

SOUTHEAST ELECTRIC Cooperative



CELEBRATING 80 YEARS



PO BOX 369, EKALAKA, MT 59324 • PH 406-775-8762 • WWW.SEECOOP.COM

80th Annual Meeting was a success

By **TYE WILLIAMS** | Manager

W^E celebrated our 80th Annual Meeting on June 12 in Ekalaka. The meeting was well attended, with 140 members registered and 224 family members fed. There were numerous reports from Albert Paul, Upper Missouri Power Cooperative; Montana Electric Cooperatives' Association and me. The reports covered a wide range of topics affecting Montana Electric cooperatives.



Southeast Electric has continued to see dramatic energy sales growth through the first half of 2026. Energy sales (kWh) are up 31 percent through June 2026, compared to the same time-frame in 2025. This excess sales growth is due to two pipeline pump sites coming online in 2025. The first pump site began pumping in July, and the second came online at the end of 2025. With the increased sales, our industrial rate members account for approximately 80 percent of our kWh sales.



Inflation slowed in 2025, but our material costs are rising again in 2026. We are likely to see a 5-percent increase in material costs, and some transportation fuel cost increases have already been passed onto Southeast Electric. Our increased sales have allowed us to absorb these cost increases while continuing to improve the infrastructure throughout our system.

MDOT plans to begin construction to

rebuild a portion of Highway 7 in 2028. We are continuing to work with land-owners, ECI and MT DOT to accommodate the Highway 7 widening project by the end of 2027. We are planning to begin construction of the transmission line rebuild in the spring of 2027 to meet the end of 2027 deadline.

Due to the very mild winter, our crews began changing poles in February, and have already changed more than 500 poles this year, and will continue to replace poles as the weather holds up. They completed another large project east of Baker, which converted that line to operate at 14,400 volts from 7,200 volts. This upgrade allows for greater capacity and greater resiliency. The work our crews perform in the field is vital to mitigating outages, and improving power quality and reliability throughout our system.

Thank you to everyone who attended our annual meeting and helped make it a good evening. If you have any questions or would like to just discuss the energy industry, please stop in our office or call. 

SECO, Co-Bank, Basin Electric donate to local fire, EMT

S^{OUTHEAST} Electric Cooperative, Co-Bank Charitable Giving and Basin Electric Sharing Success were able to award a total of \$10,500 to the Dahl Memorial EMTs and \$10,500 to the Ekalaka Volunteer Fire Department. The

EMTs will use their funds to purchase NARC boxes to be used in emergency response vehicles. The funds for the Fire Department will be used to install a generator at the new fire hall.

In defense of pronghorn

By **JUNO MCGRAW** | Guest columnist

PRONGHORN antelope (*Antilocapra americana*) are so common in the western United States that they could be easy to overlook. In fact, Montana has the second largest population of pronghorn in the country. Pronghorn are endemic to North America — they're only found here. These familiar faces, who have persisted on this continent for 19 million years, deserve more than just a passing glance.

Pronghorn antelope have quite the misleading name, given that they aren't related to antelope at all; their closest living relatives are giraffes. The Antilocapridae family (which pronghorn belong to) diverged from the Giraffidae family (comprised of giraffes and okapis) sometime around 20 to 23 million years ago (MYA). About three million years later, after migrating into what is now North America, Antilocapridae split into two subfamilies: Merycodontinae and Antilocaprinae.

There were five recognized genera in the Merycodontinae subfamily, who were each just under two feet tall and weighed about 20-50lbs. By the time Merycodontinae began to fade from the fossil record, eventually going extinct altogether (9 MYA), the Antilocaprinae subfamily was becoming increasingly successful. There were at least 13 Antilocaprinae genera (antilocaprids) known to inhabit prehistoric North America, evolving alongside other well-known fauna of the time period.

The open grassland and savanna habitat of North America in the Neogene Period was home to saber-toothed cats, mastodons, giant ground sloths the size of modern elephants, rodents as large as modern black bears, wild horses, and vulture-like birds with 12 foot wingspans. Notably, North America was home to the American cheetah, which had the same geographic distribution as antilocap-



rines. American cheetahs were not true cheetahs, being more related to mountain lions, but were still incredibly fast sprinters in open grasslands. It is believed that antilocaprids evolved in response to American cheetah predation, gaining adaptations allowing them to outrun their pursuers. Today, only one member of the Antilocapridae family remains: the pronghorn. Pronghorn are the fastest land mammal in the western hemisphere and the second fastest land mammal on Earth, reaching speeds of 50-60 mph.

Modern pronghorn still inhabits the flat, open grasslands and plains of North America. As of 2025, the estimated pronghorn population in Montana is just under 160,000, with the majority occupying the southeastern corner of the state.

A three-year study conducted by Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks provided further insight on the population, migration and range of our pronghorn. This study, published in 2024, determined that eastern Montana's pronghorn population trends are stable or increasing, while central and western Montana's populations are struggling to bounce back after the catastrophic 2010-2011 severe winter and subsequent disease outbreaks.

Data collected from the study is being used to inform conservation decisions to ensure these animals can continue to run free on the same prairies they've occupied for millions of years. RAM

Capital Credits

Information needed to refund the capital credits shown below

LISTED below are the names of former Southeast Electric Cooperative, Inc. members capital credit checks mailed in May 2026 and returned to SECO by the U.S. Postal Service because it could not be delivered to the address on file.

If your name appears on this list, if you know of the current whereabouts of members listed, or if you are a beneficiary or representative of a deceased member, please contact our office at 406-775-8762.

Abraxas Petroleum

Marvin Brown

Joy Duffield (Deceased)

Jack Krueger (Deceased)

Mike Krueger

Matthew A & Kayle M Prince

Dale A Radke (Deceased)

Virginia Richardson

Emily Shelton

Ray & Jo Sweetser

John Woods, Jr.



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