



MPE Apprentice Lineman Bryce Poppe was out before the sunrise recently near Lake Agnes, north of Kremmling, to restore power from a small outage.

MPE CLOSER TO \$100 MILLION GRANT FUNDING

MPE's Community Benefits Plan has been implemented and submitted to the USDA

MPE has submitted its Community Benefits Plan (CBP) for review by the USDA. Once approved and having met the USDA's implementation requirements, MPE should begin receiving its obligated payments for the \$100 million New ERA grant.

MPE executed a letter of commitment with the USDA on January 14, 2025, for the New ERA program, obligating a grant in the amount of \$100,321,532 over 20 years. The funding supports MPE's new power purchase agreement (PPA) with Guzman Energy to enhance the resilience, reliability, and affordability of our rural electric system. After a brief review period, on March 25, the USDA announced it was releasing previously obligated funding under New ERA and other federal programs, like PACE.

An outline of MPE's CBP was submitted as a part of the initial New ERA grant application. It was referred to by the USDA as a "plan for the plan," and MPE's document earned positive feedback. When the announcement was made regarding the release of New ERA funding, MPE immediately set into action to finalize its required CBP. After nearly a year of coordinating efforts with constituents across MPE's service territory, Helen Sedlar, MPE Director of Development, was able to lead the efforts to finalize the plan. She also consulted with liaisons at the USDA. MPE submitted the CBP on May 21 to the USDA. The USDA informed MPE that we are the first of 51 New ERA award recipients to send in its CBP for review.

MPE's CBP funding will expand existing programs and launch new initiatives that strengthen rural resilience

across its service territory. These investments are focused on four key priorities, which correspond with the four priorities set forth in the New ERA program: energy efficiency and affordability; workforce development and housing; food assistance for rural communities; and opportunities for our farming and ranching families and communities.

- **Priority 1** supports energy affordability and efficiency and education through rebates, demand-side management programs, and outreach to help income-qualified members reduce energy costs.
- **Priority 2** invests in the American workforce by funding paid lineman apprenticeships, expanding training opportunities in energy fields, and supporting workforce housing needs through local partnerships.
- **Priority 3** provides direct benefits to rural families through food assistance for homebound seniors, helping improve grocery access in Grand and Jackson Counties.
- **Priority 4** expands Ag-focused opportunities for rural youth through paid summer internships, support of 4-H, and scholarships for students from farming and ranching families, fostering local career pathways in technical and Ag-related fields.

For more information or to ask a question or leave feedback on MPE's New ERA grant or Community Benefits Plan, visit www.MPEI.com/New-ERA.

OUR PLAN FOR A 'NEW ERA'

Transformational funding will support current needs and prepare our co-op for the next 75 years (and beyond).



A LETTER FROM OUR CEO

VIRGINIA HARMAN

Each of MPE's speakers at the recent 75th Annual Meeting – me, Board President Liz McIntyre, and CFO Eric Jones – highlighted how important and transformational, our co-op's New ERA grant funding would be moving forward. As Eric put it, this "\$100 million grant is historic, especially for a co-op with \$120 million in total assets."

The significance of this funding cannot be understated. That's why...

1. Our team worked tirelessly to put forth the absolute strongest application we could;
2. I accompanied a contingency from Colorado to go to our nation's capital to visit with our representatives about the critical nature of this funding after it was frozen; and
3. We recently put in extra hours to submit our Community Benefits Plan (CBP) for review so we could, once our plan is approved, begin to receive this funding.

As our cover story indicated, we have completed and submitted our CBP to the USDA for their review. I want to share a few more "behind the scenes" details about this milestone.

Our contacts at the USDA, who we greatly appreciate, have informed us that MPE is the first in the country of more than 50 New ERA awardees to complete and submit its CBP. Again, this is an illustration of how diligently we are working to bring this funding to our co-op as soon as possible. It is also another testament to our small but mighty staff and their efforts.

Those at the USDA even asked us how we were not only able to craft what they said is a well-developed CBP, but also implement so many of the goals so quickly. Our Director of Development, Helen Sedlar, explained that MPE has a history of community engagement. As a cornerstone of our communities throughout Grand and Jackson counties and beyond, MPE has long given back to areas that are highlighted as priorities in the New ERA program, as listed in the story on page 1. As part of our commitment to the CBP, MPE is providing funding of \$1 million over 10 years, or at least \$100,000 annually, in order to expand our community investments.

Helen, who herself has a long history of community involvement through her non-profit work in our area, also deserves much of the credit for our expedited CBP timeline. She worked with the Grand County Health & Human Resources Coalition (HHRC) to bring that group of more than 35 area leaders on board as the CBP steering committee. She and the HHRC know the area's needs and available resources, thus the alignment of giving opportunities to the New ERA priorities was relatively seamless.

Again, after learning of MPE's New ERA application was approved, our main priority was to do all we could to start receiving the funds as soon as possible. It will result in around \$5 million to MPE annually. Exactly how these added funds will be utilized is yet to be determined. Setting strategy is one of the most important roles of our board of directors. Each of our board members takes this responsibility very seriously. I anticipate the board will look each year to balance the current needs (i.e., rate stabilization) with the needs of the future. Those might include investments in our system, generation resources, and so on to set up our co-op for success over the next 75 years. I expect that at the 150th Annual Meeting in the year 2100, those on stage will again speak of how transformative these funds were for MPE.

MPE INTERN GRAVITATES TOWARD LINEMAN WORK

Jacob Trail shadowed various MPE jobs while completing his high school internship

Middle Park High School junior Jacob “Jake” Trail rotated through several departments and shadowed various job duties at Mountain Parks Electric (MPE) for his internship. He learned that he might like to work for MPE one day, and he would gravitate most toward being a lineman.

“I like the danger aspect of lineman work,” Jake said, explaining that he likes activities that push the limit, like downhill skiing, snowmobiling, and playing on the varsity football team, in which he said he has averaged a concussion per season. He’s also on the basketball team and is center fielder for the baseball team.

During his twice a week visits to MPE during the spring semester, he was able to ride along with a line superintendent to visit work sites and observe line crews working safely in the field. He even got to take his hand at putting on climbing gear and safety equipment and working his way (partly) up a pole (as seen in the photo). With the Member Relations team, he photographed a crew repairing a pole.

In other areas of the co-op, Jake worked with dispatch, in the warehouse, engineering, the safety coordinator, and metering.

After high school, Jake plans to complete a 2-year mission trip to serve The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, “hopefully somewhere in Africa.” After that, he may consider following through with becoming a lineman, which includes lineman school, then working as an apprentice, and up to a journeyman lineman.

MPE maintains a strong apprenticeship program for line work and, starting in 2024, has an Electric Industry Scholarship category that can help fund programs related to career paths such as those at MPE, including for linemen or women.

Andrew Smyth, formerly an EMT, started his transition to becoming a linemen with a summer internship for the MPE Operations Department in 2024. He worked hard, earning the trust of the line crews and supervisors. From there, he applied for and was awarded a \$10,000 MPE Electric Industry Scholarship towards the Colorado Mesa University’s Electric Lineworker Program in Grand Junction. He excelled in the program, propelling him to get hired at MPE as an apprentice linemen in May 2025.



Jacob Trail, right, works with Metering Tech Chris Michalowski on wiring a communication device.



Jacob composes a photo of linemen and MPE trucks with Rocky Mountain National Park in the background while out in the field with Member Relations and Communications.



CALL 8-1-1 BEFORE YOU DIG

As we enter the season of construction and yard projects, MPE reminds everyone to call 8-1-1 before you dig.

Dialing 8-1-1 will call the Utility Notification Center of Colorado (UNCC). MPE is a UNCC member and will only locate our facilities with a line locate request from UNCC. Also, MPE only locates our facilities up to the meter on services of 400 amps and below. Anything above a 400-amp service is the member's responsibility to get locates.

Anyone who plans to dig should call 8-1-1 or visit www.call811.com/811-In-Your-State at least 3 business days before digging to request that the approximate location of buried utilities be marked with paint or flags so that you don't unintentionally dig into an underground utility line.

Since September 2024, Vannguard has been the contractor handling MPE members' electric utility locates. Vannguard also does locates for Xcel Energy in MPE's service territory.

Line locating is a priority for MPE, falling under the co-op's strategic plan categories of safety, concern for community/members, and system reliability. 8-1-1 protects you and your community. Hitting a buried line while digging can disrupt utility service, cost money to repair, or cause serious injury or death.

Always contact 8-1-1, wait the required time for utilities to respond to your request, and ensure that all utilities have responded before putting a shovel in the ground.

8-1-1 Five Steps graphic courtesy of call811.com



1. NOTIFY

Call 8-1-1 or make a request online two to three days before your work begins. The operator will notify the utilities affected by your project.

2. WAIT

Wait two to three days for affected utilities to respond to your request. They will send a locator to mark any underground utility lines.

2-3

3. CONFIRM

Confirm that all affected utilities have responded to your request by comparing the marks to the list of utilities the 8-1-1 call center notified.



4. RESPECT

Respect the markers provided by the affected utilities. The markers are your guide for the duration of your project.



5. DIG CAREFULLY

If you can't avoid digging near the markers (within 18-24 inches on all sides, depending on state laws), consider moving your project location.



REBATES & HEAT TAPE REMINDERS

Spring is a great time to work on projects around the house. Remember to check out the MPE rebates before you start your project planning. MPE offers members rebates on electric lawn and garden equipment, insulation upgrades, water heaters and more!

Have you turned off your heat tape? We recommend marking your calendar around April 1st to turn off your heat tape.

Also, to reduce the energy usage of heat tape, it is recommended to not run it continuously. MPE offers a rebate for installing timers on all heat tape circuits.

MPE also offers rebates on electrical vehicle chargers. If you're curious about or considering an EV, mark your calendar for an EV Ride & Drive event on Sept. 20, from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. at YMCA Snow Mountain Ranch.

www.MPEI.com/Rebates

UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS

Hot Sulphur Days

Hot Sulphur Springs, June 6-8

Granby Rodeo

June 8-July 27

83rd Annual Never Summer Rodeo

& Never Summer Jam

Walden, June 20-22

Blues from the Top Music Festival

Winter Park, June 27-29

MPE offices closed

July 3 – in observance of Independence Day

Granby 4th of July Parade

11 a.m.

Winter Park 4th of July Celebration & Concert

Rendezvous Event Center, July 4, starting at 6 p.m.

Presented by MPE & Guzman Energy

Grand Lake Independence Day Fireworks

10 p.m.