

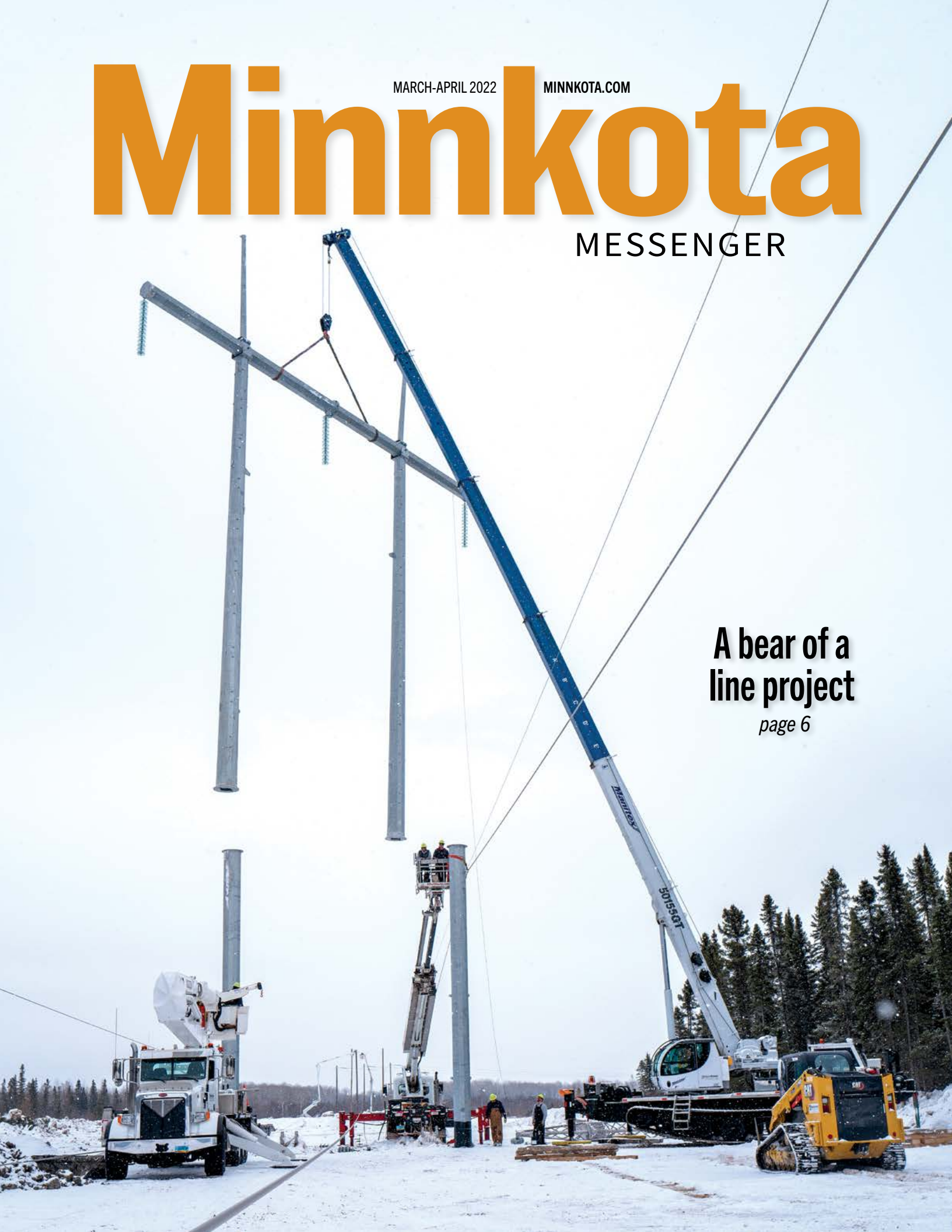
Minnkota

MARCH-APRIL 2022

MINNKOTA.COM

MESSANGER

**A bear of a
line project**
page 6



Contents

Features

- 3 **Resilient By Design**
When faced with adversity, Minnkota employees responded with the strength and determination to make 2021 a highly successful year. That message was delivered to the membership and key partners during the Minnkota annual meeting on April 1.
- 6 **A bear of a line project**
Linework takes a little bit extra in the boggy forests near International Falls, Minn. This year, it took the construction of a 3-mile ice road for crews to simply access the worksite.
- 10 **A place for volts and vitamins**
Minnkota's Grand Forks fleet garage was transformed into a headquarters for giving in March, serving as host to the annual Feed My Starving Children MobilePack event.
- 14 **The wrath of the Red**
Twenty-five years ago, Mother Nature dealt Minnkota a double dose of devastation. One of the worst storms in Minnkota history was followed by a historic flood of the Red River. Not surprisingly, Minnkota's employees answered the call when it mattered most.



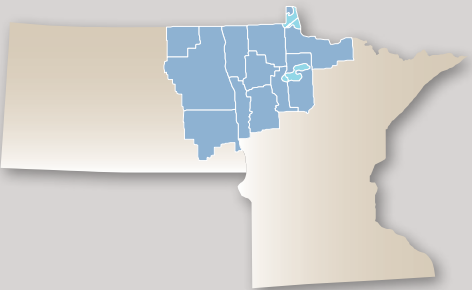
On the cover: Minnkota crews prepare to set a new transmission structure just west of International Falls, Minn. The structure is near the end of a 230-kilovolt line running through Smokey Bear State Forest.

Minnkota Messenger is published six times a year by Minnkota Power Cooperative. Its mission is to communicate Minnkota's perspectives and concerns to its members, elected officials, employees and other business audiences. For editorial inquiries, call (701) 795-4282 or email bfladhammer@minnkota.com.

Editor
Ben Fladhammer
Contributing Writer
Kaylee Cusack
Graphic Designer
Jennifer Erickson
Photography
Michael Hoeft
Printing and Mailing
Troy Ahonen
Travis McCleish

Board of Directors
Chair
Les Windjue
Vice Chair
Mark Habedank
Secretary-Treasurer
Colette Kujava
Steve Arnesen
Rick Coe
Kalvin Hoff
Roger Krostue
Anthony Ottem
Greg Spaulding
Lucas Spaeth
Mike Wahl
Tom Woinarowicz
President & CEO
Mac McLennan

Subscription Inquiries
For change of address or subscription inquiries, contact Monica Sletten at msletten@minnkota.com.
Minnkota Power Cooperative is an equal opportunity and affirmative action employer.
Stay Connected
Follow us on our website for additional information, expanded stories, video and photo galleries. Go to news.minnkota.com.



Minnkota Power Cooperative is a generation and transmission cooperative headquartered in Grand Forks, N.D. It supplies wholesale electricity to 11 member-owner distribution cooperatives, three in eastern North Dakota and eight in northwestern Minnesota. Minnkota also serves as operating agent for the Northern Municipal Power Agency, an association of 12 municipal utilities in the same service region. Together, the Joint System serves more than 159,000 customers.



Resilient By Design

ANNUAL MEETINGS
SHOW COOPERATIVE
SPIRIT IS ALIVE AND WELL

Cheers, camaraderie and fellowship filled Minnkota's conference center on April 1 as the cooperative held its first in-person annual meeting in nearly three years. The 82nd annual meeting gathered about 150 members and key power partners to celebrate the past year's success and look ahead to the opportunities on the horizon.

The meeting's theme, Resilient By Design, recognized how Minnkota persevered through the pandemic, volatile energy market conditions and rapid industry change. Minnkota Board Chair Les Windjue opened by thanking employees for showing strength in the face of adversity.

"These past few years have not been easy," Windjue said. "You have faced many challenges and uncertainties – both at work and at home. On behalf of the board, I want you to know that we value your hard work and perseverance."

In reviewing 2021, Minnkota leaders pointed to an increase in industry change and volatility. One of the most pivotal moments of the year came in February when extreme cold weather caused significant grid instability and outage issues across the United States. Minnkota experienced limited negative impacts due to the reliable operation of the coal-based Milton R. Young Station, the strength of its power delivery system and the strategic use of the demand response program.

"We're in a time when the industry is changing faster than it ever has before," Mac McLennan, Minnkota president and CEO, said in his closing address. "We routinely have to make 50-plus year decisions, but we live in a society that wants instantaneous change. Our challenge is to find the best way to balance reliability, affordability and sustainability."



Mac McLennan, Minnkota president and CEO, discussed how quickly the industry is changing and what Minnkota is doing to respond during his closing address.



Paul Aakre, Square Butte board president, reported on a successful year at the Milton R. Young Station and the potential of Project Tundra.

Although there is tremendous uncertainty, the organization is working to define its own path forward through major power supply planning efforts and the evaluation of Project Tundra – an effort to build the world’s largest post-combustion carbon capture project at the Young Station. In 2021, progress was made in the engineering and design of the carbon capture and storage facilities, while also refining the economic model. Those efforts will continue in the coming year in anticipation of making a final decision on whether to move forward by the end of 2022.

“We’ve done a phenomenal amount of work to model Project Tundra against numerous power supply alternatives,” McLennan said. “For the rest of 2022, we’re going to work on carbon reduction strategies, while reducing our exposure to price and market volatility. There’s no risk-free path forward, but there are things we can do to better position ourselves for the energy transition ahead.”

Financial rebound

Following a difficult financial year in 2020 due to impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, Minnkota rebounded in 2021 and had one of its best financial years in recent

memory. The improved position is thanks in large part to stronger wholesale energy markets, increased member sales and the growth of new data center facilities in member service areas.

“With our cooperative in solid financial condition, the board took action to extend its deferred revenue plan through 2024,” Windjue said. “The board also approved placing \$10 million into a new Resource Transition Fund, which will be used to manage future power supply costs or extreme market volatility. The board will be reviewing our Financial Goals Policy in 2022 and continues to look for ways to maintain financial strength.”

Minnkota’s long-range financial forecast is also showing improvement. Wholesale rates over the next decade are anticipated to be approximately the same, although major power plant outage expenses will need to be managed during upcoming years.

Square Butte sees success

Square Butte Electric Cooperative also held its 48th annual meeting on April 1 at Minnkota’s headquarters. Square Butte owns the Unit 2 generator at the Young Station and is governed by the same 11 cooperatives that own Minnkota.

“Unit 2 performed exceptionally well during the year, running reliably and meeting all land, water and air quality standards,” said Paul Aakre, Square Butte president. “The facility was available to produce power 90.7% of the time, including during major grid challenges caused by extreme cold weather.”

Looking ahead, Aakre said that Square Butte is committed to making the necessary investments to ensure the plant can continue to perform well.

“We have scheduled a three-month major maintenance outage on Unit 2 in the fall of 2022,” Aakre said. “Our planning efforts for this outage began earlier than ever to stay ahead of global supply chain challenges. Thorough inspection work and other projects will be completed during the outage with a goal of positioning the facility for long-term operation.”

Awards presented

Minnkota’s cooperative family includes many long-term leaders who were recognized at the meeting, including:

- Mark Habedank received the Electric Hammer Award recognizing his 25 years of service to Wild Rice Electric Cooperative.
- John Lund, Beltrami Electric Cooperative, and Marcy Svenningsen, Cass County Electric Cooperative, received the Red Lantern Award recognizing their 10 years of service on their respective boards.

In addition to the awards, the Minnkota board passed a resolution recognizing Svenningsen as she stepped down from the board and accepted a new role as Farm Service Agency state executive director for North Dakota.

Roger Amundson was also honored with a resolution for his 17 years of service to the Square Butte board and 21 years of service to the Roseau Electric Cooperative board.

New directors elected

During the business session and reorganization meetings, new delegates and officers were elected to the Minnkota and Square Butte boards.

The Minnkota board reelected Windjue, Nodak Electric Cooperative, as its chair and Habedank, Wild Rice Electric, as vice chair. Colette Kujava, Red Lake Electric Cooperative, was reelected as secretary-treasurer.

Other directors elected to one-year terms were: Rick Coe, Beltrami Electric Coopera-

tive; Calvin Hoff, Cass County Electric Cooperative; Tony Ottem, Cavalier Rural Electric Cooperative; Greg Spaulding, Clearwater-Polk Electric Cooperative; Steve Arnesen, North Star Electric Cooperative; Tom Woinarowicz, PKM Electric Cooperative; Roger Krostue, Red River Valley Cooperative Power Association; and Mike Wahl, Roseau Electric Cooperative.

At the Square Butte annual meeting, Aakre, PKM Electric, was reelected as president of the Square Butte board of directors and Larry Sollie, Wild Rice Electric, was reelected vice president. Murl Nord, Beltrami Electric, was elected secretary-treasurer.

Other directors elected to the board for one-year terms were: Terry Kraft, Cass County Electric; John Martinson, Cavalier Rural Electric; Bill Lanners, Clearwater-Polk Electric; David Kent, Nodak Electric; Mike Hanson, North Star Electric; Peter Mosbeck, Red Lake Electric; Marvis Thompson, Red River Valley Co-op Power; and Shawn Gust, Roseau Electric.

By Ben Fladhammer / Photography Michael Hoelt



Minnkota Chair Les Windjue (left) presents the Electric Hammer Award to Mark Habedank, recognizing his 25 years of service to the Wild Rice Electric board.



Square Butte President Paul Aakre (left) presents retiring director Roger Amundson with a framed resolution recognizing his 17 years of service to Square Butte and 21 years of service to Roseau Electric.



John Lund (right) received a Red Lantern Award for his 10 years of service on the Beltrami Electric board.



About 150 members and guests attended the annual meetings on April 1 at Minnkota’s headquarters.

A bear of a line project

MINNKOTA'S POWER DELIVERY CREWS OVERCOME CHALLENGES OF A UNIQUE NORTHERN MINNESOTA LANDSCAPE

It was snow globe situation.

On the final day of February, just a couple miles south of the Canada-Minnesota border, the dense evergreens of Smokey Bear State Forest wore the décor of a Koochiching County snowfall. In the absence of wind, the fluffed-up flakes fell in no hurry whatsoever. The scene contained within the orb of remote silence was surreal.

But after days of site-setting for the installation of a 120-foot galva-

nized steel transmission structure, Minnkota's line crew didn't really recognize the poetry of the moment.

"Today we just have to set the top and bring the wires into it. Then it's a lot of cleanup to do," said Minnkota lineworker Weston Meyer, harnessing up for the bucket truck. "Honestly, it's just kind of like another day for us."

Pole 545 was the last of several H-frame structures the team would raise along the 230-kilovolt (kV)

Moranville-Littlefork line this winter. They will need to wait until next winter to finish the maintenance replacement project of eight total structures, which will remove 75-foot aluminum lattice poles for the taller steel poles. The warm season just won't do for the undertaking. Smokey Bear State Forest is beautiful, but boggy, making wheeled travel in the marshy right of way impossible in the summer.

Even when the 3-mile-long corridor freezes in the winter, the line is still inaccessible without some special tools and creative planning.

"A contractor tried to come in and clear a path from the east, a much shorter distance," said Minnkota line superintendent David Lagge, pointing to an area 200 feet to the east of the site – a 3-4-foot deep beaver pond. "They fell through with the dozer and abandoned that route."

Minnkota crews remove an old aluminum transmission structure from a line near International Falls, Minn., on Feb. 28.

Lineworker Garret Reineke helps prepare the new H-frame structure for its lift.



Minnkota used its own team instead to carve a temporary “ice road” from the west, over the frozen bog making up the 3 miles of line corridor. Utility workers Pat Plain and Kevin Holweger and lineworker Kelly Hebl worked several days plowing the path with a bulldozer. Plain then spent nearly a month maintaining and fortifying the road so that it was safe, packed and traversable for the upcoming convoy of bucket trucks, cranes and semis.

There are many areas in Minnkota’s northern Minnesota service area where sloughs and wetlands pose a challenge to power delivery. But Smokey Bear is a rare beast.

“That I know of, we’ve never built a so-called ice road to this extent,” Lagge said.

Built to last

Minnkota engineer and project lead Brenden LaHaise and his team specifically chose H-frame replacement structures fit for the wet northland.



The replacement of a structure of this size calls for the collaboration of many Power Delivery teams.



“The part I’m most proud of is the fact that they came out completely open to doing this on terrible conditions, in the winter. There was no question.”

– David Lagge
Minnkota line superintendent



“Because of our choice to install a direct embed structure, galvanized steel made the most sense for the environment they’re being installed into,” LaHaise said. “The old aluminum structures are on concrete footing that are not in the best condition. Over time, those concrete footings can become compromised, which is a problem facing other areas of this line.”

The new structures will also enhance the line’s clearance, securing Minnkota’s compliance requirements. LaHaise says the steel structures will likely continue to work their way into future projects in both Minnesota and North Dakota, and this installation provides the crew with preparative knowledge of the equipment.

“It’s always good to have the crew get experience,” he said. “If we have a storm happen where a line goes down, then we have some of these waiting in our pole yard. They already understand how they are raised compared to the old ones.”



Hearing can be tricky over the hum of equipment, so crews use hand signals for clear communication.

The replacement of pole structure 545 required additional collaboration with transmission neighbor Minnesota Power. The line’s ownership transitions to the Duluth-based provider at the edge of the state forest. Through a series of meetings and phone calls, the two utilities ensured a safe and efficient project. “We want to make sure we were all on the same page in terms of project coordination so we’re not stepping on each other’s toes,” LaHaise explained.

With all of the complications entwined in the upgrade of 545, one wouldn’t fault Minnkota’s crews for cringing at the idea of taking on

the project. However, Minnkota’s crews see things a little bit differently than most.

“The part I’m most proud of is the fact that they came out completely open to doing this on terrible conditions, in the winter. There was no question,” Lagge said, watching his power delivery team through the snow-globe snowfall. “When this project came up, I was asked if I wanted contractors to do it. I asked the guys, and they said, ‘Oh, no, we’ll do it.’ That’s even though they’re away from the family and everything else. They were all in on it.”

A place for volts and vitamins

MINNKOTA HOSTS GRAND FORKS
FEED MY STARVING CHILDREN
MOBILEPACK EVENT FOR
SECOND YEAR



A little volunteer helps
move boxes to and
from the tables.

Hairnet in place and spoons filled with vitamins and veggies, Jen Regimbal bopped along to the music filling Minnkota's Grand Forks fleet garage on March 25.

"Just hold on loosely, but don't let go," the Minnkota human resource coordinator crooned along with the 38 Special hit. "If you cling too tightly, you're gonna lose control!"

Regimbal was joined by five fellow Minnkota volunteers for this shift of the Feed My Starving Children (FMSC) MobilePack, a two-day community event hosted at Minnkota's Grand Forks headquarters facility. This was the second year Minnkota opened its doors to hundreds of volunteers in partnership with a Grand Forks-based FMSC fundraising and coordination group.

When Regimbal heard organizers were looking for a handful of Minnkota employees to assist with set up, ushering volunteers and packing food, she recruited her Minnkota crew to join her in making a difference.

"I jumped at the chance. I think it's a fun, active way to volunteer," she said. "I'm happy to be a part of it and happy to work at a place that gets involved."

Minnkota employees joined volunteer groups from local schools, churches and businesses to bag more than 280,000 nutritionally complete meals, or FMSC "MannaPacks," on March 25-26. Each bag of food contains powdered vitamins, dehydrated vegetables, soy and rice – a special formula for safely easing the hunger of malnourished children across the world.

Jim Martin, a Minneapolis-based FMSC volunteer program coordinator, says somewhere between 6,000 and 7,000 children die every day from malnutrition-related illnesses. The mission of this Christian nonprofit organization is to start moving the needle in the right direction.

"In addition to putting food in the bellies of kids who really need it, we're trying to also feed their spirit, to help them think about a future where they're not worried about where their next meal is coming from," Martin explained as volunteers filled and weighed MannaPacks nearby. "That gives them the opportunity to start really concentrating on their schoolwork and think about life beyond the next four hours."



Minnkota Human Resource Coordinator Jen Regimbal scoops ingredients into a Feed My Starving Children MannaPack.



Minnkota's conference center served as a perfect place for volunteers to learn about the FMSC program and process.



Many hands made light work over the course of two days of preparing MannaPacks.

2022 Minnkota MobilePack

By the numbers

2
days

1,248
volunteers

280,152
meals packed

768
kids fed for
a year

41
local church
partners

15
local business
partners

5
school/service
group partners

Students from local schools comprised the majority of volunteers in the first packing shift.



Partners for packing

Grand Forks' Jodie Storhaug discovered the concept of the FMSC Mobile-Pack in 2010 after she experienced a volunteer packing shift with her family in the Twin Cities. She brought the idea back to her church council at Calvary Lutheran, found more community partners to help with fundraising, and joined with her husband Bruce to pull off the first Grand Forks MobilePack in 2011.

"We had a vision of it not being just a church event, but rather wrapping the whole community into it – the church community, our businesses, our service groups," Jodie said.

"It seemed like it would be more impactful," Bruce added.

The event was successful from the start and continued for eight years at the Grand Forks Public Works facility. The Storhaugs were soon looking for a larger, more efficient site for the MobilePack in 2019 – and Minnkota's new headquarters fulfilled every need.

"This facility is just phenomenal," Bruce said. "The amount of space

that's available in the garage allows us to have the event and to have enough room for everybody to be there. The big conference center allows everyone to be together to get their instructions."

"The Minnkota staff is participating in the whole weekend, so we know that people are here not just for their Monday-Friday jobs," Jodie said. "They're stepping up and wrapping their hearts around this, too."

Minnkota was prepped to host its second MobilePack in 2020, but the pandemic halted in-person volunteer events for two years. In 2022, Minnkota was ready to get back to the pack. Minnkota Facilities Manager Dave Whalen worked closely with both the Minneapolis FMSC group and the local team to ensure the tenth event was as powerful as the rest.

"It's hard not to be upbeat and positive with them. It's amazing. Their spirits are high," Whalen said. "There's passion behind it, and that just rubs off on others. It rubbed off on me, that's for sure. I didn't expect that."

Commitment to community

As the first shift hit a goal number of boxes packed, applause and cheers erupted from volunteers in the garage. "See, there's that enthusiasm!" Jim Martin shouted.

Strong encouragement from the community pushes the Storhaugs to keep creating these celebratory moments in Grand Forks year after year. Jodie says churches and businesses continually help them exceed the fundraising necessary to bring the event back. Those surplus funds serve as seed money for the community's next event. "Being people of faith, we see that as God's prompting to do it again," Jodie said, smiling at her husband.

For Minnkota, the FMSC MobilePack is an opportunity to live out the cooperative value of Commitment to Community. Whalen anticipates Minnkota will continue to partner with FMSC and the Storhaugs as long as they need a helping hand (or many).

"We have built that relationship now. There's a ton of support from our leadership team here. They're all in, and I can see this going for a while," Whalen said.

"One of the things that attracted me to working at Minnkota, and helps me to stay motivated, is thinking of how we do impact the members that we serve," Regimbal said after filling her final MannaPack. "Even though this food isn't necessarily impacting them directly, I think it's a way to show we'll open our doors to the people out there who are doing great things for others."

By Kaylee Cusack / Photography Michael Hoeft



A volunteer brings another box of 36 MannaPacks to a pallet, which will be wrapped and loaded into a FMSC semitrailer.



Five school/service groups, 15 businesses and 41 churches volunteered during the two-day MobilePack.



Floodwaters raged through Minnkota's transformer yard near its old headquarters building in Grand Forks. (Photo by Kevin Jeffrey)

The wrath of the Red

CURRENT MINNKOTA EMPLOYEES REMEMBER
1997 ICE STORM AND FLOOD

Cameron Korynta remembers driving north to Grand Forks 25 years ago and seeing a wall of water moving toward the city.

"There was 100 miles of water coming right at us," said Korynta, who was working as an electrician at the time. "I remember thinking Grand Forks isn't going to make it through this."

The spring of 1997 was a blur for Minnkota employees as they faced two of the worst natural disasters in the cooperative's history over the span of a month. While some of the details are hard to recol-

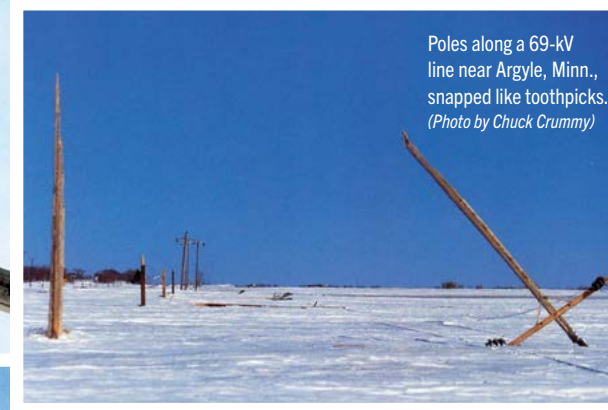
lect, there are memories that remain crystal clear to this day.

It started with a severe ice storm and blizzard that swept through the Red River Valley on April 5-6, snapping power poles like toothpicks and wiping out a significant portion of Minnkota's power delivery system. Harold Narlock was part of a crew called out to Argyle, Minn., to work on a substation as the storm arrived. Work stopped as wind, ice and snow decimated most everything in its path.

"We heard pole after pole snapping behind us, but we couldn't see a thing because



Lineworker Kevin Hodgson, United Power Association, Elk River, Minn., knocks ice off a 69-kV line near East Grand Forks, Minn. (Photo by Brenda Riskey)



Poles along a 69-kV line near Argyle, Minn., snapped like toothpicks. (Photo by Chuck Crummy)



it was pitch-black outside," said Narlock, who worked as an electrician at the time. Somehow his crew made it to a co-worker's home in nearby Warren, Minn., where they were stranded for the next two days.

When the storm subsided, Minnkota's system was left in shambles. About 540 poles on Minnkota's 69-kilovolt (kV) system and 101 aluminum structures on its 345-kV line running from Center, N.D., to Fargo were completely destroyed. Minnkota crews worked closely with the member cooperatives and other utilities to remove debris and begin the rebuild.

"The damage was so widespread," line-worker Ron Hanson said. "Usually, an ice storm hits little pockets here and there. This was everywhere."

Minnkota employees worked long hours throughout the next week to restore service to 70 of 193 substations that were out of service, bringing power back to 50,000 member-consumers. While power delivery crews were out in treacherous conditions, office staff took on an unfamiliar role of framing crossarms for power poles and getting material ready for crews.

"Everyone was helping, and it was never-ending," Korynta said. "Even the farmers were out with us pulling trucks out of the mud and getting us to where we needed to be."

Roads were built to reach many damaged 345-kV structures that stood in up to 12 feet of water. (Photo by Chuck Crummy)



Replacement power poles were floating in the floodwaters around Minnkota's old headquarters.



Efforts to save Service Centers 1 and 2 with a secondary dike continued here two days before the flood's crest. (Photo by Jean Walton, NDAREC)

Water everywhere

With the one disaster barely contained, another soon followed. Just two weeks later, the raging waters of the Red River of the North inundated the Greater Grand Forks area, forcing 50,000 people to flee their homes – including most of Minnkota's Grand Forks-based employees. The scene turned apocalyptic as several downtown buildings became engulfed in flames.

"I remember being reassured that we were safe and the next minute being told we

had to evacuate because the dike on our end of town had broken," said Lisa Severson, who worked in Accounting at the time. "I remember loading up the kids and thinking, where will we go? All the bridges were closed, how are we going to get out of town? Do we leave our electricity on or turn it off? It was dark, there was water everywhere and we were all scared."

Minnkota had built a series of dikes around its facilities and even piled dirt inside the building around its Control Center. Unfortunately, none were equipped to handle the rising Red River. Muddy waters swept through Minnkota's headquarters, including the warehouse, diesel plant and main office building.

With no power in town, Joe Leddige remembers the darkness that covered the region.

"It was pretty eerie driving in at night and not being able to see a thing," the 45-year Minnkota employee said.

Navigating challenges

In 1997, the Internet was not widely used and cellphones were still a rarity for most people. Minnkota invested significant time and resources into keeping its microwave radio system up and running. Portable generators were placed at communication towers throughout the system so crews could keep in contact through vehicle radios.

"It was 15-hour days going around gassing up these generators," said electrician Dean Swatowski. "Every day was a blur. You just did what you had to do."

With floodwaters ravaging much of Grand Forks and the surrounding areas, driving became much more difficult. Minnkota utilized a helicopter to maneuver employees throughout the system and to their temporary work areas at Nodak Electric Cooperative or on the second floor of the headquarters building.

With Leddige's home on higher ground outside of town, he hosted numerous employees – including a group from the Milton R. Young Station near Bismarck who traveled to Grand Forks with trucks, tools and pumps to remove water from buildings and make repairs.

"I ended up running a bed and breakfast," Leddige said. "I was up at 5 o'clock in the morning to feed the guys. A helicopter would come to pick them up and drop off guys who'd been working all night and were hungry."

Road to recovery

When the floodwaters receded, the restoration work continued at Minnkota's facilities. Employees cut up and removed soaked carpeting, manned pumps and trudged through muck-filled buildings in the massive cleanup effort.

While employees worked long days to bring power back to communities and repair Minnkota's headquarters, many dealt with

home damage and managing family members who temporarily relocated outside of town. Others lost everything.

"We would work all day and spend the evenings trying to get all the wet stuff out of our basement and try to salvage what we could from the mess," Severson said.

Following the flood, Grand Forks acted quickly to build a massive levee system at a cost of \$409 million. To make room for the levees, entire neighborhoods were demolished. The river is now surrounded by a Greenway recreation area and a thriving downtown. Rising river waters no longer create the panic they once did.

Although things looked bleak 25 years ago, the recovery doesn't surprise Leddige.

"We're North Dakota tough," he said with a smile.

By Ben Fladhammer
Photography Submitted Photos



A helicopter was used to transport employees throughout the region to make repairs and restore electricity.



Red River Valley lineworkers Rick Davis, on pole, and Bret Holte reconnect the underground service to a member south of Climax. Boats were needed to repair lines in flooded areas. (Photo by Jerry Noel, Red River)





Minnkota hosts Project Tundra landowner meeting

Landowners near Center, N.D., had an opportunity on April 6 to receive updates on Project Tundra development efforts, ask questions of the project leaders and learn more from the scientists who have studied the area's geology for carbon dioxide (CO₂) storage.

Minnkota has reached significant milestones in 2022 in its pursuit of Project Tundra. In January, the cooperative received the necessary permits to safely and permanently store CO₂ in the area. In addition, the designated storage site became the second in the United States to receive approval of its Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (MRV) plan from the Environmental Protection Agency. The MRV plan is required to utilize federal 45Q tax credits for the project.

"These approvals are essential for Project Tundra to move forward," said Mac McLennan, Minnkota president and CEO. "We remain grateful for the outstanding support we've received from area landowners, the city of Center and the communities around Oliver County. Project Tundra would not be possible without these strong partnerships and your continued cooperation as we continue ahead."

Among the speakers at the landowner meeting were McLennan; Shannon Mikula, Minnkota environmental manager and Project Tundra geologic storage lead; and Wes Peck, Assistant Director for Subsurface Strategies at the Energy & Environmental Research Center. Both in-person and virtual meetings have been held consistently over the last few years to

ensure landowners and other key stakeholders receive timely project updates and have a forum to ask questions and provide feedback.

Minnkota anticipates completing engineering work and permitting of the CO₂ capture facility. Additional work will be completed to refine the project's economic model and prepare to pursue financing efforts. A decision on whether to move forward with construction is expected before the end of the year.

"We believe this project can serve as a blueprint for the rest of the state, country and world to preserve coal-based power plants, while making important progress toward environmental goals, including Governor Burgum's goal to be net carbon neutral by 2030," McLennan said.

Cass County Electric featured in safety video

Minnkota member Cass County Electric Cooperative was featured in a new video produced by Safe Electricity.

The video tells the story of 17-year-old Mary Gehrig who was driving home from a friend's house near Kindred, N.D., on a stormy June night in 2021. Although there was near-zero visibility due to the storm that turned much more severe than originally forecast, she noticed two white lines off into the distance. As she got closer, she realized that those lines were across the road, in her path, and that they were anything but small.

Gehrig slammed on the brakes and her car struck the object, which happened to be one of two high-voltage transmission power lines lying in the road. The massive cable stopped Mary's car in its tracks. The car's electrical system was damaged,

and she was stuck there alone during the storm.

Fire chief Rich Schock, who was on the scene that night, said, "Those are large transmission lines with a lot of volts in them," adding that the outcome could have been fatal had Mary gotten out. "Mary did everything right," he said.

When there is an accident involving downed power lines, a padmount transformer or other related equipment, Safe Electricity offers these safety tips:

- Call 9-1-1 and report that a downed line or other electrical equipment is involved.
- Do not get out of the vehicle until electric utility workers say it is safe to exit.
- Warn those involved in the accident to stay put and alert others who might approach to stay back.

Exiting the vehicle is a last resort and should only be attempted if the car is on fire or giving off smoke. If this is the case, exit the vehicle by crossing your arms and jumping from the vehicle without touching it. Then, hop with both feet together as far as you can.



Watch
the video

Lignite Energy Council to offer Teacher Education Seminar



Registration is now open for the Lignite Energy Council's Teacher Education Seminar: Energy, Economics and Environment. The free seminar gives teachers a firsthand look at

lignite mining and related energy production. The seminar will be held June 13-16, 2022, at Bismarck State College's National Energy Center of Excellence, Bismarck, N.D. Teachers from all grade and subject levels should apply as soon as possible.

Teachers who attend and complete a lesson plan can choose from one of three North Dakota institutions from which to receive their graduate credits: University of North Dakota, North Dakota State University and Minot State University. Free lodging, meals and mileage reimbursement are provided.

The seminar provides instruction on history, geology, land reclamation, environmental protection and economics of the lignite industry, the need for more workers, energy conservation and transmission. Tours of a power plant and mine will also be provided as part of the seminar. Teachers will take home handouts, videos, coal samples and activities that can be used in the classroom.

For more information and an online application, go to <http://www.lignite.com/teachers>.

Minnkota celebrates Power Delivery Appreciation Day

Reliable power is a product of more than one team. It takes crews of electricians, telecommunications pros, technical maintenance technicians, lineworkers, and construction and utility workers to keep electricity flowing. On April 11, Minnkota celebrated Power Delivery Appreciation Day by delivering our heartfelt gratitude to the hardworking and talented teams that make power possible in our region.

