The Climate + Energy Project is a huge fan of renewable energy. I’m sure that statement doesn’t surprise anyone reading this month’s issue of MPower. We support renewables to reduce emissions but there are a myriad of reasons our partners do, too.

Whether it’s wind energy in Kansas, solar power in Missouri, or geothermal in Oklahoma, there are tangible economic benefits that create jobs, revitalize rural communities, and provide a balanced energy mix. What might surprise you about CEP is that we are fans of transmission lines as well.

The Importance of Transmission

Electric generation and transmission planning go hand-in-hand. It is a mistake to talk about one without the other. The average coal plant in the United States is more than forty years old, and the average nuclear plant is over thirty.

Our transmission grid needs attention, not only to deal with increased consumer demands and more efficient operations, but also to replace and upgrade the majority of its facilities—which will exceed fifty years of age in the next decade or so. Over the next twenty years, we will spend hundreds of billions of dollars to build new generation and transmission.

The transmission system built to serve large, central generating plants like coal and nuclear is quite different from the one we must build to collect Heartland wind and deliver it to market. It is important to recognize that investments in either generation or transmission can enable, delay, or prevent alternatives on the other side of the equation.

(Continued on page 3.)
September has been a busy, busy month! Besides rolling out a new website for Water + Energy Progress, we’re busy making plans to recognize all of the terrific award winners for the innovative ways they are saving water and energy on their farms. Watch for news from program director, Rachel Myśliwy, about Gail Fuller and all the ways we plan to showcase his energy leadership.

Our newest team member, Cassi Reimer did a terrific job organizing a booth at the Kansas State Fair. Our partners from the Wind Coalition, Kansans for Clean Energy and Kansans for Wind Energy have been talking to Kansans about the benefits of wind energy at the “Wind Works for Kansas” booth. We’ll share their thoughts in next month’s issue and on our website and Facebook very soon. Head on over to the new website www.windworksforkansas.com to share your support for wind energy.

Stop by our booth at Concert for the Climate on September 28th or the Mother Earth News Fair on October 12th and 13th to add your picture to the “Faces of Wind” exhibit that will be traveling the state this fall.

Thanks to our wonderful volunteers, partners and my amazing staff for all the terrific work you’re doing!

Dorothy Barnett
Executive Director,
Climate + Energy Project

IN THE BLOG: Read What CEP Staff and Consultants Are Saying

MAKING THE FUTURE
One hundred years from now, what will people say about the world today?
Published September 10, 2013  |  Read Blog

SPP’S ORDER 1000 FILING
SPP members are working to revise or request rehearing on rejected Order 1000 rulings.
Published September 3, 2013  |  Read Blog

FARMERS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
Successful innovations can save water and energy in agriculture.
Published August 27, 2013  |  Read Blog

HOPE AMIDST BAD NEWS
These days energy policy news is mostly bad. But Kansas politicians give us hope.
Published August 20, 2013  |  Read Blog
THE GRAIN BELT EXPRESS

Over the past six weeks we’ve been closely following the Kansas Corporation Commission’s (KCC) public hearings for the Grain Belt Express Clean Line siting application.

The Grain Belt Express is one of Clean Line Energy Partner’s proposed 750-mile overhead, high-voltage direct current transmission lines designed to connect wind energy in Western Kansas and send it to population centers east. Just like we export cattle or wheat, the Grain Belt Express will allow us to export our rich wind resource.

Between our Heartland Alliance for Regional Transmission (HART) stakeholders and CEP staff, we attended all four of the public hearings. HART stakeholder Mark Richardson submitted testimony at Seneca, Executive Director Dorothy Barnett submitted testimony in Beloit, Program Director Cassi Reimer submitted testimony in Russell, and HART stakeholders Boyd Orr and Johnathan Hladik both testified in Kinsley. We hope you’ll take time to read the various comments.

All of the hearings were well attended.

We applaud the Kansas Corporation Commission for a siting and routing application process that provides stakeholders an opportunity to get the facts about each project through presentations and Q&A, as well as a chance to give statements on the record voicing their support or opposition to the route Clean Line has proposed.

DEBATING THE CLEAN LINE

While there were plenty of people in opposition, there were a lot of people who supported the route as well. Common themes emerged from both sides of the debate.

Those in favor talked about stranded wind energy assets that will provide their counties and landowners much needed income via landowner leases and donation agreements with wind farms that currently lack transmission lines to get to market. Proponents cited that jobs will be created from not only the wind farms but from the transmission line itself. They shared stories about the materials their companies would supply as part of a multi-billion dollar investment in Kansas.

Those opposed expressed health concerns from electric and magnetic fields (EMFs), dissatisfaction with landowner compensation, and a general “not in my backyard” sentiment.

There seems to be some misinformation circulating about HVDC lines and EMF. According to the World Health Organization, Oak Ridge National Laboratory, and the International Agency for Research on Cancer, there is no indication that strong electric or magnetic fields cause long-term health effects on people, cattle, or crops.

As for Clean Line’s compensation package, no other utility (and yes, they have been granted public utility status by the Kansas Corporation Commission) provides landowners payments for the poles on their land in addition to a traditional easement payment.

FINDING A BALANCE

When siting transmission lines (or roads, or pipelines) it’s important to find the right balance between the public good and property rights. It’s easy to understand why some landowners are concerned about the transmission lines.

At CEP, we believe the Grain Belt Express transmission line finds that balance.
PROJECT UPDATE: TAKE CHARGE CHALLENGE

The gun went off; the race has started! Four cities are competing for the $10,000 grand prize, and it all starts with a kick-off event. Each city hosts a kick-off event which announces the MOKAN Take Charge Challenge and is their first opportunity to earn points! Hays, Hutchinson, and Kansas City just wrapped up their events, and Warrensburg, MO has plans underway for their big event!

Take Charge Challenge isn’t designed to be a cookie-cutter program. Rather, it brings communities together, bridges gaps, inspires creativity, and fosters a more efficient community.

The kickoff events are a perfect example of that! Hays hosted their kickoff event in the evening, serving growlers from a local brewery, Lb. Brewing Co, and food from Gella’s Diner. Utility and city representatives shared information on local programs related to energy use. On the other hand, Kansas City decided that a morning breakfast buffet at the new Hollywood Casino with the Mayor would draw potential participants. The Kansas Cosmosphere, home of Apollo 13, seemed to be an enchanting venue for Hutchinson, where the captive audience was able to listen to a panel of speakers. All events were different in look and feel just like the cities. We can’t wait to see what Warrensburg dreams up!

All kickoff events are worth 100 points for the community, and they present a great opportunity to get businesses signed up to participate in the challenge... which leads to earning more points!

Check out the live scoreboard at mokan.takechargechallenge.com to see which community is in the lead today!

TED ALEXANDER, A “USED SUNLIGHT” SALESMAN

If you’ve ever wondered how to create a water source right where you need it, just ask Ted Alexander. Through dedicated grazing management and a holistic approach Ted Alexander has done just that. The Alexander ranch covers 7,000 acres in the Gypsum Hills in Barber County, the largest remaining mixed grass contiguous prairie. Keeping a close eye on the herd impact on the land, watching the rainfall, and waging a war on cedar trees, Ted has taken a property that was between 50-80% covered with cedars to rangeland in high to excellent state. His practices save water, improve water quality, save energy, use renewable energy sources, and improve profit due to an increased flexibility in management practices.

Ted explains, “What happened is, I cleaned off the top of these hills, got a better energy flow and water cycle, more water on the ground in the cycle, grew more forage, raised more stock, then I got into all of the principles of grazing management. Now I have streams that are flowing and we’re in the worst drought since the 1950’s. I have water, one of those goods and services, water, flowing out of canyons that 30 years ago were dry.”

From the extensive solar-powered, water pumping pipeline to the nationally recognized drought plan, Ted Alexander is a true innovator on the land. You can look forward to reading all about Ted’s practices in the October Water + Energy Progress feature. The case study will include explanations of the ways Ted’s practices save water and energy, downloadable podcasts, video from Ted’s September field day, and a guest blog or two. Be sure to sign up for updates so you don’t miss any of this great information!
UPCOMING EVENTS

BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND THE OUTDOORS SUMMIT • SEPTEMBER 24-26, 2013
The 7th Summit continues its tradition of excellence by providing attendees with resources to enhance their efforts to promote health as it relates to the built environment and the outdoors. Visit kansasbeos.org to learn more.

ENERGIZE THE HEARTLAND • SEPTEMBER 26, 2013
Join local chambers of commerce, business leaders and policymakers from across Kansas and Missouri to discuss the costs and benefits of the regional renewable energy industry and learn how to support the growth of renewable energy in our region. The event will be held at Union Station in Kansas City Missouri. The event is co-hosted by the Kansas City Chamber, Chambers for Innovation and Clean Energy, and the Climate + Energy Project. View the invitation, then register online here.

PRAIRIE FESTIVAL • SEPTEMBER 27-29, 2013
The 35th annual Prairie Festival will be held at the Land Institute. It will begin with the traditional barn dance and bonfire on Friday at 8 p.m. The lectures will run on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and from 9 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. on Sunday. Visit thelandinstitute.org to learn more.

CONCERT FOR THE CLIMATE • SEPTEMBER 28, 2013
This free event at Kaw Point Park in Kansas City is hosted by Kansas City area environmental and conservations group, and is designed educate and inform families about the impact of global climate change and offer alternative ideas and practical home-based solutions. Stop by the Climate + Energy Project booth to add your photo to our “Faces of Wind” art piece to encourage support for wind energy in Kansas. Visit concertfortheclimate.org to learn more.

KANSAS ENERGY CONFERENCE • OCTOBER 1-2, 2013
Held at the Manhattan, Kansas, the Kansas Energy Conference will welcome Dennis Wierzbicki as a featured speaker. Mr. Wierzbicki is the president of Grundfos USA, a branch of an international water technology company with an annual production of more than 17 million units. Breakout session topics will include renewable energy, wind energy, transportation of alternative fuels, education, agriculture, research, and more. Visit kansascommerce.com/EnergyConference to learn more.

MOTHER EARTH NEWS FAIR • OCTOBER 13-14, 2013
This family-oriented sustainable lifestyle event features dozens of practical, hands-on demonstrations and workshops from the leading authorities on renewable energy, agriculture, gardening, green building and transportation, and natural health. CEP Staff will present, “Renewable Agriculture” on the Renewable Energy Stage. Visit motherearthnews.com to learn more.
The first Water + Energy Progress case study, featuring Gail Fuller of Emporia, KS, was released on September 1st. Gail’s commitment to no-till with diverse cover crops and intense rotational grazing saves water and saves energy in many ways. This case study is chock full of great information. Check it out!

CASE STUDY FEATURES
• Water: Cover crops improve water infiltration, retention, and water quality.
• Energy: Fuel efficiency, reduced chemical inputs, mob grazing, renewable energy sources.
• Progress: Take the “can’t” out of your vocabulary, build a good team, change the way you look at things.
• Brass Tacks: Gail Fuller talks cover crops and mob grazing.
• Resources on cover crops, no-till, solar energy in agriculture, book lists, videos and more!
• Q&A with Rob Myers, Regional Director, Extension Programs North Central Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE)

VIDEO FEATURES
• Gail’s presentation, “Farming in Nature’s Image”
• Paul Brown of Brown Family Farms, Bismarck, ND, talking about Water + Energy
• Jonathan Lundgren talking about the connections between beneficial insects, Water + Energy
• Gail Fuller lining out the ways his practices impact water and energy use.

COMING SOON
• Full videos from Gail Fuller’s Field School, including in-the-field footage of Jill Clapperton in the Soil Pit, Gabe Brown and Jonathan Lundgren, as well as all of the presentations from the field school. You don’t want to miss these great videos! Sign up for Updates to see when they go on line.
• Guest Blog by Dean Krehbiel, NRCS State Resource Agent