

MVEC's 2026 Energy Forum | Speaker Profiles



Blois Olson, founder and CEO of Fluence Media and Fluence Advisory has been called “Mr. Minnesota” for his ability to read the mood of the state’s residents and the political dynamics and economic trends. He has moderated hundreds of conversations across the state including political debates, economic discussions and business forums. His influential newsletters and commentaries are read by thousands daily as part of Fluence Media. From the MN Orchestra lockout to Punch Pizza at the State of the Union he’s influenced news and information three decades throughout the country. His insights and perspective are sought regularly by business, civic and political leaders across the state and country. Named one of 100 Minnesotans you should know for 2023, he was recognized as a “Top Marketer” by Minnesota Business magazine in 2012 and named one of “200 Minnesotan’s You Should Know” by Twin Cities Business magazine in 2011. He has been an on-air

host and contributor to WCCO Radio since 1998. Outside of radio, Blois has built a handful of successful businesses in media and public relations/public affairs, his current company Fluence Media is the leading source of information for Minnesota’s business and political elite. He lives in St. Louis Park, has two adult children, and enjoys pickleball, golf and wine. <https://fluence-advisory.com/>

Legislative Panel: Features bipartisan perspectives on energy policy. Sen. Eric Pratt (R) and Rep. Ben Bakeberg (R) and Sen. Nick Frentz (D).



Tricia Elite, Manager, Government Affairs & Policy, Minnesota Rural Electric Association, advocates on behalf of Minnesota’s 50 not-for-profit electric cooperatives and the 1.7 million member-owners they serve across the state. In this role, she represents cooperative interests at the Minnesota Capitol, working with legislators, regulators, utilities, and energy stakeholders on policies that affect electric reliability, affordability, and safety. Prior to joining MREA she spent nearly 10 years working for the Minnesota Senate. She holds a communications degree from St. Cloud State University and a master’s in American Government from Georgetown University. <https://www.mrea.org/>



Todd Brickhouse, Chief Executive Officer and General Manager, Basin Electric Power Cooperative, joined BEPC in 2022 as its senior vice president and chief financial officer. He was named chief executive officer and general manager in December 2023. Brickhouse leads a team of nearly 1,800 employees who work to provide value to the cooperative’s membership by providing affordable and reliable power, products, and services produced in a safe and environmentally responsible manner. BEPC’s service territory includes 3 million consumers across nine states in the Upper Midwest, Great Plains, and Rocky Mountain regions. Its largest subsidiary, Dakota Gasification Company, operates the Great Plains Synfuels Plant, a coal gasification facility which produces synthetic natural gas and 12 additional products. Dakota Gasification Company captures and sequesters approximately 2 million metric tons of carbon dioxide annually. Brickhouse started working in the utility industry at Old Dominion Electric Cooperative in 2000 and served as the vice president

and treasurer from 2010-2022. He spent his early career in the financial services industry and has a background in securities trading, investment banking, and investment management. Brickhouse holds a bachelor’s degree in economics and business from the Virginia Military Institute, Lexington. <https://www.basinelectric.com>



Marvin Denzer, Chief Executive Officer, Minnesota Valley Electric Cooperative joined the cooperative in 1991, he has served in engineering and operations leadership roles and developed MVEC’s key accounts program for commercial, industrial, and agricultural members. As CEO since 2022, Marvin has helped lead the cooperative through a period of significant member growth while maintaining a strong focus on safety, reliability and innovation. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering from North Dakota State University and is a graduate of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Management Internship Program.





Steve Albrecht, P.E., Operations Administrator and Community Engineer for Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community (SMSC) since 2019. In this role, he is charged with leadership, budgeting, and planning for the Public Works, Property Services, and Land and Natural Resources Departments. Prior to becoming operations administrator, he served as the Land and Natural Resources Director for the SMSC. Prior to joining SMSC he served as the public works director for the City of Burnsville from 2011–18. From 2004–2010, he served as public works director/city engineer for the City of Prior Lake. From 1994–2003, Steve worked as a consulting engineer for several municipalities and developers in Carver, Scott, Dakota, and Hennepin Counties. He has a degree in agricultural-water resource engineering from the University of Wisconsin and is a licensed civil engineer in Minnesota. <https://shakopeedakota.org/>



John Suter, Vice President of Economic Research, National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation provides economic and capital markets analysis to cooperative leaders across the country. Since joining CFC in 1984, he has served in a variety of leadership roles and is a frequent speaker on economic trends affecting the electric cooperative industry. He holds advanced degrees in economics and finance and is a Chartered Financial Analyst. John's research and analysis appears in CFC's weekly economic publication and podcast, Solutions Economic & Market Watch. CFC helps electric cooperatives with financial needs. <https://www.nrucfc.coop/>



Jarred Miland, Regional Director External Affairs North Region, Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO), is a seasoned electric industry professional with significant experience in utility and RTO technical and business operations. He has spent 18 years at MISO in several roles managing initiatives in transmission planning, system operations, and tariff administration. Jarred has 14 years of electric utility experience engaged in transmission planning, system operations, and strategic initiatives. He works with various MISO Transmission Owners and other stakeholders to leverage his experience for key issues and initiatives that support grid operations, markets, and transmission planning in the MISO region. Jarred has a Bachelor of Science Electrical Engineering degree from North Dakota State University. <https://www.misoenergy.org/>



Maggie Pears, Initiative Manager, for the Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP) initiative as part of Minnesota's Efficient Technology Accelerator (ETA), a statewide program implemented by **Center of Energy and Environment (CEE)**. In her role, she is responsible for spearheading the initiative strategy for residential ASHPs with CEE's internal team and external partners and overseeing market deployment to increase technology adoption. She implements training deployment, contractor network management, utility collaboration, supply chain collaboration, and marketing collaboration. Prior to CEE, Maggie worked at a nonprofit consulting and project management organization that supported the adoption of medium and heavy duty zero-emission vehicles. She holds a BA in Geography and Environmental Studies from Macalester College. <https://www.mnashp.org/>, <https://www.mncee.org/>



Kelsey Neumaier, Load Control Specialist at Minnesota Valley Electric Cooperative, joined the cooperative in 2023 as a System Dispatcher and transitioned to her current role in 2025. She supports system reliability, coordinates load management strategies, member notifications, and oversees MVEC's rebate program, helping member-owners take advantage of energy-efficient products and Energy Wise money saving incentives. Kelsey earned her System Operator Certification from Northwest Lineman College in 2024 and was a member of the first cohort to complete MVEC's LEAD (Leadership Empowerment and Development) Program in 2024-25.