

2026 Lincoln Electric Cooperative Board of Trustees Elections

Lincoln Electric Cooperative will hold an election for two open Trustee seats in District 6. Trustee elections are conducted by mail-in ballot, and each member will receive a ballot in the mail in early March.

Members may return completed ballots by mail using the provided return envelope, or by dropping them off at the ballot box located at the LEC office.

Per the Bylaws, all members vote for trustees in all districts, regardless of which district they reside in. Even if you are in District 7, you still vote for nominees in District 6. The two nominees who receive the highest number of votes will be elected.

Members who return their completed ballot by the April 13th deadline will receive a \$10 bill credit on their next electric bill.

This election, we have four nominees. Below are their self-written biographies, listed in alphabetical order by last name.

Larry Benson

Hello, my name is Larry Benson. I have lived in Eureka since graduating from Western Montana College in Dillon, Montana, where I was born and raised.

Up until last June, I worked as an educator for the entire 34 years of my teaching career at Eureka Public Schools. In that time, I have been involved in several positions as a coach, advisor and leader, many of them as a volunteer. I served as a high school football, golf, boys and girls basketball coach.

As a district employee, I worked as part of the maintenance department, and I continue to drive a school bus. I spearheaded the Envirothon program in the high school, as well as the Biocontrol Program in the county through the Montana Department of Agriculture.

I have been an active member in the Eureka community through several organizations. I have been a volunteer coach and 4-H leader of the groups my children were a part of as well. I have donated my time to the Holy Cross Lutheran Church Council and the Tobacco Valley Rodeo Association.

I believe being involved in these activities has helped shape the person I am today. I have acquired leadership skills and communication strategies that will make me a valuable member of the Lincoln Electric Cooperative Board of Trustees. I appreciate your consideration of me for the position.

Ben Goodrich

Our Cooperative is at a pivotal moment. Energy costs are rising. Technology and business landscapes are changing.

Decisions made today will shape our future for decades. Predictable, affordable power is essential for families and businesses. The challenges facing our Cooperative can't be understated; AI energy consumption and power-generating technology shifts are going to impact us. We need strong leadership to protect LEC.

I'm offering my experience to help our Cooperative meet these challenges responsibly. With nearly two decades working in the energy industry and a proven record leading organizations through high-stakes decisions, I've learned how to manage complex social and financial issues while staying true to core values.

My approach is simple: Protect members' investments while planning wisely for the future. I've spent my career solving big problems and want to give back.

This isn't just about electricity—it's about our community; I want to see Lincoln County thrive. I bring experience matched for the challenges of today, not yesteryear, and the backbone necessary to help the LEC Board become a more trusted board of governance through radically increased transparency and accountability. Together, we can ensure strong leadership and a Cooperative ready for the next chapter of LEC's legacy.

Rick Peterson

I have had the opportunity to serve on the Lincoln Electric Board of Trustees for the last 6 years. During that time, I have gained greater appreciation for the cooperative community and how it works and serves us in rural Montana.

I have also learned that there are many complexities to "keeping the lights on", especially as we work to maintain competitive rates.

Through serving on the board, I have gained greater knowledge and understanding as we have made decisions about the future of the co-op. There are new technologies and fuel sources being researched and vetted as the industry faces growth and demand. There is an ongoing search for ways to attain and maintain resource adequacy.

The Northwest has many challenges with differing agendas, local statutes, political leanings, cultures, and points of view; all of which pull the conversation in different directions. Finding the correct answers for our co-op and community can be very challenging. At Lincoln Electric we are blessed with great staff, both out on the lines and at

LEC headquarters. Years of knowledge and experience and strong ties to the community are important at LEC, it takes all of us working together to find solutions.

It has been an honor to be part of the process, and I would love to be able to continue working for our cooperative and community for the next three years.

Greg Stought

Gregory Stought and his wife live in Eureka. He is retired from a long professional career in information technology planning and management for the county government of a large, complex metropolitan area. He previously organized and managed key information systems for a suburban city government, managed a forestry research laboratory for a major university, and served as Corporate database administrator for the industry-leading geographic information software company.

All of these positions involved working closely and collaboratively with elected officials, city and county councils, their advisory boards, committees, and the public to design, develop and support the delivery of a wide range of services, including public utilities, while consistently ensuring high quality customer service. This also required close collaboration with private consultants and contractors to design critical infrastructure projects, negotiate all relevant contracts, and ensure effective oversight through project completion and acceptance.

Greg's academic background is in Geography and he is familiar with the physical, cultural, and economic geography of Northwestern Montana. He is well aware of the development pressures and related issues facing Lincoln Electric Cooperative, and stands fully prepared to deal with them effectively to achieve the best possible future for LEC and all its members.