

UPDATE

JANUARY - MARCH 2009

Ice Breaks Transmission, Not Spirit

Much of the Ozarks and Arkansas Delta was transformed into Iceland on January 27, 2009, as northern Arkansas and southern Missouri were encrusted with up to five inches of ice during a two-day storm that destroyed trees and transmission poles leaving thousands of utility customers without power. Nearly 70 counties across both states were declared Federal disaster areas, and the impact to Southwestern's system was substantial.

Even as the freezing rain was falling, line crews from Southwestern's Springfield, Missouri, and Gore, Oklahoma, maintenance Units were mobilized to assist the Jonesboro Unit in Arkansas, in the heart of the ice zone. The initial assessment revealed a devastating picture.

The storm affected nearly 300 miles of Southwestern's transmission system, with 70 miles of conductor on the ground and more than 400 structures damaged. Primary damage was centered in northeast Arkansas and the bootheel of Missouri, necessitating the replacement or repair of 355 69-kilovolt (kV) and 64 161-kV structures, along with associated conductor and fiber optic shield wire.

Not only was the flow of power interrupted throughout Southwestern's



TRANSMISSION STRUCTURES ACROSS NORTHEAST ARKANSAS AND SOUTHEAST MISSOURI WERE SNAPPED LIKE TWIGS BY A SEVERE ICE STORM ON JANUARY 27, 2009, THAT DAMAGED 300 MILES OF SOUTHWESTERN'S LINES AND IMPACTED REGIONAL TRANSMISSION AND COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS.

transmission system, but also the flow of information through the agency's data communications systems. Damage to optical ground wire (OPGW) and microwave hardware at several sites from eastern Oklahoma to southeast Missouri necessitated a separate repair effort among the Engineering & Planning and Scheduling & Operations Divisions.

"I've been at Southwestern for 28 years, and this is the worst destruction from a single storm I've ever seen," says Kenny Broadaway, Southwestern's Craft Superintendent for the Jonesboro Maintenance Unit. "We knew this was going to take weeks to finish repairing."

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LOCAL DISTRIBUTION LINES IN AND AROUND KENNETT, MISSOURI, WERE TORN DOWN BY THOUSANDS OF POUNDS OF ICE.

sought to get their systems up and running. One of Southwestern’s neighboring utilities and some of Southwestern’s customers immediately supplied Southwestern with crucial materials to help expedite restoration efforts while the agency sought to procure additional resources.

“Many materials needed for reconstruction were not readily available from distributors since they are manufactured on an as-needed basis,” explains Jim Hunt, Contract Specialist with Southwestern’s Division of Acquisition & Facilities Services. “However, early on, our vendors bent over backwards to give priority to our needs in the manufacturing process.”

“When the Federal disaster declarations came in, that made some streamlined procurement methods available,” adds fellow Southwestern Contract Specialist Sean Long, who was instrumental in awarding two major construction contracts that got the recovery process started. “By utilizing Letter Contracts, for example, we were able to get two contractors in place restoring poles and lines within 72 hours of receiving the requirements. This process would normally have taken 90 to 120 days.”

Funding for the restoration efforts was critical. “As Southwestern learned the extent of the damage, Financial Management staff contacted the Department of Energy (DOE) and the Office of Management and Budget to activate emergency funding,” says Donna Short, Director of Southwestern’s Division of Financial Management. “Our Administrator, Jon Worthington, actually hand-carried the required documents to Secretary Chu at DOE just after the storm. We were very pleased to have the necessary funding available within two days.”

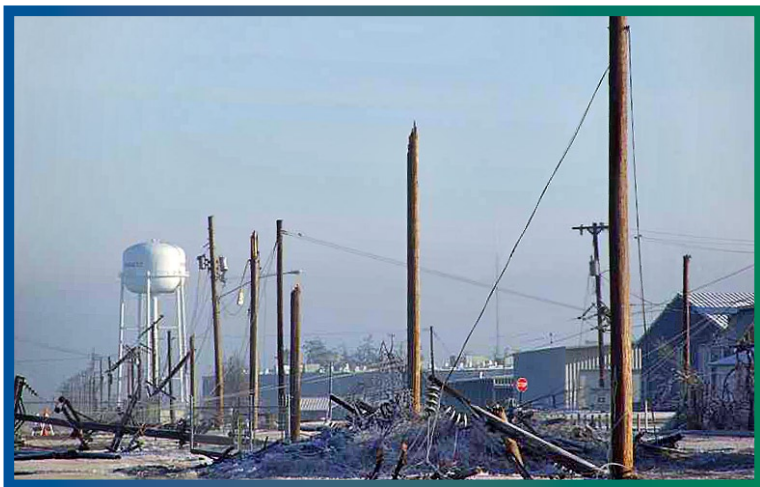
While the procurement process was moving forward, Southwestern’s line crews got busy utilizing poles and hardware that were already on-hand. They melted and broke ice off switch mechanisms with blow torches and hammers. They worked through freezing temperatures, ice falling from towers, and -- when the weather warmed up -- deep mud. They salvaged existing cross-arms and poles whenever possible. Within the first week, they had repaired and energized two major line segments: Sikeston to New Madrid, Missouri, and Jonesboro to Water Valley, Arkansas. Steady progress was also made on Line 3001 between Dardanelle and Bull Shoals Dams, a main artery for power in north central Arkansas.

ICE STORM FROM PAGE 1

Due to the magnitude of the devastation and the critical need to get power restored to customers during continued cold weather, Broadway and Tom Green, Director of Southwestern’s Division of Maintenance, quickly decided to bring in additional resources to assist Southwestern’s 18 linemen. The agency contracted for crews from Total Electrical Service and Supply Company (TESSCO) (Midland, Texas) and North Houston Pole Line (NHPL) (Houston, Texas), and also put out a call for help from Western Area Power Administration (Western), which sent two crews from its Rocky Mountain Region and one from its Upper Great Plains Region.

RISING TO THE CHALLENGE

As Southwestern began repairing lines during the first week after the storm, supplies and materials were difficult to obtain as electric utility companies throughout the region



THE STREETS OF KENNETT, MISSOURI, WHICH RECEIVED SOME OF THE HEAVIEST ICING FROM THE STORM, LOOKED LIKE A “WAR ZONE” ACCORDING TO KENNETT’S LARRY JONES.

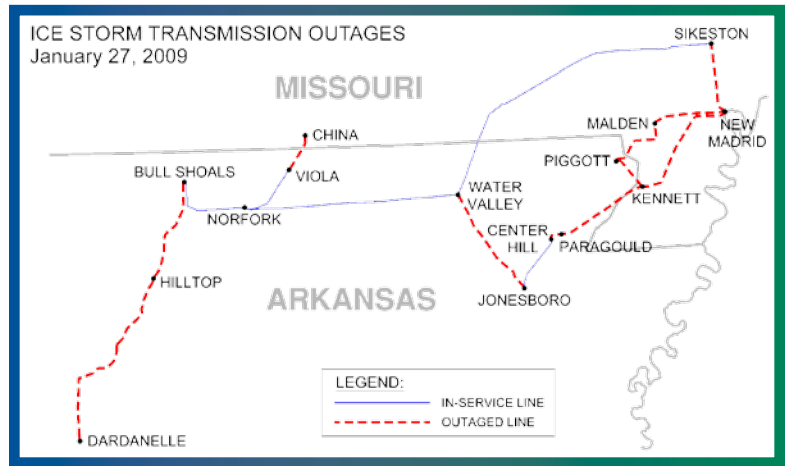
“IT WAS LIKE A WAR ZONE.”

However, the hardest work was yet to come. Among the communities of Kennett and Malden, Missouri, and Piggott, Arkansas, Mother Nature had demolished hundreds of Southwestern’s high voltage structures, and tens of thousands of local distribution poles were literally snapped in two under several inches of ice. All would need to be completely replaced.

Southwestern’s Kennett Substation never lost power, although the town’s local system was in shambles.

“The ice accumulated to the point where it filled the gaps between individual icicles and formed massive slabs of ice hanging on the lines,” says Larry Jones, Superintendent of Utilities, Kennett Board of Public Works. “When the wind and weight snapped one pole, the tension on the line caused all the poles to just snap one after the other like dominoes.” Jones took dozens of photos of the local devastation, showing trees, utility poles, street lights – everything bent, broken, or on the ground. “It was like a war zone,” he says.

To the north, Malden was cut off from the electric grid, but was able to rely temporarily on an interconnection with Ameren, an adjacent utility company. However, the biggest concern for Southwestern’s Broadaway and the line crews was Piggott, which had been completely isolated from the electric grid and was operating solely on diesel generators to serve its load, keeping the lights on only for homes and critical facilities.



SOUTHWESTERN’S TRANSMISSION SYSTEM WAS DAMAGED FROM DARDANELLE IN NORTH CENTRAL ARKANSAS ALL THE WAY UP TO SIKESTON, MISSOURI.

As Southwestern received necessary supplies and outside crews reported for duty, all available personnel were concentrated around the Missouri bootheel. The NHPL contractors mobilized on February 5, 2009, and started wrecking out and setting new H-frame structures at Piggott heading toward Malden. Western arrived on February 8, 2009, and began working at Malden heading toward Piggott. TESSCO arrived on February 11, 2009, and got busy moving equipment and wrecking out structures throughout the area alongside Southwestern’s crews.

On February 10, 2009, Line 3001 between Bull Shoals and Dardanelle was energized and the remainder of Southwestern’s linemen were dispatched to the bootheel area, bringing the total number of workers to over 90 across the hardest hit areas.

By the second week of February, Broadaway notes, Southwestern’s crew members had been working dawn-to-dusk for 15 straight days. “I tell you, those guys were working hard,” he says. “All the crews worked really well together, but I know some of our guys wanted to get a couple days off to rest, or go home and see their families.”

However, Broadaway could only promise to start rotating crews out once the Piggott Substation was back online, and additional weather hazards were not about to make that an easy goal to reach.

Heavy rains and flooding stopped work altogether on February 10, 2009, and high winds the following day slammed bucket rigs into poles and hampered progress. Everywhere, the crews were up to their knees in mud.



Photo Courtesy of Western.

CONTRACT CREWS SUCH AS THIS WESTERN TEAM SETTING POLES NEAR MALDEN, MISSOURI, HELPED TREMENDOUSLY WITH GETTING POWER RESTORED QUICKLY.

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ICE STORM FROM PAGE 3

Despite these obstacles, the drive to restore power on the Malden-Piggott line met with success by mid-afternoon on February 14, 2009. After clipping in and hanging braces on the final few spans, Southwestern energized the line at 2:42 PM, so that no one in Piggott had to have a candlelight dinner on Valentine's Day if they didn't want to.

"We were most happy to be plugged back into the grid," said Piggott Mayor Gerald Morris after power had been restored. "We are thankful we had the generators and powerplant." Morris says city residents were grateful to the workers restoring power, noting that many drove out daily to watch the steady progress being made, and regularly yielded traffic rights-of-way to utility trucks.

Southwestern's Broadaway has nothing but praise for the crews working on Southwestern's lines. "All these guys work without complaint to get the job done," he says. "Our guys and the crews from Texas, of course, are used to this kind of mud. And a lot of the Western guys are from Wyoming and Montana, so they just said the heavy winds made them feel right at home."

UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL

Jon Worthington, Southwestern Administrator, and Scott Carpenter, Assistant Administrator of the Office of Corporate Facilities, toured the transmission system damage from Jonesboro all the way up to Malden on February 11, 2009. The pair visited with crews out in the field and stopped by the offices of impacted customers to keep them informed of Southwestern's progress, listen to any concerns, and assure them of the agency's commitment to getting power restored as quickly as possible.

"It was important for me as the Administrator to get out and be visible with the customers and crews," says Worthington. "I wanted to personally convey to them that if they needed anything, we would help in any way we could."

Worthington and Carpenter stopped in at City Water & Light of Jonesboro to meet with Ron Bowen, Manager; Rick Henley, Power Purchase Sales Administrator; Terry Williams, Purchasing Agent; and other personnel in order to thank them for the city's assistance with obtaining extra poles and other hardware early in the restoration efforts.



JON WORTHINGTON AND SCOTT CARPENTER CHECK IN WITH A COMBINED JONESBORO AND GORE CREW WORKING BETWEEN MALDEN, MISSOURI, AND PIGGOTT, ARKANSAS.



(L-R) MALDEN'S TED BELLERS DISCUSSES REPAIRS WITH SOUTHWESTERN'S JON WORTHINGTON AND SCOTT CARPENTER, AND MALDEN OFFICIALS KEN COOK AND RAY SANTIE.

Next, Worthington and Carpenter travelled up to Kennett to meet with Kennett's Larry Jones. Soon after, they had lunch in Malden with Mayor Ray Santie, Ted Bellers, Director of Utilities, Gary Youngquist, Power Plant Supervisor, and other officials and utility crew members. Lastly, they headed over to Piggott to meet with Mayor Gerald Morris.

Along the way, Worthington and Carpenter paid a surprise visit to crews out in the field to thank them for their hard work and to see what additional resources they might need. "I am genuinely interested in the work that they do," says Worthington, who trod through the mud in lineman boots as he shook hands and talked to people. At one point, he climbed into the cab of a Western truck to introduce himself. "I certainly appreciate how quickly they respond to emergencies, and how focused they are as a team."

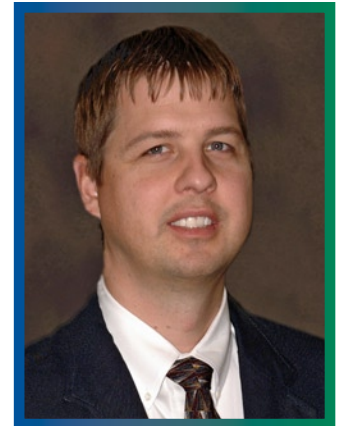
Adds Carpenter, "We really wanted to express our appreciation to these guys, and to stress how important their work is for the economies of these small towns. We also let them know how appreciative the customers have been with their hard work."

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Boyken Selected as Customer Service Director

Marshall Boyken, former Hydraulic Engineer in Southwestern's Division of Resources & Rates, was selected to be Director of the Division of Customer Service, effective March 1, 2009. Boyken, who began his career at Southwestern in 2004, succeeds Scott Carpenter, who was named Assistant Administrator of the Office of Corporate Facilities earlier this year.

Boyken's career has always involved finding solutions that effectively integrate public needs with project requirements and government regulations. He previously worked in the Road Design Office of the Iowa Department of Transportation before beginning his Federal career in 2000 at the Tulsa District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) in Tulsa, Oklahoma. At the Corps, he spent two years in the Reservoir Control Section actively involved in the day-to-day regulation of the District's reservoirs. He then transferred to the Military Design section as a Project Engineer where he was involved with the engineering management of multiple vertical construction military projects.



In 2004, Boyken came to Southwestern as a Hydraulic Engineer in what was then the Division of Scheduling and Operations. His duties included analyses of hydropower operations and coordination of customer-funded maintenance projects at Corps' hydropower plants within Southwestern's marketing area.

As Director of Southwestern's Customer Service Division, Boyken will oversee the development and execution of all contracts and agreements regarding power sales, transmission, communications, tariffs, and funding of Corps maintenance projects, as well as the public affairs activities of the agency.

Boyken holds both a bachelor's and master's degree in Civil Engineering from Iowa State University, and is a Registered Professional Engineer in the State of Oklahoma. ♦

Brairton New Deputy Administrator in Washington



Michael Brairton assumed the duties of Deputy Assistant Administrator in the Power Marketing Liaison Office (PMLO) in Washington, D.C., on March 30, 2009. He will serve as the primary contact for the Southeastern and Southwestern Power Administrations, representing both agencies before Congress, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), the Department of Energy (DOE), and other Federal and industry organizations.

Brairton comes to the PMLO from DOE's Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs, where he served since June 2008 as advisor to the Secretary of Energy, the Deputy Secretary of Energy, and other senior officials regarding the political, congressional, and inter-governmental implications of major DOE programs and policies. His duties there also included development, management, and coordination of DOE relations with Congress, states, local governments, tribal nations, Federal agencies, and other stakeholders.

Brairton's first assignment at DOE in February 2007 was with the Office of Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability, where he worked closely with Western Area and Bonneville Power Administration staff members in advising the Western Governors' Association on identifying renewable energy zones and developing and implementing rules to designate National Interest Electric Transmission Corridors.

In 2005, he joined the American Public Power Association (APPA) as a Government Relations Representative. During his time at APPA, Brairton worked with a coalition of consumer-owned utilities and other stakeholders to help develop the final version of the Clean Renewable Energy Bond Program included in the Energy Policy Act of 2005.

Before joining DOE, Brairton served on the staffs of various members of Congress, including U.S. Representative Mike Sorrel of Indiana, U.S. Representative Gary Miller of California, and Senator Chuck Hagel of Nebraska. His first opportunity to work with a Power Marketing Administration came in 2000 while working for Miller during

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Southwestern Extends Native American Contracts

Southwestern continues its support of the Department of Energy's American Indian Policy by renewing its support services contract with Wyandotte Tribal Corporation (WTC) of Wyandotte, Oklahoma, and also by entering into a new support services contract with Chickasaw Nation Enterprises (CNI) of Ada, Oklahoma, both effective March 1, 2009. As the prior five-year contract with WTC ended this spring, Southwestern opted to separate support services across two contracts: one for information technology (IT) and the other for program/administrative services.



IT support at Southwestern will continue to be provided by WTC through its Bearskin Services unit. Although the prior contract was through the corporation's Wyandotte Net Tel (WNT) unit, the same on-site contracting personnel will remain in place. Like WNT, Bearskin Services is a Native American Tribal Business, wholly-owned by the Wyandotte Nation, and is certified by the Small Business Administration (SBA) as an 8(a) firm.

Bearskin Services offers client-server and networking technology products and support services with a focus on the needs of government clients. As it has grown over the years, the company has been awarded contracts with the Department of the Interior, the Department of Agriculture, the Navy's Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command, and other government organizations. Profits from the Southwestern contract will help the Wyandotte tribe in funding infrastructure improvements, emergency services, educational scholarships, and other improvements in housing and healthcare.

Southwestern's contract for program/administrative services was awarded to CNI. Established in 1996, CNI is a Federally chartered corporation with its charter granted by the Department of Interior. As a Native American Tribal Business, CNI is also certified by the SBA as an 8(a) firm.



CNI has expanded tremendously since 2002 and is currently made up of 12 different companies providing a variety of products and services in the areas of technology, administrative, medical/dental, construction, and manufacturing. CNI Professional Services LLC, the unit that is contracted with Southwestern, has been awarded contracts with several organizations within the Department of Energy, the U.S. Air Force, and the Department of Health and Human Services.

CNI is one of the largest Tribal companies in the lower 48 states, and returns a majority of its profits to the Chickasaw tribe to meet education, healthcare, and infrastructure needs. ♦

In Memory of Knoland Plucknett



KNOLAND AND CAROLYN PLUCKNETT

Knoland J. Plucknett, Assistant Administrator of Southwestern from 1965-76 and the first Executive Director of the Committee on Power for the Southwest, which later became Southwestern Power Resources Association (SPRA), passed away on October 16, 2008. Born in 1916 in DeWitt, Nebraska, Plucknett earned a bachelor's degree in Electrical Engineering from the University of Nebraska and worked for the U.S. Department of the Interior in Washington, D.C., before moving to Tulsa, Oklahoma, to work at Southwestern. He served in the U.S. Naval Reserve as an instructor in Radar Technology during World War II, and was a lifetime member of the International Association of Professional Engineers and the International Electronic and Electrical Engineers. Plucknett was also an active member of the Engineers' Society of Tulsa. He and his wife of 69 years, Carolyn, were honored guests at SPRA's 50th anniversary celebration in 2007. Contributions in his memory may

be made to the Knoland and Carolyn Plucknett Scholarship Fund at Oklahoma State University (OSU) for students in the College of Engineering and the College of Human Environmental Sciences, at OSU Foundation, P.O. Box 1740, Stillwater, OK 74076; or to Saint Simeon's Episcopal Home in Tulsa. ♦

ICE STORM FROM PAGE 4

Dudley Steele, an Electrician on the Jonesboro Substation Crew, served as the driver for Worthington and Carpenter on their journey. As the group criss-crossed the flooded rice and cotton fields until nightfall, they stopped frequently to view decimated transmission lines. Twisted, broken H-frames stretched off to the horizon, and trees were still bent low with branches piled on the ground around them.

“This storm is definitely the worst I’ve ever seen,” Steele, a 14-year line crew veteran, told his passengers, echoing the sentiment of so many Southwestern employees and customers. “We have a lot of work still to do.”

By the end of the day, however, Steele says he came away with new insights on Southwestern’s role in keeping the power on. “I really learned a lot,” he says, after seeing firsthand how Southwestern’s management interacts closely with customers even during emergencies. “I spend most of my time out in the field, so I don’t often get to see the executive side of how all this works. It has been a very interesting education.”

CHARGING THE GRID

With all customers back on the grid by mid-February, Southwestern continued repairing the remaining damaged lines. As warmer, dryer weather prevailed in late February and most of March, crews replaced steel on the damaged towers of Line 3014 to New Madrid, and installed new poles on the 69-kV Malden-New Madrid line. Western and NHPL crews reported home by mid-March, and TESCO contractors finished sagging and clipping conductors on Line 3014 before heading home. According to Southwestern’s Scott Carpenter, although the agency’s 69-kV lines still require complete reconductoring later in the spring, the transmission system was fully operational by April.

Repairs have also been made to Southwestern’s communications system. “People from Operations, Engineering, Information Technology, and Acquisitions have made a tremendous effort in getting communications back up and working,” says Danny Johnson, Section Chief for Communications Engineering. “There was an initial effort by the Operations Technicians to patch back together as much fiber as they could in the Gore and Jonesboro areas. And a major undertaking at R.S. Kerr was very beneficial in getting data flowing in the Gore region.”

Some procurement requests will require several weeks for delivery, including much of the new OPGW and hardware, so Johnson notes that some of the communications system has only been temporarily restored. “We had to do some emergency splices of fiber, and they have held up pretty well,” he says, adding that OPGW cannot be strung permanently until all damaged transmission structures are strengthened or replaced.



CREWS FROM WESTERN, TESCO, AND NORTH HOUSTON POLE LINE WERE INVALUABLE IN GETTING THE POWER FLOWING AFTER THE STORM.



JON WORTHINGTON (CENTER) TALKS WIND, MUD, AND RESTORATION WITH SOUTHWESTERN’S SCOTT SIMS AND DUDLEY STEELE.

After all the emergency outages, weather hazards, sleepless hours, and procurement challenges, Southwestern’s Jon Worthington notes that the ice storm brought out the best in Southwestern’s workforce and showcased the agency’s excellent relationships with its customers, sister agencies, and other utility companies. He wants Southwestern employees to know that their efforts are recognized at the highest levels of the DOE.

“When I met with Secretary Chu, I told him about the resourcefulness of the men and women working for Southwestern,” he recalls. “I let him know that we hoped to have the power back on in less than three weeks. And we did that. Secretary Chu was very impressed with our ability to mobilize and make that happen.” 💧

NEW EMPLOYEES

Michael Brairton
DEPUTY ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR
POWER MARKETING LIAISON OFFICE

Lyndsey Derkatch
STUDENT TRAINEE
DIVISION OF RESOURCES & RATES

Brian Massey
EQUIPMENT OPERATOR
JONESBORO MAINTENANCE UNIT

Jesse Tate
EQUIPMENT OPERATOR
JONESBORO MAINTENANCE UNIT

Joseph Underhile
EQUIPMENT OPERATOR
JONESBORO MAINTENANCE UNIT

BRAIRTON FROM PAGE 5

the California electricity crisis. As a senior staff member in Miller's office, Brairton worked with Western Area Power Administration during efforts to upgrade Path 15 connecting northern and southern California.

Brairton holds a bachelor's degree in History from the University of Maryland. 💧



WATTS INSIDE?



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