

April 3, 2015

TO: NRECA Board of Directors
Distribution CEOs
Statewide Managers
G&T Managers

FROM: Jo Ann Emerson



WORKFORCE FACT: Recent college grads rank the utility industry 23rd out of 25 desirable careers. Many co-ops are engaging middle school and high school students in their communities to raise awareness of the great jobs electric co-ops provide.

Wally Beyer Remembered as Passionate Rural Electrification Leader

The electric co-op family sends its heartfelt thoughts and prayers to the family of [Wally Beyer](#), the former RUS Administrator and North Dakota electric co-ops leader, who died last Friday. Wally's wife Joyce and their children are proud that he is widely remembered for his [passion and dedication](#) to electric co-ops and rural electrification and as a "Champion of Rural America." Before his tenure at RUS from 1993 to 1999, Wally served as Verendrye Electric Cooperative CEO for 25 years, where he started as a draftsman in 1963.

Co-ops Raise Regional Issues, Urge Flexibility at FERC Conference

A strong turnout of 20 electric co-op representatives underscored our concerns to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) at its last conference on reliability impacts of EPA's existing plants GHG proposal. [Corey Linville](#), Sunflower Electric Power's Vice President of Power Supply and Delivery, and [Michalene Reilly](#), Hoosier Energy's Environmental Special Projects Manager, did a great job urging FERC to get EPA to address significant flaws in its proposal that could harm reliability and electricity markets. NRECA has also filed written comments and supporting information (attached) urging FERC to work with EPA on key issues.

Co-ops Can Maintain Reliability Under Northern Long-Eared Bat Listing

Co-ops will be better able to fulfill legal requirements to maintain reliability and safety under the Fish and Wildlife Service's ["threatened" listing](#) for the northern long-eared bat, which impacts 650 distribution and G&T co-ops in the bat's 37-state range. The FWS decision includes a [special rule](#) for bat "takings" that allows essential utility rights-of-way management, including cutting down trees, and emergency response. Our [statement](#) explains why an endangered finding sought by environmental groups would have threatened reliability. We continue to work with FWS on clarifying issues like how the listing affects new installations. The disease affecting the bat population is unrelated to electric lines.

Mark Your Calendars for ACRE Training Camp on June 7-8

Mark your calendar for our ACRE® Training Camp at NRECA's Arlington offices on June 7-8.

The popular workshop will give your ACRE[®] coordinators and other staff a deep understanding about our program and managing daily operations. Participants will also network with other ACRE[®] coordinators from co-ops across the country. We'll provide more details about the agenda and hotel information in the upcoming weeks. Send questions to [ACRE[®] Team](#).

NRECA Resolutions Books Available

Check out the 2015 [Member Resolutions](#) booklet, and please share it with your boards and staff. You voted on these resolutions at our Annual Meeting in Orlando, and they'll guide NRECA staff over the next year. Democratic member control is one of our co-op principles, and our ability to engage in meaningful policy debates and find consensus is one quality that sets NRECA apart from other associations.

FCC Urged to Recognize Co-op Lenders for Broadband Projects

We filed [comments](#) asking the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to clarify two issues on the Connect America Fund's Phase II bidding for high-speed and rural broadband experiment grants. We're urging FCC to grant the waivers Cooperative Finance Corp. and CoBank are seeking to be eligible financial institutions to provide letters of credit for co-op bidders. We're also asking FCC to limit the time period for letters of credit and allow financial institutions to reduce their credit obligation when a project build-out is completed.

Co-ops Seek Clarification on Proposed 'Hold Harmless' Merger Standards

We joined the American Public Power Association in comments urging the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to ensure ratepayers will not be harmed by proposed changes to "hold harmless" commitments for utility mergers. Utilities that seek FERC approval of mergers must provide "hold harmless" commitments agreeing not to seek recovery of merger costs in rates unless the deal provides offsetting savings. We generally support the proposed changes. We're asking FERC to clarify that merger applicants must continue to show there will be "no adverse effect" on rates and the proposed changes will not leave ratepayers vulnerable.

Attached: NRECA comments to FERC