

A History of Looking Out for the Future of Our OTEC Communities

The Seven Cooperative Principles



Your Oregon Trail Electric Cooperative (OTEC) operates according to the same set of core principles and values, adopted by the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA). All cooperatives can trace the roots of these principles to the first modern cooperative founded in Rochdale, England in 1844.

OTEC was formed in 1987 based on the cooperative business model, with the foundation of these seven cooperative principles:

1. Voluntary and Open Membership
2. Democratic Member Control
3. Members' Economic Participation
4. Autonomy and Independence
5. Education, Training and Information
6. Cooperation among Cooperatives
7. Concern for Community

Concern for Community is the reason why OTEC was founded. Back in 1987, this part of northeastern Oregon was served by a for-profit, investor-owned utility, CP National Corporation. This multi-state conglomerate was looking to unload its dilapidated system and to get out of the not-so-lucrative rural electric utility business. When several attempted purchases failed, your friends and neighbors came together (under the leadership of Dick Haynes and Peggi and Glenn Timm) to form OTEC and operate the utility locally using the cooperative business model as their guide. It was their concern for our community – to bring

safe, reliable and affordable electric power to our region – that defined our purpose.

While centering on member needs, cooperatives work for the sustainable development of communities through policies and programs accepted by the members.

It is in that spirit that we continue today offering rebates to commercial businesses to change their existing lighting to more energy efficient lighting, \$100 credits to electric bills when members install a qualifying electric water heater, and offering a credit on electric accounts for appliances that meet ENERGY STAR® Compliance.

In addition to providing electric service, OTEC strives to serve our members and the communities that make us strong by contributing limited cash and "work-in-kind" donations to community groups in our service area.

Donations are provided for the purpose of public benefit, community improvement, charitable, scientific or educational purposes. OTEC regularly supports civic club fundraisers, local 4-H and FFA events, youth sports programs, community project improvements and non-profit organizations. OTEC also gives back to your community through programs such as the Rural Electric Washington D.C. Youth Tour and the Peggi Timm Civic Leadership Award.

In 2015, OTEC awarded twenty-eight \$5,000 scholarships to deserving students throughout our service territory. Scholarships are available for first time college students, returning students and those students who would like to pursue a career in the electrical energy industry by enrolling in line

school. Scholarships are funded through the interest on the unclaimed capital credits and do not impact member's rates.

For cooperatives, these are easy decisions to make because unlike investor-owned businesses where the owners and employees can be far removed from the users of the service, in a cooperative the owners and users are the same people: You!

This is why we call you a member and encourage you to actively engage with us. The health and long-term sustainability of our community depends on all of us demonstrating our mutual concern for our community.

While it has been twenty-seven years since we began offering electricity, our concern for our community has never wavered. We will continue to work for the sustainable development of our community and welcome your input as we work to meet your needs for the next twenty-seven years and beyond.



The 3rd Annual Peggi Timm Civic Leadership Award was presented to DI Lyn Larsen-Hill of La Grande. DI Lyn selected the Union County Friday Backpack Program a non-profit 501(c)3 to receive the \$25,000 donation, made available through earnings on unclaimed capital credits.

Seven Cooperative Principles

1 VOLUNTARY AND OPEN MEMBERSHIP

Cooperatives are voluntary organizations open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination.

2 DEMOCRATIC MEMBER CONTROL

Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting policies and making decisions. The elected representatives are accountable to the membership. In primary cooperatives, members have equal voting rights (one member, one vote) and cooperatives at other levels are organized in a democratic manner.

3 MEMBERS' ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION

Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their cooperative. At least part of that capital is usually the common property of the cooperative. Members usually receive limited compensation, if any, on capital subscribed as a condition of membership. Members allocate surplus for any or all of the following purposes: developing the cooperative, possibly by setting up reserves, part of which at least should be indivisible; benefiting members in proportion to their transactions with the cooperative; and supporting other schemes approved by the membership.

4 AUTONOMY AND INDEPENDENCE

Cooperatives are autonomous, self-help organizations controlled by their members. If they enter into agreements with other organizations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources, they do so in ways that ensure democratic control by their members and maintain their cooperative autonomy.

5 EDUCATION, TRAINING AND INFORMATION

Cooperatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, management, and employees so that they can contribute effectively to the development of their cooperatives. They inform the general public, particularly young people and opinion leaders, about the nature and benefits of cooperatives.

6 COOPERATION AMONG COOPERATIVES

Cooperatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the cooperative movement by working together through local, national, regional and international structures.

7 CONCERN FOR COMMUNITY

While focusing on member needs, cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies accepted by their members.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2015

OTEC Scholarship Winners

Oregon Trail Electric Cooperative is dedicated to the advancement of youth in the communities we serve.

 <small>Kristen Altstet</small>	 <small>Andrew Branen</small>	 <small>Debbie Brown</small>	 <small>Logan Valentine</small>	 <small>Michelle Lefman</small>	 <small>Kyle Stack</small>
 <small>Zachary Tomac</small>	 <small>Teri Clark</small>	 <small>Austin Phantime</small>	 <small>Carla Wallace</small>	 <small>Rayce Houser</small>	 <small>Mikayla Luttrell</small>
 <small>Ashley Owen Daniels</small>	 <small>Derek 'Jemy' Carter</small>	 <small>Hailey Bobawig</small>	 <small>Lee McElrigg</small>	 <small>Maddie Zabala</small>	 <small>Jackson Thain</small>
 <small>Akwantee Culm</small>	 <small>Adriana Stein</small>	 <small>Amika Andersen</small>	 <small>Ella Wadum</small>	 <small>Caryn Roberts</small>	 <small>Austin Faust</small>
 <small>Michelle Steinhilber</small>	 <small>Cody Gyllenberg</small>			 <small>Kivra Moore</small>	 <small>Jada Burgess</small>

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