

# SOUTHEAST COLORADO POWER ASSOCIATION

SEPTEMBER 2023



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**Our primary mission** is to provide high-quality, reliable electric service at a reasonable cost to our members, improve their quality of life through new technologies and services, be a visible and active member of the community and serve our members with respect, courtesy and responsiveness.

**SOUTHEAST COLORADO  
POWER ASSOCIATION IS  
AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY  
PROVIDER AND EMPLOYER**



## The Power is in Your Hands

BY KEVIN BRANDON CEO [KEVINB@SECPA.COM](mailto:KEVINB@SECPA.COM)

**B**ecause we are a co-op, we operate a little differently than other utilities. Southeast Colorado Power Association's (SECPA) decisions are made locally, by directors who also live right here in our communities throughout southeastern Colorado. Everyone who pays to receive electricity from the co-op is a member. When you pay your electric bill each month, your money stays here — to pay for the electricity used, to make improvements to our local system to strengthen service reliability, and to pay the wages of our employees. The money you pay the co-op doesn't line the pockets of shareholders five states away — it stays right here in our local communities. We are a co-op, and we exist to provide a service to you, our local members.



KEVIN BRANDON

You may notice that throughout the year, we schedule opportunities for you to attend co-op events (such as our annual meeting) so we can hear from you. We also attend lots of local events throughout our communities, so if you see us out and about, be sure to stop and say hello, ask any questions, or raise any concerns you may have.

Our success lies in your satisfaction, which is why we offer these opportunities to engage and listen to what you have to say.

You are part of an electric cooperative and you can count on our team to maintain local jobs, at-cost electricity, and first-class service, no matter what the economy and supply chain issues throw at us.

SECPA is striving to keep our costs as low as possible so we can keep more money in your pocket. We want to help you maximize the value you can get from our services and offerings. For example, we can help you save on energy bills through our rebate program for energy-efficient products such as high-efficiency appliances, heat pumps, and outdoor power equipment.

Be sure to like and follow us on Facebook to see valuable information on events, safety tips, and notices about things happening such as outages.

Please know that you — the members of SECPA — are at the heart of everything we do. Co-ops adhere to seven guiding cooperative principles that reflect core values of honesty, transparency, equity, inclusiveness, and service.

We exist to serve you and provide the quality, reliable, friendly service you expect and deserve. While we have grown over the years, we are still driven by the same guiding principles to serve our community. We hope to see or hear from you soon. This co-op was created for you, the members. The power is in your hands.

# Half a Lifetime of Drought



When Otero County resident Andee Leininger wrote a book about drought, she probably had no idea of the irony: Soon after its debut, Colorado was out of the drought. Leininger laughed about it as she shared her experiences that led her to write *Half a Lifetime of Drought*.

“Growing up on a ranch during drought really changes your perspective on ranching and rangelands in general,” she said. Leininger learned about the science behind it in college but used her knowledge of growing up on a ranch to apply it to help others.

She kept hearing about the lack of resources for ranchers to translate the science into layman’s terms. That’s when she decided to try and be that bridge to make understanding the science of managing drought a little easier for everyone.

“I tried to make everything relatable and relate it back to the things I had experienced growing up on the ranch as well. And just kind of make it a practical guide for people,” she

said. Leininger shares a little of her story at the beginning of the book and then launches into why it’s important to manage drought.

But how exactly does one manage drought? Remember that irony mentioned above? She elaborated on how it’s actually a very good time to be discussing drought during a year with above-average rainfall. “This is the perfect year to plan for it because you’re not stressed out about where your feed is coming from, you’re not stressed out about finding lease pasture, and the market is actually pretty good, I think; it’s better than it’s been in a while.”

Leininger advised using this year to bank the forage for winter grazing, which could give ranchers a leg up in the spring. And then came the caution that this year isn’t normal. Farmers and ranchers in southeastern Colorado already know what Leininger shared next: Rain won’t always be so plentiful in the years to come.

“The weather is very cyclical, of course,” she said.

▲ Andee Leininger is the author of the book *Half a Lifetime of Drought*.

At the time of our interview, all 64 counties in Colorado were out of the danger range for drought, according to the U.S Drought Monitor.

Leininger’s knowledge of drought management is available to others through her small business, SECO Ranch Planning. She advised having a plan. “It doesn’t have to be set in stone,” she said. “I think a lot of people are like, ‘Oh, I made this plan and I have to stick with it.’ No. Mother nature never stays the same, so your plan shouldn’t. Change with the weather, change with the seasons.”

*Half a Lifetime of Drought* can be purchased anywhere books are sold online.

Leininger is a Certified Professional in Rangeland Management. Information about her business can be found at [secoranchplanning.com](http://secoranchplanning.com).

▼ Leininger Ranch





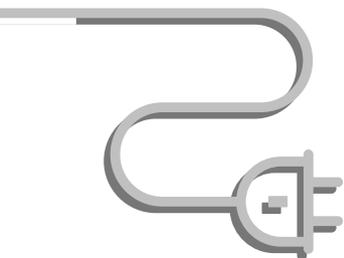


# STAY SAFE ON THE FARM POWER LINE AWARENESS

Make sure everyone on your farm is trained on safe practices around electricity. Utilize these safety tips for you, your employees, seasonal workers, family members, and anyone else accessing your farm.

- Keep equipment at least 10 feet from lines — at all times, in all directions.
- Know all power line locations on your farm and routes between fields.
- Always use a spotter when moving equipment near power lines.
- Don't completely rely on autosteer or GPS to detect and clear power lines or poles. \*WIN Kurt Tate acct 2007910000
- Never attempt to move a power line out of the way or raise it for clearance.
- If a power line is sagging or low, contact us.

If your equipment hits a power line, pole, or guy wire, do not leave the cab. Immediately call 911; warn others to stay away; and wait for the utility crew to cut the power.



## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Did you know that fall is the perfect time to schedule a tuneup for your heating system? Home heating accounts for a large portion of winter energy bills, and no matter what kind of system you have, you can save energy and money by regularly maintaining your equipment.

Combining proper equipment maintenance and upgrades with recommended insulation, air sealing, and thermostat settings can save about 30% on your energy bills.

Source: Dept. of Energy

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Always assume a downed power line is energized. Downed lines can energize the ground up to 35 feet away.

## YOU COULD BE A WINNER THIS MONTH

If you find your name in this issue as follows (WIN\* your name, your account number), please contact Southeast Colorado Power Association at 719-384-2551 or 800-332-8634 to receive a credit on your next power bill.

Last month's winner was William Leiker.

