



## The importance of effective right-of-way control

Maintaining right-of-way is one of the most expensive operating costs experienced by electric utilities in Kentucky. A few years ago, I was driving through the plains of South Dakota and noticed nice orderly three phase lines running down the side of the interstate. You could travel several miles without ever seeing a tree. As I reflected on how low right-of-way control costs must be in that area, I realized it's all a tradeoff. The nearly constant gale force winds and treacherous winter conditions those utilities endure more than counteract not dealing with as many vegetation-related concerns.

Properly executing a multifaceted vegetation management program is a long-term strategic commitment. Our approach to vegetation management was overhauled when Wide Open Utility Service began operation in 2021. We have spent the last 24 months continuing to clear our right-of-way, all the while educating ourselves with available reliability data and developing a most effective forward-thinking plan to preserve clean, clear right-of-way for decades to come.

In the past, Nolin has relied predominantly on vegetation control by mechanical means using bucket trucks, chainsaws, tractors with mowers and other heavy machinery. While clearing by mechanical means will always be a necessary part of effective vegetation management, the goal is to reduce the time and resources needed for that

control method over a span of several years.

Late this spring and through the summer, Nolin RECC will be implementing a systemic herbicidal treatment component to its overarching vegetation management program. Only herbicide products that have been registered for use on utility right-of-way by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency will be used. These products have undergone significant testing to ensure that they impact their target control species of vegetation without posing a threat to you, your pets, wildlife or the environment. Every Wide Open Utility Service employee who will be performing herbicidal treatment has received a Kentucky state certified applicator's license, and has spent deliberate time in training endeavors to prepare them to properly apply vegetation control products. Topics covered in their training include:

- Specific intended use of each product (which types of vegetation each herbicide controls)
- Appropriate storage and handling of these products (including how to mix the products and use proper ratios)
- PPE required during all phases of herbicide application
- Proper application techniques (cut stump spray bottle application, low volume backpack application, high volume spray application, patterns of application to be used within the right-of way)



Right-of-way before (left) and one year after (right) vegetation management including herbicide. Photos by Brandon Myers, Farmers RECC

- Important topographical considerations, like proximity to surface water
- The impacts that weather—most notably wind, rain, humidity and barometric pressure—can have on spraying and how to plan properly around forecasted meteorological activity

Nolin RECC intends to apply herbicides in two distinct ways. The first method is a cut stump basal treatment that is applied directly to the residual stump or stem of certain woody or broadleaf species after mechanical removal. These applications will nearly always take place in the immediate aftermath of removal. The products that will be used in this application are Garlon 4 Ultra (which is dyed blue) or RoundUp Custom ATU (an aquatic approved product that will be



by Greg Lee

From the  
President/CEO

Continued on 46B

# EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

*Continued from 46A*



SARAH FELLOWS

**Bryson Puyear - Nolin RECC Apprentice Line Technician - 1.5 years of service**



SARAH FELLOWS

**Dorsey Cole - Mechanic, Wide Open Utility Service - 1.5 years of service**

used when application is needed nearer proximity to surface water).

The second method of herbicide application that will be used by Nolin is a high volume foliar (HVF) technique that will be broadcast across the right-of-way. This will be performed by use of pickup truck with a large tank and hoses with spray nozzles to be actuated by the applicators. In this type of application, a combination of products are used in very low concentrations to control numerous target species simultaneously. The products that will be used in this method are ArborChem Clean Cut, Terravue, Garlon 3A, and Escort XP. When used in combination, these products will control a wide range of woody and broadleaf vegetation while permitting long term vitality of nearly all true grasses. A drift control additive may also be utilized when weather conditions dictate its necessity.

Ultimately, the goal of herbicidal treatments for vegetation control is three-fold:

- Maintain or increase electric reliability
- Provide a cost-effective means of vegetation control
- Create a sustainable right-of-way environment that is both ecologically prudent and aesthetically satisfactory.

While some people have a provisional aversion to the use of herbicides, it is important to remember that the products mentioned here are considered safe for

use when utilized properly. Additionally, the resultant right-of-way is often a haven for many species of desirable native plants and grasses that have been suppressed by other overgrown or invasive species. Consequently, the return of these desirable native species provides a favorable habitat for numerous animals.

Nolin intends to utilize herbicidal treatments in rural settings and the less densely populated areas of our service territory. Not because they pose a threat, but because the less inhabited areas will have inherently less vegetation control by property owners (i.e. mowing of yards, etc.). We will make all reasonable efforts to notify our membership when spraying will be taking place in their area. If you do not want herbicides applied on your property, we will have a form available by which you can opt-out of this program. Additionally, each product Nolin intends to use is listed in this article. The Safety Data Sheet (SDS) for each can be found at [www.nolinrecc.com](http://www.nolinrecc.com).

Using herbicides to control unruly vegetation can be of tremendous benefit to Nolin RECC. Because it is a cost-effective method of vegetation control, it will ultimately be financially beneficial to our entire membership. It is our hope that all of our members will also appraise this program for the longterm positive impacts it can have on our environment.

## Updates to serve you better

The lobby of our Radcliff office is closed temporarily to make updates to the building. The Radcliff office DRIVE-THRU is open and available for payments during renovations. Any other account business can be done by calling (270) 765-6153, visiting our E'town office at 411 Ring Road or at [www.nolinrecc.com](http://www.nolinrecc.com).

We appreciate our members' patience as we make improvements to serve you better. We hope the work is completed by the end of April, but we will post an update to our social media channels and website when we have a lobby reopening date.



SARAH FELLOWS

The Radcliff office lobby is closed temporarily, the drive-thru is open for payments only.



# Cooperative principle: Education

Photos by Sarah Fellows

We recently hosted our spring Member Advisory Council (MAC) meeting at the Hardin County Extension Office. More than 200 were in attendance including members and their families and Nolin directors and employees. The spring MAC meeting is an important way to communicate with our members as well as begin the director election process each year.

This year, we invited local high school and continuing education scholarship applicants to be present for a random drawing to determine Nolin's scholarship recipients. The recipient of the Bob

Wade Sr. Memorial Scholarship had been chosen by the scholarship selection committee prior to the meeting and was announced that night as well. See below for all 2023 scholarship recipients.

Each year, Nolin RECC awards \$13,000 in scholarships to area students who are graduating high school or seeking a continuing education. Eligible applicants were invited to the spring Member Advisory Council meeting and a random drawing was held for six (6) \$1,500 scholarships for graduating high school students and one (1) \$1,500 for a Nolin member who is 21 or older and continuing their education.



Nolin RECC Director Buddy Rosenberger attended the meeting with his wife, Carol. After serving as a Nolin director for 45 years, Buddy has announced he will not be running for reelection this year.



Gwendolyn and Timothy Brashear and Elahna Thompson were in attendance at the MAC meeting. Elahna was one of the 43 area high school students that applied for the scholarship drawing held during the MAC meeting.



Danika Peak and her daughter, Grace, attended representing District 4. Grace is a graduating senior from Central Hardin High School who applied for one of Nolin's scholarships drawn at the meeting.



Nolin RECC Attorney John Scott and his wife, Sandra, attended the meeting. John is stepping down as Nolin's attorney after 42 years of service to the co-op.



Seven graduating high school students were presented with scholarships during the MAC meeting. Pictured, from left, are Gavin Breunig (Elizabethtown High School), Braden Shearer (Elizabethtown High School), Chloe Hornback—Bob Wade Sr Memorial Scholarship (Elizabethtown High School), Jenna Kittrell (John Hardin High School), Ephraim Morgan (LaRue County High School), Averie Strader (Central Hardin High School), and Kathryn Gray (Central Hardin High School).



Continuing Education scholarship recipient Jason Ford and Nolin RECC District 4 Director David Brown.



# Operation Round-Up: Apply today!

Operation Round-Up is a voluntary program that Nolin RECC members can opt into and have their monthly bill rounded up to the nearest dollar each month. This change goes into a fund that is administered by a nonprofit board of local citizens.

Organizations that help the community can apply for these grants. The Operation Round-Up board then chooses the projects they determine will be awarded grant funding. Last year's recipients

include CASA of the Heartland, Mission Hope for Kids, Sunrise Children's Services, South Hardin Baseball and Softball Leagues and Friends of the LaRue County Library.

Organizations that would like to apply for Community Impact Grant funding from Operation Round-Up this year can find details and the application at [www.nolinrecc.com](http://www.nolinrecc.com) or pick up an application at one of Nolin's offices. The deadline to submit an application is May 1, 2023.



Representatives of 2022 Operation Round-Up grant recipients and board of directors. Photo: Desaree Ruic

## Meter testing:

Nolin RECC does regular checks of a sampling of equipment across our service area to make sure everything is running smoothly. This spring, you may see crews from Luthan

Electric Meter Testing on your property. They will have identification and a letter from Nolin with them. If you have any questions, please give us a call at (270) 765-6153.

## Right-of-way work schedule

To keep our members informed, we are providing information about where our right-of-way crews plan to work each month. This information is subject to change.

April 2023: Vertrees Substation,

Hardinsburg Road/HWY 86, Vertrees Church Lane, N Grandview Church Road, S Grandview Church Road, Church of God Road.

Free wood chips are available, call (270) 765-6153, ext. 2714 for details.

### How to reach Nolin RECC

#### ELIZABETHTOWN OFFICE

411 Ring Road | Elizabethtown, KY 42701  
8 a.m.-5 p.m., Mon-Fri | (270) 765-6153

#### RADCLIFF OFFICE

101 West Lincoln Trail Blvd.  
Radcliff, KY 40160  
8 a.m.-5 p.m., Mon-Fri

#### TOLL-FREE BUSINESS CALLS

1-888-637-4247

#### PAY DIRECT BY PHONE TOLL FREE

1-855-938-3651

#### FOR EMERGENCIES

(270) 765-6153

[www.NolinRECC.com](http://www.NolinRECC.com)

Email: [Comments@NolinRECC.com](mailto:Comments@NolinRECC.com)

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