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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LPEA to Host April 23 CommunityPowerX: The Regional Energy Future Forum
Event at Durango Arts Center will explore reliability, regional collaboration, and the evolving power landscape

DURANGO, Colo. (March 19, 2026) — La Plata Electric Association (LPEA) will host CommunityPowerX on Thursday, April 23, 2026, at the Durango Arts Center. The evening forum is designed to educate members on the rapidly evolving regional energy landscape and what it means for reliability, local generation, and the future of electric service. The event follows LPEA’s April 1 transition to greater energy independence, marking a new chapter in how the cooperative sources power and participates in regional markets.

“This forum is about education and collaboration,” said LPEA CEO Chris Hansen, who will facilitate the discussion. “By bringing peer utility leaders into the conversation, we’re giving members a clearer understanding of how the regional energy system is evolving and how utilities are working together to share resources, manage risk, and keep power reliable and affordable for the communities we serve.”

A featured panel discussion will bring together regional energy leaders to discuss how utilities are navigating an increasingly independent energy landscape and the increase in wildfire danger. Panelists include:

- **Hank Adair**, Utility Director for the Farmington Electric Utility System (FEUS), will discuss regional challenges and opportunities, including its mutual aid partnership with LPEA.
- **Jack Johnston**, CEO of Delta-Montrose Electric Association (DMEA), will share insights from DMEA’s transition to greater energy independence following its departure from Tri-State and what that shift means for regional collaboration and grid resilience.
- **Luis Reyes, Jr.**, CEO and General Manager of Kit Carson Electric Cooperative (KCEC), will share insights from KCEC’s precedent-setting transition following its 2016 departure from Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, the first cooperative to successfully exit the association and one of the first electric cooperatives in the United States to achieve 100% daytime solar power, meeting all daytime energy needs from locally generated solar resources.

KCEC’s move was followed by Delta-Montrose Electric Association in 2020 and United Power in 2024 each charting its own path toward greater energy flexibility and local resource planning.



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“Strong cooperatives are built on informed and engaged membership,” said LPEA Board President Nicole Pitcher. “This forum gives our members the opportunity to hear directly from cooperatives that are already seeing the benefits of greater energy independence and to better understand what that means for LPEA. It’s about making sure our members feel informed, confident, and part of where we’re headed.”

Doors open at 5:30 p.m., with the main program running from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. Seating is limited. A \$5 seat reservation fee will be donated to the [LPEA Round Up Foundation](#) in support of local nonprofit organizations. Seat reservations are available at lpea.coop.

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Media may use these [images](#).

About 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.