

ROUGH RIDER NEWS

ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

WINTER WONDERLAND: Exploring the season's charms at Cross Ranch State Park

BY SAMANTHA VANGSNES



At Cross Ranch State Park, guests are able to enjoy the groomed trails and take in the beauty of the Missouri River.

For many residents in North Dakota, winter seems to be the longest season and requires us to be creative with how we spend our time both indoors and outdoors. While sometimes the comfort of a warm house and playing games or watching movies is exactly what is needed, other days are perfect to get out and explore (more than our yard)!

North Dakota's outdoors has more to offer than cold temperatures, wind and snow in the winter. Places like Cross Ranch State Park make an exciting addition to your winter to-do list.

Cross Ranch is located on the Missouri River in some of the last undeveloped stretches of the river. Located near Center, the park is an easy drive for a day trip filled with adventure. Cross Ranch offers over 16 miles of trails, most of which are used year-round. These trails aren't just for hiking, as winter welcomes park visitors to snowshoe and cross-country ski.

Winter activities at Cross Ranch

During the winter season, Cross Ranch has about 10 miles of trail groomed for cross country skiing and snowshoeing.

"The trails in the winter offer an opportunity for visitors to take in the landscape of the Missouri River and various wildlife, such as bald eagles, mule deer, migrating birds and even moose," says Terry Mitchell, Cross Ranch park manager.

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Cabins and yurts are available to rent in the winter months at Cross Ranch State Park.

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The park offers equipment rentals for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. One of the most popular trails is the Matah “River” Trail, which is just under 3 miles long and is the most versatile trail. On this trail, visitors can hike, snowshoe or cross-country ski, while relishing the river view and the chance to spot wildlife.

While there are many activities at Cross Ranch, some come just to relax and read a book.

“We have cabins and yurts available to rent in the winter. Some are fully furnished and some have a more rustic feel,” Mitchell notes.

Seven lodges are available for rent in the winter, including four yurts and three cabins. Visitors still love to stay at the park in the winter.

“Last year, we had a couple from Florida fly in and stay at the park for a weekend. They wanted to experience staying in a cabin during the winter,” Mitchell recalls.

He does caution visitors who stay to bring extra food and clothes, because you never know what the weather may bring.

In addition, the park hosts many activities during the winter months for visitors. Annually, the park hosts Winterfest in February. The family friendly celebration includes outdoor activities, warm food and refreshments for all to enjoy. The park also hosts a fat-tire bike ride in February.

Find your way to Cross Ranch

Cross Ranch can be found by following the brown N.D. Department of Transportation signs along the road, whether you’re coming from Beulah, Center, Mandan or Washburn.

“If you’re on gravel, you have taken the wrong route,” Mitchell cautions.

Mitchell advises interested parties to watch the Facebook page, Cross Ranch State Park, for activities and updates. ■

Prepare for tax season with SmartHub

Tax season can be daunting, but with SmartHub, you can easily access and review your energy bills, helping you manage your taxes more effectively. Let us assist you in making the tax season a breeze.

Print copies of your monthly utility bills for your tax records by logging into SmartHub. Visit www.roughriderelectric.com, then click “SmartHub” to proceed to your billing history. If you have not signed up for SmartHub, you can set up a new secure account. ■

MANAGER'S MESSAGE:

Reliable power for today and tomorrow



Travis Kupper

Ring in a new year sparks a sense of renewed hope and optimism about the future. As the co-general manager/CEO of Roughrider Electric

Cooperative, it's a time to reflect on where we are and where we are going. At the heart of this reflection, I think about ways we can better serve you, the members of the cooperative.

Our team at Roughrider Electric is always looking ahead, exploring ways to innovate and utilize new technologies to improve our services. As our nation increasingly relies on electricity to power the economy, keeping the lights on has never been more important. We're committed to powering – and empowering – our service area at a cost local families and businesses can afford.

One critical component of reliable power is the mix of energy resources used to generate the electricity that keeps the lights on across Roughrider Electric's territory. You may not realize it, but Roughrider Electric doesn't generate electricity. Instead, we purchase it from our energy providers, Basin Electric Power Cooperative, Upper Missouri Power Cooperative and the Western Area Power Administration. From there, we distribute power to homes and businesses throughout our communities.

We're increasingly using more electricity generated from renewable energy sources, but

we still depend on a diverse energy mix to ensure reliable power is available to our members whenever they need it.

Advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) enables two-way communication between the co-op and members. In the event of a power outage, AMI helps pinpoint the exact location of the outage and can even analyze damaged or tampered meters. AMI helps Roughrider Electric save money with real-time data and ultimately improves power reliability for our entire area.

Proactive tree trimming is another way we limit service disruptions. Scheduled trimming keeps power lines clear from overgrown limbs that are likely to fall.

One of the best methods for improving our services to you is by monitoring trends and leading practices from other electric cooperatives in North Dakota and across the country. Learning from other cooperatives is one of the many benefits of the cooperative business model, because it's about cooperation, not competition.

As we begin 2024, Roughrider Electric will continue working to provide the reliable, affordable electricity you expect and deserve – for today and tomorrow. ■



POWERING ON: Roughrider Electric Cooperative's calendar

JANUARY

HEATING ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE

LIHEAP applications open now through May 31. Scan the QR code for more information.



JAN. 19

YOUTH TOUR APPLICATION DEADLINE

Scan the QR code for more information.



FEB. 1

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION DEADLINE

Scan the QR code for more information.



FEB. 1

MEMBER SATISFACTION SURVEY BEGINS

Watch for your February bill, Roughrider Electric Cooperative social media and future *North Dakota Living* issues.



MARCH 11

MEMBER SATISFACTION SURVEY BEGINS VIA PHONE

Members who have completed the survey via print or digitally will not be contacted.



Safety Starts with ME: Snow removal



As winter weather continues, we want to remind Roughrider Electric Cooperative members to stay safe around electrical equipment. You've seen the "big green boxes" in your area, but have you wondered what they are? These boxes are known as pad-mounted transformers and are crucial for converting electricity to a voltage that is safe for use in homes and local businesses.

"Pad-mounted transformers are crucial for power, but they can pose a dangerous risk if appropriate precautions are not taken," says Claud Privratsky, who works in maintenance at Roughrider Electric Cooperative.

"Think of it like this: Just as there are power lines above the ground, there are also power lines below the ground. These underground lines connect to transformers, which are like power hubs. The transformers get power from high-voltage lines and then send it in different directions to homes and businesses through secondary lines. When clearing snow, be careful around underground cabinets and transformers, because messing with them could damage the hidden power lines," he says.

It is important to carefully remove snow around the pad-mounted transformers.

"Snow can sometimes make these pieces of equipment hard to detect, making snow removal more dangerous," Privratsky says. "Be sure to know the location, if near one, to make snow removal safe and easy."

Safety Starts with Me (and YOU)!

Use these tips to keep you and your family safe around pad-mounted transformers:

- **Mark the location of pad-mounted transformers.** If you have a pad-mounted transformer in your area, mark its location with a flag or reflector to alleviate accidents when removing snow.
- **Carefully remove snow around pad-mounted transformer.** Snow piled on electrical equipment can impact your safety and electric service to your home. In the event of an outage, having the pad-mounted transformers cleared of any snow will make it easier for lineworkers to restore power.
- **Never touch, climb or play near or on a pad-mounted transformer.** It is important to inform children to never play on "the big green box."
- **Keep the area around a pad-mounted transformer clear of any obstructions.** A 10-foot radius is recommended. This includes trees, shrubs or other obstructions. This distance allows for lineworkers to maneuver around the transformer with their equipment if needed.
- **Do not dig around a pad-mounted transformer.** Always call 811 before you dig. Below the transformers are pad-mounted lines that can cause damage to you and the electrical system if hit.
- **Report any damaged or unlocked transformer to your local cooperative.** If you notice anything off about the equipment, call Roughrider Electric at 800-748-5533.

"At Roughrider Electric, we want to provide you with electricity as well as protect your livelihood," Privratsky says. We hope you and your loved ones will take these tips into consideration when removing snow to stay safe this winter. ■



2024 SCHOLARSHIPS

DEADLINE: FEB. 1

*Visit our website for applications
and more detailed information
www.roughriderelectric.com*



Area high school scholarship

Roughrider Electric Cooperative will award nine \$500 scholarships. Each school in our service area chooses one recipient. School representatives from Belfield, Beulah, Center-Stanton, Dickinson High, Dickinson Trinity, Hazen, Richardton-Taylor, South Heart and Dickinson Hope Christian Academy choose a graduating senior to receive the funds. Contact your school counselor for more information.

\$1,000 Basin Electric Power Cooperative scholarship

Roughrider Electric will award a \$1,000 scholarship to a student who is already enrolled or planning to enroll in a full-time graduate or undergraduate program. The student must attend an accredited two- or four-year program, university or vocational/tech school.

Lineworker scholarship from 3C Construction

Roughrider Electric is offering one \$500 scholarship sponsored by 3C Construction, LLC. Owned in part by Roughrider Electric, 3C Construction employs lineworkers who travel, plowing cable and assisting with projects as needed. Eligible applicants are high school seniors who are enrolled or planning to enroll in a certified vocational or technical school pursuing a career as a lineworker.

Luck-of-the-draw scholarship

Roughrider Electric will award three \$500 luck-of-the-draw scholarships to be drawn at our annual meeting.

High school scholarship outside service area

Roughrider will award one \$500 scholarship.

Mechanic scholarships from West Dakota Utility Services

Roughrider Electric is offering one \$500 scholarship sponsored by West Dakota Utility Services, LLC. Eligible applicants are high school seniors who are enrolled or planning to enroll in a certified vocational or technical school pursuing a career as a mechanic.

Students can call the Hazen office with questions. Applications can also be filled out online and emailed to bquenette@roughriderelectric.com, or printed and mailed to: Roughrider Electric Cooperative, Attn: Scholarship Committee, 800 Highway Dr., Hazen, ND 58545-4737



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

All applicants must have a parent or guardian who is a Roughrider Electric member.



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Roughrider Electric wants to hear from you!

Roughrider Electric Cooperative will be conducting a member engagement survey from February through March. This member engagement survey aims to gather feedback and insights from members of Roughrider Electric regarding their experiences, satisfaction levels and suggestions for improvement.

There are multiple ways to participate:

- Watch for the printed survey enclosed with your February bill.
- Access the survey online via our social media channels or website.
- Opt for a phone survey, scheduled for March. Rest assured, your privacy is our priority. Your responses will remain confidential, anonymized and aggregated for analysis purposes only. Your valuable input will help us improve without compromising your privacy. No information will be shared externally. As a gesture of appreciation for your valuable input, participants who choose to provide their contact information will also be entered into a giveaway for a chance to win a set of Medora Musical tickets. ■



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU.

Your voice, your impact! Participate in our member satisfaction survey and play a vital role in shaping the future of our services.



Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

APPLY FOR A TRIP OF A LIFETIME



WHAT IS YOUTH TOUR?

An all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., paid for by Roughrider Electric Cooperative. A week of visiting historic monuments, touring world class museums, learning about electric cooperatives and meeting elected officials. Developing lifelong friendships with delegates from across the country!



JUNE 15 TO 21, 2024

AN ALL-EXPENSE-PAID TRIP TO WASHINGTON, D.C.

ESSAY QUESTION

If chosen as a Youth Tour delegate, you will be traveling to Washington, D.C., to experience and learn about America's rich history. What moment in American history do you wish you had been a part of and what would you have contributed?

HOW TO APPLY

To enter the essay-writing contest, you must be a sophomore or junior in high school, and you and your parents or guardian must be served by Roughrider Electric Cooperative.

Email entries to Brad Quenette at bquenette@roughriderelectric.com or mail a hard copy to: Youth Tour Essay Contest, 800 Highway Dr., Hazen, ND, 58545-4737.

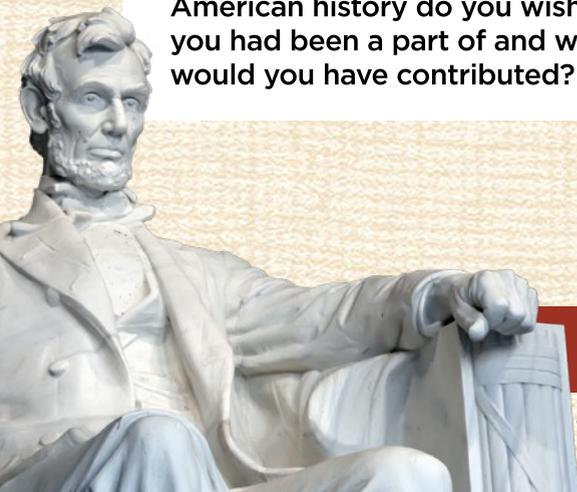
Questions? Call Brad at 701-748-2293 during regular business hours.

The deadline is Jan. 19, 2024.

EMPOWER



LEARN MORE AT
ROUGHRIDERELECTRIC.COM/YOUTH-TOUR



Roughrider Electric board meeting highlights: Oct. 27, 2023

The October meeting of the board of directors of Roughrider Electric Cooperative was held on Oct. 27, 2023, via Microsoft Teams. President Greg Steckler called the meeting to order at 8:10 a.m. General Counsel Jennifer Grosz was designated as the meeting recorder. A board quorum was met. Also present were Roughrider's Co-General Managers/CEOs Travis Kupper and Jason Bentz, Chief Financial Officer Alex Craigmile, Chief Information Officer Charlie Dunbar, Chief of Staff/Line Superintendent Shawn Olson, Director of Key Accounts Leonard Hibl, Business Manager Michaela Kathrein and Board Liaison Connie Hill. The meeting commenced with the board reviewing Roughrider Electric's mission statement.

Consent agenda: An amendment was proposed to the consent agenda. The agenda was approved as amended. The Sept. 29, 2023, meeting minutes were also approved. Capital credit estate retirements, proposed member applications and cancellations were presented and approved.

Strategic/action: Bentz and Kupper presented the co-general managers' report, which included updates from Upper Missouri

Power Cooperative, Basin Electric Power Cooperative and the Grid Resilience and Innovation Partnerships Program. Bentz and Kupper also reviewed updates from 3C Construction and West Dakota Utility Services.

Action items: The board reviewed and approved the 2023 general retirement of cooperative capital credits.

Discussion/general information: Craigmile provided the board with a preliminary 2024 budget.

Administration/upcoming meetings: Upcoming meetings and events were shared.

Department reports: Craigmile reviewed the September 2023 financial reports. Olson provided a report, which included service and an outage update. Hibl presented a report, which included an update on accounts. Dunbar reported on updates they are working on for the co-op's servers. Grosz provided a report on projects she is working on for the co-op.

The meeting concluded with the adjournment. Troy Sailer, secretary, certified the accuracy of the minutes.

Next meeting date: The next meeting date was set for Nov. 17, 2023, at Roughrider Electric's office in Dickinson. ■

Statement of nondiscrimination

Roughrider Electric Cooperative Inc. is a recipient of federal assistance from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture and USDA civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its agencies, offices and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible agency or USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD3027, found online at www.usda.gov/oascr/how-to-file-a-program-discrimination-complaint and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. ■



www.roughriderelectric.com

HAZEN OFFICE

701-748-2293 or 800-748-5533
800 Highway Dr., Hazen, ND 58545
7:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. CT Monday-Friday

Payments may be deposited in the deposit box by Roughrider Electric's main office entrance or in the drop boxes located at Krause's Super Valu in Hazen or Bronson's Super Valu in Beulah.

DICKINSON OFFICE

701-483-5111 or 800-748-5533
P.O. Box 1038, 2156 4th Ave. E.
Dickinson, ND 58602
7 a.m. - 4 p.m. MT Monday-Friday

Payments may be deposited in the deposit box west of Roughrider Electric's main office entrance or the west and south locations of Family Fare supermarkets.

OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

Greg Steckler, President; Dunn Center.....	548-8122
Roger Kudrna, Vice President; Dickinson.....	483-8377
Troy Sailer, Secretary; Golden Valley.....	948-2427
Bruce Darcy, Treasurer; Golden Valley.....	983-4222
Jesse Flath, Hazen.....	880-0386
Darell Herman; Beulah.....	873-4371
Arnold Kainz; Dickinson.....	483-8207
Dan Price; Hensler.....	794-3779
Callen Schoch; New England.....	290-3836

MANAGEMENT

Travis Kupper.....	Co-GM/CEO
Jason Bentz.....	Co-GM/CEO



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