

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



River Power Renewed

Fort Randall Renovations
Pages 8-9

Pick, Sloan & the Missouri
Pages 12-13

The Fort Randall Dam is retrofitted
with new generating units.
Photo by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Photo by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

BOARD REPORT



FEM staff meet with the Board of Directors at the April meeting.

April Board Report

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of FEM Electric was held in Ipswich, South Dakota at 8:30 a.m. on April 21, 2026, pursuant to due call and notice. It being determined that a quorum was present, President Gary Bachman called the meeting to order. Secretary Eric Odenbach kept the minutes of the meeting. The following directors were declared present by roll call: Gary Bachman, Eric Odenbach, Tom Thorpe, Kelly Melius and Paula Petersen. Electrical Manager Ryan Holien, Director of Finance and Benefits Rhonda Tuscherer, Operation Manager Sean Christiansen and CEO Scott Moore.

Guest Employee: Dan Feldhaus

Changes to the agenda: Remove K & H Construction Contract under 8 A.

Changes/Additions to Minutes from February 20, 2026, meeting: none

Next Meeting Date: After a review of the calendars, directors agreed that the next regular meeting of the board would be on Tuesday, May 19, 2026, at 8:30 a.m. to be held at FEM Electric Board Room in Ipswich, South Dakota.

Moved by Thorpe, seconded by Kelly Melius and carried to approve administrative business.

The board and staff watched NRECA Governance Video titled "Pros and Cons of Peer Director Assessment".

Parker VanZee with Eide Bailly of Sioux Falls joined the meeting at 9:00 a.m. remotely to review the 2025 annual audit with FEM Electric board of directors and staff. Angela Sieh, FEM Electric Accountant, joined the meeting during the presentation.

Moved by Kelly Melius seconded by Eric Odenbach and carried to approve the 2025 Audit as presented.

Moved by Paula Petersen seconded by Eric Odenbach and carried to acknowledge the manager, and staff reports along with East River Electric load management report.

Moved by Kelly Melius seconded by Tom Thorpe and carried to enter executive session at 11:32 a.m.

Moved by Eric Odenbach seconded by Kelly Melius and carried to come out of executive session at 11:55 a.m.

The board acknowledges receiving and reviewing March 2026 Cyber Security Report.

Resolutions and Contracts: none

Membership Business: Board acknowledged membership business.

New Memberships, Member Cancellations and Contracts:

Disconnects: Jerald & Shirlee Schack, Tolstoy, SD, Active Farm; Roger & Jan Melius, Faulkton, SD, Active Farm

Reconnects: Justin & Sarah Bieber, Bowdle, SD, Active Farm; Taylor & Dustin Poor, Faulkton, SD, Active Farm

Contracts: Sam Aman, Eureka, SD, House; Derek & Riley Petersen, Ipswich, SD, Grain Bin

Retired Locations: US West Communications, Columbus, OH, Commercial

Moved by Eric Odenbach seconded by Paula Petersen to approve contracts for Sam Aman and Derek and Riley Petersen.

Capital Credits:

Estates – April 2026: none

73 & Older – April 2026: None

Moved by Tom Thorpe seconded by Kelly Melius and carried to approve 2025 Allocations of Capital Credits Margins in the amount of \$361,361.32. They also reviewed the Market Rate margins.

Board acknowledged receipt of following financial business.

Financial Business: The board acknowledged reviewing the following financial information:

The check register for the month of March 2026 contained information on checks #36095 through #36188 and all automatic payments/withdrawals for March 2026 totaling \$786,707.64

March 2026 financials were reviewed.

Continued on page 6

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

FEM ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

(USPS 189-720)

Board of Directors

Gary Bachman, President
Tom Thorpe, Vice President
Eric Odenbach, Secretary
Paula Petersen, Treasurer
Kelly Melius, Asst. Secretary/
Treasurer
Vaughn Beck, Attorney

CEO/General Manager

Scott Moore
info@femelectric.coop

Management Staff

Sean Christiansen
Operations Manager
Ryan Holien
Electrical Manager
Rhonda Tuscherer
*Director of Finance and
Benefits*

Editor's e-mail:

oban@femelectric.coop

FEM ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS is the monthly publication for the members of FEM Electric Association, Inc., 800 5th Ave., Ipswich, SD 57451. FEM Electric Cooperative Connections' purpose is to provide reliable, helpful information to members on electric cooperative matters and better living.

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Design assistance by SDREA

**FEM Electric is an equal
opportunity provider and
employer.**



Scott Moore
General Manager/CEO

As we move into busy spring work, a person can feel the excitement in the spring air. Trucks are delivering fertilizer and seed to farm operations, and those operations are working in a positive direction. Farm equipment has started moving through the fields creating some satisfaction as acre after acre gets planted with hopes of a great growing season. With some help in the fall, agriculture producers will see a good harvest with good commodity prices.

The electric business operates similarly. With the arrival of spring we're starting and completing projects that have been in planning stage for months, providing power to new locations and strengthening our primary system to ensure years of reliable power. In 2026, FEM Electric will be finishing construction projects that are in our current four-year work plan. The operations department along with our engineering team will have the next four-year work plan ready for board approval by year-end. We currently replace or install around

fifteen to twenty miles per year, and we plan to continue that trend. Just like your operation, the cost of material and installation continues to increase along with the cost of continued annual maintenance. At the end of 2025, FEM had 2164 member services, and while maintaining approximately 760 miles of overhead line and 1200 miles of underground. FEM Electric members are fortunate that over the past twenty years most of the original overhead electric lines have been replaced or updated, helping to maintain reliable service.

At the April board meeting Eide Bailly of Sioux Falls reported to FEM Electric board that they had completed the 2025 annual audit. Once again, this process doesn't start a week before our annual audit. It is a process all employees at FEM take pride in every day by completing paperwork correctly and on time. The office crew works together to complete and respond quickly to the auditor's request.

Continued on page 6

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

@FEMElectric on 

@fem_electric on 

@FEMelectric on 

We'll post outage updates, safety tips, news and more to keep our members informed on all the latest from FEM Electric.

Statement Mailing Dates

June 26, 2026 for June's energy

July 28, 2026 for July's energy

Regardless of the statement mail out date, payments are due in the office by the 9th of the following month.

NATIONAL SAFETY MONTH: PLUG INTO WHAT MATTERS

Safety is a word that shows up in mission statements, meetings and job sites across every industry. At its best, it reflects preparation, awareness and responsibility.

That's where the difference shows.

Electricity doesn't leave room for shortcuts. It demands attention, consistency and respect every day. For your local cooperative, that responsibility is built into the work.

The job goes beyond delivering power. It protects the people who build and maintain the system and the communities who rely on it. Reliable and affordable electricity matters, and so does making sure every crew member goes home at the end of the day.

That outcome takes focus, repetition and a culture where doing things right matters more than doing them fast.

Built on the Right Habits

Linework is demanding and, at times, dangerous. It's also highly structured. Crews follow national standards designed for utility work. Protective equipment isn't optional. Procedures aren't suggestions.

Before a job begins, it's planned. Crews walk through the work, identify risks and make sure everyone is aligned. Communication stays constant.

What happens after the job matters just as much. Near-misses are tracked, reviewed and discussed to understand what happened and prevent it from happening again. Over time, those lessons build a stronger, more prepared workforce.

Everyone is expected to look out for each other. If something doesn't look right, it gets said. That accountability turns policies into habits.

Contractors working alongside cooperative crews are held to those same expectations.

Extending Beyond the Jobsite

The work doesn't stop at the edge of a right-of-way. Because crews live in the communities they serve, that responsibility carries beyond the job.

Your local cooperative shares electrical safety information through schools, events and outreach. It's simple advice that helps prevent accidents.

June is National Safety Month. Most electrical injuries are preventable, and small decisions matter.

Leave electrical work to qualified professionals. Don't overload outlets. Stay clear of downed power lines and report them. If something looks off, whether it's a damaged transformer or an open substation, say something.

Take the Extra Moment

Electricity is easy to take for granted. But the systems behind it, and the people maintaining them, depend on careful decisions.

When a task involves electricity, take a moment. Look twice. Think it through.

That pause can make all the difference.



"Be safe, lineman!"

Renn Ronning, age 8

Renn urges the line crew to stay safe on the job. Thank you for sharing your picture, Renn! Renn's parents are Justin and Katrina Ronning from Elk Point, S.D.

Kids, send your drawing with an electrical safety tip to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). If your poster is published, you'll receive a prize. All entries must include your name, age, mailing address and the names of your parents. Colored drawings are encouraged.

Easy & Delicious FAMILY MEALS

TACO SOUP

Ingredients:

- 1 lb. hamburger, cooked and drained
- 1 28 oz. can red or kidney beans
- 1 28 oz. can petite diced tomatoes
- 1 14 oz. can corn
- 1 pkg. taco seasoning

Method

Put all ingredients into bean pot. Microwave for 20 minutes. Serve with shredded cheese and corn chips. Do not drain liquids.

Marla Gilbert
Southeastern Electric

QUICK PORK CHOP DINNER

Ingredients:

- 4 pork chops
- 2 tps. prepared mustard
- 2 tps. flour
- 1/2 tsp. salt or Mrs. Dash
- Dash of pepper
- 2 tps. fat or oil
- 1 10 oz. can of chicken rice soup or chicken broth
- 1/2 cup water
- Add onion, potatoes, carrots, garlic powder to taste

Method

Spread mustard over pork chops and sprinkle with flour, salt and pepper. Brown thoroughly in fat or oil in pressure cooker. Add chicken soup and water. Add vegetables and cover. Set control at 10 and cook 12 minutes or 35 minutes if you add vegetables. Cool pan for 5 minutes, then reduce pressure.

Ruth Konechne
Central Electric

CARAMELIZED HAM & SWISS SLIDERS

Ingredients:

- 12 Hawaiian dinner rolls, split
- 1/4 cup horseradish sauce, optional
- 12 slices deli ham (or 24 if it's thinly sliced)
- 6 slices Swiss cheese, cut in fourths (so you have 24 squares of cheese)

Sauce

- 1/2 cup butter
- 1/4 tsp. onion powder
- 2 tps. brown sugar
- 1 tsp. Dijon mustard
- 2 tps. poppy seeds
- 1-1/2 tps. Worcestershire sauce
- 1/4 tsp. garlic powder

Method

Spray a 9x9 or 9x13 glass dish with non-stick cooking spray. Set aside. Preheat oven to 325°. Spread roll bottoms with horseradish sauce (if using). Fold up pieces of ham to fit the rolls and place them on the bottom halves of the roll. Next, place 2 squares of cheese, replace roll tops and place in a single layer in the prepared pan.

In a small skillet, heat butter over medium-high heat. Stir in remaining ingredients. Pour over rolls. Cover with foil and bake covered for 20 minutes. Remove foil and bake 5 more minutes. *These can also be made ahead of time. Just cover with foil and refrigerate for several hours or overnight. Bake as instructed.

Jerald and Virginia Jensen
Sioux Valley Energy

Please send your favorite recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in December 2026. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

Picture by Shutterstock.

BOARD REPORT CONTINUED

Board Report continued from page 2

Director of Finance Rhonda Tuscherer reviewed:

1. Quarterly Budget Projection Update and Current TIER
2. RUS & CFC Loan Summaries
3. CFC SCTC Interest

Moved by Eric Odenbach seconded by Paula Petersen to approve transfer from RUS Special Construction Fund Trustee Account Transfer Confirmation in amount of \$975,000.

Moved by Kelly Melius seconded by Eric Odenbach and carried to approve board expense reports and attorney fees.

Legal Update: none

Meeting Report:

East River monthly board report was given by Gary Bachman and monthly video was watched.

Tom Thorpe reported on SDREA Board meeting.

The safety meeting minutes from March 24, 2026, were acknowledged along with employee meeting minutes held on March 20, 2026.

Adjourn: President Gary Bachman declared the meeting adjourned.



Manager's Report continued from page 3

I believe communication and transparency are important, so I want to remind members that the board approved to have Star Engineering to do an updated electric rate study in 2026. The last study was completed in 2019. In July 2025, our power supplier Basin Electric gave notice that our power cost was going to increase by 18.7% starting January 1, 2026. We were able to get that increase cut in half for 2026, with the understanding there will be another increase in 2027 from Basin. We will not know what rate increase will be needed until late fall, but the board and staff will keep you informed so our members can make good business decisions moving forward.

As you travel to fields and pastures, please stay alert to any powerlines or electrical equipment that doesn't look correct. If you see a problem, please call 605-426-6891.

Remember that FEM Electric annual meeting is June 23, 2026, in Ipswich at the public school. Come enjoy a meal, cash drawing, \$40.00 energy credit, and bring your junior or senior high school child and enter their name in a drawing for Young Adults Light the Way Scholarship (member parent must also attend).

It is never too early to call if you are looking to add or update any electrical loads. Call Sean Christiansen or Ryan Holien 605-426-6891.

Mina Lake

Thank you so much for your sponsorship of the 2026 Mina Lake Casino Night. Thanks to your donation, this year's event surpassed all previous years in attendance and earnings. We truly appreciate your continued support of the Mina Lake activities and improvements funded by this event.

Sincerely,
Mina Lake Celebrations

OFFICIAL NOTICE

FEM Electric Association, Inc.

Official Notice of

Annual Meeting of Members

Notice is hereby given that the 78th Annual Meeting of the members of FEM Electric Association, Inc., will be held at the Ipswich High School in the City of Ipswich, State of South Dakota, at **six-thirty p.m. on Tuesday, June 23rd, 2026**, for the purpose of:

- 1. The reports of officers, directors and committees
- 2. The election of directors for three-year terms

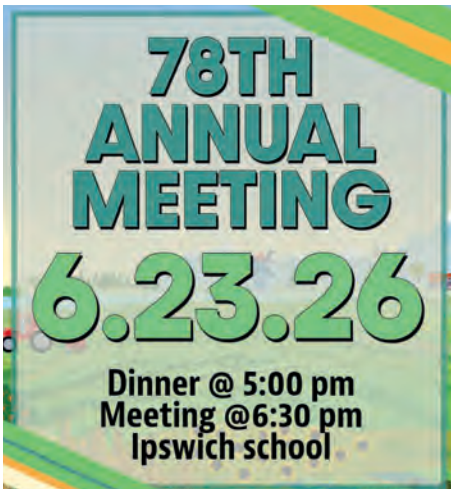
With the election of a director at this meeting, the following member has been nominated for director by the Nominating Committee in accordance with the bylaws of the Cooperative:

- Tom Thorpe - District 2
- Josh Heinrich - District 3

Please take further notice that any fifteen or more members of the cooperative may make additional nominations by listing their nominee and the appropriate Directorate District and signing such Petition of Nomination. The petition must be submitted to the board of directors at least 25 day prior to the annual meeting. Any such petition so submitted will be posted, along with the list of nominations made by the Nominating Committee.

3. Transacting any such other business as may properly come before the meeting or any adjournment thereof.

Eric Odenbach, Secretary
FEM Electric Association, Inc.

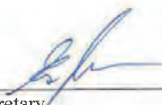


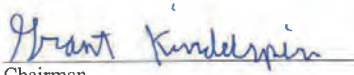
FEM ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION, INC.
IPSWICH, SOUTH DAKOTA
March 5, 2026

We, the Nominating Committee, in session on March 5, 2026, at the Beck Law Office in Ipswich, South Dakota, hereby nominate the following:

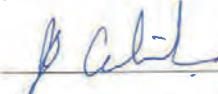
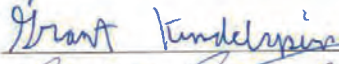



District 2 – Tom Thorpe

District 3 - Josh Heinrich


Secretary


Chairman

We, the undersigned, certify that the foregoing minutes are true and correct.

We, the Nominating Committee, wish to place the above names in nomination.



The rotor is lifted out of the generator unit using two cranes. This component of the generator will be reused once other parts are replaced.
Photo Submitted by USACE

RENEWING RIVER POWER

Fort Randall Dam Undergoes Multiyear Renovation

Jacob Boyko

jacob.boyko@sdrea.coop

A 72-year old hydropower dam in southeast South Dakota is the first of the state's four mainstream Missouri River dams to undergo a substantial retrofit to improve the facility's efficiency and reliability.

Fort Randall Dam, which began operating in 1954, was built near Pickstown, South Dakota, through the Pick-Sloan Missouri Basin Program. The program was included in the Flood Control Act of 1944 by Congress to dam the Missouri River at multiple points to improve the region's water management, irrigation, flood control and navigation while also generating much-needed hydropower. (See Pages 12-13 for more on how the program came to be.) A marvel at the time of its construction, the two-mile-long rolled-earth dam holds back 5.4 million acre-feet of water in Lake Francis Case. The dam's eight turbine generators have a maximum generating capacity of 320 megawatts – enough electricity to power about 245,000 homes.

Now, more than seven decades later, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is looking to boost those numbers and revitalize the aging dam with state-of-the-art, 21st-century technology to ensure the facility keeps up with the region's modern energy demands.

Overseeing the multi-year project is Maintenance and Operations Manager Michael Schenkel, who's spent the last 14 years at the Fort Randall Project overseeing the facility's maintenance, operation and planning. Schenkel says while the dam's eight original 72-year-old generators and turbines have served reliably, a renewal will improve the project's operation.

"Like many aging public assets, it's time for reinvestment," Schenkel said. "The turbine-generator units were installed in the

1950s and are beyond their expected service life. We're replacing them to ensure long-term energy and infrastructure resilience."

He pointed out that the USACE got its money's worth with the original generators, saying how rare it is for a generator to last over 70 years without needing a rewind – referring to the process of replacing the stators, or the copper windings and insulation that help convert the turbine's rotation into electricity. Over time, heat, vibration and age can weaken that insulation and increase the risk of failure. Schenkel noted that Fort Randall is the only Missouri River dam in South Dakota that has retained its original stators up to this point.

The scale of the units pose a significant challenge – each unit is 40 feet tall and weighs more than 400 tons, necessitating piece-by-piece transport, assembly and installation. Voith Hydro North America, the company awarded the contract to manufacture and install the new turbine runners and generator stators, began the decommissioning and replacement of the first generator in July of 2025. USACE expects that generator to be offline until November 2026 after installation is complete and engineers can inspect it for any issues. Once the first unit is back online and clears inspection, engineers will give the contractor the green light to proceed. To keep up with hydropower demand and allow adequate flow downstream, USACE's goal is to keep six units operating and two units offline for renovation at a time until the project is wrapped up in 2031.

Schenkel explained how the upgrade solves two problems at once: it replaces aging components in the dam and provides the opportunity to install new, highly efficient generators and turbines to produce more power with the same amount of water.

Fort Randall's original turbines generate hydropower most efficiently with 103 feet of head – the vertical distance between the water levels above and below the dam, determining the pressure at which water moves through the turbine. At 103 feet of head, each generator will produce about 31 megawatts of electricity.

However, due to the region's fluctuating power demands, water

management and other factors, operating in the efficient middle ground isn't always ideal. Schenkel says USACE often operates Fort Randall at 40 megawatts and 119 feet of head – about 4% below peak efficiency.

To solve this problem of lost efficiency, the new turbines being installed are highly-efficient, rated for 52 megawatts at 119 feet of head. This change raises the facility's total generating capacity from 320 megawatts to about 400 megawatts – enough electricity to power more than 300,000 homes.

“We expect to recover roughly 10% more energy output from the same water volume,” Schenkel said. “Essentially free power beyond the capital investment once the upgrade is complete.”

As part of the renovation, USACE also completed as-needed updates to the switch yard, which is the infrastructure that routes power to transmission lines for transport across the region.

Electricity generated at the Fort Randall Dam is managed, transported and sold by the Western Area Power Administration under the U.S. Department of Energy.

As a co-op member, part of your utility's energy mix is hydropower from the Missouri River dams, including Fort Randall, “so this work directly affects co-op members,” Schenkel added.

Looking at the dam's age and efficiency profile – and also being the only dam in South Dakota possessing its original stator windings – Schenkel said Fort Randall was the clear priority. The USACE has begun planning a similar renovation project for the Oahe Dam.

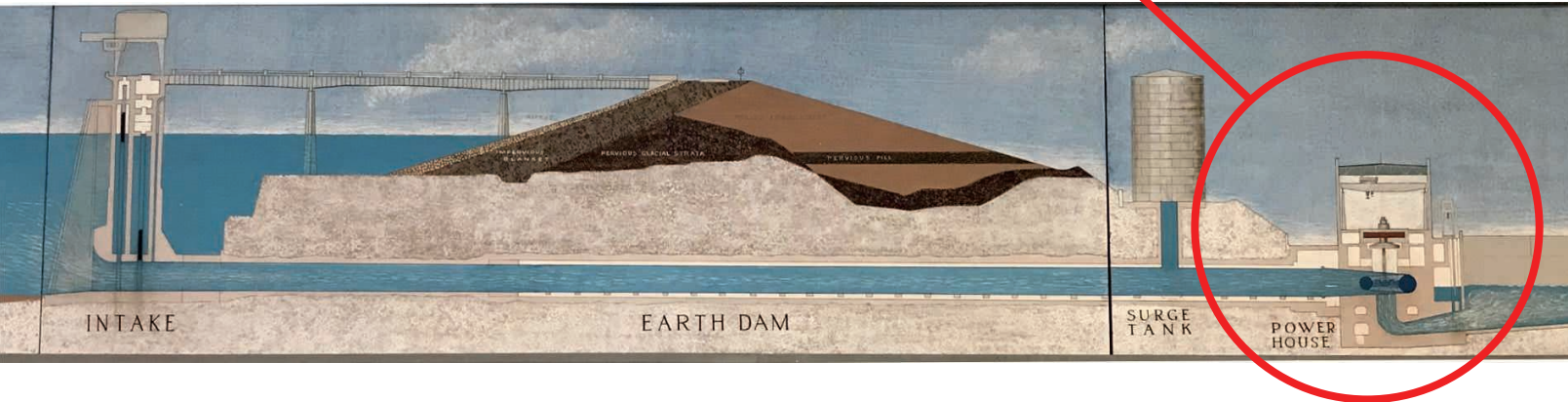
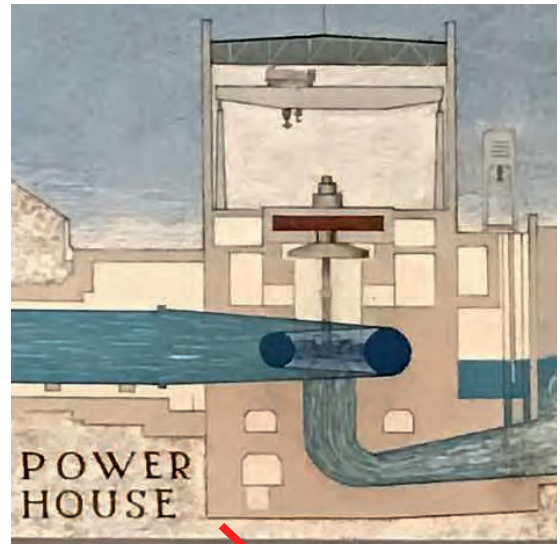
Work at the Fort Randall Project is scheduled to wrap up in 2031 once all eight generating units are replaced.



Above: The Fort Randall Dam is equipped with eight turbines. Unit 6 turbine is shown being removed for the first time since it went online in 1955.

Below & Right: A visual of Fort Randall Dam. Water flows into the powerhouse via the intake tunnel. As the water passes through, it spins the turbine. The rotor, connected to the turbine, spins inside the stator. As the rotor spins inside the stator, its magnetic field passes through copper windings and produces electricity.

Photos Submitted by USACE



MEET YOUR CANDIDATE FOR DISTRICT 3

At the annual meeting in 2025, Director Gary Bachman, who is currently President of the board of directors, announced his retirement. His announcement sparked the search for a candidate to replace him after the 2026 annual meeting.

A group of FEM members were selected to begin that search. Your nominating committee found a qualified candidate who is committed to representing and serving the FEM membership in Josh Heinrich.

Josh grew up on a farm located Southeast of Bowdle until the age of 14. He began splitting his time between the farm and Lincoln, NE after that. He attended Maplewood Academy in Hutchinson, MN. From there, he started nursing school at Union College in Lincoln, NE where he graduated with his bachelor's degree in 2014.

He moved back to Bowdle to operate the farm full time, but also works at Bowdle Healthcare during slower months. He enjoys splitting his time between nursing and the farm, keeping his nursing skills sharp and helping the community.

Josh's wife Sarah is a Physical Therapist at Bowdle Healthcare, and they have 2 kids; Vaughn who is in 4th grade, and Maiya, who is in 1st grade. Josh says, "With over a decade of experience as a nurse, I've learned how to care for many different patients who have ranged from having a minor illness or injury to someone who has required life saving interventions. I have also learned to work with various staff and providers to



help achieve positive health outcomes for a wide population." These skills will be a valuable asset to the FEM Board of directors.

His farming experience means he's learned how to make responsible financial decisions that both improve his operation and not jeopardize its success. "I've learned to prioritize all the tasks that need to be completed for each season, for crops and cattle to be profitable. I've been able to get to know and work with neighbors to have a stronger community."

Josh also serves on the Bowdle School Board, which has been a learning experience. He's gained insight into how a school is operated. "With all of these different jobs and positions my family and I have had fun along the way. I look forward to the opportunity of being a part of the FEM Board, and I hope that my contributions can have a positive impact on the cooperative and its members."

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

During these warm summer months, a smart thermostat can help keep your home comfortable while reducing cooling costs. Smart thermostats learn your routine and automatically raise the temperature when you're away and cool things down before you return, avoiding unnecessary energy use. You can also adjust settings remotely from your phone, so you're never cooling an empty house. Setting your thermostat a few degrees higher while you're away or asleep can lead to significant savings. Many smart thermostats provide reports and tips, helping you fine-tune your energy use and stay cool while keeping your electric bill in check.



78TH ANNUAL MEETING 6.23.26

**Dinner @ 5:00 pm - Meeting @6:30 pm
Ipswich school**

**DON'T MISS THE 78TH ANNUAL MEETING OF
THE FEM MEMBERSHIP**

Districts 2 and 3 up for Election

\$500 Young Adults Light The Way Scholarship
High School Junior and Seniors eligible

Must attend entire meeting with at least one member parent.

**\$40 ENERGY CREDIT TO ALL MEMBERS
WHO ATTEND THE ENTIRE MEETING**

\$500 in grand prize drawings will be given away.
Must be present to win.

**Dinner of baked steak, roast beef or pulled
pork provided to all attendees.**

Keep up to date with your cooperative.

THE PICK-SLOAN PLAN

Taming North America's Longest Waterway

Jacob Boyko

jacob.boyok@sdrea.coop

In the 1930s, both the upper Missouri River and its home in rural America looked notably different than they do today.

That was a period in which electricity was still a luxury enjoyed by townfolk lucky enough to have a municipal or investor-owned utility serving the community. As rural neighbors founded electric cooperatives to serve their homes, the once-primitive prairie quickly began to light up. And with that step into the modern age came the growing need for more electricity.

At this same time, the 2,300-mile-long Missouri River passing through seven states in the region was proving to be an untamable, destructive force for the communities and agriculture producers on its banks.

The floods would wreak havoc on riverside cities like Omaha, Kansas City, St. Louis, and Mississippi River communities like Memphis and New Orleans during swells, disrupting economic activity and trade. During low-flow years and toward the end of summer, the low water levels made navigation extremely difficult for barge traffic.

These problems had been ongoing. All the way back in 1933, President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal constructed the Fort Peck Dam near Glasgow, Mont. There, the nearly 4-mile-



The Missouri River floods downtown Pierre in 1952 before the Oahe Dam is complete.

Photo Courtesy of S.D. State Historical Society

long and 250-foot high rolled-earth dam created Fort Peck Lake, stretching 134 miles across eastern Montana and generating up to 185 MW of electricity. Even so, the federal government understood more work was needed to fully rein in the power of the Missouri.

Competing Visions: Pick vs. Sloan

Lewis A. Pick, an officer with the US Army Corps of Engineers, and William G. Sloan, an official with the Bureau of Reclamation, each had a vision for the future of the Missouri River Basin.

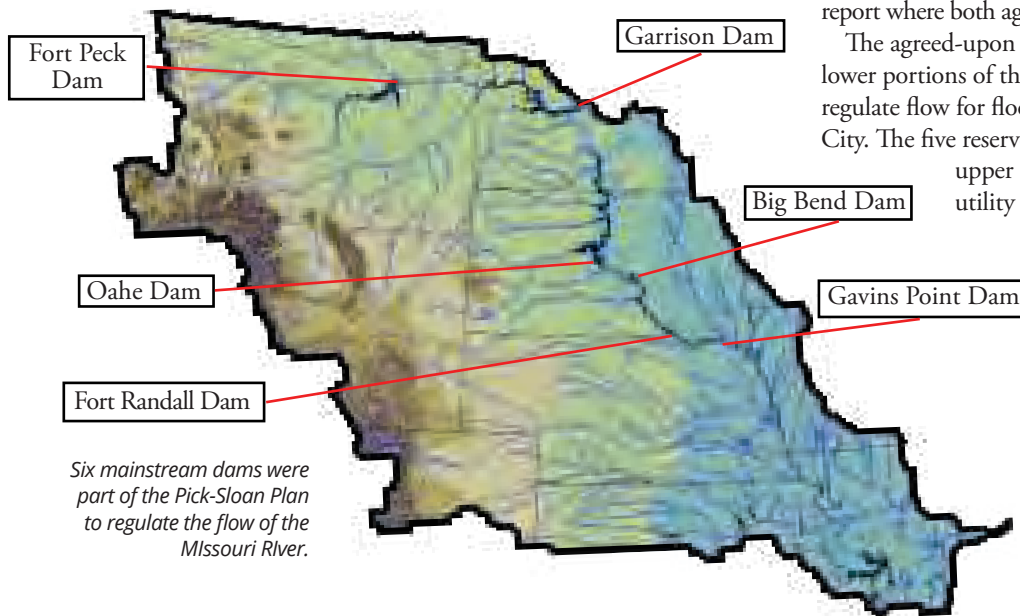
Pick envisioned large dams on the main channel of the Missouri River with a focus on flood control and navigation downstream in the lower Missouri River basin. His plan included five main-channel dams with levees from Sioux City, Iowa, to the river's confluence with the Mississippi River in St. Louis, Missouri.

Sloan, on the other hand, wanted the projects to benefit the upper Missouri River basin, with a focus on water storage for irrigation and agricultural development. Sloan recommended dozens of smaller dams with hydro-electric power plants.

The battle between the USACE and DOR was contentious, but it became clear that no side could garner enough support on its own to pass a project with price tags of about \$1 billion each.

Finally, in 1944, USACE and DOR released a joint engineering report where both agencies' goals for the basin were represented.

The agreed-upon plan would benefit both the upper and lower portions of the basin, with five hydro-power dams to regulate flow for flood control and navigation past Sioux City. The five reservoirs would store water for uses in the upper basin, including irrigation, recreation, utility systems and hydropower generation.



Six mainstream dams were part of the Pick-Sloan Plan to regulate the flow of the Missouri River.



Oahe Dam during construction in 1958.

Photo Courtesy of S.D. State Historical Society

Fort Randall Dam (1946-1954)

Location: Pickstown, S.D.

Length: 10,700 feet long – over 2 miles!

Height: 165 feet at highest point

Generating Capacity: 8 hydroelectric generating unites producing up to 320 MW. (See pp. 8-9)

Completed in the 1950s, Fort Randall was the first of South Dakota's mainstream Missouri River dams to come online, generating hydropower for the region and changing the river from a threat into a resource. The Fort Randall Dam creates Lake Francis Case, named for South Dakota's US Senator and Pick-Sloan advocate Francis Higbee Case. The reservoir can store about 5.3 million acre-feet of water (enough water to flood 5.3 million acres at a depth of 1 foot).

Garrison Dam (1947-1955)

Location: Riverdale, N.D.

Length: 11,300 feet long – over 2 miles!

Height: 210 feet at highest point

Generating Capacity: 5 hydroelectric generating unites producing up to 583 MW.

Garrison Dam creates lake Sakakawea, which stretches across western and central North Dakota. The reservoir is the largest on the Missouri River, holding more than 23.5 million acre-feet of water. The dam is named after the nearby town, Garrison. Controversially, the lake flooded the homes of the Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara tribal nations.

Oahe Dam (1948-1963)

Location: Pierre/Fort Pierre, S.D.

Length: 9,360 feet long – about 1.8 miles!

Height: 245 feet at highest point

Generating Capacity: 7 hydroelectric generating units producing up to 786 MW.

Oahe Dam sits north of Pierre and Fort Pierre, forming Lake Oahe. The reservoir can hold about 23 million acre-feet of water. Oahe Dam has the highest generation capacity, producing enough electricity to power about 600,000 homes.

The dam and lake's name came from the Oahe Indian Mission established more than 70 years before. The mission's site, as well as other communities and tribal lands, were submerged beneath the reservoir.

Gavin's Point Dam (1952-1957)

Location: Yankton, S.D.

Length: 8,700 feet long – about 1.6 miles.

Height: 74 feet at highest point

Generating Capacity: 3 hydroelectric generating unites producing up to 132 MW.

The farthest downriver dam on the Missouri, Gavin's Point is a dam essential for controlling the water levels for downstream barge traffic starting at Sioux City on the Missouri River and all the way down to New Orleans on the Mississippi River. The dam creates Lewis and Clark Lake on the South Dakota-Nebraska border, with a storage capacity of 492,000 acre-feet of water.

Big Bend Dam (1959-1966)

Location: Fort Thompson, S.D.

Length: 10,570 feet long – about 2 miles.

Height: 95 feet at highest point

Generating Capacity: 8 hydroelectric generating unites producing up to 439 MW.

The final mainstream Pick-Sloan dam to be completed on the Missouri River, Big Bend Dam creates Lake Sharpe, holding about 1.7 million acre-feet of water.

The Good and the Bad

A lot of good came from the Pick-Sloan Plan: affordable hydropower for communities throughout the region and water storage to mitigate drought and reduce flooding.

However, a project of such magnitude will also naturally have downsides. University of South Dakota Professor David Swanson says the disruption of

natural patterns has affected ecology for riverside habitats.

Cottonwood seedlings need wet, sandy soil to germinate – without spring floods, it's hard for new trees to establish. Today, there are fewer young cottonwoods growing.

In addition, birds like the least tern that nest on sand bars struggle to find suitable ground, affecting populations.

The reservoirs also flooded more than 1 million acres of land along the Missouri River, some held by private landowners and tribes, and displaced about 6,000 people from land where their families had lived for generations.

In South Dakota, several former communities lay beneath Lake Oahe, including parts of Polluck and Forest City.

Between Chamberlain and Oacoma, American Island was once a statewide destination for boy scouts, with its miles of forest, camp with cabins and bathhouse, racetrack. Today, it sits below dozens of feet of water in Lake Francis Case.



American Island's locally-famous animal statues were moved before Lake Francis Case flooded the island. Photo Courtesy of the Cozard Memorial Library



Tribal leader George Gillette wipes tears as land is seized for the Garrison Dam. Photo Courtesy of National Archives

DIRECTOR OBTAINS NATIONAL RECOGNITION CERTIFICATE

FEM ELECTRIC CO-OP DIRECTOR ACHIEVES CREDENTIAL IN TODAY'S ELECTRIC UTILITY COMPETENCIES



Paula Petersen from FEM Electric recently received the Board Leadership certificate from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA).

An ever-changing business environment has imposed new demands on electric cooperative directors, requiring increased knowledge of changes in the electric utility business, new governance skills and a solid knowledge of the cooperative principles and business model. FEM Electric has a commitment to work through NRECA to sharpen this body of knowledge for the benefit of their electric cooperative member-owners.

The NRECA Board Leadership Certificate (BLC) recognizes individuals who continue their professional development after becoming a Credentialed Cooperative Director (CCD). Directors who have attained the BLC have completed 10 credits in advanced, issues-oriented courses.

Achieving recognition was Paula Petersen, who sits on FEM's board of directors as Treasurer.

NRECA represents the nation's almost 900 private, consumer-owned electric cooperatives, which provide electric service to more than 42 million people in 48 states, with over 7,200 Directors. FEM Electric serves approximately 2100 people in Faulk, Edmunds and McPherson Counties.



TIPS TO AVOID ENERGY SCAMS

Protect your accounts by enabling multi-factor authentication (MFA) wherever possible. MFA adds an extra layer of security by requiring a second step—like a code sent to your phone or an authentication app—beyond just your password. Even if a scammer steals your login information through phishing or data breaches, MFA can stop them from accessing your account. Choose app-based authentication over text messages when available, as it's more secure. Taking a few minutes to turn on MFA for email, banking and additional online accounts can significantly reduce your risk of identity theft and financial loss.

Source: staysafeonline.org



People • Power • Purpose



South Dakota Rural Electric – – – – – YOUTH EXCURSION – – – – – July 20-22, 2026

Application Form

To apply for 2026 Youth Excursion, complete the form below and return it to FEM Electric.
The deadline to apply is June 1, 2026. If you have any questions, please call 605-426-6891.

2026 Youth Excursion Application

Name: _____
Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone#: _____ Email: _____
School: _____ 2025-2026 Class/Year: _____
Gender: _____ T-shirt Size: _____

Return this information by June 1, 2026 to:
FEM Electric
PO Box 468
800 5th Ave.
Ipswich, SD 57451



JUNE 19-20
77th Annual Tabor
Czech Days
 Food, Dancing, Parade
 Tabor, SD
taborczechdays.com

To have your event listed on this page, send complete information, including date, event, place and contact to your local electric cooperative. Include your name, address and daytime telephone number. Information must be submitted at least eight weeks prior to your event. Please call ahead to confirm date, time and location of event.

JUNE 4-6
Black Hills Quilt Show
 Thurs. 5-8 p.m.
 Fri. 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
 Sat. 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
 Rushmore Hall
 at the Monument
 Rapid City, SD

JUNE 5
Northern Bull Riding Tour
 Prairie Village
 Madison, SD

JUNE 6
Bulls 'n' Pulls
Antique Tractor Pull
 Prairie Village
 Madison, SD

JUNE 6
Citywide Rummage Sale
 Sales Throughout Community
 – Treasures Guaranteed!
 Redfield, SD

JUNE 6
Eureka Citywide
Rummage Sale
 8 a.m.
 Eureka, SD
 605-230-1777

JUNE 13
Journey Into Uncovering
Historic Pickstown
 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
 Pickstown, SD
 605-487-7299

JUNE 13
America's 250th
 Baseball/Softball Day
 Train Day, Carnegie Library
 Open House, Fireworks
 Redfield, SD

JUNE 13
Luce Pioneer Day
 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
 Rope & Candle Making, Butter
 Churning, Dutch Oven Cooking
 Lake Herman State Park
 Madison, SD
 605-880-5077

JUNE 19-20
Estelline Rodeo Days
 5:30 p.m. Mutton Bustin'
 6 p.m. Rodeo (Both Days)
 Estelline, SD
www.estellinerodeo.com

JUNE 19-21
Ipswich Trail Days
 Ipswich, SD
ipswichtraildays.com

JUNE 26-27
Buckhorn Rodeo
 Britton, SD
 605-880-5077

JUNE 26-27
Orient Days
 Orient, SD

JUNE 26-28
Bowdle Tower Days
 Bowdle, SD
 605-252-6694

JULY 2-4
USA 250th Celebration
at Mount Rushmore
 Rapid City, SD
www.nps.gov

JULY 3
City of Eureka Celebration –
USA's 250th Anniversary
 3 p.m.-11 p.m.
 Eureka, SD
 605-284-2441

JULY 8
Tracy Area Gardens & Quilts Tour
 2-7:30 p.m.
 Lakes Area – Shetek, Sarah, Gavin
 Rain Date: July 9
 Tracy, MN
 507-629-3252
tracy.area.garden.quilts@gmail.com

JULY 11
40th Annual Spearfish Canyon
Half Marathon & 5K
 Start: 7 a.m., Savoy, SD
 End: City Park, Spearfish, SD
 Register: www.nhcasa.org

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40th Annual Spearfish Canyon
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Note: We publish contact information as provided. If no phone number is given, none will be listed. Please call ahead to verify the event is still being held.