



**KANSAS ELECTRIC POWER COOPERATIVE, INC.**

# NEWSMAKER

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Summer 2016

## KEPCo Constructing Solar Farm



Marcus Harris

KEPCo is excited to announce that the early stages of construction have commenced on a one megawatt solar farm in Benton, Kansas. The solar array will consist of approximately 4,560 solar panels and the array will be interconnected to an existing Butler Rural Electric Cooperative Association substation adjacent to the array.

KEPCo Services, Inc. (KSI) will serve as the project engineer and KEPCo will manage the long-term operations and maintenance of the facility. KSI staff performed the feasibility analysis, as well as several other analyses, to determine the viability and optimum location of the facility. The energy produced by the solar farm will be utilized to reduce KEPCo's power needs from traditional resources and will provide carbon-free energy year round to KEPCo's Members. This project further diversifies KEPCo's already varied energy portfolio and enables KEPCo's Members to reap the benefits of solar energy through the economics of a utility-scale project.

During the design phase, KSI used project guidance and design templates created by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Solar Utility Network Deployment Acceleration (SUNDA) project. The SUNDA project is a four-year, multi-state solar installation research project funded by a Department of Energy grant. KSI's extensive experience and expertise will be augmented by working with a national solar equipment procurement company and a local civil structural engineering firm. The project will be engineered, constructed and monitored in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, agreements, permits, codes and standards.

Site development is scheduled to begin in July and will involve site clearing and associated preparation work prior to construction. Once the site work is completed, the following will occur in the order listed: install underground facilities and concrete foundations; install racks; mount modules to the racks; install string inverters; wire the modules to the inverters and the inverters to the AC panels; install the monitoring equipment; install the transformer and disconnect switch; final site work and final inspection. The solar array's production and performance will be monitored using built-in equipment that will allow real-time evaluation of performance.

Since KEPCo is a not-for-profit utility that has access to cooperative financing, and since KEPCo will operate and maintain the array itself, the costs associated with the financing, operations and maintenance will be more economical than if KEPCo sought traditional financing and contracted for the operation and maintenance of the facility. These factors will reduce the cost associated with the project for KEPCo's Members.

## **NRECA Legislative Conference**

A contingent of 20 Kansas electric cooperative representatives attended the NRECA Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C. on May 1, 2, and 3. Marcus Harris, EVP & CEO, Bill Riggins, Senior Vice President, Chief Strategic Officer and General Counsel, and Phil Wages, Director of Member Services, Government Affairs, and Business Development represented KEPCo at the conference.

Over 1,500 electric cooperative representatives from across the country were present in Washington to convey industry issues to their respective congressional leaders. Each year the conference is the largest electric cooperative grass roots event in the nation's capitol. "This conference enables electric cooperative representatives from each state to further enhance strong relationships with their respective congressional delegation and to communicate our collective concerns as Congress debates issues that affect our industry. The conference also provides our Kansas contingent the opportunity to express ideas and concerns to our Kansas delegation that are specific to Kansas electric cooperatives and rural Kansans," said Marcus Harris.

Issues discussed with the Kansas delegation included extending the tax credit for geothermal heat pumps, coal combustion residuals legislation, regulation of pole attachments, FEMA, the Lesser Prairie Chicken, and encouraging the delegation to join two newly-formed caucuses.



Kansas electric cooperative representatives at the NRECA Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C.

## KEPCo Attends Member Annual Meetings

Senior staff of KEPCo attended each of KEPCo's nineteen member electric cooperative's annual meetings and KEPCo's marketing display was exhibited at eleven of the meetings as well. Marcus Harris, KEPCo's EVP & CEO spoke at several of the meetings, providing a wide-range of information on topics such as: the relationship of KEPCo to its member cooperatives; information about KEPCo's diverse power supply, in particular the amount of energy derived from non-greenhouse emitting resources; KEPCo's solar project; the status of the Clean Power Plan; and the need for a diverse and flexible power supply in the future.



Marcus Harris providing remarks at LJEC's annual meeting.

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## KEPCo Employees Celebrate Anniversaries

KEPCo held its annual employee appreciation luncheon in March and recognized four employees with service anniversary milestones. Employees recognized were: Coleen Wells - 15 years; Shari Koch - 10 years; John Payne - 10 years; and Matt Ottman - 15 years.



(L to R) Coleen Wells, Shari Koch, John Payne, Matt Ottman, and Marcus Harris

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## KEPCo Selects Engineering Intern



Cameron Kennedy of Bonner Springs, KS has been selected as the recipient of the Stephen E. Parr Engineering Internship. Cameron attended Basehor High School and is a senior at Kansas State University, majoring in Electrical Engineering.

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### **REDLG Loan Awarded**

Kincheloe's, Inc., a full-service farm implement dealer in Pratt, Kansas, was recently awarded a loan through the USDA Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant program (REDLG) to construct an addition to an existing building. The addition will allow Kincheloe's Inc. to attract a larger customer base, increase sales, and improve employee efficiency and customer service.



Kincheloe's Inc.

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### **KEPCo Preparing IRP**

KEPCo staff is in the process of preparing an Integrated Resource Plan (IRP). The IRP is a comprehensive written evaluation of KEPCo's range of power supply alternatives, including new generation capacity, power purchases, energy conservation and efficiency, environmental impacts, and renewable energy resources. The evaluation will also examine resources for the future, evaluate options, and identify solutions, in addition to being utilized as a planning tool as KEPCo begins its strategic planning process this summer.