartphone app



GIS mapping

system has many additional features such as a smartphone app that allows you to use your mobile phone exactly as if you were at your desk phone.

None of this would be possible without diligently laying the groundwork through robust infrastructure. Most of the upgrades have exceeded expectations and have helped to dramatically improve service to the consumers, which, at the end of the day, is really why we upgraded. **NWPPA**

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Oregon court validates City of Hermiston's formation of a natural gas utility

Up until now, the members of NWPPA have been focused on electric power. That could change in the future, however, if existing consumer-owned electricity utilities decide to branch out into natural gas service. A court in Eastern Oregon has paved the way for this diversification by ruling that cities in Oregon have authority to build, own, operate, and maintain a natural gas distribution utility. Cities in Oregon also have the power to “exclude or eject” an incumbent gas utility from part or all of the city’s public rights of way — thus overcoming an existing allocation of exclusive service rights.

The court’s ruling started with an industrial customer in the City of Hermiston. According to a story filed on May 12 by the Easton Oregonian newspaper, an existing industrial customer in the city’s Cook Industrial Site was informed by the incumbent gas utility that it would cost more than \$2.3 million to expand natural gas service to the facility. Moreover, the gas utility’s line extension policies required the industrial customer to pay the entire cost of the upgrade prior to initiating construction. This unforeseen capital investment for gas service halted the planned expansion of the industrial facility. The City says that a lack of sufficient natural gas service in the Cook Industrial Site also prevented another industrial facility from locating there and bringing 250 new jobs to the area.

City leaders recognized that any future industrial expansion in the city — and the associated job growth that comes with it — would require natural gas service that is sufficient to meet immediate needs and to accommodate future expansion. Unlike the incumbent natural gas provider that was restricted by its own line extension policies, the City was willing to extend service capacity without requiring customers to pay the entire cost up front. Instead, the City would be willing to recoup its initial investment over time in order to stimulate job growth in the city. On August 25, 2014, the city council adopted Resolution 1965, which establishes the Hermiston Gas Utility and authorizes city leaders to take such actions that may be necessary to form the gas utility.

The Hermiston City Council’s adoption of Resolution 1965 was a bold move given that there are currently no other consumer-owned natural gas distribution utilities in Oregon. The first step in the process, therefore, was to seek judicial validation of the City’s legal authority to form and operate a natural gas utility. The City took advantage of a process set forth in Oregon law that allows cities to test the validity of an action or the legality of a contract before the action is undertaken or the contract becomes binding.



In a judgment issued on March 26, 2015, the Umatilla County Court affirmed that the City does have the legal authority to form and operate a municipal natural gas utility. The court rejected the legal arguments filed in opposition by the incumbent natural gas company. The court concluded that “Resolution 1965, and the actions authorized therein, are legal, valid, and binding obligations of the City of Hermiston.” The court specifically found that “the City has authority under ORS 221.420 to exclude or eject [incumbent natural gas company] from part or all of the City’s public rights of way.” Finally, the court concluded that the “City also has the authority under ORS 221.410, its home rule authority, and its home rule charter to build, own, operate, and maintain a natural gas distribution system within the city’s boundaries for the benefit and use of its inhabitants.”

Although the City would create the first consumer-owned gas distribution system in Oregon, it is far from unprecedented outside of the state. In the state of Washington, for example, the City of Ellensburg (itself an NWPPA member) has operated a gas utility since 1957. The City of Ellensburg claims to be the first municipality west of the Mississippi River to have its own natural gas distribution system. Today, Ellensburg has over 115 miles of distribution mains and over 5,000 customers. The City of Ellensburg says that its gas system “has an enviable safety record,” and that it currently plans to expand the system to improve reliability and provide for future growth.

Consumer-owned gas utilities are even more common outside of the Pacific Northwest. According to the American Public Gas Association (APGA), there are over 1,000 consumer-owned gas systems nationwide. These systems include communities of all sizes, including Philadelphia, San Antonio, Memphis, Indianapolis, Omaha, Colorado Springs, and Long Beach. According to the APGA website, the benefits of owning a natural gas utility overlap with the benefits of owning an electric utility: local control, competitive costs, customer service, and economic development.

Looking forward, the future of public power in the Pacific Northwest may include both electricity and natural gas. As both Ellensburg and now Hermiston have shown, consumer-owned natural gas service is both legal and feasible.

NWPPA

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OPALCO's Hildreth honors linemen



The Friday Harbor line crew. (L-R) General Manager Foster Hildreth, Luke Furber, Bob Belcher, Sean Parsons, and Steve Eyler.

On April 17, OPALCO GM **Foster Hildreth** visited each of the utility's three line crew facilities (Eastsound, Lopez Island, and Friday Harbor) to celebrate their critical roles in the co-op and in honor of National Lineman Appreciation Day. Staff provided some treats and decorated their crew rooms. In addition, each lineman received a new industry-specific fire-retardant work shirt sporting the new OPALCO safety logo that was designed by OPALCO Engineer **Ed Lago**.

Hildreth made the three-island tour to acknowledge all of the OPALCO linemen. "You guys are deserving of recognition every day for your vital service to the membership," said Hildreth. "I'm in awe of your commitment — knowing that you are out there day and night, in calm or wind or sleet or snow to restore power."

He further recognized those linemen who have come up through OPALCO's apprenticeship program. "This is what a co-op is about: giving our local members — the next generation — opportunities for education and training, as well as a living wage so they can raise families in their home communities," he said. **NWPPA**

Umatilla's Eldrige to retire in 2016

After nearly 44 years with Umatilla Electric Cooperative (Ore.), **Steve Eldrige** will retire from his position of general manager and CEO in early 2016. Eldrige made the announcement to about 350 attendees of the cooperative's 78th Annual Meeting on April 18.

"With UEC's fortunes on the rise, with an engaged membership, an exceptional board, and wonderful employees, I am announcing the beginning of another new chapter in my life," Eldrige said. "It has been my honor to serve the UEC membership for the past 43 years. You have entrusted me with work that mattered. Thank you."

The exact timing of Eldrige's retirement in early 2016 hasn't been set. The UEC Board of Directors will hire a recruiting firm and conduct a national search for a new manager. The process may take most of 2015.

Eldrige was raised in Umatilla, studied electrical engineering at Oregon State, and was hired as the cooperative's engineer when he graduated in 1972.

In 1990, the UEC Board of Directors selected Eldrige to become the third general manager in the history of the cooperative, which was formed in the late 1930s. The previous general managers were **Ray Woolley** (hired in 1939) and **Russ Dorran** (promoted in 1971).

Currently, Eldrige is chairman of Eastern Oregon Telecom, the Good Shepherd Health Care System Hospital Board, Ruralite Services Board, and the Power Resources Cooperative Board. In addition, he serves on the boards of PNGC Power, Pacific Northwest Utilities Conference Committee, and Lightspeed Networks. **NWPPA**

Tacoma wins NHA award for Little Falls project

On April 28, Tacoma Power (Wash.) received its fourth-straight Outstanding Stewards of America's Waters Award from the National Hydropower Association. The award for Recreational, Environmental & Historical Enhancement honors a pioneering fish passage project at Little Falls on the North Fork Skokomish River.

Tacoma Power collaborated with the Skokomish Indian Tribe and regulatory agencies to carve fish ladders into existing bedrock and conceptualize potential future modifications using innovative construction techniques. The project eases fish passage, preserves the beauty of the culturally significant location, and helps secure salmon and steelhead populations.

The flow of the river at Little Falls is divided into two channels, both of which were previously identified as barriers to fish. Both channels are now open to fish passage.

"For the fourth year in a row, Tacoma has been recognized for its outstanding achievements that have provided extraordinary operational, recreational, historical, environmental, or educational value," said **Linda Church Ciocci**, executive director of the National Hydropower Association. "Tacoma's work this year to improve the passage and habitat for salmon in the Pacific Northwest while preserving the aesthetics of the site is another demonstration of their commitment to the community and ecosystem they serve." **NWPPA**

MEA becomes a self-generating utility

On May 1, 2015, at midnight, Matanuska Electric Association (Palmer, Alaska) made history, moving from an all-requirements purchaser of power to a self-generating utility. Using power produced by the 171-megawatt Eklutna Generation Station natural gas-fired power plant, MEA now produces all the power to meet its full member demand and required reserves with the help of

Continued on page 18

energy from local and statewide hydropower projects.

“This is an important day for our cooperative and the entire Railbelt,” said MEA General Manager **Joe Griffith**. “Less than two years ago, we broke ground on this project. I am proud of our team and project partners who made it all happen within a few months of our optimistic timeline and 10 percent of our project budget. It’s quite an accomplishment.”

While all 10 of the 17.1-megawatt engines have been commercially available since March, due to the terms of an interim sales agreement, Chugach Electric Association was only purchasing the output of four of those engines. MEA’s Power Sales Agreement with Chugach Electric Association ended April 30 at 11:59 p.m. and plant operators report the switch was seamless and uneventful.

MEA’s 10 smaller engines allow the utility to more efficiently follow the service area’s primarily residential load and bring a unique efficient load following capability to the Railbelt. The plant will provide electricity to MEA’s members 30 percent more efficiently than the machines previously serving the cooperative, providing a significant reduction in fuel consumption and related costs.

Chugach Electric Association will continue to provide MEA with power and gas dispatch services for the next year. **NWPPA**

Wilkinson says goodbye to CVEA

This year’s Copper Valley Electric Association (CVEA) annual meetings in April in Glennallen and Valdez were the last for CEO **Robert Wilkinson**, who retired on June 1 after having served as the CEO for 18 of his almost 29 years with the Alaskan cooperative.

A major focus of the meeting was to honor Wilkinson, say goodbye, and thank him for everything he has done for the members of CVEA. In turn, Wilkinson thanked the members for the opportunity to serve as their CEO; he also thanked the board of directors and the employee team for their roles in the success of the cooperative. **John Duhamel**, CVEA executive engineer/project manager and incoming CEO, surprised Wilkinson with remarks reflecting on a few items from Wilkinson’s long list of accomplishments during his time as leader of the cooperative.

Duhamel estimates that Wilkinson secured appropriations of grants and facilities totaling more than \$150 million during his time as CEO. Probably his most important contribution to the cooperative, Wilkinson built the organization into a highly regarded leader in the industry with a flawless reputation. CVEA leads in many areas of the Alaska electric utility industry. With Wilkinson’s leadership



the definition of “rural Alaska” was changed in EPA regulations benefiting the members of CVEA by saving millions of dollars. This action also benefited many other rural co-ops around the state.

In September 2014, Wilkinson was recognized for his service to the industry when he received the highest industry award given by the Alaska Power Association, the Mason LaZelle Achievement Award. His nomination for this award was supported by past and current members of the Alaska Legislature, as well as members of Alaska’s Congressional Delegation. **NWPPA**

Gray tapped as WSPE president-elect

In April, Mason County PUD No. 1 (Shelton, Wash.) Director **Jocelyne Gray** was voted president-elect of the Washington Society of Professional Engineers (WSPE) by her association peers. Her term will run from July 1 of this year through June 30, 2016, when she will then become president of the state society. In addition to WSPE, she has also been very active in the Society of Women Engineers since 1996, encouraging young females to enter the profession.

“I am honored to be chosen by my fellow engineers who have entrusted me to help shape the future of WSPE and our engineering profession, particularly as we work with the stakeholders and the legislature over the next several years to revise Chapter 18.43 RCW ‘Engineers and Land Surveyors Act,’” said Gray.

Gray has been a member of WSPE since 2011. At PUD 1, she serves as the director of water and wastewater operations and is the District’s in-house licensed civil engineer.

Established in 1937, WSPE is a professional association representing the interests of engineers from all fields of practice and is the state society of the National Society of Professional Engineers (NSPE). **NWPPA**

EPUD receives positive financial audit

In mid-April, Emerald PUD (Eugene, Ore.) released its annual audit and financial statements for 2014, following a thorough review by independent auditor, Moss Adams LLP. Representatives of Moss Adams presented the positive results to the EPUD Board of Directors at their April 14 meeting.

“Overall, EPUD is in a solid financial position,” said **Julie Desimone**, partner at Moss Adams.

Among management’s financial highlights for the year were Emerald’s continued low electricity rates for customers, substantial progress in reducing long-term debt,



and the careful planning and completion of reliability upgrades.

“We’re very excited to have our auditors confirm the fiscal health of the utility,” said Emerald PUD Chief Financial Officer **Sara Cline**. “This is what our staff and board work so diligently to maintain.”

Go to www.epud.org for a complete copy of Emerald’s 2014 audit report. **NWPPA**

Member utilities announce election results

Columbia REA held its 77th annual meeting at the Walla Walla (Wash.) County Fairgrounds on April 16. The annual event was attended by approximately 300 members, family members, and special guests. The voting for directors resulted in the election of two new board members and the re-election of another, each representing one of the three CREA governing districts. The newly elected board directors are **Tom Hildreth** of Walla Walla (District #1) and **Duane Depping** of Burbank (District #2); **Kathleen Wooldridge** of Starbuck (District #3) ran uncontested. Directors serve three-year terms. Following the meeting, the board held an organizational meeting to select new officers: **Vic Parks** of Burbank as president, **Wooldridge** as vice president, and **Eric Johnson** of Dayton as secretary-treasurer.



Tom Hildreth



Duane Depping

Blachly-Lane Electric Cooperative (Junction City, Ore.) members exercised their right of democratic member control on April 18 at the 2015 Annual Meeting by electing board officers. **Curtis Short** of Junction City was elected to his first term as director for District 2, and **Cliff Kelley**, who is from Elmira and ran unopposed, was elected to his third term as District 5 director.

Matanuska Electric Association (Palmer, Alaska) held its 2015 Annual Meeting and board election on April 28. There were 265 MEA members and their families in attendance, totaling more than 500 attendees. On the ballot this year were three board seats and five bylaw propositions. **Peter Burchell**, **Kit Jones**, and **Janet Kincaid** were all elected to their at-large director positions. All five bylaw propositions passed.

In April, approximately 360 people attended the Copper Valley Electric Association (Alaska) Annual Meeting in Glennallen and 290 attended the meeting in Valdez; these numbers beat last year’s record attendance numbers. In elections, incumbents **Paul Kildal**, **Lon Rake**, and **Will Stark** were re-elected to three-year seats. CVEA employees **John**

Duhamel, **Diana Absher**, **Jessi Gallatin**, and **Garrette Francis** were recognized for five years of service; **Jaime Matthews** and **Brett Stewart** for 10 years; **Mark Czarnecki** for 15 years; and **Jeanie Willford** for 25 years with the cooperative.



Jeanie Willford

OPALCO members boarded the ferry on May 2 for the 2015 Annual Meeting and Board of Directors’ election after the co-op

received a record 2,758 total ballots representing more than 24 percent of the membership. The successful candidates were incumbent **Winnie Adams** and **Randy J. Cornelius**, former OPALCO general manager, for District 2. The member-initiated bylaw amendment was unsuccessful by a



OPALCO’s 77th Board of Directors, before the election. (L-R) Jim Lett, Dr. Jerry Whitfield, Winnie Adams, Vince Dauciunas, Glenna Hall, Bob Myhr, and Chris Thomerson.

small margin. Guests joined the 229 members present aboard the WSF Hyak for a total of 337 people in attendance.

Three members were elected to the Peninsula Light Co. (Gig Harbor, Wash.) Board of Directors as the utility held its annual meeting at company headquarters on May 4. **L. Paul Alvestad**, **Nick Markovich**, and



L. Paul Alvestad



Nick Markovich

Debra Ross, all incumbents, were elected to serve three-year terms as the top three vote-getters. After the election results were announced, board officers were named to three-year terms. **Signo Uddenberg** will serve as president, **Alvestad** as vice president, **Marc Jorgenson** as treasurer, and **Jeff Bucholz** as secretary. The other three PenLight board members are **Roger Spadoni**, **Spencer Nordfors**, and **Scott Junge**.



Debra Ross

Midstate Electric Cooperative’s 63rd annual meeting on May 9 in La Pine, Ore., was well attended with 459 registered members. Proposed amendments to update the bylaws of the cooperative passed by a 93-percent margin, and

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incumbents **Vic Russell**, **Robert Reed**, and **Diana Cox** all ran unopposed and were re-elected to serve members for another three-year term. Officers for 2015-2016 are **Russell** as president, **Bud Kendall** as vice president, and **Gordon DeArmond** as secretary treasurer.

At the Salem Electric (Ore.) Annual Membership Meeting on May 12, **Jeff Anderson** and **Joe Van Meter** were re-elected to three-year terms on the board of directors. At the Organizational Meeting of the board of directors, the following officers were elected to serve for 2015-2016: **Jerry Berger**, president; **Van Meter**, vice president; and **Anderson**, secretary treasurer. The other members of the board are **Dave Bauer**, **Carl Beach**, **Alicia Bonesteele**, and **Paul Ennor**.

NWPPA

High-speed Internet comes to Pend Oreille

Pend Oreille PUD's (Newport, Wash.) Community Network System (CNS) recently met a milestone for connections to its broadband services. Of the 3,800 homes and businesses in the southern half of Pend Oreille County that were part of the Fiber-to-the Home Project, 1,500 customers are now connected to its broadband services and are enjoying high-speed Internet. The response significantly exceeded District expectations.

Although it has been a major challenge for CNS to respond to the high volume of customer requests for service, the challenge has been met and CNS is now able to react quickly to new installation requests.

CNS provides wholesale broadband to multiple retail service providers who use the common infrastructure for residential and business customers. These customers now enjoy 100-megabit broadband capacity; speeds that are simply unavailable in most areas, even large cities.

The fiber-optic network has connected the people in the county to the world and changed their lives. The District continuously receives messages about families and businesses that have chosen to move to Pend Oreille County because of the Internet speeds offered. The PUD also hears heart-felt stories of how families are able to stay connected due to the broadband. **NWPPA**



(L-R) CNS Supervisor Robert Fritz and Information Technology and Telecommunications Director Rhonda Thomas celebrate the occasion with a cake.

Columbia Generating Station sets longest run record

Last month, Columbia Generating Station set a new record for its longest continuous operational run — 683 days — when operators shut down the reactor on May 9 for start of the station's biennial refueling and maintenance outage. Columbia achieved what's known as a "breaker to breaker" run for the first time in its 30-year history, meaning the plant has been operating non-stop since reconnecting to the grid on June 25, 2013, following its previous refueling outage.

During the 683-day run, Columbia produced nearly 18 million megawatt-hours of electricity and operated at a more than 98-percent capacity factor.

"This record run is about keeping our commitment to the region to produce clean, reliable, and cost-effective power for the long-term," said **Mark Reddemann**, Energy Northwest CEO. "I'm proud of our team and their many accomplishments over the last two years."

Columbia was online every single day during 2014 and in November broke its previous record — 505 days set in April 2011 — for consecutive days online. Columbia also produced more clean, nuclear energy for the Northwest power grid during fiscal 2014 than any other fiscal year in its 30-year history. The nuclear facility sent nearly 9.8 million megawatt-hours of electricity to the grid, culminating three consecutive years of record-setting generation. In November, Columbia also marked five years without an unplanned shut-down.

The 42-day refueling and maintenance outage will include several major projects and the loading of 248 new, higher-efficiency, nuclear fuel assemblies into the reactor core. An additional 1,500 skilled outage workers were hired locally and from across the country to support maintenance projects throughout the plant. **NWPPA**

Scarano hired by Franklin PUD

Franklin PUD (Pasco, Wash.) recently hired **Victor Scarano** as the new auditor/director of Administrative Services. Scarano will be responsible for Franklin PUD's accounting functions, including the annual budget, compliance with all applicable accounting standards, and internal auditing. The position further provides oversight and supervision to Information Technology and Broadband Operations, Customer Service, and the Meter Reading departments.

Scarano has a Master of Business Administration from the University of Alaska, and has worked in accounting and



finance for 19 years with 14 of those years being in a leadership role. Prior to relocating to the Tri-Cities, Scarano held the position of vice president and chief financial officer of an Alaskan-based company where he was responsible for administrative operations and overall financial responsibility.

NWPPA

New Vera substation plans are underway

Vera Water and Power (Spokane Valley, Wash.) will be constructing a new substation starting in the fall of 2015 and continuing into July 2016. The project is meant to better serve current and future customers, and to keep the operation of the district's electric system safe and reliable.

The substation has been in the preliminary stages for many years, and was delayed a decade due to the economy. The construction budget for the new substation is set at \$2,000,000, which is expected to be the most expensive project Vera has ever constructed. The substation is currently in the design process, and bids have been accepted for ordering the transformer.

Vera's last constructed substation was the Sullivan Substation in 1982. This will be the starting point for the new substation's design, including a concrete block wall as well as noise and sight reduction features. NWPPA

MEWCO dedicates Cecil Cleveland Well



(L-R) Scott Hislop, Chuck Taes, Joe Morgan, Alice Murphy, Dave Thompson, Cecil Cleveland, Mike Baker and Sam Waldron.

On May 14, 2015, Modern Electric Water Company (Spokane, Wash.) held a dedication ceremony to honor Cecil Cleveland, a former board president. Cleveland served as a MEWCO director since 1995, and as president from 2009 to his retirement in 2013. Under his direction as a board member, the company made many improvements to its infrastructure. Over the years, he has been active in many community organizations.

The dedication ceremony centered on the unveiling of the new sign at the well site's entrance, as well as a tour of the new facility. General Manager Mike Baker gave a short speech focusing on Cleveland's years of service and sincere dedication to the company. Also present at the dedication were Alice Murphy, Board President Dave Thompson, Susan Thompson, Secretary/Treasurer Sam Waldron, Director Chuck Taes, Marcia Taes, Director Scott Hislop, Attorney Jamie Wolff, Assistant General Manager Joe Morgan, and other Modern Electric Water Company employees. NWPPA

Four member utilities earn RP3

The Sacramento Municipal Utility District (Calif.), Douglas County PUD (East Wenatchee, Wash.), Benton PUD (Kennewick, Wash.), and Cowlitz PUD (Longview, Wash.) are four of 191 of the nation's more than 2,000 public power utilities to earn the Reliable Public Power Provider (RP3®) designation from the American Public Power Association (APPA) for providing consumers with the highest degree of reliable and safe electric service.



"We're honored to receive the RP3 designation," said Maria Veloso-Koenig, SMUD director of Grid Planning. "Our utility staff puts in a lot of hard work to serve this community. RP3 represents a much appreciated recognition of this hard work."

"This designation should be considered a pat on the back for our employees," said Bill Dobbins, general manager of Douglas County PUD. "It provides recognition that what they do each day is appreciated and important."

Kenneth Stone, energy services and accounting manager at Braintree Electric Light Department of Braintree, Mass., and executive committee member of APPA's RP3 Review Panel, presented the designations on May 18 during the association's annual Engineering & Operations Technical Conference held in Sacramento.

The RP3 designation recognizes public power utilities that demonstrate proficiency in four key disciplines: reliability, safety, workforce development, and system improvement. Criteria within each category are based on sound business practices and represent a utility-wide commitment to safe and reliable delivery of electricity. The RP3 designation now lasts for three years (up from two), so the 97 utilities that earned the designation this year join the 94 that received it last year for a total of 191.

This is the tenth year that RP3 recognition has been offered. NWPPA

Top water honor goes to Prather



Clark Public Utilities Water Quality and Production Manager Steve Prather (center) with Director of Water Services Doug Quinn, Clark Public Utilities Commission Board President Jim Malinowski, and staff from the Department of Health.

Drinking Water Week was highlighted by award presentations by the Washington State Department of Health. This year, the Department of Health Office of Drinking Water (ODW) honored Clark Public Utilities Water Quality and Production Manager Steve Prather with the Lifetime Achievement Award.

ODW officials presented Prather with the Lifetime Achievement award at Clark Public Utilities in Vancouver, Wash. ODW recognized Prather for his efforts to “help operators respond to system concerns from remote facilities, which improves response times, minimizes damage and water loss, and improves service to customers.” **NWPPA**

Safety awards awarded to Columbia River PUD

Columbia River PUD (St. Helens, Ore.) has been honored by the American Public Power Association (APPA) and NWPPA for safe operating practices. The PUD had no lost-time accidents in 2013 or 2014, and earned first-place awards in both the national and regional competitions for their efforts.

“Working day-in and day-out with the power of electricity is not something to take lightly,” said **Kenneth Roberts**, chair of the APPA Safety Committee and line supervisor for Huntsville Utilities in Alabama. “The recipients of this award understand the essential nature of safety in our line of work. It’s embedded in their work culture.”

More than 290 utilities entered the APPA awards contest, which is the highest number of entrants in the history of the program. Entrants were categorized based on their total hours of worker exposure, and ranked based on their incident rate. **NWPPA**

BPA selects Manary as new VP

The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) has selected **Michelle Manary** to be its vice president of Transmission Marketing and Sales. She began her new position on June 1.

“Michelle brings over 17 years of impressive and well-rounded experience to this vitally important position,” said **Richard Shaheen**, senior vice president for Transmission Services. “This experience, along with a strong leadership skillset, makes her the ideal selection to help BPA continue to meet its responsibilities as a federal transmission provider.”

In her new position, Manary will provide executive leadership in the planning, development, and administration of the overall marketing of transmission products and services. She also will lead the implementation of the full range of contracts associated with transmission products sold by BPA. **NWPPA**

We remember

Lincoln Electric Cooperative Executive Secretary **Marcia Karen Ellingson** passed away on May 1, 2015. She was 55 years old.

Ellingson was born on August 13, 1959, grew up in Eureka, Mont., and graduated from Lincoln County High School in 1977. She had a varied career with jobs around the Northwest before she ultimately settled into her 26-year position as executive secretary for Lincoln Electric. At Lincoln Electric, she was the go-to person, known for her knowledge, motivation, and punctuality. As the executive secretary, Ellingson was responsible for assisting both the board and general manager. She took these duties very seriously; learning all she could about each person to help accommodate their needs and situations.

She was also an accomplished musician with a lovely voice. In high school she was selected to represent the United States in a national choral group that toured throughout Europe. She was looking forward to being a grandmother and meeting her granddaughter in early August.

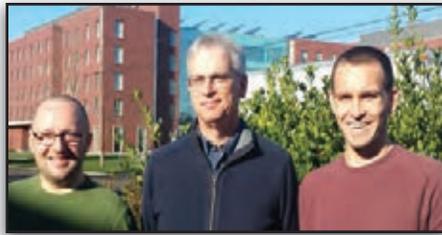
Ellingson was preceded in death by her father, John M. Ellingson, and her sister, Teresa M. Clinton. She is survived by her mother, Mary A. Ellingson; brother, Dennis M. (and Mary) Ellingson; sons, Gabriel A. Layton, Anthony T. (and Shauna) Layton, and David A. Rockow Jr.; numerous nieces and nephews; and her four-legged, furry friend, Ollie.

Online condolences and memories may be shared at www.schnackenbergfh.com. Donations in her name may be made to the charity of your choice. **NWPPA**



TriAxis announces new team members

With the recent acquisition of CVO Electrical Systems in January 2015, TriAxis Engineering is proud to announce their newest team members: **Benjamin Leland, P.E., Michael Antonishen,** and **David Castor, P.E.**



(L-R) Ben Leland, Dave Castor, and Mike Antonishen.

Leland has enjoyed designing, implementing, and maintaining a wide variety of control systems over the past six years of his electrical engineering career. Starting out with CVO Electrical Systems, and now with TriAxis Engineering, he works on a daily basis with SCADA and embedded control systems for electric distribution, water, wastewater, and industrial clients.

Antonishen joins TriAxis Engineering from CVO Electrical Systems as well. Antonishen has wide ranging experience and interests that include utility system long-range planning and design; intelligent device integration; and power system modeling, analysis, protection, and grounding.

Castor is the former owner of CVO Electrical Systems and has been an electrical engineering consultant for over 40 years. Prior to the formation of CVO Electrical Systems in 2005, he worked for ESA, Inc. for seven years and also spent 18 years at CH2M Hill.

TriAxis's core electric utility consulting team has worked together since 1978; since incorporation as TriAxis in September 1996, the group has performed over 400 projects. For more information, visit www.triaxiseng.com. **NWPPA**

SPIDACalc V6.0.1.0 has been released

SPIDA Software introduces new features and functionality to its user community with the release of SPIDACalc v6.0.1.0. The release of SPIDACalc v6.0.1.0 brings new features, increased functionality, and advanced analysis options to better equip the SPIDACalc community. One of these new features is Advisor. Advisor is a revolutionary tool that performs a diagnostic and analytic review of existing designs and provides recommendations and comparisons back to the user — saving time and money!

Along with the introduction of Advisor, users are now able to analyze designs using the Co-Rotational/Geometric Non-linear Analysis method. New regulatory mandates are being introduced to the Canadian electric and telecommunication industry later this year and these changes will require Canadian utilities and telecommunication companies to analyze their structures using the Co-Rotational/Geometric Non-linear Analysis method.

SPIDA Software is leading the way with practical and cutting-edge software solutions that help electric utilities and telecommunication companies better design, manage, and track their physical assets. For more information about SPIDA Software, visit www.spidasoftware.com. **NWPPA**

BKI welcomes new team members

Brown & Kysar Inc. (BKI) recently hired two new employees: **Dustin Gaunder, P.E.** and **Heather Cook.**

Gaunder comes to BKI from Oklahoma, taking on the task of distribution and systems team lead. He has worked in all aspects of a utility, primarily with distribution and systems design. His systems experience includes protection, relaying, SCADA, system coordination, and related areas. He is excited to settle down in the beautiful Pacific Northwest with his wife Kylie.



Dustin Gaunder

Cook has taken over the role of substation team lead. She has extensive experience in project management, including work at a large utility, a manufacturer, and another larger consulting firm. Cook is a Pacific Northwest native from the Tri-Cities area.



Heather Cook

Brown & Kysar Inc. serves small- to mid-sized public utilities in the Pacific Northwest. For more information, visit www.bki.cc/. **NWPPA**

AIR receives FAA approval for commercial drone use

Aerial Inspection Resources Inc. (AIR) has received FAA authorization to utilize unmanned aircraft for monitoring and inspecting electrical transmission equipment, gas pipelines, and other critical infrastructure systems. AIR's authorization — known as the "333 Exemption" — allows the company to deploy drone technology in all 50 states. AIR is the first Portland-based company to receive this FAA exemption, and they join a select group of 289 companies that can now commercially operate unmanned aerial systems (UAS) in the United States.

"We are primed and ready to start offering our UAS technologies that we have been developing over the past three years," said **Vernie Santos**, AIR's VP of Business Development. "AIR's unmanned aerial systems far outperform traditional inspection methods, and we also know it will have a huge impact on safety."

Aerial Inspection Resources Inc. becomes the latest major player in the developing Pacific Northwest UAS technology cluster. For more information, visit aerialinspectionresources.com.

NWPPA

by Nicole Case

NWPPA's 2015 Federal Rally was perfectly timed to make a difference for our members



During any given day, hundreds of people descend upon policy makers in and around Capitol Hill and the White House, advocating for their view on national policy issues. For three days in late April, 17 NWPPA representatives joined those hundreds as we took our Northwest message to national policymakers.

As the seat of our nation's government, Washington, D.C., is the destination for many people looking to affect change. During any given day, hundreds of people descend upon policy makers in and around Capitol Hill and the White House, advocating for their view on national policy issues. For three days in late April, 17 NWPPA representatives joined those hundreds as we took our Northwest message to national policymakers.

NWPPA's annual Federal rally is the cornerstone of its legislative and regulatory program. Our trip to Washington, D.C., is a long-running tool in our arsenal to build relationships with our congressional delegation and administration policy makers. "It is our in-person meetings with our delegation and staff that packs the most punch when it comes to building relationships in D.C., and presenting our message in a way that is impactful and succinct," said Ken Weiss, board member of Clearwater Power and president of the NWPPA Board of Trustees.

In partnership with Northern California Power Agency, NWPPA's Federal Rally is held every spring, at a time when Congress is working on drafting legislation for the congressional year. "There was so much going on when we were in D.C. that we couldn't have timed it better," said Scott Egbert, NWPPA GRC chair and board of trustee member from Wells Rural Electric Cooperative in Nevada. "Congressional staff sought our perspective on legislation in the drafting stage such as Reps. Zinke's (R-Mont.) and Schrader's (D-Ore.) legislation to ensure utilities can manage vegetation in and near rights of way on public lands in a timely manner," said Egbert.

In addition to rights-of-way legislation, NWPPA was the first public power organization to learn that our efforts to protect the tax-exempt status of municipal bonds have borne fruit. During our meeting in Senator Ron Wyden's (D-Ore.) office, we learned that tax reform efforts will not include proposals impacting municipal bonds. This was great news as municipal bonds are primary sources of funding for public power infrastructure projects.

Also in the midst of congressional activity while we were in D.C. were two additional legislative priorities for NWPPA: cyber security and energy efficiency.

- **Cyber information sharing and liability protection legislation:** Electric utilities have long supported information sharing and liability protection as legislative fixes to help prevent cyber attacks. The week before we traveled to D.C., the House of Representatives passed a cyber information sharing bill — H.R. 1560. In our meeting with Congressman Greg Walden (R-Ore.), a senior member of the House Energy & Commerce Committee, we learned that civil liberties proponents lobbied hard to insert a sunset clause in the bill. As it stands, the protections in H.R. 1560 would expire after seven years. NWPPA joined other public power supporters in opposing that sunset clause in the Senate version of the bill, which is set for Senate consideration.
- **Energy efficiency legislation:** NWPPA has supported legislation efforts to improve energy efficiency for years. In fact, in Resolution 2015-01 NWPPA urges Congress to promote all technically feasible, cost-effective, and achievable energy efficiency measures. During our week in D.C, President Obama signed the Energy Efficiency Improvement Act, a bill introduced by Senators Shaheen (D-N.H.) and Portman (R-Ohio). Public power has long supported versions of this bill over the years. The signing of the bill into law marks the culmination of years of work by public power and other supporters.

As in past years, the issues we raised during our visits to policymakers were guided by public power's overarching goals of providing low-cost and reliable electricity to electricity consumers. Those goals are evident in NWPPA's resolutions and reflected in talking points developed for use in D.C. In addition to those mentioned above, NWPPA's delegation raised these additional priority issues:

1. Reliability and affordability concerns with the Environmental Protection Agency's proposal to regulate greenhouse gas emissions from existing power plants. The plan is called the Clean Power Plan.
2. Support for streamlining hydro relicensing, aid to small and medium utilities for cyber assessment and

monitoring; streamlining federal permitting; and support for all hydro as a renewable in new energy policy.

3. Support for congressional efforts to reform the Endangered Species Act to give states and local governments more involvement in listing decisions. Also, oppose proposed changes to critical habitat designations and support delay of greater sage-grouse listing decision to give state habitat plans more time to impact the health of the species.
4. Oppose efforts by the EPA to redefine “Waters of the U.S.” as it would only increase the permitting requirements and costs for utilities on land that are currently not covered under the Clean Water Act.
5. Support local solutions like the work of the NW Power Pool on integration of intermittent resources. NWPPA’s litmus test for any new operational tool or market mechanism is whether implementation provides net benefits for our member’s retail consumers.
6. In support of comments made during the Portland, Ore., “listening session” with NWPPA members and the Senate Energy and Natural Resources staff, shared that we are ready, willing, and able to contribute our expertise and knowledge in support of any upcoming energy policy.

NWPPA’s success in D.C. is directly attributable to the members that take time out of their busy lives to travel across the country to carry our Northwest message. The extent of our relationships with the Northwest congressional delegation and other policy makers is truly a testament to their dedication to their utilities, the association, and the communities they represent.

NWPPA’s 2016 Federal Rally is set for April 24-27. If you are interested in learning more about the Federal Rally, please contact Nicole Case at Nicole@nwppa.org.

NWPPA

Nicole Case is NWPPA’s legislative consultant. She can be contacted at nicole@nwppa.org.



NWPPA thanks our 2015 Federal Rally team:

- Michelle Bertolino, Roseville Electric Utility (Calif.)
- Debbie Bone-Harris, Franklin County PUD (Wash.)
- Steve Boorman, Bonners Ferry Electric Department (Idaho)
- Scott Egbert, Wells Rural Electric Company (Nev.)
- Marc Farmer, Clatskanie PUD (Ore.)
- Elizabeth Hadley, Redding Electric Utility (Calif.)
- Doug Hardy, Central Montana Electric Power Cooperative (Mont.)
- Paul Hauser, Trinity PUD (Calif.)
- Ron Holmes, Wasco Electric Cooperative (Ore.)
- Dave Kelsey, Yellowstone Valley Electric Cooperative (Mont.)
- Meera Kohler, Alaska Village Electric Cooperative (Alaska)
- Larry Luong, Sacramento Municipal Utility District (Calif.)
- Ted Rampton, Utah Associated Municipal Power Systems (Utah)
- Brent Ridge, Energy Northwest (Wash.)
- John Simpson, Eugene Water & Electric Board (Ore.)
- Steve Taylor, Mason County PUD No. 1 (Wash.)
- Ken Weiss, Clearwater Power Company (Idaho) **NWPPA**

Electric Reliability Organization (ERO) registration program update

NERC recently announced that further work on the Risk Based Registration (RBR) Phase II would be suspended. There are several reasons for this decision:

- 1) Initial research indicates the uniqueness of system design, configuration, and business practices are so varied among the smaller entities that to develop criteria and assess these entities for high, medium, and low risk will be extremely difficult.
- 2) The Bulk Electric System (BES) exception process is ongoing and the ERO and industry need time to understand the impact of the revised definition.
- 3) There is tremendous flexibility for regional entities to work with registered entities within the current Risk Based Compliance Monitoring and Enforcement Program to assess materiality of standards and requirements to an entity’s system and functions.

WECC has in fact worked with individual entities in this manner to reduce compliance burdens and uncertainty. WECC is fully committed to working with every entity throughout the BES Exception process and using the risk-based CMEP processes and tools to support reliability efforts. We highly encourage entities to call WECC staff directly and begin the dialogue on registration and compliance scoping.

WECC points of contact include Michael Dalebout (mdalebout@wecc.biz or (801) 819-7632) and Kim Israelsson (kisraelsson@wecc.biz or (801) 819-7613). **NWPPA**

COVER STORY

by Erica Erland and Jodi Henderson

Utilities and customers are embracing community solar – is your utility next?

According to the Solar Electric Power Association's (SEPA) *Utility Community Solar Handbook*: "In communities across the United States, there is a rising interest in community solar programs as a means to increase participation in solar energy for people who may have physical, financial, or other limitations to installing solar on their own property. Additional drivers for community solar include interest in increasing energy independence, offering a hedge against rising fuel costs, cutting carbon emissions, and providing local jobs. Community solar programs provide an alternative to the traditional process of individuals or businesses placing solar on their property."

A quick survey of our utility members showed that while NWPPA utilities in every state they represent have customers and members with solar projects/net-metering projects on their own property, not many have community solar projects. However, as SEPA says above, the word is out about them and many utilities are weighing the pros and cons of community solar — several members have even built one or are starting the process.

In Montana, several utilities find themselves in different stages of the process: Yellowstone Valley Electric Cooperative is currently working on a business plan, while Flathead Electric Cooperative has made it to the legal stage.

"Ravalli Electric Co-op [in Corvallis, Mont.] is in the process of applying for a USDA REAP Grant for a proposed 25-kilowatt community solar project," said Ravalli's Jim Maunder. "If all goes well the project could be started in spring of 2016."

In California, Plumas-Sierra REC in Portola is in the process of completing a community solar project that will be installed on the utility's rooftops. They recently went out for a bid for a 100-kilowatt system, but will consider adding additional phases if there is an interest for more.

"Lassen [in Susanville, Calif.] is also exploring possibilities of a community solar project," said Lassen Municipal Utility District Energy Services Manager Theresa Phillips.

Though it is not right for every utility for different reasons, two Washington utilities recently embraced community solar and the projects were met with off-the-charts demand from their customers.



Clark Public Utilities (Vancouver, Wash.)

Clark Public Utilities first considered community solar in the fall of 2014, evaluating potential sites and gauging customer and commissioner interest in pursuing a community project. Met with a positive response, staff moved forward with early counsel from Northwest SEED and the Bonneville Environmental Foundation (BEF).

Through Clark Public Utilities' existing relationship with BEF, strategic and logistic support for community solar became available at no cost. To promote implementation of community solar projects by its public power customers, the Bonneville Power Administration had allocated funding to BEF to aid utilities in the siting, development, and design of community solar projects. This relationship allowed Clark Public Utilities staff to harness the experience and expertise of the BEF solar group to move the project ahead quickly.

"A team of employees across multiple utility departments came together to work through facilities, infrastructure, and electric service challenges as they arose," said Matt Babbitts, Clark Public Utilities project manager for Community Solar.

“The help from Northwest SEED to start and then BEF taking the lead on site and shade analysis as well as the details of the project design made it possible for staff to make informed recommendations to our board and have decisions made quickly.”

In November 2014, commissioners granted staff a green light to move forward with a formal bid process for a ground-mounted community solar project, located on utility property. With generous state incentives set to expire in 2020, the board urged staff to move quickly in order to maximize the benefit to customers choosing to participate.

“With the clock ticking on state incentives, we wanted to move the project along as fast as we could,” said Babbitts. “Communication across departments was key as we prepared bid requirements, budget estimates, and technical specifications. It wasn’t just a team effort, it was a true testament to this utility’s commitment to internal customer service — we had all hands on deck.”

As A&R Solar was selected through the bid process as the system contractor, staff worked to develop marketing materials, participation agreements, and a project timeline with a goal of generation by the end of June 2015.

Efforts to “sell” the power generated by the first project and sign up customers to participate began in January 2015 with a marketing campaign slated to continue through April. Instead, the project sold out in the first day. With commissioner approval, a second project, adjacent to the first, was given a green light. That project sold out two days later. When a third project sold out within a week, utility staff began to look closely at just how many projects could fit on the identified site. Additional shade analysis was done, roofs were evaluated as potential sites, and incentive thresholds were carefully calculated. As bids for subsequent projects were opened and awarded, customer demand to purchase project units continued to increase.

Clark Public Utilities was fortunate that other utilities, such as Seattle City Light, had already gone through this process and were willing to share their experiences, preparing others as they headed into the marketing phase. Even knowing that projects in other areas had been met with high demand, the utility was still very surprised by the immediate, positive response from customers. Instead of ramping up communication over several months, staff needed to slam on the brakes after the first few hours.

As a utility that aims to provide customers with the very best service, including making programs available to all who want to participate, it was fortunate that with the five projects possible on the designated site, all customers on the waiting list look to be able to participate in Community Solar at some level.

Construction on the five sold-out utility-owned community solar systems are now underway. The ground-mounted arrays together total 319 kilowatts and more than 700 residential customers of Clark Public Utilities own units. Through a combination of Washington state production incentives and

Clark fast facts:

- Five separate ground-mounted systems totaling 319 kilowatts
- More than 700 participants purchasing between 1 and 100 units
- One unit consists of one-twelfth (1/12) of a solar panel and costs \$100
- Competitive bid process employed for all five projects; awarded to A&R Solar from Seattle, Wash.
- Materials include Itek panels and invertors made in Washington



Over 700 residential Clark Public Utilities customers own the above five solar systems.

utility generation credits, participants are projected to be paid back in less than four years. The production incentives from the state will continue until 2020 unless extended by the legislature. And the generation credits will continue for the life of the community solar system, expected to be at least 20 years.

“We’ve got all the participation agreements out to the customers signed up to purchase units and so far we have over 90 percent of them back and on the books,” said Babbitts. “Many employees who are also customers held off on purchasing units so that as many customers who wanted to could get in. With those employees waiting in the wings, we have a reliable back-up list if any original owners fail to follow through. We’re confident all five projects will remain 100-percent sold to residential customers.”

The overwhelming success of Clark Public Utilities’ Community Solar program is an opportunity for the utility to demonstrate a commitment to renewable technology; provides a real-time illustration of the benefits and limits of solar power; and will be a large-scale educational installation right onsite at the utility.

Continued on page 28



Benton PUD's Ely Community Solar Project groundbreaking on April 22, 2015. In attendance were left to right: Commissioner Jeff Hall; General Manager Chad Bartram; Department Specialist — Power Management Sharon Carstens; Power Rates Analyst II and Community Solar Project Manager James Dykes; Commissioner Lori Sanders; Electrical Engineer II Dax Berven; Senior Director of Engineering & Power Management Rick Dunn; and Commissioner Barry Bush.

Benton PUD quick tips:

- Seek advice from others who have successfully implemented similar programs
- Be prepared for more customer interest than expected
- Provide easy access to information and answers for customers' questions

Benton PUD (Kennewick, Wash.)

Benton PUD serves customers with a growing interest in solar in a community that brags about over 300 days of sunshine a year. This coupled with generous state subsidies and an ongoing mission of Benton PUD to be a trusted energy partner to its customers made it clear it was time to develop a solar program including a community solar option.

Benton PUD's Solar Connections program was charged with providing tools for customers to assist them in making decisions pertaining to solar whether on their property or participating in the community solar program. The initial focus of the team was developing a community solar program — the first of its kind in the area.

With such a large task in front of them, the team looked to its partners in the public power community to learn from others who had successfully implemented similar programs. The team reached out to Seattle City Light, Inland Power and Light in Spokane, and Clark Public Utilities to help identify best practices and lessons learned from their projects. Those they called upon stepped up and answered questions, shared resources, and provided insight in community solar. Benton PUD staff spent a day with Inland Power and Light staff and toured their solar array project.

Invaluable lessons from the other public power utilities' experiences were incorporated in Benton PUD's plans. Common advice included to be prepared for more customer interest than expected, and customers will want easy access to information and answers to their inquiries.

With this in mind, Benton PUD designated staff to the project and the website was updated with a new microsite dedicated to the Solar Connections program. The site provided tools for net metering customers as well as providing details on the upcoming community solar program.

An online enrollment form for the community solar project was linked to the website. The site also offered an extensive list of frequently asked questions, along with a solar calculator that offered customers the ability to calculate estimated generation as well as view information about state incentives and credits that would be available for customer enrolling in the program.

Benton PUD followed Inland Power and Light's lead. Customers were notified by direct mail of the project and provided the opportunity to participate in a random drawing for the 1,500 units available. The program was also promoted through the customer newsletter and at the local chamber of commerce's annual meeting. Regular posts on social media and the website reminded customers about the project and status of enrollment.

In April, members of the local chamber, local economic development organization, and media were invited to attend the groundbreaking for the project. The project received great news coverage on all three local television stations and radio, as well as social media.

Inland Power and Light's and Clark Public Utilities' advice was right on target: it didn't take much to develop an interest in the project and customer response. Benton PUD received 429 customer requests totaling 5,840 (of 1,500) units. An



independent accounting firm randomized the list and extracted customers who would be offered the option to purchase units. At the time of writing of this article, 111 customers were selected to purchase unit(s) and have been approached to sign an agreement to participate in the program.

While construction on the project has not yet begun, it is expected that construction will be completed and the project will be in production by July 1, 2015. A large part of the success of the program is due to the lessons learned from other utilities who had already implemented successful projects. **NWPPA**

Erica Erland is the corporate communications manager at Clark Public Utilities in Vancouver, Wash.; she can be contacted at eerland@clarkpud.com. Jodi Henderson is the communication specialist III at Benton PUD in Kennewick, Wash.; she can be contacted at hendersj@bentonpud.org.

About the cover photo

Another Washington member is harnessing the power of solar farther up north — all the way up north in Alaska.



Alaska's renewable energy potential includes 40 percent of the total U.S. river hydropower, 90 percent of total U.S. tidal energy potential, and the largest terrestrial and offshore wind potential in America. Even so, Alaska still has the lowest levels of private investment in electrical infrastructure, and the highest energy costs in the U.S. These factors create outstanding business potential, which Alaska Power & Telephone Company (based out of Port Townsend, Wash.) continues to capitalize on through innovation, strategic partnership, and the ingenuity and experience of its employee-owners. The latest AP&T project doing just that is the new utility-scale 24-kilowatt solar array in the remote community of Eagle on the Yukon. In partnership with the Alaska Energy Authority Renewable Energy Fund, its connection to the grid on May 20, 2015, garnered AP&T the distinction of owning the largest utility-owned solar installation producing electricity in Alaska. **NWPPA**



Balancing the New Energy Horizon

A diverse mix of energy generated at Energy Northwest provides enough reliable, affordable and environmentally responsible power for more than one million homes.



www.energy-northwest.com



JOB OPPORTUNITIES

The Job Opportunities is a service provided to NWPPA member systems and associate members. Member price is \$110 per listing for a 30-day period.

- Job Opportunities ads are also accepted from non-members. Ads are \$330 per listing for a 30-day period.
- *Copy must be received before the 25th of the month prior to the month of publication* (for example, February 25 for March issue).
- The *Bulletin* is mailed by the 15th of each month.
- Complete the online Job Opportunities ad placement form at www.nwppa.org.
- NWPPA reserves the right to edit all listings in order to fit size requirements in the publication.

POSITION: Energy Efficiency Specialist

COMPANY: Cowlitz PUD (Longview, Wash.)

SALARY: DOE.

DEADLINE TO APPLY: June 16, 2015.

TO APPLY: Application and a complete list of requirements can be found at www.cowlitzpud.org.

POSITION: Engineering and Operations Manager

COMPANY: Klickitat PUD (Goldendale, Wash.)

SALARY: DOE.

DEADLINE TO APPLY: June 17, 2015.

TO APPLY: Submit written application to Klickitat PUD, c/o Human Resources, 1313 S. Columbus, Goldendale, WA 98620, or fax to (509) 773-7449. Application and full job description can be found at www.klickitpud.com.

POSITION: Fish Passage/Water Quality Biologist

COMPANY: City of Tacoma (Tacoma, Wash.)

SALARY: \$64,188.80-\$82,284.80 annually.

DEADLINE TO APPLY: June 18, 2015.

TO APPLY: Applications are accepted online only at www.cityoftacoma.org/jobs.

POSITION: Electric Utility System Operator/Assistant System Operator — Distribution

COMPANY: City of Redding (Redding, Calif.)

SALARY: \$40.04-\$52.73 per hour.

DEADLINE TO APPLY: June 19, 2015.

TO APPLY: View detailed job announcement and apply online at www.ci.redding.ca.us.

POSITION: Business Systems Analyst

COMPANY: Cowlitz PUD (Longview, Wash.)

SALARY: DOE.

DEADLINE TO APPLY: June 19, 2015.

TO APPLY: Complete the District application and send cover letter and resumé to Cowlitz PUD, Attn: HR, P.O. Box 3007, Longview, WA 98632, or scan and email to jobs@cowlitzpud.org.

POSITION: Reliability Compliance Manager

COMPANY: Northern California Power Agency (Roseville, Calif.)

SALARY: \$136,200-\$170,250 annually.

DEADLINE TO APPLY: June 20, 2015.

TO APPLY: Apply online at www.ncpa.com/careers/job-listings/.

POSITION: Manager of Member Services

COMPANY: Glacier Electric Cooperative, Inc. (Cut Bank, Mont.)

SALARY: DOE.

DEADLINE TO APPLY: June 26, 2015.

TO APPLY: Direct inquires to Matt Hudson. Submit a cover letter, resumé, and three professional references, or letters of recommendation, to mhudson@glacierelectric.com.

POSITION: Analyst III/IV System Control Center (R15-177)

COMPANY: Portland General Electric (Portland, Ore.)

SALARY: DOE.

DEADLINE TO APPLY: June 26, 2015.

TO APPLY: Complete employment application online at https://PGN.igreentree.com/CSS_External/CSSPage_Referred.ASP?Reg=R15-177. If you have questions, call (503) 464-7250.

POSITION: Journeyman Lineman

COMPANY: Northern Lights, Inc. (Sagle, Idaho)

SALARY: DOE.

DEADLINE TO APPLY: June 27, 2015.

TO APPLY: All bids or applications with current certifications should be

sent to Northern Lights, Inc., Attn: Deed Hall, P.O. Box 269, Sagle, ID 83860, emailed to deed.hall@nli.coop, or faxed to (208) 263-7412.

POSITION: Line Design Engineering Supervisor

COMPANY: Anchorage Municipal Light & Power (Anchorage, Alaska)

SALARY: \$75,004-\$95,576 annually.

DEADLINE TO APPLY: June 27, 2015.

TO APPLY: Apply online at www.muni.org/jol.

POSITION: Customer Engineering Supervisor

COMPANY: Anchorage Municipal Light & Power (Anchorage, Alaska)

SALARY: \$75,004-\$95,576 annually.

DEADLINE TO APPLY: June 27, 2015.

TO APPLY: Apply online at www.muni.org/jol.

POSITION: Chief Power Dispatcher

COMPANY: Anchorage Municipal Light & Power (Anchorage, Alaska)

SALARY: \$75,004-\$95,576 annually.

DEADLINE TO APPLY: June 27, 2015.

TO APPLY: Apply online at www.muni.org/jol.

POSITION: Relay Substation Technician

COMPANY: Anchorage Municipal Light & Power (Anchorage, Alaska)

SALARY: \$100,380.80 annually.

DEADLINE TO APPLY: June 27, 2015.

TO APPLY: Apply online at www.muni.org/jol.

POSITION: Generation Division Manager

COMPANY: Anchorage Municipal Light & Power (Anchorage, Alaska)

SALARY: \$66,794-\$117,956 annually.

DEADLINE TO APPLY: June 27, 2015.

TO APPLY: Apply online at www.muni.org/jol.

POSITION: Power Generation Technician

COMPANY: Kodiak Electric Association (Kodiak, Alaska)

SALARY: \$45.14 per hour.

DEADLINE TO APPLY: June 29, 2015.

TO APPLY: Go to www.kodiakelectric.com for a complete job description and application packet. Contact Nancy Sweeney, Human Resources, at nbsweeney@kodiak.coop or (907) 486-7709, for more information.

POSITION: Journeyman Lineman

COMPANY: Kodiak Electric Association (Kodiak, Alaska)

SALARY: \$45.14 per hour.

DEADLINE TO APPLY: June 29, 2015.

TO APPLY: Go to www.kodiakelectric.com for a complete job description and application packet. Contact Nancy Sweeney, Human Resources, at nbsweeney@kodiak.coop or (907) 486-7709, for more information.

POSITION: Financial Analyst

COMPANY: Lakeview Light & Power (Lakewood, Wash.)

SALARY: DOE.

DEADLINE TO APPLY: July 2, 2015.

TO APPLY: Application and full description are available under Customer Care/Job Openings at www.lakeviewlight.com. Submit an application and resumé in person at 11509 Bridgeport Way, S.W., Lakewood, WA or by email at dwarner@lakeviewlight.com.

POSITION: Director of Loss Control

COMPANY: ARECA Insurance Exchange (Anchorage, Alaska)

SALARY: Competitive.

DEADLINE TO APPLY: July 10, 2015.

TO APPLY: Submit resumé with three professional references to Crystal Enkvist, Executive Vice President, ARECA Insurance Exchange. Submit via email to cenkvist@alaskapower.org.

POSITION: Power Generation Technician — Terror Lake
COMPANY: Kodiak Electric Association, Inc. (Kodiak, Alaska)
SALARY: \$45.14 per hour.
DEADLINE TO APPLY: July 12, 2015.
TO APPLY: A complete job description and application can be found at www.kodiakelectric.com. Contact Nancy B. Sweeney, Human Resources, at nbsweeney@kodiak.coop, or (907) 486-7709, for more information.

POSITION: General Manager
COMPANY: Naknek Electric Association, Inc. (Naknek, Alaska)
SALARY: DOE.
DEADLINE TO APPLY: July 31, 2015.
TO APPLY: Job description, Board Policy 100-2, application form, and consent to background check form can be obtained from Tina Torrey at tina@khe.com. Submit a cover letter expressing interest and describing qualifications, a detailed resumé, at least three professional references, completed application, and consent to background check to Tina Torrey, Kempel, Huffman & Ellis, P.C., 255 E. Fireweed Lane, Ste. 200, Anchorage, AK 99503 or tina@khe.com.

POSITION: Special Projects Coordinator
COMPANY: Orcas Power and Light Cooperative (Eastsound, Wash.)
SALARY: DOE.
DEADLINE TO APPLY: Open until filled.
TO APPLY: Download and submit an OPALCO employment application (available at www.opalco.com/jobs) along with professional resumé, cover letter, and references to Bev Madan, 183 Mt. Baker Rd., Eastsound, WA 98245 or bmadan@opalco.com.

POSITION: Journeyman Lineman
COMPANY: Orcas Power and Light Cooperative (Eastsound, Wash.)
SALARY: DOE.
DEADLINE TO APPLY: Open until filled.
TO APPLY: Download and submit an OPALCO employment application (available at www.opalco.com/jobs) along with professional resumé, cover letter, and references to Bev Madan, 183 Mt. Baker Rd., Eastsound, WA 98245 or bmadan@opalco.com.

POSITION: Head Accountant
COMPANY: Orcas Power and Light Cooperative (Eastsound, Wash.)
SALARY: DOE.
DEADLINE TO APPLY: Open until filled.
TO APPLY: Download and submit an OPALCO employment application (available at www.opalco.com/jobs) along with professional resumé, cover letter, and references to Bev Madan, 183 Mt. Baker Rd., Eastsound, WA 98245 or bmadan@opalco.com.

POSITION: Deputy Security Director
COMPANY: Chelan County Public Utility District (Wenatchee, Wash.)
SALARY: Low \$100,000s.
DEADLINE TO APPLY: Open until filled.
TO APPLY: Apply online at www.chelanpud.org under “Careers.”

POSITION: Reliability Compliance Analyst
COMPANY: Chelan County Public Utility District (Wenatchee, Wash.)
SALARY: \$80,000s annually.
DEADLINE TO APPLY: Open until filled.
TO APPLY: To view complete job description or apply online, go to www.chelanpud.org. Contact Ruth Erwert, recruiting manager, at joblist@chelanpud.org or (509) 661-4540 with any questions.

POSITION: Power Manager
COMPANY: Klickitat PUD (Goldendale, Wash.)
SALARY: DOQ.
DEADLINE TO APPLY: Open until filled.
TO APPLY: Applications and detailed job description are available at www.klickitapud.com and at the Goldendale Klickitat PUD office, 1313 S. Columbus, Goldendale, WA 98620, or by fax (509) 773-7449.

POSITION: Communications Specialist
COMPANY: Ravalli Electric Cooperative (Corvallis, Mont.)
SALARY: \$37,500 annually, DOE.

Construction Design Manager

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES: Supervision of employees covering engineering design of transmission and distribution projects for the electric utility • Daily supervision of department employees • Conduct annual performance appraisals • Development and implementation of annual goals • Conduct Interviews and make selections for job vacancies • Resolve employee relations and performance issues Budget processes (O&M and Capital) • Administer and approve purchase orders, expense accounts and expenditures for large capital projects • Develop and monitor annual budgets for the department. Direct the design of residential, commercial, and industrial line extensions and the utility’s distribution & transmission projects • Assigns project personnel to various phases of a project • Coordinates activities concerned with scheduling and resolving engineering design problems Responsible for inter-agency capital work project coordination • Responsible for monitoring city, county, state and federal construction projects that impact the utility’s facilities Responsible for the department’s technical training, development of best practices and participation on the Standard’s Committee • Schedule and monitor departmental training needs. • Review technical publications and attend technical seminars to keep current with design practices. • Provide departmental training in the use and application of design standards. Provide utility and engineering expertise to customers in solving electric service issues. • Investigates customer problems and their solutions. • Reviews requests for exceptions to utility construction policies and procedures.

QUALIFICATIONS: Bachelor of Science degree in Engineering or the equivalent in training and experience. Seven to ten years utility design and/or construction experience. Supervisory experience is preferred. Thorough knowledge of transmission, substation, and distribution facilities design required. Comprehensive knowledge of commercial and industrial electrical system design required. Must be knowledgeable of electrical standards and codes. Excellent supervisory and human relations skills required.

HOW TO APPLY For confidential consideration, please forward your resume with cover letter via email to jobs@clarkpud.com. Resumes may also be sent to Clark Public Utilities, Human Resources Dept, PO Box 8900, Vancouver, WA 98668. Position is open until filled.



DEADLINE TO APPLY: Open until filled.
TO APPLY: For application information, go to www.ravallielectric.com. Submit letter of interest, resumé, completed REC application, and portfolio or samples of your work. Email all documents to employment@ravallielectric.com or mail to Ravalli Electric Coop., Human Resources Dept., P.O. Box 190, Corvallis, MT 59828.

POSITION: Civil Engineering Manager/Chief Dam Safety Engineer
COMPANY: Avista Corp. (Spokane, Wash.)
SALARY: DOE.
DEADLINE TO APPLY: Open until filled.
TO APPLY: Apply online at www.avistacorp.com/careers. **NWPPA**

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