

Big Skylights



An internal newsletter of the STATEWIDE ASSOCIATION OF MONTANA RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES

A report from your Chief Executive Officer Dave Wheelihan

July 13, 2007

Growth to exceed power supply at Fall River

Explosive residential growth is a major concern of trustees and management charged with maintaining a reliable power supply at Fall River Electric, director **Ron Fernelius** told members at the co-op's 2000 annual meeting June 23 in Ashton, Idaho. He said such growth rates would ultimately exceed the co-op's power supply from the Bonneville Power Administration.

Manager **Dee Reynolds** added, "We expect to add 1,000 new members in 2007." That growth boom in northern Idaho and the West Yellowstone area of Montana, which the cooperative serves, would represent a jump from 750 new services in 2006 and an average of about 500 in previous years. The cooperative hired nine new employees, including six line workers in 2006 and provided temporary housing and rental assistance in a satellite resort area where rentals are scarce for on-call employees. Mr. Reynolds said that BPA power contracts were due to expire in 2011.

Before the 2008 annual meeting, the board is looking to explore power supplies that will set direction for the cooperative for the next 20 years, including new hydropower opportunities at Hebgen Dam in Montana. He said that rates would remain stable for the coming year, adding, "That's about as far as we dare predict in this economy."

In trustee elections, incumbents **J. Richard Smith**, **Ron Dye** and board president **Clyde G. Seely** were all re-elected.

Condolences

Our thoughts and prayers are with the family of **Doug Larson**, a long-time former lineman at Northern Electric Cooperative who died June 25 at his home in Opheim. Mr. Larson, 53, worked as a lineman at Northern Electric for 22 years, from 1981 to 2003. Funeral services for Mr. Larson were held June 29 in Opheim.

CALENDAR

July
12
13
14-17

Fall River Annual Meeting
NRECA Finance Challenge Begins
Member Services Training

Ashton, ID

Great Falls, MT

August
6-8
17-20
30

Office Managers & Accountants Conference
CoBank Energy Management Conference
NRECA Finance Challenge Ends

Great Falls, MT
Aspen, CO