



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **LPEA Exits Supplier and Enters Regional Energy Market**

*Cooperative simultaneously departs legacy supply model and joins Southwest Power Pool, reducing emissions and improving flexibility*

**DURANGO, Colo. (April 1, 2026)** — La Plata Electric Association (LPEA) today announced it has successfully completed its energy supply transition, formally departing Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association (Tri-State) and joining the Southwest Power Pool (SPP) Regional Transmission Organization (RTO), effective April 1, 2026. With this transition, LPEA expects to achieve an additional 20% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, while delivering lower wholesale power costs, greater reliability, and increased local control for its members.

“This is a defining moment for our cooperative,” said Chris Hansen, CEO of LPEA. “We’ve built a power supply portfolio that is more flexible, more local, more resilient, and more affordable while staying grounded in our mission to serve our members.”

### **A Board-Led Decision Delivering Results**

The transition follows a multi-year effort led by LPEA’s Board of Directors to secure a more sustainable and cost-effective energy future.

“This is exactly why we made the decision to leave,” said Board President Nicole Pitcher. “I was proud to be part of that Board vote, and we’re already seeing it pay off for our members with lower costs, stable rates, and a cleaner, locally controlled power supply.”

### **Lower Costs and Rate Stability for Members**

Through its new power supply strategy and participation in SPP’s competitive wholesale market, LPEA expects to realize more than a 10% reduction in wholesale power costs. These savings allow LPEA to hold base rates stable for 2026, even as broader power supply costs across the region have increased.

“Affordability is a long-term commitment,” Hansen said. “This transition gives us the tools to manage costs responsibly while continuing to improve service.”

### **Part of a Broader Cooperative Movement**

LPEA joins a growing number of electric cooperatives that have successfully transitioned away from Tri-State to pursue more flexible, locally responsive energy strategies, including:



- Kit Carson Electric Cooperative (NM) – departed in 2016
- Delta-Montrose Electric Association (CO) – departed in 2020
- United Power (CO) – departed in 2024
- Mountain Parks Electric (CO) – departed in 2025

Additional cooperatives have provided unconditional notice of withdrawal over the past several months:

- Chimney Rock Public Power District (NE)
- Panhandle Rural Electric Membership Association (NE)
- Roosevelt Public Power District (NE)
- Jemez Electric (NM)
- Wheat Belt Public Power District (NE)

### **Strengthening Reliability and Flexibility Through SPP**

By joining SPP, LPEA gains access to a broader, multi-state energy market and transmission network enhancing reliability, improving efficiency, and increasing long-term flexibility.

As part of SPP’s regional system, LPEA will:

- Strengthen reliability through access to a larger grid and more diverse energy resources
- Optimize power costs in real time through competitive wholesale markets
- Maintain local control over resource decisions and rates
- Support future growth through coordinated regional transmission planning

“This move gives us access to tools and flexibility we simply didn’t have before,” Hansen said. “It strengthens reliability today and positions us for the future.”

### **Looking Ahead: A More Flexible, Local Energy Future**

This transition marks a new chapter for LPEA; one focused on local control, innovation, and long-term value.

Members can expect continued investment in local energy resources, expanded programs to manage energy use and costs, and a system designed to adapt to the region’s evolving needs.

“We are building the future grid for Southwest Colorado,” Hansen said. “And we’re doing it in a way that puts our members first.”



## **Continue the Conversation: CommunityPowerX on April 23**

To help members better understand what this transition means for reliability, costs, and the future of the grid, LPEA will host CommunityPowerX: The Regional Energy Future Forum on April 23, 2026, at the Durango Arts Center.

The public event will bring together regional energy leaders to discuss the future of the grid, how new energy resources work together, and what members can expect in the years ahead.

“This transition is just the beginning,” Hansen said. “CommunityPowerX is an opportunity for members to ask questions, hear directly from experts, and be part of the conversation about our energy future.”

Members are encouraged to attend. Additional details and registration information are available at [LPEA.coop](https://lpea.coop).

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Note to Editors: High-resolution images of CEO Chris Hansen and Board President Nicole Pitcher, along with images of the service territory are available [here](#).

### **About LPEA**

La Plata Electric Association (LPEA) is a locally owned, member-governed electric cooperative serving approximately 37,000 homes and businesses across Southwest Colorado. As an independent co-op, LPEA is committed to keeping power reliable and affordable while ensuring members have a direct voice in how their energy future is shaped. LPEA serves a diverse region, from rural communities and Tribal partners to growing towns and businesses, each with different energy needs. Whether members are focused on keeping the lights on, managing their bills, or adopting new technologies like solar and battery storage, LPEA is working to meet them where they are. In 2026, LPEA joined the Southwest Power Pool, expanding access to a broader mix of energy resources to strengthen reliability, reduce costs, and support a cleaner, more flexible energy future, while keeping decisions local. Learn more about LPEA at [lpea.coop](https://lpea.coop).