



Kilowatt Korner

APRIL 2022

April brings rain and snow showers with the hopes of May flowers. April also celebrates Earth Day which began in 1970 as a day to show support for the environment. WREA, like electric distribution cooperatives around the country, was founded by farmers and ranchers whose way of life depended on sensible environmental stewardship. WREA continues to honor these values by advancing a responsible and practical approach to providing electricity to its members which includes a diverse energy portfolio. Almost a decade ago, WREA's Board set out a simple local renewable energy policy which is to pursue local projects that make sense both financially and electrically. This policy supports WREA's primary mission which is to provide safe, reliable and affordable power to our membership. WREA developed three local projects that achieved our goals with the Miller Creek Ditch Hydro Project, the Meeker Solar Garden and the Piceance Creek Solar Farm. These projects met electric and financial requirements as well as offer members direct access to local solar generation with the White River Solar leasing program.

WREA's Board of Directors and management recently attended Tri-State Generation and Transmission's (Tri-State), Annual Meeting which focused on reliability and affordability during the transition to more renewable energy. WREA is confident that Tri-State is well prepared to balance the use of renewables and load base generation with a strong transmission system so it can reliably provide WREA power even when the sun doesn't shine, and the wind doesn't blow.

Today, just over 35% of the total energy consumed by WREA members is renewable; 34% from Tri-State and just over 1% from WREA's locally generated power. By 2024, over 50% of WREA's wholesale power will be generated from renewable sources and by 2030, over 70% of the power consumed by WREA members will be from renewable sources. Tri-State's diligence along with its extensive transmission system and diverse power supply allowed it to weather the 2021 Winter Storm Uri with minimal system issues and no corresponding rate increase. Future reliability depends on Tri-State's continued investment in additional transmission and maintaining a diverse power supply. Recently, Tri-State joined the SPP Western Energy Imbalance Service to support efficient use of transmission and generation so that it can effectively utilize its diverse energy sources throughout its large service territory. WREA continues to advocate for regional load base generation including natural gas to support Tri-State's diversified energy mix.

Electricity is the energy that fuels our lives and our economy which makes it a relevant topic of conversation not only on Earth Day but throughout the year. We are excited that this month's Kilowatt Korner kicks off a conversation with the *Rio Blanco Herald Times (HT)* about WREA and our energy future. Next week the *HT* will dive deeper into renewable energy and reliability with an in-depth article followed by a *HT* Energy Podcast featuring WREA's General Manager, Alan Michalewicz.

As we wrap up the month of April, don't forget to turn in your White River Solar leases by **Friday, April 29, 2022**. Please call if you have any questions about solar leasing. It seems like we have had even more spring winds than normal, so please continue to be cautious of power lines with spring burns. Director Candidate Petitions for this fall's WREA Board elections will be available beginning on **June 15, 2022**. In September, one director from the Town of Meeker District and two Directors from the Rural District will be elected. And mark your calendars for the Member Appreciation Event on **Friday, July 22, 2022**, on the RBC Courthouse Lawn with food, music, and member appreciation gifts.

Thank you!

~ White River Electric Association