

Flathead's Ross Holter Receives 2021 Jim Brands Award

(October 20) Northwest Public Power Association's 2021 Northwest Innovations in Communications (NIC) Conference Planning Committee selected Flathead Electric Cooperative's Ross Holter as this year's recipient of the Jim Brands Award for his lifetime commitment to the public power industry and remarkable work in energy services. The award was presented on October 13 during the NIC at The Benson Hotel in Portland.

Having started his career at Flathead, Holter has over 23 years of experience in energy services and the utility industry. He is known as a "co-op and energy efficiency expert" and advocate in his area, and he has a passion for educating members. Holter has done much for his industry, including taking the lead on the development of Flathead's landfill-gas-to-energy plant, which was the first project of its kind in Montana. He has also guided the development of both of the co-op's solar projects and has helped to educate thousands of community members and industry professionals through presentations at schools, conferences, community events, and service organizations. Holter will be retiring from Flathead in January.

"His knowledge of our industry, coupled with his passion for educating and serving members, has largely influenced the way we've promoted the cooperative spirit through our community over the recent decades," said Flathead Electric Cooperative Supervisor of Marketing & Communications Katie Pfennigs. "Throughout his career at FEC, Ross has maintained a progressive attitude, helping ensure FEC is a leader in our industry."

This annual award honors Jim Brands and his 35-year career in the electric utility and energy services industries. Brands, a previous employee of NWPPA and longtime friend to the public power industry, cocreated Efficiency Services Group in 2005. He passed away in 2014 from cancer at the age of 61. Current or former employees of NWPPA member utilities are eligible to receive this award. The NIC Planning Committee selects recipients based on accomplishments through at least 10 years of energy services experience, at least 20 years of service to the industry, and promotion of public power through efforts such as community service. Recent winners include NEEA's Eugene Rosolie (2019), Clearwater Power Co.'s Bob Pierce (2018), and Ravalli Electric Cooperative's Jim Maunder (2017).

About NWPPA: NWPPA is an international association representing and serving more than 150 customer-owned, locally controlled utilities in the Western U.S. and Canada. The Association also serves over 300 associate members across the U.S. and Canada who are allied with the electric utility industry. For more information, visit www.nwppa.org or follow @NWPPAssoc on our social channels.

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Ross Holter receives the 2021 Jim Brands Award from NIC Chair Theresa Phillips.