

April 29, 2016

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

Legislative Conference: Co-ops Ready to Take Issues to Hill!

We're excited to see 1,500 co-op leaders coming to Washington to visit congressional offices and key agencies during Legislative Conference. See the conference schedule and materials on our [main issues](#). We're going to congressional offices to address pole attachments, coal ash regulations, Federal Emergency Management Agency disaster relief, geothermal heat pump tax credits and federal lands management policies. Our forums include some new issues: unmanned aerial vehicles (drones), 2016 Co-ops Vote campaign, NRECA's leadership in the Community Storage Initiative using electric water heaters and Clean Power Plan stay impacts for co-ops.



Download the [Legislative Conference App](#) to see conference updates, breaking news, a congressional directory and other resources. If you're not joining us this year, use the [app](#) to follow the action.

Join in Co-ops Vote Activities at Legislative Conference

Co-op directors, employees and members across the country can take part in [Co-ops Vote](#) activities at our Legislative Conference with a few easy clicks. First, post a photo of yourself on social media holding a sign saying why you are a Co-op Voter, and what in the 2016 elections are important to you and your co-op. Be sure to use the hashtag #CoopsVote when you post it. You can also add a Co-ops Vote filter to your profile picture on Facebook and Twitter. Just visit our Co-ops Vote [Co-op Resources page](#) and follow the instructions to add the filter. It's a simple way to show your support for Co-ops Vote on social media.



Co-ops Celebrate Carbon Project Groundbreaking in Wyoming

NRECA joined Basin Electric Cooperative, Tri-State G&T and other public-private partners in an official groundbreaking ceremony for the [Integrated Test Center](#) (ITC) at Basin Electric's [Dry Fork Station](#) near Gillette, WY. When the ITC opens in 2017, researchers competing for NRG COSIA's \$20-million [Carbon XPRIZE](#) will test new carbon capture technologies. NRECA and co-ops are providing \$1 million of the matching funds to leverage a Wyoming state [\\$15 million pledge](#) to the project.

Electric Co-ops, Public Power Highlighted as Community Solar Leaders

Electric co-ops and public power systems are highlighted for their efforts on community solar initiatives in a new Consumer Federation of America [report](#). The report recognizes electric co-

ops and public power as leaders in developing community solar for consumers for whom rooftop solar is not feasible. “Public power systems and rural electric cooperatives have led utility efforts in developing community solar projects. These projects reflect strong interest and participation of their residential customers, who as members (rural electric) or citizens (public power) also have the final say about investment decisions,” CFA said.

Water Programs Reauthorization Clears Senate Committee

The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee passed (19-1) a Water Resources Development Act reauthorization bill (S. 2848). Along with authorizing the Army Corps of Engineers major navigation, flood-control and environmental-restoration projects, the bill also includes aid for water supply projects in drought-stricken areas. The bill now goes to the floor.

Good News! No Critical Habitat Listing for Northern Long-Eared Bat

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) [announced](#) it will not designate critical habitat for the northern long-eared bat under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). FWS said designating critical habitat for the northern long-eared bat under ESA is not “prudent” and could do more harm than good. The decision is based on analyses of [white-nose syndrome](#) impacts on the species and the potential harm of publishing hibernation locations and drawing people to those sites.

House Panel Passes Defense Bill with ESA Language Helpful to Co-ops

The House Armed Services Committee passed (60-2) a defense authorization bill (H.R. 4909) with language to delay an Endangered Species Act (ESA) listing of the greater sage-grouse for 10 years and allow continued development and operation of range-wide collaborative conservation plans. The committee accepted Rep. Bridenstine’s (R-OK) amendment to delay any ESA listing of the lesser prairie-chicken, and also remove the American burying beetle from the list. The House passed similar language in a 2015 defense bill, but it was dropped during conference negotiations with the Senate.

Committee Improves Disaster Response Bill to Address Co-op Concerns

We got a win in the House Energy and Commerce Committee when it passed the Securing Access to Networks in Disasters (SANDy) Act (H.R. 3998) with an amendment by Rep. Pallone (D-NJ). The change removed language that could have made it difficult for co-ops and other electric utilities to access disaster areas and quickly restore power. The bill goes to the floor.

Save the Date: ACRE® Training Camp in June

Make sure to get your reservations for ACRE® Training camp on Thursday-Friday, June 2-3, at NRECA headquarters. ACRE Training Camp is designed for electric co-op and statewide staff who handle ACRE operations. The program covers all aspects of ACRE operation, including strategies to market and promote the program to eligible employees and member-owners. We’re holding a block of Westin Hotel rooms and you can make [reservations](#) at a discounted \$169 per night until May 9. If you have questions, e-mail the [ACRE Team](#).