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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CommunityPowerX: Explore the Future of Power with LPEA's Energy Experts
From Water to Watts: Local Hydro, Battery Storage, and Competitive Markets

DURANGO, Colo. (October 9, 2022) - La Plata Electric Association (LPEA) is bringing energy experts to the stage for CommunityPowerX, a TEDx-style evening exploring the technologies and innovations shaping the future of power in the Four Corners region. The event will take place Thursday, October 23, at the Gaslight Theatre in Durango.

Attendees will hear from leading voices in regional power markets, hydroelectric energy, and battery storage, all framed in the context of how these innovations benefit LPEA members through cleaner, local, and more reliable electricity. **Seating is limited, and advance registration is required.**

CommunityPowerX is part of LPEA's effort to educate and engage members as the cooperative embarks on two major milestones. On April 1, 2026, LPEA will leave its outdated and restrictive wholesale contract with Tri-State, gaining more control over energy decisions. At the same time, the co-op will join a brand-new Regional Transmission Organization (RTO), Southwest Power Pool, which officially begins operations on the same day. These steps open the door to broader, more competitive energy markets and give LPEA new tools to manage electricity use during high-demand periods. It also paves the way for innovations like utility-scale battery storage bringing members cleaner, more reliable power at lower costs.

CommunityPowerX Program:

The Power of Connection

Carrie Simpson, VP of Markets, Southwest Power Pool (SPP)
Simpson will explore how RTOs connect utilities across the West, enabling access to cleaner, lower-cost electricity while improving grid reliability. Her talk will highlight how LPEA could leverage regional markets to bring more value and flexibility to local members.

Hydroelectric: The Original Renewable Power

Sam Perry, CEO, HydroWest
Perry will showcase the enduring role of hydroelectric power in delivering clean, local energy. A fourth-generation hydro pioneer, Perry continues his family's Colorado legacy by restoring and operating grid-scale hydro systems that provide reliable, sustainable electricity close to home.



The Grid's New Ally: Battery Storage

Katie Guerry, SVP of Regulatory and Government Affairs, Convergent Energy + Power

Battery energy storage systems (BESS) act like a giant battery for the grid, storing clean energy when it's abundant and releasing it when demand is high. This talk will explain how utilities use batteries to keep the lights on, integrate more renewable energy, and make the grid more flexible and reliable. Guerry from Convergent Energy + Power, a New York City based developer with experience in utility-scale batteries and Colorado co-ops like United Power, will share insights on how this technology is shaping the future of energy.

"CommunityPowerX is about connecting people, ideas, and innovation," said LPEA's CEO Chris Hansen, who will offer opening remarks. "We want our members to see how local hydro projects like Vallecito dam, battery storage at Shenandoah, and regional markets are all part of building a cleaner, more resilient energy future for our communities."

CommunityPowerX is part of LPEA's Co-op Month celebration, marking over 85 years of service while looking ahead to a more independent, flexible, and sustainable energy future.

Event Details:

Date: Thursday, October 23, 2025

Location: The Gaslight Theatre, Durango

Time: Doors open at 5:30 p.m. | Talks begin at 6:00 p.m.

Registration: Limited seating – [Register here](#)

Media Resources:

High-resolution headshots and bios for all speakers are available upon request.

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About La Plata Electric Association (LPEA)

LPEA is a member-owned, not-for-profit, electric distribution cooperative serving La Plata and Archuleta counties, with segments of Hinsdale, Mineral, and San Juan counties. LPEA is the fifth largest cooperative of 22 in Colorado, and aims to provide safe, reliable electricity at the lowest reasonable cost to its approximately 37,300 members. For additional information, contact LPEA at (970) 247-5786 or visit lpea.coop.