

The role of coal

Baseload generation crucial to future energy supply

In 2007, Minnkota Power Cooperative made a major commitment to wind energy by signing a long-term contract to purchase a significant amount of wind energy from the recently completed Langdon Wind Energy Center (*Editor's note: See story page 8*).

While renewable energy sources such as wind are increasing, coal remains the backbone of energy generation for Minnkota, the region and the nation.

David Loer, Minnkota President & CEO, said he expects the cooperative's coal-fired plants in North Dakota to exist far into the future.

"Coal is the most abundant and economical generation resource," he explained. "Wind has its place, but it is limited by inconsistent wind speeds. Coal doesn't suffer such limitations, but is instead abundant, inexpensive and reliable."

Supply is abundant

Coal is a proven generation source that has abundant resources, demonstrated by multiple statistics:

- One-half of the nation's electricity is provided by coal, with even higher per-

centages in the Upper Midwest. Coal provides 90 percent of the electricity in North Dakota and 66 percent in Minnesota.

- Nationally, coal has enough proven reserves to last 250 years at the current rate of usage. North Dakota alone has 25 billion tons of economically recoverable reserves, enough to serve the state's power plants for 800 years at current consumption levels, according to the North Dakota Geological Survey.
- Thirty million tons of lignite is produced annually at the state's four surface mines. About 80 percent is turned into electricity and 20 percent is used by the Great Plains Synfuels plant.

Price is right

Coal-generated power is affordable, partly because North Dakota's coal remains in the state and the plants are built adjacent to mines. Having the BNI Coal mine next to the Milton R. Young Station near Center, N.D., is a prime example of the low transportation costs with a mine-mouth facility.



The Young Station's production cost of generating one megawatt-hour (MWh) of electricity in 2007 was \$22.24. That beats the national average cost of \$23.68 for generating one MWh with coal.

Coal greatly beats the average generation cost for natural gas, which is at \$67.20 per MWh.

"So when we talk about how affordable it is, we really mean it," said Steve Van Dyke, director of communications for the Lignite Energy Council. "A megawatt-hour is enough electricity to serve 800 homes for one hour. That's a lot of electricity."

While the cost of gasoline and natural gas has soared, electricity prices from coal have remained relatively stable. Residents of North Dakota and Minnesota enjoy electricity rates that are roughly half of what residents of California and New York pay.

Being the lowest-cost producer of electricity, coal-based energy provides consumer cost savings. Those savings increase the disposable incomes of working families for housing, food, education, health care and transportation – all vital ingredients for a better quality of life.

Count on coal

Reliability may be coal's best quality. "Coal-based generation is available 24/7," Van Dyke said. "There is no fluctuation on the transmission grid with thermal generation from coal."

Technology allows batteries to be built only so big. Solar power is good when the sun is shining. Wind energy is good when the wind blows.

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**North Star Electric
will be closed
Friday, July 4,
in observance of
Independence Day.**

JUNE 2008

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North Star Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Mission Statement

To improve the lives of our member-owners and community by responsibly providing electric energy and other beneficial services while maintaining the very highest standards of performance.

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Highlights from the **BOARDROOM**

These are the highlights from the Board of Directors meeting held on May 12, 2008. The board acted upon usual, routine business.

Reports from staff included the financial report, computer conversion, E-billing, rate study, the CIP (conservation improvement program), Operation Round Up, a wind powered generator planned for south of Williams, a solar project planned in Littlefork, the tours to the coal-fired power plant in Center, North Dakota, record turnout at the member appreciation days, identification of the winners of the North Star Knowledge Scholarships and random drawings, load management, the RUS Rural Electric Development Loan & Grant program, Minnkota's purchase over time of Minnesota Power's share of generation at the Square Butte plant, and the legislative trip to Washington, D.C., to discuss future power availability, development of technology to make emission-free electric plants an affordable reality, and balancing electricity needs with environmental goals. Minnkota's wholesale rates are expected to increase at least 28 percent over the next four years as existing legislation requires the installation of additional scrubbing equipment on plants already in service, but a much larger increase is expected if pending climate change/carbon tax legislation is passed. Also discussed were new service requests, work plan projects for this summer, inspecting URD (underground) cabinets, safety and training, hiring four part-time apprentice line workers for the summer, equipment, territorial maps, outages and right-of-way issues.

Checks payable to local charitable organizations, and funded with unclaimed capital credits, were handed out to board members to distribute. Reports were given by board members who had attended meetings in the last month. There was extensive discussion on the high cost of pending federal legislation that will extensively tax coal-fired

electricity for the CO₂ (carbon dioxide) emissions, and those taxes will end up being paid by the end users in their electric bills. NRECA is rolling out the Our Energy Our Future campaign (www.ourenergy.coop) to increase Americans' awareness of the cost of carbon legislation, given the absence of technology to economically reach the proposed mandates. Senator Klobuchar appears to have a solid opinion that the globe is warming, and it is our fault. For that reason, she is strongly in favor of this legislation that will heavily tax coal-fired generation of electricity, which now affordably accounts for 80 percent of the electric supply provided by cooperatives. Energy conservation and development of higher-cost alternative sources are important, but they are not the single answer. (132-13-022-01 Wayne Young) To reliably meet America's electricity needs by 2020, forecasts suggest we will need 118,000 MW of new baseload power. There has not been a loan for a baseload power plant for the co-ops since 1992. Even if a power plant were approved today, it could not come on-line until 2015. As for coal-fired power plants in China, they added 90,000 MWh in 2006 alone, while none were added in the U.S. They are bringing one new coal-fired plant on-line every week, with plans to continue this pace until 2015, all with few emission controls. On the statewide level, Senator Stumpf was able to get some rural DFLers to say enough is enough, and it looks good on the statewide level. Manager Hoskins added that Representative Anzelc is working favorably with the cooperatives.

Detailed minutes are available at the Cooperative for member review. Regular board meetings are generally held the first Wednesday of every month. If you wish to speak with the board, or have an item that you would like to have placed on the agenda, please contact Manager Dan Hoskins at least one week in advance to be included on the agenda.



Dan Hoskins, General Manager

Just a reminder . . . Contact your legislators

Two months ago I asked you to contact your U.S. Senators and Congress people and ask them to consider the cost and the possible ramifications to the people if they passed the Senate Bill 2191 concerning carbon legislation. I ask that if you have not contacted those folks, please consider doing so either by phone, e-mail, fax or postcard. If you would like our assistance, please feel free to contact us and we will send an e-mail for you. Just send us your name and address on the form in this *Enlightener*.

Also, please contact you local State Representatives and Senators concerning the climate change bill that they are considering that would be separate of the federal bill but would have adverse ramifications to our state's economy. Ask those folks some of those same questions.

I would like to say one thing, all of these folks who we have elected have great responsibilities, and with every person, organization or group that passes through their door wanting something, their job is very demanding. I have the utmost respect for them and their position, and I would think that they would respect your views and questions with answers.

Now on the other hand concerning this energy situation that we are in; we have to do our part. The energy crunch is going to be upon us and we have to start looking at conservation. According to the experts, without any new firm generation of electricity the demand for energy will exceed supply on the West and East Coasts as soon as 2009, which will bring brownouts and blackouts to those areas. Our area, which is the Midwest, could be looking at this sort of thing as early as 2010. Our member service department has numerous energy conservation ideas for you to utilize in your home. Why not contact them today?

There was some very good news concerning our very own Minnkota

Power Cooperative and if you look further into this edition of the *Enlightener*, you will see an important news release from Minnkota concerning the addition of firm energy to our Minnkota system. I would like to add, although this assists the Minnkota-associated systems with their electricity needs in the future, we still need the ability for our industry as a whole to be able to produce firm baseload power.

Graduation kudos go out to Lacey Holen. Lacey graduated from Lake of the Woods High School in Baudette. Lacey is the daughter of Kevin Holen, who works for North Star Electric in the member service department as an electrician.

With Memorial Day past us and

Independence Day coming up, I would like for all of us to take a moment and reflect. It is the *soldier* who has given us freedom of speech, not the poet; it is the *soldier* who has given us the freedom of the press, not the reporter; it is the *soldier* who has given us the freedom to demonstrate, not the campus organizer; it is the *soldier* who has given us the right to a fair trial, not the lawyer; it is the *soldier* who salutes the flag, serves under the flag, and whose coffin is draped by the flag, who allows the protester to burn the flag and it is the *soldier* who has given us freedom of religion and to say God Bless America! Have a Happy Fourth of July.

God Bless you and our Troops,
Dan

Get involved in the energy debate.

I would like North Star Electric to e-mail my elected officials and ask them these three questions:

- ?** What is your plan to make sure we have the electricity we'll need in the future?
- ?** What are you doing to fully fund the research required to make emissions free electric plants an affordable reality?
- ?** Balancing electricity needs and environmental goals will be difficult. How much is all this going to increase my electric bill and what will you do to make it affordable?

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Account number _____

The North Star Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting of the Members is scheduled for Friday, Oct. 10, at the Lake of the Woods High School. The Board of Director positions up for elections are:

District 1, 4 and 5 – 4-year term

Your district number is printed on your electric bill. If you are interested in a position on the Board of Directors, you may pick up a petition form at our North Star Electric Cooperative office in either Littlefork or Baudette.

Please be advised that each membership of the North Star Electric Cooperative is allowed one signature, and in the case of joint membership, only one signature is allowed. (A husband and wife are not joint members unless they have completed a joint membership application.)

SECTION 3. QUALIFICATIONS.

All persons eligible to become or remain a director of the Cooperative shall:

(a) be a member in good standing of the Cooperative receiving electric service at the member's primary residence in the district from which the director is to be elected prior to being nominated for director;

For purposes of these bylaws, "primary residence" shall mean the residence that is the chief or main residence of the person and where the person actually lives for the most substantial portion of the year:

(b) have voting rights within the district from which the director is to be elected;

(c) not be employed by, materially affiliated with or have a material financial interest in any director, individual or entity which either is:

(1) directly or substantially competing with the Cooperative; or

(2) selling goods and services in substantial quantity to the Cooperative; or

(3) possessing a substantial conflict of interest with the Cooperative;

For purposes of this section, the terms "material" or "substantially" shall be interpreted as constituting a minimum of 5 percent of a member's total hours of employment sales or income on an annual basis:

(d) not be an employee or not have been an employee of the Cooperative within the last three (3) years;

(e) not be a close relative of an employee, where as found in these bylaws

"close relative" means any individual who is, either by blood, law, or marriage, including step, half, foster and adoptive is either a spouse, child, grandchild, parent, grandparent, brother or sister.

(f) be only one, and not more than one, member of a joint membership; provided, however, that none shall be eligible to

ity of any action taken at any meeting of the board of directors.

(i) Exceptions. In regard to the restrictive provisions of this section that are based upon close relative relationships, no incumbent director shall lose eligibility to remain a director or to be re-elected a director if, during a director's incumbency, a director becomes a first kindred relative of another incumbent director or of a Cooperative employee because of a marriage or an adoption to which the director was not a party.

(j) Disqualification. After the board of directors determines that a director or a nominee for director lacks eligibility under the provisions of this section or as may be provided elsewhere in these bylaws, it shall be the duty of the board to promptly make a disqualification. After the board of directors determines that any person being considered for or already holding a directorship lacks eligibility under this section it shall be the duty of the board of direc-

tors to withhold such position from such person or to cause a director to be removed therefrom, as the case may be.

SECTION 5. NOMINATIONS.

The procedures and methods of nominating candidates for election as a director of the cooperative are hereby established:

Nominations by Petition. Any twenty (20) or more members of a district of the cooperative may make nominations in writing over their signatures not less than sixty (60) days prior to the annual meeting, and the Secretary of the board of directors shall post the petition at the principal office of the cooperative, Baudette, Minnesota; such listing of nominations by petition may be mailed to each member through the medium of the cooperative newsletter.

Nomination Process for Director Election

As approved, with a Bylaw amendment by the membership, this will be the second year that Nominating Committees will not be used to identify candidates for director elections. Anyone interested in running for the North Star Electric Cooperative Board of Directors should review the following information from the North Star Electric Cooperative Bylaws Article IV, Board of Directors, Section 3, Qualifications, as well as the new nomination procedure, Article IV, Section 5, Nominations.

become or remain a director or to hold a position of trust in the Cooperative unless all shall meet the qualifications hereinabove set forth;

(g) if a representative or agent of a member is not a natural person i.e. a corporation, partnership, limited liability company, or similar, then the representative or agent designated as a nominee for director shall be an individual residing within the external boundaries of the district from which (s)he is nominated; and

(h) agree to regularly attend all board, annual and special members' meetings, and in no case have more than four (4) unexcused absences within a twelve (12) month period of time.

Nothing contained in this section shall affect in any manner whatsoever the valid-

CURRENT ELECTRICAL INSPECTORS

State law requires that every new electrical installation in any construction, remodeling, replacement or repair shall file a certificate for inspection with the State Board of Electricity and be inspected by a Minnesota electrical inspector.

• St. Louis and Koochiching counties:

Bob Orgon

10111 Roosevelt Rd. S.E.
Bemidji, MN 56601
Phone: (218) 556-3829
Fax: (218) 333-0451
7:00 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. (Mon. thru Fri.)

• Roseau and Lake of the Woods counties:

Scott Stenvik

16409 State Hwy 1 N.W.
Thief River Falls, MN 56701
Phone: (218) 689-5406
7:00 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. (Mon. thru Fri.)



Minnkota announces strategic agreement

North Star Electric Cooperative's wholesale power supplier, Minnkota Power Cooperative, recently announced an agreement with Minnesota Power, an investor-owned utility based in Duluth, Minn., to secure additional energy from Milton R. Young 2, a 455-megawatt (MW) coal-fired plant near Center, N.D., owned by Square Butte Electric Cooperative.

Currently, the output from Young 2 is purchased under contract by Minnkota and Minnesota Power, with each utility receiving approximately 50 percent. Electricity generated by Young 2 flows over a direct current (DC), 465-mile transmission line from Center to Duluth, where it is converted back to alternating current (AC) for further transmission into the Minnesota Power and Minnkota service areas.

Under the terms of a Memorandum of Understanding, Minnesota Power will assign their Square Butte power purchase contract to Minnkota. This transfer will facilitate gradual increases in the Minnkota capacity and energy allocations from 2013 through 2026. At that time, the cooperative will begin to utilize 100 percent of the Young 2 output.

Growing system

Minnkota's energy sales to the 11 Class A member-owner cooperatives continue to increase each year. The latest Power Requirements Study forecasts an annual growth rate of 2.5 percent system wide.

"The member-owner distribution cooperatives are experiencing moderate but manageable growth in demand for electricity as the rural economy expands," said David Loer, Minnkota President & CEO. "High energy producing baseload generation is necessary to meet that demand reliably and affordably. Along with additions of wind energy and energy efficiency measures, this project will provide Minnkota with the power needed to serve long-term, future load requirements."

To bring the energy generated by Young 2 into the Red River Valley and to allow the existing DC line to deliver additional wind energy, Minnkota will construct a new 345-kilovolt (kV) transmission line from Center to either Fargo or Grand Forks. The line is scheduled to be completed by 2013.

The existing DC line and DC/AC conversion facilities will be sold to Minnesota Power for fair value on Jan. 1, 2009. Minnesota Power plans to add several hundred megawatts of new wind generation near Center and will utilize the DC line to transmit that energy to Duluth.

"We value our long-term partnership with Minnkota, and we expect to continue working together on future strategic issues," said Don Shipp, President & CEO of Minnesota Power's parent company, ALLETE, Inc. "This agreement enables us to reconfigure our power supply resources to better meet our respective long-term needs. For us, it's a creative way to tap the rich wind resources of North Dakota and bring more renewable energy to our Minnesota customers."

North Dakota Gov. John Hoeven added, "We've worked closely with these two innovative companies to further develop our state's renewable and traditional energy resources. This agreement will provide future power supply for Minnkota and allow Minnesota Power to develop additional wind energy in western North Dakota."

Young 2 capacity allocations to increase starting in 2013

Generation resources

The primary sources of base-load generation for Minnkota are the Milton R. Young Station near Center, and the Coyote Station near Beulah, N.D. Both plants utilize North Dakota's vast lignite coal reserves and provide approximately 80 percent of the Minnkota energy requirements.

In addition to owning two commercial-scale wind turbines in North Dakota, one near Valley City and the other near Petersburg, Minnkota is purchasing energy from the newly developed Langdon Wind Energy Center south of Langdon, N.D. Wind energy now supplies about 10 percent of the Minnkota annual energy requirements. Minnkota is working with wind developers to expand its wind portfolio to more than 300 MW during the next two years, which will then provide more than 25 percent of its annual energy requirements.

Minnkota also receives 10 percent of its total energy supply from hydropower allocations through the Western Area Power Administration (WAPA).



Warmer weather traditionally brings an increase in remodeling, repairs, landscaping and construction projects both inside and outside the home. Being aware of the more frequent causes of electrical injuries – and following basic electrical safety guidelines – can help reduce electrical safety hazards for you, your family and friends.

Safe Electricity and North Star Electric urge all do-it-yourselfers to take precautions, especially when working around electrical equipment and overhead power lines.

“Before tackling any project, take a few minutes to prepare for the job,” says Molly Hall, director of Safe Electricity. “Make sure you have the right tools and check cords for any cracks or frayed insulation. (783-33-086-02 Alma Ysen) Take note of potential hazards in the work area such as overhead power lines, especially those connected to the home.”

Make sure outdoor outlets are equipped with a ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI). Use a portable GFCI if your outdoor outlets don’t have them. It’s also a good idea to have GFCIs professionally installed in wet areas of the home, such as the kitchen, bath and laundry.

“Be willing to hire a licensed professional for projects that involve electrical wiring or work close to electrical equipment,” adds Jay Solomon, University of Illinois Extension Engineering Educator. “Some work, like trimming trees near power lines, is best left to professionals.”

Safety tips to keep in mind include:

- Look up and around you. Always be aware of the location of power lines, particularly when using long metal tools like ladders, pool skimmers and pruning poles, or when installing rooftop antennas and satellite dishes or doing roof repair work. Be sure to lower your long equipment when you are moving

it. Carry ladders and other long items horizontally whenever possible.

- Be especially careful when working near power lines attached to your house. Keep equipment and yourself at least 10 feet from lines. Never trim trees near power lines – leave that to the professionals. Never use water or blower extensions to clean gutters near electric lines. Contact a professional maintenance contractor.
- Make sure you have the right tools and equipment for the job. Use only extension cords that are rated for outdoor use when working outside.
- Use heavy-duty, three-prong extension cords for tools with three-prong plugs. Never remove or bend back the third prong on extension cords. It is a safety feature designed to reduce the risk of electrocution or shock.
- If your projects include digging, like building a deck or planting a tree, call your local underground utility locator before you begin. Never assume the location or depth of underground utility lines. This service is free, prevents the inconvenience of having utilities interrupted, and can help you avoid serious injury.
- Electricity + water = danger. If it’s raining or the ground is wet, don’t use electric power or yard tools. Never use electrical appliances or touch circuit breakers or fuses when you’re wet or standing in water. Keep electric equipment at least 10 feet from wet areas.

Make certain home electrical system and wiring is adequate to support increased electric demands of new electric appliances, home additions or remodeling projects. Home electrical systems age and deteriorate over time. Older homes require more frequent inspections and maintenance. Aging of electrical systems, combined with increased loads to meet today’s electrical needs can pose electrical hazards. Replace worn and outdated wiring, and add enough outlets for appliances and electronics. Safe Electricity strongly recommends this NOT be a do-it-yourself project.

“Hire a licensed professional to perform an electrical inspection and do any recommended electrical work,” says Hall.

For more information, visit www.SafeElectricity.org. Safe Electricity is an electrical safety public awareness program created and supported by a coalition of several dozen organizations, including electric utilities, educators, and other entities committed to promoting electrical safety.

Visit us at the county fairs

Lake of the Woods
Baudette, June 26-29

Northern District
Littlefork, July 24-27





Energy Efficient Ventilation

Circulating fans include ceiling fans, table fans, floor fans and fans mounted to poles or walls. These devices create a windchill effect that will make you more comfortable in your home, even if it's cooled by natural ventilation or air conditioning. Ceiling fans are considered the most effective of these fans.

If you use air conditioning, a ceiling fan will allow you to raise the thermostat setting about 4° Fahrenheit with no reduction in comfort. In temperate climates, or during moderately hot weather, ceiling fans may allow you to avoid using your air conditioner altogether. Install a fan in each room that needs to be cooled during hot weather.

Ceiling fans are only appropriate in rooms with ceilings at least eight feet high. Fans work best when the blades are seven to nine feet above the floor and 10 to 12 inches below the ceiling. Fans should be installed so the blades are no closer than eight inches from the ceiling and 18 inches from the walls.

Larger ceiling fans can move more air than smaller fans. A 36- or 44-inch diameter fan will cool rooms up to 225 square feet, while fans that are 52 inches or more should be used in larger rooms. Multiple fans work best in rooms longer than 18 feet. Small- and medium-sized fans will provide efficient cooling in a four- to six-foot diameter area, while larger fans are effective up to 10 feet.

A larger blade will also provide comparable cooling at a lower velocity than a smaller blade. This may be important in areas where loose papers or other objects will be disturbed by a strong breeze. The fan should also be fitted to the aesthetics of the room – a large fan may appear overpowering in a small room.

A more expensive fan that operates quietly and smoothly will probably offer more trouble-free service than cheaper units. Check the noise ratings, and, if possible, listen to the fan in operation before you buy it.

When buying window fans, look for the ENERGY STAR® label. Fans that earn the label move air 20 percent more efficiently, on average, than standard models.

Ceiling fans

The role of coal *Baseload generation crucial to future energy supply*



(Continued from page 1)

“Coal-generated electricity is generated at the same time it is used,” Van Dyke said.

Coal-based electricity also adds to the nation's energy security. While the Middle East remains a volatile source of oil and a disruption could potentially cripple the U.S. economy, coal is a domestic resource.

Economic engine, too

The lignite industry is also a high-powered economic engine.

North Dakota's four mines and seven power plants provide more than 4,000 direct jobs, with an average annual salary of \$70,000. That compares with the state's average of \$30,000.

Along with agriculture, manufacturing, tourism and oil/natural gas, lignite is one of the state's top five industries. The industry is also a taxpayer in the state, providing more than \$160 million during each biennium while lowering others' tax responsibility.

Nationally, coal is a strong economic

engine, too. According to a Penn State study, coal will add more than \$1 trillion to the U.S. economy in 2015, along with 4.6 million to 9 million jobs.

Investments continue

In addition to its benefits to the overall economy, the coal industry is investing in itself. The State of North Dakota and the electric industry are formal partners in a lignite research and development program. The goal is to expand lignite's economic benefits through projects that allow the fuel to be used more cleanly, efficiently and economically.

The state's research and development money is raised from severance taxes on coal mined in the state and from a percentage of the coal conversion taxes. For each state dollar invested in research and development, another six dollars comes from other sources.

A current example is research being done to capture mercury emitted from lignite-based power plants. The state's \$2.8 million was leveraged with money from

other sources for a total of \$27 million for mercury research. The research led to a decrease in costs of capturing mercury in the last three years from \$70,000 a pound to less than \$10,000 a pound.

Utilities also are doing their part to address concerns about air emissions. In North Dakota, they have invested more than \$800 million in emissions control technology and will invest another \$800 million in the next few years to meet new regulations.

Although the use of coal to generate electricity nearly tripled between 1970 and 2000, the coal-based electricity sector reduced emissions of targeted air emissions by one-third.

“It's important to remember that North Dakota and Minnesota are two of only 12 states in the nation that meet all ambient air quality standards set by the Environmental Protection Agency,” Van Dyke said. “It's clear that coal will be used to power the nation's growing energy needs long into the future.”

Staff Report

Ann Ellis, Manager of Finance and Administration



Grass roots . . . the power of the people.

You've been hearing us talk about the high cost (an 85 percent higher electric bill alone) of proposed global warming and carbon tax legislation. Hopefully, you have contacted your legislators to let them know how YOU feel, because they won't know unless you tell them. If we just sit back and assume it all works out, we may be in for a rude awakening.

Every legislator knows that listening to their constituents is important. It gets the job done right, and it gets them re-elected. We, at North Star, would like to form a list of members who are willing to be placed on a contact list to be used when important legislation is pending. We can be more effective if our legislators are hearing from many voters who repeat our message, and sometimes action is needed on short notice. That is what "grass-roots" efforts are.

Are you willing to be placed on this list? It does not commit you to do anything. It will only include you in special communication of issues, and, if you desire, you can take the step to contact your legislators. If you'd like to help, please return the form printed here, drop us an e-mail, or give us a call to be added to North Star's Grass-roots Efforts Group. Thank you for saying "yes."

Current issues

If you're looking for more information on the current legislation, please go to www.ourenergy.coop, visit our Web site at www.northstarelectric.coop, or get in touch with us for information we can mail to you.

Striking the right balance between environmental stewardship and the health of our economy is our goal.

Clip and send section below:

I want to be added to North Star's Grass-roots Efforts Group.

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone number _____ e-mail _____



Minnkota, FPL Energy announce wind farm addition

Minnkota Power Cooperative, North Star Electric Cooperative's wholesale power supplier, has signed a contractual agreement with FPL Energy to purchase more electricity from an addition to the Langdon Wind Energy Center located in Cavalier County. The wind farm became operational Dec. 31, 2007.

The project will utilize 27 additional General Electric (GE) wind turbines, each having a nameplate capacity of 1.5 megawatts (MW). The expanded facility is expected to provide another 140 million kilowatt-hours (kWh) to Minnkota each year. By the end of 2008 when the expansion is completed, more than 13 percent of Minnkota's annual energy sales to the associated cooperatives and municipalities will be derived from the wind.

"We are pleased to purchase additional energy from the Langdon Wind Energy Center expansion," said David Loer, Minnkota President & CEO. "Minnkota plans to add more than 300 MW of renewable energy to our generating portfolio during the next several years. The expansion at Langdon is part of that effort."

Studies have shown that the existing 115-kilovolt (kV) transmission infrastructure, which was enhanced last year, is adequate to carry the additional wind energy into the regional grid without major modifications.

FPL Energy, a subsidiary of FPL Group, currently operates five wind farms in North Dakota near Center, Edgeley, Kulm, Langdon and Wilton, totaling more than 328 MW. As the nation's leader in wind energy, FPL Energy has wind farms in 25 states, totaling more than 5,210 MW of wind capacity.

Minnkota is a generation and transmission cooperative that supplies wholesale electricity to 11 electric distribution cooperatives serving a 34,500-square-mile area in eastern North Dakota and northwestern Minnesota. Minnkota is also operating agent for the Northern Municipal Power Agency (NMPA), which serves 12 municipal utilities in the same geographic region.

Together, the Minnkota/NMPA Joint System serves more than 129,000 customers.