

# POWER LINES

VOLUME 13, ISSUE 3

FALL 2019

Representation | Engagement | Advocacy

## Currents of Change: Get with the Flow

In the electricity world, there are different kinds of currents—alternating, direct, and conventional. Current is defined by *Britannica* as “any movement of electric charge carriers.” Alternating current and direct current are frequently abbreviated AC and DC, respectively. The point is—current does not stay still; it is always in motion. **In much the same way, the REA world does not remain still.**

Currents of change are constantly influencing the REA world through economics, member participation, political winds, technology changes, legislative and regulatory tactics, and a myriad of other factors. Ignoring the currents of change does not work well in any business including within an REA. Reacting to change may move the REA ahead but it is a defensive strategy and it is difficult to evolve and grow when on the defense. Intentionally navigating change in the REA world, is an offensive strategy that will position your REA for the future.

Besides the currents of change and electricity, there are river, wind, and ocean currents. If you ever paddled on a river you know it is easier to paddle downstream with the current than to go against it upstream. The jet stream is probably the most well-known wind current and when you travel with it your flight is shorter. The ocean has so many major currents they have names, and those currents affect our weather, amongst other things. **All this current trivia—to demonstrate currents are powerful!**

Sometimes it's necessary to go against the current but, undoubtedly, things require less energy when we figure out how to work with the current, with the flow, using the power of the current to help us get where we need to go.

Staying silent, giving up your REA paddle and just floating along on the currents of change? Quite the opposite is needed now more than ever. However, the method by which REAs go with the flow must be intentional and should use the tides to advance the future of all REAs. **Get with the flow and use the current to the your best advantage.**

The AFREA has been involved in a number of key Alberta Utility Commission (AUC) hearings over the past few years on behalf of its membership. Instead of sitting on the sidelines waiting to see where the currents took the industry, the Federation got into the flow, paddling hard, to represent the membership, while

Continued on Page /2

### AFREA



## Quick Notes

- Watch for weekly news updates in the AFREA E-News sent to your inbox each Saturday morning at 10:00 am.
- If you have any news, events, or stories you would like to share, please email: [janeth@afrea.ab.ca](mailto:janeth@afrea.ab.ca) or [linda@afrea.ab.ca](mailto:linda@afrea.ab.ca) at the Federation office.
- New Directors? Please ensure up to date contact lists are provided to the AFREA office after Fall District Meetings.

## In This Issue:

- Currents of Change: Get with the Flow—change is inevitable, for our REAs and the world around us.
- AGM—#AFREA2020
- Rural Electric Grant Program
- AFREA/REA Role Chart

## Next Issue:

Season's Greetings

## Currents of Change—continued from Page /1

making a case for REAs and rural Albertans. Sometimes the results were in favour of REAs and other times the Federation was able to influence the outcome even though the decisions were not entirely what was desired. Being in the flow was, and is, hard work that does not guarantee the future; however, without that work, REAs are in danger of being swept away in a fast-changing complex electrical world. **Currents of change can take you forward to new places of opportunity or leave you stranded on the rocks.**

The AFREA is working to ensure member REAs are moving with the flow. As an organization, we are committed to working with the currents of change to control our destiny. Paddling may involve lobbying for a Bill—as the Federation has for the past few years, or it may be offering the REA perspective to the AUC and the government on important issues... like how Alberta's electricity market is designed.

REAs are in the business of distributing electricity and the Federation is in the business of representing REAs as a cooperative alternative in the distribution business. It's a business where the electrical current and the currents of change can be beneficial or lethal. **Only one thing is for certain - nothing remains static.**

We know whatever the activities we undertake as a Federation and a membership, as long as we paddle together, we have a chance at navigating the currents of change and using the flow to further the future of REAs.

*"A river cuts through a rock not because of its power but its persistence."*

*~James N. Watkins, Author*

### Legislative Update:

The AFREA is involved in a number of proceedings to represent our members. Details are being shared and discussed at this year's Fall District Meetings. See your Fall District Meeting booklets—mailed out prior to your meeting—for information and bring your questions to Al Nagel during the AFREA Presentation on the agenda.

#### **Some good news from the government.**

CEO Al Nagel and District 7 Director, Wayne Meyers, were invited to attend the announcement release on Thursday, November 7, 2019. Continuation of funding is good news for the **Rural Electrification Grant Program** administered by the AFREA. Agriculture & Forestry Minister Devin Dreeshan made the announcement that the government is maintaining funding for rural utilities, irrigation districts, and agricultural societies. A statement was provided on the media news release from AFREA President, Dan Astner:

*"We continually work to help create the conditions for Alberta's rural electrification associations to be successful and sustainable. We guide our members in implementing good governance and best practices to meet our rural communities' electricity needs. This funding announcement supports our innovative and dynamic rural electrification associations to continue their work as part of a vibrant rural Alberta."*

**Connect with us: [www.afrea.ab.ca](http://www.afrea.ab.ca)**

Follow us on Twitter: @AFREA1



Find us on FACEBOOK



## AFREA AGM—FEBRUARY 2020



The quote on page 2 fit with the theme—The Power of Persistence—for our upcoming **Annual General Meeting and Conference** to be held February 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> at the Fantasyland Hotel in Edmonton. The Conference will consist of our usual Wednesday line up of breakout sessions and Trade Fair, to be following with our evening Welcome Reception and Silent / Live Auctions. Thursday's Agenda follows up with the AGM business meeting.

We are celebrating our 50th anniversary of incorporation in 2020. Yes, we've been around longer as an idea and an entity when many early REA directors realized the need for provincial representation.

And representation, engagement, and advocacy are what we do on your behalf. The tenacity of our members installing power to the rural farms in the late 1940s and early 1950s is the foundation upon which the AFREA was built. And over the years we have been there to lead the charge. As the saying goes—even water can cut through rock if it's persistent. So, we persist.

The Board and Staff invite you to attend the 2020 AGM & Conference to help us celebrate 50 years of officially being in business. Watch for the **#AFREA2020** hashtag on social media to spread the word and remember to share stories with us to make the year a special one for all of us.

### THE POWER OF PERSISTENCE

**Register today for the 2020 AGM & Conference.**

**Delegate invitation packages have been mailed out / the brochure is on our AFREA web site.**

- Contact Janeth at the Federation office for any inquiries or questions about the AGM. She can be reached at 780-417-3396 or [janeth@afrea.ab.ca](mailto:janeth@afrea.ab.ca)
- If you would like to sponsor or contribute silent auction items a fillable form is available on our web site.
- For Trade Show inquiries please contact Valerie Lavorato at the Federa-



**Exclusive insurance coverages and savings for AFREA members and employees**



As a member/employee of the AFREA, The Co-operators provides a special Member Benefits Program. To learn more about the exclusive insurance coverages available to you, contact The Co-operators directly and identify yourself as an AFREA member and/or employee. Members—your members qualify, too!

Contact your local Co-operators Financial Advisor today to learn more, or visit:

<http://www.cooperators.ca/en/About-Us/why-coops-are-better/members-benefits-program.aspx>

## PURSuing AN REA FUTURE—GOVERNMENT

### Our Asks on Your Behalf:

- Establish the exclusive right to serve all consumers up to 500 KVA within designated REA area.
- All services with a size greater than 500 KVA will be negotiable between the consumer and the area wire owners.
- REAs have a 'duty to serve' all consumers within the designated service area.
- All existing distribution assets are grandfathered—this provision effectively insulates Investor-Owned Utilities (IOUs) and REAs from immediate asset loss.

### DESIGNATED SERVICE AREAS HAVE BEEN DETERMINED NECESSARY FOR REA SURVIVAL.

To provide clarity for our membership-based organization and to prevent duplication, the AFREA developed this flow chart that demonstrates the level of responsibility and roles for both the AFREA and the REA. It premises the “working together” principle of the co-op and is driven by the economic principles of “economies of scale” and “best business practices.” Any questions? Contact Al Nagel, CEO

## AFREA / REA ROLE FOCUS CHART

