

# SOUTHEAST ELECTRIC Cooperative



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## TOUR OF FREEDOM MINE FASCINATING

Column by **TYE WILLIAMS** | Manager

**S**OUTHEAST Electric Cooperative receives an allocation every month for a percentage of power generated by the hydroelectric dams along the Missouri River system. Currently, hydroelectricity does not cover our entire power needs, so the rest of the power we use is supplied by Basin Electric Cooperative, which Southeast has been a member of since Basin's inception in 1961.



Over the past few years, I have been able to tour a few of Basin's generation facilities. In 2021, I was able to tour a natural-gas-generation facility outside of Williston, N.D., and then this year I was able to tour the Freedom Mine, Antelope Valley Station, and the Great Plains Synfuels Plant. The Freedom Mine provides lignite coal to the Antelope Valley Station and the Great Plains Synfuels Plant.


One of the most fascinating portions of the tour was the reclamation process at the Freedom Mine. This is a continuous process, which starts before they even strip dirt to start mining coal, and the results were impressive. When we drove to the active mining location, we drove through reclaimed land and it contained fields, tree rows, hills and all the wildlife you would expect outside of Beulah, N.D.



The Antelope Valley Station uses lignite coal as a fuel source and can produce up to 900 megawatts of reliable baseload generation. As the Freedom Mine surrounds Antelope Valley Station, this generating facility is considered a mine-to-mouth operation, which increases its efficiency and reduces fuel transportation costs.

The Great Plains Synfuels Plant was built in conjunction with Antelope Valley Station in the 1980s to produce natural gas from lignite coal. At that time, there was predicted to be a shortage of natural gas by the 1990s, so the Great Plains Synfuels Plant

was built to help curb the predicted shortage. Today, we do not have a shortage of natural gas, but over the last 40 years the plant has diversified products which now include fertilizers, NOX-emission-control products and other chemicals.

The overall tour experience was quite fascinating, and if anyone would like to learn more about where Southeast Electric's power comes from, reach out as I do enjoy talking about it. I hope everyone had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Here is to another good year on the prairie of Eastern Montana. 

## GM JOINS RESCO BOARD

**I**N September, Tye Williams, General Manager of Southeast Electric Cooperative, Inc. was appointed to the Board of Directors for RESCO – Rural Electric Supply Cooperative. RESCO is a member-owned, not-for-profit wholesale distributor of high voltage electrical products.

Todd Hettich, director, Northern Electric Cooperative (SD), Seth Syverson, general manager, Northern Plains Electric Cooperative (ND), Adam Tromblay, general manager, Nobles Cooperative Electric (MN), Tye Williams, manager, Southeast Electric Cooperative (MT) were welcomed to the RESCO Board of Directors during the RESCO Annual Meeting, held Sept. 13 in Des Moines, IA. Tye will serve for 1 year and then consider a 3 year term. RM

## WILLIAMS EARNS CFPC

**I**N November of 2023, Tye Williams, General Manager, earned his Cooperative Financial Professional Certificate (CFPC). This accomplishment did not come without commitment and hard work. By completing two-week sessions, web conferences, work assignments including a comprehensive project, he established himself as the cooperative's in-house financial and business consultant.

Tye will see many valuable benefits and continued opportunities for personal and professional growth as part of the CFPC network. Congratulations on this achievement. RM



## HILLIARD WINS \$1,500 LINEMAN SCHOLARSHIP

**T**HE \$1,500 Vernon Emery Memorial Lineman Scholarship was awarded to Carson Hilliard.

Carson attended Northwest Lineman College in Meridian, Idaho, for the summer semester. In Carson's application he stated that he was looking forward to learning the information and tools to have a successful and safe career in the power-delivery industry. His goal was to eventually return to Ekalaka and work for Southeast Electric Cooperative. On January 1st, Carson will start work at Southeast Electric as an Apprentice Lineman. Southeast management felt that Carson is a good fit for our organization, and we look forward to watching him grow and learn. RM

