



# DAIRYLAND DIRECTOR REPORT: A 2025 REVIEW

Sandra Davidson, SREC Board Chair  
Representative to the Dairyland Board



Dairyland Power Cooperative is Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative’s wholesale power provider. As a generation & transmission (G&T) cooperative, Dairyland is a cooperative owned by the 24 distribution cooperative members it serves – including Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative (SREC). Governed by its own board of directors, I am our cooperative representative on the Dairyland board and will share key updates from the past year.

Dairyland serves its members and power supply customers with safe, reliable and cost-effective electricity to meet the needs of our local rural communities. Safety is Dairyland’s top priority, as noted by Dairyland’s President & CEO Brent Ridge, who says, if cooperative employees do not work safely, nothing else matters.

Long-term reliability means ensuring infrastructure is in place to support an “all-of-the-above” fuel mix for power generation. Dairyland generates and obtains electricity from solar, wind, natural gas, coal, hydroelectric and biomass facilities. Being part of the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) ensures electricity is delivered at cost-competitive rates through a balanced mix of renewable

Through a streamlined and improved process – in close collaboration with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) – Dairyland will pursue 500 to 1,000 megawatts (MW) of power purchase agreements for clean energy projects. The first project was for 250 MW from Buffalo Ridge II Wind Farm in South Dakota, secured in February. Buffalo Ridge generates enough wind energy to power about 70,000

homes. Additionally, the award supports important upgrades and rebuilds for parts of Dairyland’s existing transmission infrastructure – ensuring communities have access to reliable electricity for decades to come.

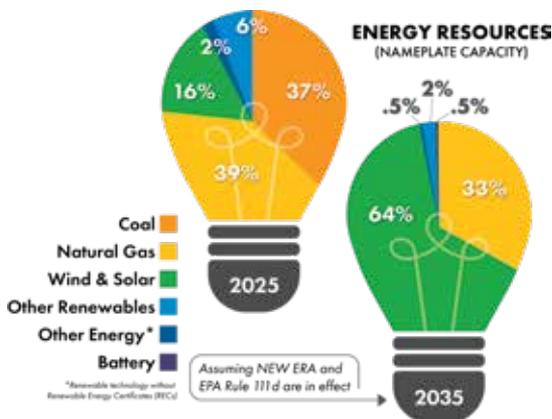
By being part of one of the largest transmission buildouts in history, Dairyland is supporting regional reliability to benefit our members. MISO has named Dairyland a developer for three projects in its Long Range Transmission Plan – Tranches 1 and 2.1.

The Alma-Blair Transmission Project will be a 345-kilovolt [kV] transmission line that will span 33 miles between the Alma Substation near the Mississippi River in western Wisconsin, and the Tremval Substation near Blair, Wis.

In southeastern Minnesota, the Wabasha Relocation Project will relocate about 13 miles of 161 kV transmission lines in Wabasha County. Also, Dairyland and GridLiance Heartland, LLC, will jointly develop and co-own the MariBell Transmission Line. One segment of MISO’s larger buildout, the proposed project is for a 765 kV/161 kV double-circuit line between Marion, Minn., and Bell Center, Wis. (about 140 miles). Community open houses have been hosted along the proposed route, with more to come. These events allow landowners and community members to ask questions and learn about the benefits these lines will provide.

The 765 kV lines are new to the region. One 765-kV line carries as much electrical capability as six, 345-kV lines, minimizing the land needed by as much as 70% to 80%, while improving reliability. Investing in higher-capacity lines now avoids the cost of upgrading or building additional lines in the future.

At the end of 2025, Dairyland acquired the Rocky Road Energy Center (East Dundee) and Elgin Energy Center (Elgin) in Illinois. The purchase of existing natural gas-fired power plants supports the Cooperative’s focus on sustainability and reliability for its members while transitioning to a lower-carbon future.



(intermittent) and traditional “baseload” resources.

In April 2025, Dairyland received confirmation from the Trump Administration that its \$595 million Empowering Rural America (New ERA) grant from September 2024 would be funded. Initiatives made possible by the grant will benefit Dairyland’s members and the region with:

- Resource diversification to support rural communities, economic growth and U.S. energy independence
- Downward rate pressure for rural residents
- Increased grid reliability and resilience resulting from critical transmission line upgrades

As part of its overall sustainable power supply plan, Dairyland continues to explore small modular nuclear reactors. With nuclear as a viable future energy option, Dairyland hired Grover Hettel in September to be their Executive Vice President & Chief Nuclear Officer. Nuclear will drive the clean energy transition by providing reliable baseload, carbon-free power to support economic growth and the integration of wind and solar.

Since 2012, Dairyland has spent millions of dollars annually overseeing the Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installation (ISFSI) site that stores the spent nuclear fuel from the retired La Crosse Boiling Water Reactor. Until 2025, Dairyland had recouped its expenses through lengthy and costly litigation against the federal government. Last year, Dairyland was able to create a settlement process, which will recoup costs for Dairyland and its members more efficiently.

In 2025, Moody's Ratings revised the outlook for Dairyland Power Cooperative to positive from stable and affirmed Dairyland's A3 rating, supporting their Strategic Priority of Financial Strength.

Dairyland works with elected officials, regardless of party affiliation, to advocate for policies benefitting electric cooperatives, including cybersecurity policies. In January 2026, Dairyland's Vice President & Chief Information Officer Nate Melby testified at a hearing before the U.S.

House of Representatives that focused on solutions for energy infrastructure that would help strengthen collaboration between the government and the private/independent sector, detect cybersecurity threats and increase physical security.

The Load Management Modernization project continues to make progress with the installation of new receivers throughout Dairyland's service territory. This project will enhance Dairyland's current load management program to reduce electricity use during periods of peak demand and higher market prices on the grid.

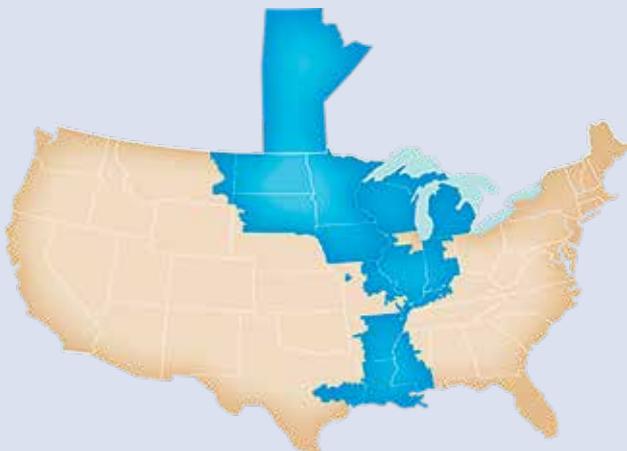
As we flipped the calendar to 2026, dangerously low temperatures and severe winter weather significantly impacted the Dairyland system, and the MISO and PJM (east coast) grid operators' footprints. In addition to the cold, forced generation outages resulted in MISO declaring a Maximum Generation Event Step 2c/Energy Emergency Alert (EEA) Level 2 on Saturday, Jan. 24, for the first time since 2009. Additionally, Dairyland declared several Full Load Control events at the end of January and early February to help reduce members' electricity use during times of both peak demand and peak prices. These coordinated efforts help the grid remain stable.

Dairyland and SREC have worked to mitigate the financial impact of the severe weather and forced generation outages. However, due to demand, operational and market challenges during the event, a power cost adjustment charge will appear on monthly electricity bills throughout the spring.

## ABOUT MISO

The Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) is an independent, not-for-profit, member-based organization responsible for keeping reliable and cost-effective power flowing across 77,000 miles of transmission lines. MISO focuses on three critical tasks:

1. Managing the flow of high-voltage electricity across 15 U.S. states and the Canadian province of Manitoba
2. Facilitating one of the world's largest energy markets with more than \$40 billion in annual transactions
3. Planning the grid of the future



## Community

Through the Cooperative Contributions Program, Dairyland and its member cooperatives continuously strive to make a positive impact on our local communities. Annually, Dairyland donates \$1,000 to a charitable organization selected by each member cooperative. SREC designated that this funding was split between the Prairie du Chien and the Gays Mills Fire Departments.

Beginning this spring, Dairyland is supporting an additional \$1,000 scholarship for SREC's scholarship program. Thanks to this contribution, SREC will be awarding a total of 41 scholarships, each valued at \$1,000 at this year's Annual Meeting.

Dairyland's Economic Development team advocates for community growth and new business establishments. In 2025, member cooperatives gained more than 34 megawatts (MW) of load growth from 27 projects, which help increase local economic activity and add new jobs. Dairyland offers its member cooperatives access to the USDA's Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant Program (REDLG), as well as Dairyland's Revolving Loan Fund and cost-share program.

We live in dynamic times, and Dairyland's Board of Directors meets monthly to ensure our cooperatives' needs are heard, working together to achieve strong outcomes for our members. Ninety years ago, electric cooperatives were founded on the principle that collaboration improves quality of life—a value we proudly continue on your behalf.



## Lineworker Appreciation Day #ThankALineworker

Every employee at Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative plays an essential role in keeping the power on. On April 13, we celebrate Lineworker Appreciation Day to recognize our crews for their hard work and dedication to safely keeping the power on.

At Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative, we are lucky to have a great group of lineworkers as the backbone of our energy infrastructure. Their combined years of service stand as a testament to their unwavering dedication to our members. Please join us in celebrating Lineworker Appreciation Day by expressing our gratitude to these devoted lineworkers for their many years of service to you, our SREC members.

- |                         |                         |                          |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Jim Wolf–35 years       | Lucas Ritchie–18 years  | Andy Lindenberg –8 years |
| Phil Schneider–33 years | Matt Rasmussen–16 years | Matthew White – 7 years  |
| Matt Ritchie–25 years   | Tory Henkel–15 years    | Dylan Tydrich–4 years    |
| Pat Pennekamp–23 years  | Shane Crowley–13 years  | Ian Martin –4 years      |
| Chad Olmstead –22 years | Robert Tank–11 years    | Colton Tranel –2 years   |
| Jason Knapp–20 years    | Dan Welsh–10 years      | Charlie Eastman –1 year  |
| Joe Ihm–20 years        | Hunter Fortney–8 years  | Reid Koenig – 4 months   |

*To our heroes in hard hats, thank you for always answering the call and keeping the lights on in our communities.*

## CONGRATULATIONS JOURNEYMEN DYLAN & IAN!



Congratulations to Dylan Tydrich and Ian Martin on achieving their Journeyman Lineworker certification. The pair is pictured above (L to R) after the January graduation ceremony.

To earn this certification, each must complete 7,360 hours of on-the-job training, 640 hours of classroom instruction, and pass the final exam.

Their continued commitment to the cooperative and our members is truly commendable. Join us in congratulating them on this outstanding achievement!



# ATTENTION 3RD GRADERS!

Deadline: April 30, 2026



Scenic Rivers Electric Cooperative is teaming up with Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Association to offer an electrical safety poster contest in recognition of Electrical Safety Month in May. Embrace your creativity and show us what electrical safety means to you and how you stay safe around electricity.

## Win Prizes

We will be offering a \$25 gift card to one winner! Plus, the top three posters will be entered into a statewide poster contest for a chance to win one of these prizes:

**1st place – Chromebook**

**2nd place - \$100 Gift Card**

**3rd place - \$75 Gift Card**

## Contest Rules

- Open to all 3rd grade students of SREC members. One entry per student.
- Poster must be themed around Electrical Safety.
- Posters should be at least 8.5"x11", but no larger than 11"x14".
- No computer-generated images.

## How to Enter

Entries must include completed entry form and student's name on the back of poster. Original artwork will not be returned to the participant.



Visit [www.sre.coop](http://www.sre.coop) for the entry form and contest details.

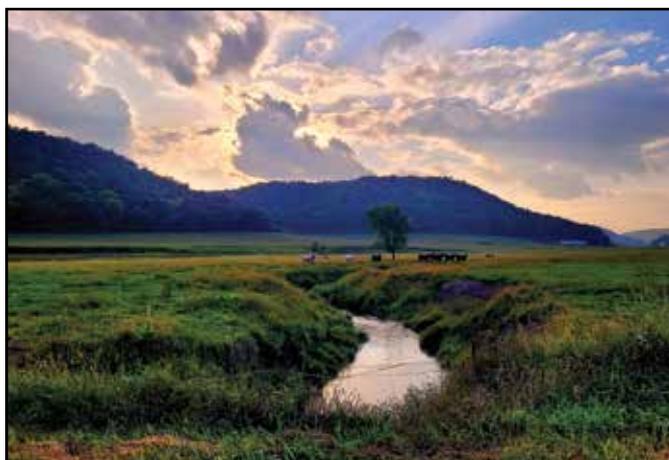
## ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH



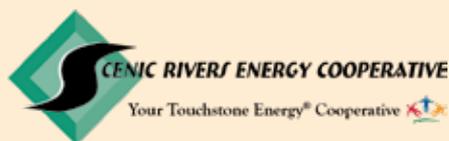
As we prepare for the seasonal shift, remember to set your ceiling fan rotation accordingly. In winter months (or whenever your home heating system is running), fan blades should rotate clockwise, which produces an updraft that pushes warm air down. In summer months (or whenever your home cooling system is running), blades should rotate counterclockwise, which produces a downdraft or windchill effect that makes you feel cooler. When used correctly, ceiling fans can boost comfort and allow you to adjust the thermostat a few degrees for energy savings.

Source: energy.gov

## MEMBER PHOTO OF THE MONTH



"To God be the Glory" is this month's featured photo from Leann Rodgers, a member in Readstown, WI.



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