

Red River Valley Cooperative Power Association

SPARKS

May/June 2022

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



SPARKS

Red River Valley Co-op Power is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Sparks (USPS 509-300) is published nine times a year – January, February/March, April, May/June, July, August/September, October, November and December – by the Red River Valley Cooperative Power Association, 109 2nd Ave. E, Halstad, MN 56548. Periodical postage paid at Halstad, MN 56548. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Sparks, Red River Valley Cooperative Power Association, P.O. Box 358, Halstad, MN 56548-0358.

Phone (218) 456-2139 or (800) 788-7784

www.rrvcoop.com

Subscription rates: \$1/year

Rich Whitcomb, Editor
Jennifer Erickson, Graphic Artist

May/June 2022
Volume 66, No. 4

Halstad, Minnesota (USPS 509-300)

OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

- Roger Krostue Fisher
Chairman
- Marvis Thompson Perley
Vice Chairman
- Paul Baukol Hendrum
Secretary-Treasurer
- Bob Kinkade Ada
- Curt Stubstad Sabin
- Trevor Sorby Glyndon

Rich Whitcomb
Chief Executive Officer

Scheduled Board Meeting

Board meetings are held in Halstad at the cooperative office starting at 8:30 a.m. on the next-to-last Monday of each month.

**Outages:
800-788-7784**

On the cover: A calf looks out towards open pasture in Bygland Township west of Fisher.



THE CEO'S REPORT Construction season

by Rich Whitcomb, CEO

Great to see freshly turned black dirt and green again on the trees! As the whole Valley comes alive with activity, construction season kicks off for your cooperative as well.

Crews are preparing for, and in some cases have started, finishing new services and projects to strengthen the distribution system. Of course, we have felt the effects of supply issues, but so far have been able to manage these disruptions effectively.

Work on the cooperative's new office building in Halstad has been progress-

ing nicely. The old portion and detached shop have been demolished and foundations poured. In short order, the pre-cast concrete pieces will be set and then the future will really start to take shape.

Kilowatt-hour sales are slightly above budget for the first part of the year and outage times have been less than anticipated, which is always a nice way to start. Much of the year remains, but these are encouraging statistics. County fairs are just around the corner so don't be afraid to stop by our booth and let us know your thoughts.



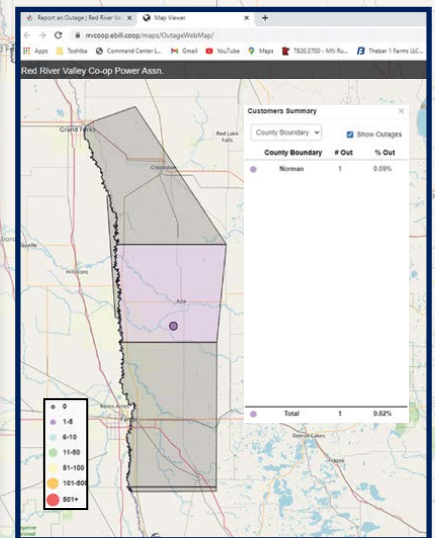
Outage viewer live at rrvcoop.com

Members can see current power outage information live at www.rrvcoop.com.

To view the outage map, just click Outages on our website. Depending on whether you are using your phone, tablet or computer, you can either view the map embedded on the screen or click the link for a standalone map.

The outage viewer is the external face of our internal outage management system to help crews with the efficient restoration of outages.

Please remember this map does not replace the need to call dispatch or the office if you are out of power. The map will simply help you understand current conditions on the system in the event of widespread outages due to nature, etc. The outage viewer will also help members see progress on outages.





When your AC croaks...

call the heat pump folks!

You've had your trusty air conditioner for years, and it hasn't let you down. **YET.**

When the time comes – and it will – for a more efficient, more versatile, money-saving replacement, Red River Valley Co-op Power recommends researching an air-source heat pump (ASHP) or a ductless mini-split heat pump. These modern technologies will not only help you fight the Minnesota summer heat, but they'll also warm you up when the state transitions to winter. Show us an air conditioner that can do that!

TECHNOLOGY BENEFIT BREAKDOWN



AIR CONDITIONER



ASHP



MINI-SPLIT HEAT PUMP

	AIR CONDITIONER	ASHP	MINI-SPLIT HEAT PUMP
How it works	Absorbs heat inside and expels it from your home, returning the cooled air into the home	Works like an air conditioner in the summer, but creates the reverse process to warm your home in the winter (throughout the home, using ductwork)	Works like an air conditioner in the summer, but creates the reverse process to warm your home in the winter (zones of the home, no ductwork needed)
Versatility	Only used during the warm months when home cooling is needed	Offers heating and cooling through every season	Offers heating and cooling through every season, can be installed in any room or space
Efficiency	Efficiency differs, but some wall-mounted units only provide spot cooling and air can leak through seals	Highly efficient technology, with no fear of air leaks	Highly efficient technology, with no fear of air leaks
Off-peak program qualified	No	Yes (nearly half of standard electric rate with adequate and automatic backup)	Yes (nearly half of standard electric rate with adequate and automatic backup)
Co-op rebate available	No	Yes (up to \$500 per ton)	Yes (up to \$500 per ton)

BONUS WINTER BENEFIT: Electric ASHP heating is much *more efficient* and *cost effective* than fuel heat technology, delivering up to three times more energy than the electricity it uses. Plus, stable electric rates will help you protect yourself from ever-volatile propane and gas prices.

Call the energy experts at Red River Valley Co-op Power to find the heating & cooling system that works best for your home!



Project Tundra sees positive momentum

UNIQUE CO₂ STORAGE COLLABORATION, \$100M LOAN ANNOUNCED

Mac McLennan (left) shakes Wade Boeshans' hand after the two signed an agreement that will allow Minnkota and Summit Carbon Solutions to co-develop CO₂ storage facilities together.

The positive momentum for Project Tundra continued forward this spring with the announcement of a new carbon dioxide (CO₂) storage collaboration and \$100 million of funding from the state of North Dakota.

Minnkota (Red River Valley Co-op Power's wholesale power supplier) and Summit Carbon Solutions, an Iowa-based firm focused on the decarbonization of the agriculture and biofuels industries, reached an agreement on April 28 to co-develop CO₂ storage facilities near Center, N.D.

The announcement was made at a media conference at Minnkota headquarters in Grand Forks where project leaders were joined by legislators, agricultural producers, scientists and other key stakeholders to communicate the benefits of this unique collaboration.

"We are joining two of North Dakota's most prominent industries – agriculture and energy – to substantially lower CO₂ emissions, while helping preserve American energy security," said Mac McLennan, Minnkota president and CEO. "If our nation is to stay competitive during the energy transition, it will require multiple states and industries working together. Our hope is that this effort can serve as a blueprint for the collaborative thinking that is needed to drive energy innovation forward."

Minnkota and Summit have been working independently on the development of their respective carbon capture and storage projects – Minnkota with Project Tundra, which aims to install innovative CO₂ capture technologies at the Milton R. Young Station in North Dakota, and Summit Carbon Solutions with the capture and permanent storage of CO₂ from dozens of ethanol plants across five states in the Upper Midwest. Now, by working together, Minnkota and Summit will more quickly, efficiently and cost-effectively advance their projects to commercial operations.

"Summit Carbon Solutions is thrilled to team with Minnkota to accelerate our project and the decarbonization of biofuels and agriculture, which will greatly enhance the economic sustainability of those industries for decades to come," said Wade Boeshans, executive vice president of Summit Carbon Solutions. "Working together, Summit Carbon Solutions and Minnkota will permanently and safely sequester tens of millions of tons of carbon dioxide every year, which will improve environmental outcomes while supporting industries critical to our region's future."

Better together

The agreement provides Summit with access to Minnkota's already permitted 100-million-ton capacity CO₂ storage site near the Young Station, the largest of only three such permitted sites in the United States. It also creates the framework to jointly develop additional CO₂ storage resources nearby, which



Mac McLennan highlights the value of bringing energy and agriculture together to lower CO₂ emissions.

are estimated to have aggregate CO₂ storage exceeding 200 million tons. The collaboration is beneficial to both Minnkota's and Summit's projects, as it reduces risk, accelerates the timeline for financing and construction, and provides increased operational flexibility when CO₂ storage begins. These benefits importantly provide landowners an enhanced opportunity to maximize the value of the rock formations deep below the surface.

As a lifelong farmer and a long-time electric cooperative leader, Minnkota Board Chair Les Windjue sees the agreement as another step forward in partnership between agriculture and energy.

"The history of these two industries is closely intertwined, as electric cooperatives were founded by farmers and grew from their hard work and ingenuity," Windjue said. "If we are to succeed in the future, we'll need to work together just as we have in the past. We'll also need to find new and innovative ways to feed, fuel and power our communities."

Minnkota and Summit have been and will be active in communicating with area landowners and other key stakeholders to ensure all development continues to be transparent and collaborative.

North Dakota Lt. Gov. Brent Sanford concluded the media conference by expressing support for both projects and their importance in getting the state to its goal of net carbon neutrality by 2030.

"We're leading the way in North Dakota by using innovation, not regulation," Sanford said. "This is an exciting day, and if it helps move Project Tundra toward its final goal, it's a really good thing."

Tundra receives important state funding

On May 23, Minnkota received approval of a \$100 million loan to help advance Project Tundra. The loan was authorized by the North Dakota Industrial Commission and will be an important component of the project's capital financing strategy. The funding is made available through the state's new Clean Sustainable Energy Authority (CSEA) and will be furnished by the Bank of North Dakota.

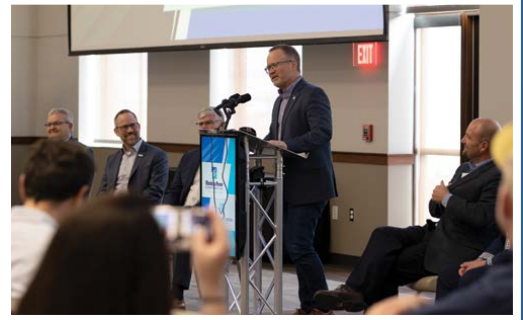
"On behalf of Minnkota, I would like to thank the state of North Dakota for its strong support of Project Tundra and its visionary

leadership in developing programs to help us advance transformational energy technologies," McLennan said. "Securing this loan shows the investment community that we have the close partnerships in place to make this project a reality."

Minnkota plans to turn its focus to financing efforts in the coming months following completion of Project Tundra's final engineering and design work. The \$1.45 billion project will primarily be funded through federal 45Q tax credits, which provide \$50 per ton of CO₂ stored. Due to Minnkota's not-for-profit status, partnerships with tax-equity investors will be necessary to utilize the credits. About 4 million metric tons of CO₂ are planned to be permanently stored each year.

"As we see a growing number of concerns around grid reliability, it is more important than ever to find ways to preserve dependable and resilient power generation assets, like the Young Station," McLennan said. "It's also important for us to make progress toward environmental goals and lower our emissions profile. We believe Project Tundra provides a path forward for Minnkota to meet both of these goals in a way that can be replicated around the state and around the world."

Minnkota anticipates making a decision on whether to move forward with construction of Project Tundra near the end of 2022. If the project does not move forward, the \$100 million loan would be returned to the state, where it could be used for other technology development opportunities.



North Dakota Lt. Gov. Brent Sanford expresses support for the new collaboration between Minnkota and Summit.



Co-op directors, farmers, media members and other key stakeholders gathered at Minnkota headquarters in Grand Forks to learn more about the projects.



Bruce Rastetter, CEO of Summit Agricultural Group, discusses how innovation is driving the agricultural industry toward a low-carbon future.



Cooperation amongst cooperatives

Red River crews assist Lake Region after devastating storm

Four of Red River Valley Co-op Power's linemen recently spent three days helping restore power to areas of Lake Region Electric Cooperative's service territory hit hard by straight-line winds.

Mutual aid between cooperatives is common and is one of the founding principles of a cooperative. Crews worked in heavily vegetated areas which

led to frequent pole climbing in order to restring wire on freshly set power poles. The picture on the left shows Red River lineworker Justin Nord working 30 feet in the air in restoration efforts.

At the height of the outage about 9,800 members of the Pelican Rapids-based cooperative were without power.

North Buffalo Lutheran Church 125th Anniversary

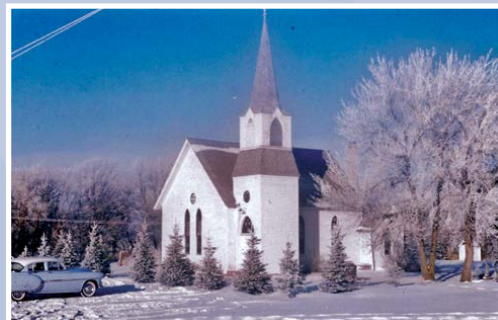
North Buffalo Lutheran Church, located several miles north of Moorhead in Kragnes Township, will celebrate its 125th anniversary July 9-10, 2022, at the church (2542 120th Ave N, Moorhead, MN 56560).

All present and former church members, families, pastors and all others interested are invited to attend.

The "North Buffalo River Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Congregation" was organized in a Kragnes Township schoolhouse on Jan. 6, 1896. It was later renamed "North Buffalo Lutheran Church" and is located two miles north and a half mile east of Kragnes, Minn., on the east side of the Buffalo River.

The first church building was built in 1897 and was replaced by the present building in 1957. The church's cemetery, North Buffalo Cemetery, was organized around 1894.

To RSVP for this event, please visit www.eventcreate.com/e/northbuffalo or call Alex Swanson, Anniversary Committee Chairman, at 701-540-8930.





STRIKING SCAMMERS OUT



Don't let scammers score by collecting your personal and financial information. Here are 3 things to look for that will help strike out scammers.

THIRD BASE

If you are ever contacted by an agency with an amazing deal on solar panels that will help save on electricity or they offer you tax credits for using solar energy — **STRIKE 3** scammer! Adding solar panels to your home is a lengthy and expensive undertaking. When identifying a scam, look for unrealistically low prices or any company saying they will lease you solar panels without a contract.

SECOND BASE

If someone claiming to be Red River Valley Co-op Power calls and says you have overpaid your utility bill and they can begin issuing you a refund if you provide them with your financial information — **STRIKE 2!** Red River Valley Co-op Power will never call and request your financial information.

FIRST BASE

If you receive a call saying your power will be turned off in the next hour if you don't reply with immediate over-the-phone payment — **STRIKE 1** scammer! Red River Valley Co-op Power will never demand your immediate payment over the phone.

HOME BASE

Tips to throw scammers out of the game:

- Always ask to speak to a trusted Red River Valley Co-op Power employee.
- Know that Red River Valley Co-op Power will only ask for personal information in order to identify members calling in.
- A tone of urgency is often a trick scammers use to try and gain information from you.
- Gather as much information as you can from the scammer and contact your local authorities. Also, make Red River Valley Co-op Power aware of the scam.
- If you are unsure about a call, just hang up and then call us back.

If you ever have any doubts about your utility bill, please call our office at 218-456-2139.



**RED RIVER VALLEY
CO-OP POWER**

Power plant tour

July 13-14, 2022

Come and travel with your friends to learn how your electricity is generated during this year's cooperative power plant tour, July 13-14.

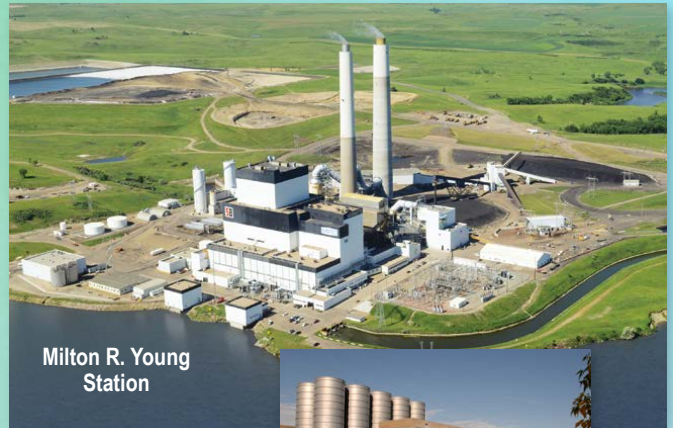
You'll travel in comfort in an air-conditioned charter bus for a fun and informative tour of Minnkota's Milton R. Young coal-fired generating plant and the BNI Coal mine. You'll also see the Garrison Dam.

At night you'll relax for the evening at the Ramkota Hotel in Bismarck where

you'll also be served a delicious banquet and hearty breakfast.

Bus fare, meals and hotel are included in the \$100 per person fee. The cost for children 14 and under is \$50. Space is limited, so reserve your spot by filling out and returning the form below, complete with your check.

Hundreds of Red River Valley Co-op Power members have enjoyed the tour through the years. Now it's your turn!



Milton R. Young Station



Garrison Dam

Power Plant Tour Registration Form

Deadline: June 24, 2022

Names of Participants

Address

Telephone Number _____

Account Number _____

Number Attending _____

MAIL FORM AND CHECK TO: Red River Valley Cooperative Power Association, P.O. Box 358, Halstad, MN 56548-0358
You will be mailed a letter of confirmation with more tour information.