
CEO'S REPORT



We've all heard the phrase, "Don't put all your eggs in one basket." This common phrase is often used in conversation when someone is about to do something foolish or risky. If they take this advice, it means they did not commit to "one basket", but instead hedged their bets with multiple options. Wrapping up financials, reviewing our annual goals, and putting together last year's information to share with the membership - this is the best way I can sum up 2022. We diversified to ensure the reliable delivery of power to your homes and businesses.

Nationally, there is increasing reliance on renewable energy sources at the same time that we're seeing fossil fuel plants taken off-line, often ahead of schedule. We're also seeing more pressure on the electric grid due more frequent and intense weather events, as well as rising electricity demand.

Our primary responsibility is to provide electricity to you 24/7 and we need reliable sources of power that will meet all the peaks and valleys of energy demand. Our power providers maintained a diverse mix of fuel sources-- fossil fuels and renewables to ensure reliability, resiliency, and meet that growing demand for electricity. They hedged resources to mitigate future outages, and [at times] even had to purchase energy on the open market when it was cheaper than generating it. Realizing the impact, our providers have looked out for you by testifying to Congress about the capacity shortages our country has been facing.

Reliability also means repairing and replacing utility equipment to prevent wear-and-tear and ensuring our equipment can withstand these events. We saw the highest peak in the history of the Cooperative with winter storm Elliot. From proactively maintaining arrestors, establishing relationships with more vendors to have transformers on-hand, and closely monitoring forecasts to safely shift loads between feeders and substations - we were able to survive the storm with less outages than in previous severe weather events. Creative means or not having all the "eggs in one basket", kept the lights on to your homes and businesses.

While our top priority is providing safe, reliable, and affordable electricity - we also want to be a catalyst for good in our community. We just turned 12 months since the decision was made to extend fiber internet services to our members, because if not for the Cooperative many homes and businesses would continue to struggle to meet the technological demands of everyday life. The five-year project is moving quickly. We look forward to offering fast, reliable internet to our first consumers at the beginning of 2024. You can find more information from our fiber subsidiary, White River Connect, at www.whiteriverconnect.com.

To meet growing demand and diversifying once again, we look forward to further connecting our communities and providing our members with every opportunity regardless of where they live. It's just like our founders did 84 years ago. It's because we are your local electric cooperative, and we strive to make long-term decisions that improve and enrich the communities we serve.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you in 2022, throughout 2023, and in the many years ahead.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

When the co-op was founded back in 1939, members of the community knew that we were a locally-owned business - likely because they, or someone they knew, played a part in helping establish the cooperative. Over time, the novelty of receiving electricity wore. The founders passed on and new people moved into the community, viewing the electric co-op like any other energy provider but it's more than just a financial statement or a business plan. We are different and the key to that difference is you, our cooperative members. Without your support and feedback, we would not exist.

The electric utility industry is changing. Energy needs are changing. The guiding principles of the cooperative model are not. We continually look for ways to improve to meet the demands of a growing population and overall lifestyle changes. It's been a year since the White River Board of Directors met for an intensive study session to review the fiber feasibility study and the many months of research conducted by our dedicated staff. As in years past, the needs of the members spoke and the Cooperative will deliver. We voted to move forward with the project. The decision did not come lightly and running all the checks and balances to make sure the models would work was a long process. The cooperative principles shape the way the electric co-op is run as well as the opportunities we provide for our members. We will ensure that those same principles be carried out with our fiber subsidiary, White River Connect.

As we look to the road ahead, we will always consider the path that was laid by our founders. We will strive to keep the lights on and connect the rural communities we serve with new opportunities. We now are excited to say that those new opportunities will include high-speed, fiber internet.

