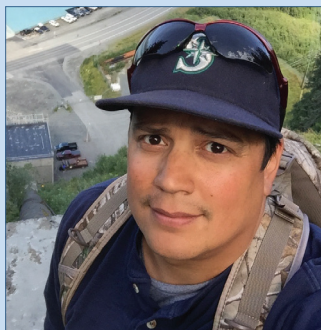


CVEA employs over 40 Alaskans, all of whom live and work in the communities we serve. We are proud of our employees and the work each one does to help fulfill CVEA's mission to provide exceptional service through safe, reliable, cost-effective electric service and programs.

Each year, CVEA recognizes employees with extended years of loyal and dedicated service to the Cooperative. We invite you to join us in congratulating them on their accomplishment.

Look Who's Working Hard For You

2023 Employee Service Awards



Ryan Compehos
Plant Operator
Valdez
15 Years

Ryan Compehos is celebrating 15 years as a Power Plant Operator in the Valdez District. Prior to CVEA, he was an electrician for Alyeska Pipeline Service Company. Ryan was born and raised in Valdez. He resides in Valdez today with partner Natalie White, kids Kalen, Rylee, Lola, and Brynn, and grandbaby Nevaeh.

In Ryan's spare time he enjoys hanging out with family and friends, playing music, snowboarding, rock climbing with the kids, camping, and riding his Harley.

Ryan said the biggest project or change in the last five years, would have to be the Valdez Diesel Plant exterior upgrade. "I used to be embarrassed to say I worked in such an ugly building, but now it is one of the nicest in town."

When asked what one thing he wished people knew about CVEA, he said, "I wish people knew how we are just a really tight group and it is one of the best places to work in town."

When asked about a funny memory, he talked about a certain co-worker doing

runway walks in the big windows at the Solomon Gulch Hydroelectric Plant. (We are going to let you ask him about that one!)

Ryan says his favorite thing about working for CVEA is just enjoying everyone he works with, company-wide. He also mentions, "as of now, every operator in the Valdez District, I have trained. I enjoy being a mentor; it is like watching your kids grow. Every one of them have their own unique talents, and together we are a very strong team."

Steve Williams, CVEA Power Generation Manager, has this to say about Ryan, "Ryan is the most senior and experienced plant operator on our team. He is also one of our licensed electricians performing a wide range of electrical repairs and installations, saving our members thousands of dollars. He is known for his contagious fun personality and willingness to train new hires."



**Kyle Anderson
Plant Operator
Valdez
10 Years**

This year marks 10 years of service for Kyle Anderson, who serves as a Power Plant Operator in the Valdez District. Kyle is originally from Valdez, where he currently lives with his son, Olin, their two dogs, Paxson and Sully, and guppies and snails in the new home he built.

In his spare time, Kyle plays music for and with his son and enjoys hunting, fishing/ice fishing, and hiking around Valdez and the Copper Basin with his dogs.

When asked what has changed in his position in the last five years, Kyle said, "I worked with the crew on many new projects and programs, including the Valdez Diesel Plant unit 4 diesel engine rebuild and updating the Operator Trainee Program. I also served on the CVEA Community Foundation Contributions Committee and Employee Engagement Committee.

Kyle's favorite thing about working at CVEA is the great culture. He says, "Everyone cares about each other and does what they can to help get whatever tasks done that need done. It is great to know that when we do our jobs well, it directly affects the membership, who also happen to be our neighbors, family, and friends."

Kyle wishes people knew that the

employees at CVEA care a lot about their jobs and finding ways to make the utility better and more efficient for the Members. When the lights go out, there is no hesitation from operators, lineman, or management to do whatever is necessary to get the lights back on. Linemen have worked around the clock in terrible weather to restore power. They really are the best linemen in Alaska. "Make sure you wave and thank your local linemen when you see them."

When asked to tell a funny story, he said, "there was once a highly anticipated left-handed dodgeball game held at one of our safety picnics. A certain manager was sure he had it in the bag, but there was a different champion crowned that day. I'm sure there will be a challenge proposed after this article comes out!"

Williams provided a few words about Kyle. "Kyle is always looking for ways to reduce waste and save the members money. His willingness to put in the extra work and supportive attitude, along with strong leadership qualities, make him a great asset. Kyle is proud to work for the members and it shows. He is truly a joy to have on the team."



**Josh Geldersma
Plant Operator
Copper Basin
10 Years**

This year Josh Geldersma celebrates 10 years as a Power Plant Operator in the Copper Basin District. He came to CVEA from HAARP, where he worked as a power plant operator and in maintenance. Josh is originally from Glennallen, where he has lived his entire 46 years, and currently resides with his wife Alyson, daughter Addlynn, three dogs, and one cat.

In Josh's spare time, he enjoys spending time with family, fishing, hunting, camping, and boating/rafting.

When asked what has changed in his position in the last five years, he says not much has changed, but a cool project was the Glennallen diesel 9 overhaul.

When asked his favorite thing about CVEA, he responded, "It is a great job,

and right in my hometown." When asked about a funny story or memory, he commented on the unexpected flood of 2022. "It was interesting. We had pumps running 24 hours a day. I thought the office might float away."

Josh jokes that most of the employees at CVEA are pretty darn friendly.....unless its before morning coffee.

Steve Williams says, "Josh brings a strong electrical and generation background to the team. He displays a true commitment to the work and the members. He can always be counted on to complete any task he's given with a smile. This big guy is humble to a fault and never seeks recognition for his service. He is great to work with and a true asset to CVEA."

Continues on page 8

COPPER VALLEY ELECTRIC

Employee Service Awards

Continues from page 5



**Ben Carlton
Lineman
Copper Basin
5 Years**

Ben started his career with CVEA as a Lineman Apprentice five years ago, and is now a Journeyman Lineman in the Copper Basin District. Prior to CVEA, he worked as an operator and mechanic for the State of Alaska, Department of Transportation.

Originally from Southern Michigan, he came to the Copper Basin in the fall of 2004. He married his wife Stephanie in 2006. They have four children, Madison, Matilda, Hunter, and Bruce.

In Ben's spare time, Ben enjoys what matters; faith, family, hunting, fishing, and trapping. Over the past few years, he and his family were also hard at work bringing Glennallen it's first franchised restaurant, the Copper River Subway, which opened in October 2021.

Ben's favorite thing about working at CVEA is being a part of the state's small

group of Journeyman Lineman and a member of Local 1547, working with highly skilled professionals, keeping the lights on in communities throughout the state.

When asked to provide a quote, Ben gave this one, by Calvin Coolidge, the 30th President of the United States of America, "Nothing in this world can take the place of persistence. Talent won't, nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius won't, unrewarded genius is practically a cliché. Education won't, the world is full of educated fools. Persistence and determination alone are all powerful."

Todd Stahley, CVEA Operations Manager, had this to say about Ben, "Ben was the first Apprentice Lineman hired by CVEA. He is now a Journeyman Lineman and is great at his job."

TAKE THE CO-OP CONNECTIONS SURVEY

5
★ ★ ★ ★ ★

We value your feedback!

CVEA is evaluating the Co-op Connections program. You could WIN prizes!

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: MAY 18th, 6PM

Participating Business



Participating Member



Non-Participating Business



Non-Participating Member



scan QR code for survey that best describes you



Animal Encounters

By Michael Rovito

The moose stood out against the white snow as we ambled up the trail on a blustery February day. Brown and big, it eyed us warily while we did the same. The forest was thick, so we felt good about the number of trees between us and the moose, but we weren't willing to take our chances.

The winter had been hard, and hungry moose seeking food and refuge from deep mountain snow had become a common sight on trails around our area.

Farther up the trail, we stopped to look back just in time to see another moose we had walked right past lift its body from its snowy bed and stroll across the trail. Struck by how close we were to a rather large animal without even noticing, we laughed nervously then proceeded up the trail with our heads on a swivel.

Encounters with wildlife run rampant in a state with so much natural space and abundant fauna.

For electric cooperative workers, this means the added risk of run-ins with animals that could hurt or even kill them.

Power lines run through wildlands of trees and high country, with vast distances between population centers. All this Alaska uniqueness conspires to keep lineworkers and crews on their toes as they toil where animals are often big, strong and dangerous.

For field workers at Alaska Village Electric Cooperative, bear, moose and even musk ox present possible encounters on the job. Bill Stamm, CEO of AVEC, says the co-op has been lucky not to have any disastrous run-ins with wildlife throughout the years, but the threat is always there.

Bill recalled a lineman in Nulato many years ago who was on foot and was challenged by a musk ox in the middle of the road. The encounter ended peacefully, but illustrates that humans aren't necessarily the toughest mammal in every situation.

Even with understanding of the natural world, sometimes curious visitors or a mistimed trail interaction can result in human versus animal. Unfortunate stories abound of Alaskans attacked by animals in the wilderness. Some don't make it out alive.

At Copper Valley Electric Association, CEO Travis Million says all his field personnel are trained in wildlife awareness and defense, which includes hands-on training with firearms.

"CVEA provides shotguns for field personnel as well as firearms at some of our power plants," Travis says.

CVEA staff train for animal attacks—known as delayed care first aid—which goes a step further than general first aid training by equipping employees with the tools and ability to care for an injured person when help is hours away.

In 2021, a man not associated with CVEA was surveying around Gulkana when he was attacked by a bear. The bear bit the man in the head, then lost interest and walked off. The man survived, but the incident illustrates how just doing your job in the Alaska wilderness comes with inherent risks.

Travis says the type of wildlife his employees encounter is typical to Alaska. They often encounter bear and moose in the field. Numerous black and brown bears live around the Solomon Gulch power plant near Valdez.

There is something quintessentially Alaskan about the necessity to be on guard for bears, moose and musk ox, among many other animals, while at work. Add in remote locations and wild weather, and the challenge of maintaining the electric systems that power Alaska is clear. ■

A bear navigates the roof of Valdez Fisheries Development Association Hatchery in Valdez, Alaska. The hatchery is across the street from Copper Valley Electric Association's Solomon Gulch hydroelectric plant. PHOTO COURTESY OF COPPER VALLEY ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION



Update: Micro Modular Nuclear Reactor Project

CVEA held public meetings on February 15 and 16, in Valdez and Glennallen respectively, to update members on the status of the proposed micro modular nuclear reactor project. CEO Million provided roughly 45 attendees an informative presentation and he, along with representative from Ultra Safe Nuclear Company, were on hand for questions and answers.

The presentation provided an overview of the proposed project, results of the feasibility study conducted throughout 2022, and next steps. The overview reminded members the purpose of the feasibility study and what questions the study was expected to answer:

- Is there anything that would prevent siting an MMR here? (Answer - nothing yet)
- What are the preferred sites and their characteristics? (Answer - near existing electrical facilities, out of the tsunami zone)
- What are the cost parameters and decision points? (Answer - the cost must be less than diesel generation and sustainable

for the long-term)

- What are the benefits, concerns, and issues for the community? (Answer - benefits will be long term lower cost of power; concerns are safety, environmental impact, and waste disposal)
- What operating specifics might apply in locating an MMR here? (Answer - road access, isolated grid, workforce)

Million also reviewed the extensive effort placed on stakeholder engagement; going beyond public acceptance to take a participatory approach, examine diverse perspectives and values, and provide an opportunity for creative solutions. Finally, potential project locations and financials were evaluated.

It was concluded that suitable site locations could be easily integrated into the current system, public acceptance appears positive overall, but the goal is to continue to engage broadly, and the risk is too high for CVEA members to own and operate the proposed project.

Given these findings, the CVEA Board of Directors chose not

to move forward as an owner/operator of the project, but has instead instructed staff to evaluate a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) with USNC should a micro modular nuclear project move forward.

Additional public meetings will be forthcoming. A final decision on the proposed project is expected by the Board in fall 2023.

Information related to the proposed project, the Ultra Safe Nuclear Company, MMR technology, a copy of the public meeting presentation, and a summary of all questions and answers discussed during the public meetings can be found on the homepage at cvea.org. We encourage members to review this information. If you have additional questions or would like to provide comment, please email info@cvea.org.

Questions & Answers

Q. What is the investment of CVEA?

A. There will be no capital investment by CVEA. The Board has opted to not own and operate the plant if the project moves forward. CVEA would only purchase power from the owner/producer via a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA)

Q. Is USNC prepared to put up the capital for this project?

A. That is currently what USNC needs to determine. They are currently assessing whether or not they want to be the owner/operator of a plant that sells power to CVEA.

Q. What is CVEA's risk or liability?

A. CVEA will have zero risk in terms of capital outlay as the Co-op will not own/operate the plant. The only risk will be locking into a long-term PPA.

Q. Who will own the land the plant will be located on?

A. The land that has been identified as a priority is currently owned by the University of Alaska. This land would be owned or leased by USNC.

Q. What if CVEA didn't wish to continue to with a long-term PPA?

A. That is always a risk with any negotiation. CVEA would hope to negotiate an 'out' clause, but that cannot be guaranteed. The goal would be to negotiate a PPA price that would be lower than any foreseeable cost of diesel fuel.

Q. Who are you contracting with for the sale of heat?

A. USNC is exploring options for sales of heat. We will share that information with CVEA and the community when any decisions are made.

Q. Does this create an opportunity to work with the State on an economic zone around it potentially?

A. There is a good chance of that. The University (ACEP) and the Governor are very supportive of this project.

Q. This seems like a good opportunity. Have you looked into the earthquake issue?

A. In general, yes. Initial seismic concerns have been answered. Once a final sight has been selected, a full seismic analysis will need to be performed. Earthquakes were specifically taken into consideration with design, and the reactor is built underground specifically to withstand earthquakes in Alaska.

Q. What is your waste disposal plan?

A. At the end of operations the reactor will be shutdown safely and the fuel moved into storage and transportation canisters. These will then be shipped offsite for temporary storage at a DOE or NRC licensed facility until the DOE begins disposal. Currently the DOE plans to place the canisters in a deep mine where they will be safely housed permanently.

Q. You mention that most of the feedback to this potential project has been positive; how have you gotten feedback from the membership?

A. CVEA and USNC engaged in many meetings to include public meetings, a variety of community stakeholder meetings, statewide meetings, and the Cooperative's Annual Meeting. We continue to address any concerns as they arise, but in general we see encouraging expressions of interest and acceptance.

Q. What is the life expectancy for the plant?

A. Life expectancy for the fuel cell is 23 years and the plant is 40 years, with options to extend the license.

Q. Will there be a public comment period prior to the Board's final decision on moving forward with this project?

A. Yes. There will be an opportunity for the public to submit comments, attend public meetings, attend Board meetings, submit comments to the Board, etc.

Q. Does USNC have an operational unit or is all of this theoretical?

A. There are no units deployed currently in the US, but the technology has been used for many years. There are two units currently being planned for deployment; one in 2026 and one in 2027. Various components of the USNC design are currently in operation or being tested in existing reactors.

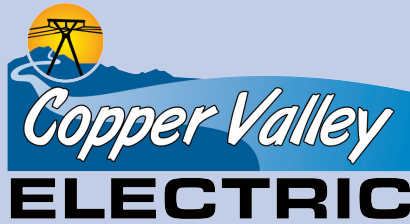
Q. Are there other plants tested and deployed?

A. Yes, very similar. The technology has been in use. This plant would be a very scaled-down version of existing gas-cooled plants.

Q. How will you ensure safety during transportation?

A. Transportation is very safe. It is highly regulated, crash tested, very sophisticated, and the fuel itself is far more rugged than anything in use today. ■

This is an abbreviated list of questions and answers from the public meetings. The complete list can be found at cvea.org.



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Board of Directors

Lon Rake, President
Yvette Delaquito, Vice President
Dan Stowe, Secretary
Will Stark, Treasurer
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P.O. Box 45
Glennallen, AK 99588
www.cvea.org

Copper Basin District
907-822-3211

Mile 187 Glenn Hwy.

Valdez District

907-835-4301

367 Fairbanks Dr.

After hours outage line

866-835-2832

Important Dates

April

CVEA Board Meeting: The April meeting of the Board of Directors is 1 p.m. Thursday, April 20, 2023, in Glennallen

Voting Deadline: Director election ballots must be received in the correct CVEA mailbox by 5 p.m., Tuesday, April 25, 2023

*don't forget to sign the back of the ballot envelope

May

CVEA Annual Meeting: Tuesday, May 2, in the Valdez District, and Thursday, May 4, in the Copper Basin District

CVEA Board Meeting: The May meeting of the Board of Directors is 1 p.m. Thursday, May 18, 2023, in Valdez

AK-34

2023 CVEA Annual Meeting

Valdez: Tuesday, May 2 Copper Basin: Thursday, May 4

Copper Valley Electric Association, Inc., invites you to the 2023 Annual Meeting of Members. The CVEA Annual Meeting is your chance, as a member-owner, to find out what is going on at your electric cooperative.

This year's meeting will be Tuesday, May 2, in the Valdez District at the Valdez Civic Center, and Thursday, May 4, in the Copper Basin District at the Glennallen Community Center (formerly Murdock Center). Registration begins at 5:30 p.m. and the business meeting begins at 6 p.m.

In addition to learning valuable information, every member signed in by 6 p.m. will be eligible to win a ton of cool prizes, including a \$1,000 cash grand prize, and will receive a \$10 credit on their power bill! Don't be late!

Vote in the Director Election

In April, all cooperative members will receive the official notice of the annual meeting in the mail, along with the 2022 Annual Report, and the 2023 Director Election materials. Director candidate profiles, a ballot, and a stamped return envelope will be included. Co-op members in both districts will select one candidate. As a member of your cooperative, the single-most important action you can take is to vote for your Board representatives.

Per CVEA Bylaws, a minimum of 10 percent of the district membership must return their ballots to constitute a valid election. For this reason, even if there is only one candidate, we still need you to VOTE!

Ballots must be received in the designated CVEA post office box by 5 p.m., Tuesday, April 25, 2023. When voting, please remember the back of the ballot envelope must be signed by the member whose signature is on file. If you are unsure what is on your signature card, just give us a call at 907-822-3211 or 907-835-4301.

All valid ballots, returned in signed envelopes, received by the deadline will be entered into a drawing for a \$50 CVEA energy credit!

Questions? Email Sharon Scheidt, CVEA Director of Communications, at sscheidt@cvea.org. ■

