

LA PLATA ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION, INC.

DURANGO, COLORADO

Board of Directors Policy

Subject: Vegetation Management			Policy No: 301
Original Issue: 6/15/16	Last Revised: 6/15/16	Last Reviewed: 6/15/16	Page 1 of 3

I. OBJECTIVE

To maintain La Plata Electric Associations Inc.'s (Cooperative's) property and rights-of-way in a manner that ensures the safety of landowners, employees and the public, as well as comply with National Electrical Safety Code, Rural Utility Service, federal, state and local laws and regulations pursuant to the operation of electrical facilities.

II. POLICY AND PROCEDURES

- A. The Cooperative will seek required government permits or applicable authorization for vegetation and tree removal or trimming, including but not limited to, federal, state, municipal, and tribal laws, ordinances, rules and regulations. The Cooperative shall seek to trim/remove vegetation and/or trees that in the Cooperative's opinion present an immediate hazard, danger, or substantial risk to the Cooperative's system, employees or public safety.
- B. The Cooperative will use hand cutting, pruning, and mechanical cutting to maintain proper clearances in accordance with recognized industry engineering and electrical safety practices.
- C. A "Hazardous Tree" is a tree that is dead, severely damaged, or may present reasonable risks to the Cooperative's lines and facilities. A Hazardous Tree may be in the Cooperative's right-of-way, a public right-of-way, or on private property. For the safety of the public and/or all involved, the Cooperative may opt to remove a landowner's Hazardous Tree, or remove the line from service to allow the landowner to safely remove the Hazardous Tree. A Hazardous Tree shall be removed or pruned in accordance with this Policy to mitigate safety hazards.
- D. The Cooperative will strive to remove all trees, whether hazardous or not, growing beneath the Cooperative's lines in a public right-of-way or the Cooperative's right-of-way. All trees that can be reasonably removed from private rights-of-way, with the landowners' permission, shall be removed. A special effort shall be made to remove all young trees in rights-of-way while they are small and before they become a hazard to the power line. Brush and other vegetation will be removed during regular tree trimming procedures.

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- E. Trees shall be trimmed to the extent that the designated minimum clearance area will be kept free of growth until the next scheduled trimming cycle. If the trimming cycle is other than three years, as may be required for a fast-growing tree species or where limited trimming is permitted by the landowner, appropriate records will be maintained to ensure that timely primary trimming is accomplished. Brush and other vegetation will be removed during regular tree trimming procedures.
- F. Landowners of the Cooperative shall provide the Cooperative access to all public rights-of-way and Cooperative easements where maintenance and cutting or pruning of vegetation and trees may be needed, in the opinion of the Cooperative, to avoid danger to the public or interference with the operation and maintenance of its power lines or facilities.
- G. The Cooperative has no affirmative duty to remove trees outside the Cooperative's rights-of-way. With a written request from a landowner, the Cooperative may assist the landowner with the removal of a Hazardous Tree outside the right-of-way at no cost to the landowner, as long as the Cooperative has identified the tree as a Hazardous Tree.
- H. Removal of branches and other debris from vegetation and tree removal in or outside the right-of-way or easement is the sole responsibility of the landowner unless otherwise agreed upon in writing. Stumps shall be cut as close to ground level as possible. Complete removal of a stump is the responsibility of the landowner.
- I. The Cooperative shall maintain a tree trade-out program. The tree trade-out program will allow a landowner to receive a tree to replace a tree the Cooperative removes completely from the right of way provided the landowner: i) signs a tree trade-out contract; and ii) has an alternative planting location agreeable to the Cooperative. The Cooperative will remove the trees, including grinding the stump to ground level, if required, and provide the landowner a tree trade-out certificate. The landowner may choose to keep the wood.
- J. The Cooperative shall control vegetation and trees around its property, including the fenced boundaries and within a substation, to ensure the safety of its landowners, employees and public while maintaining the reliability and integrity of the Cooperative's facilities.

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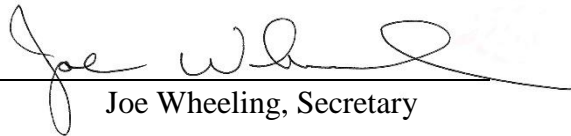
- K. The Cooperative will have a communication program for the public to notify the Cooperative of trees in and around the Cooperative's power lines. The Cooperative shall encourage Members to report trees that are potential hazards, in and outside the right-of-way, which may become a threat to public safety and/or the system's reliability.

III. RESPONSIBILITY

The Manager of Operations is responsible for the administration of this policy.

6/15/2016

Date



Joe Wheeling, Secretary