

# Tideland Topics

*Real People. Real Power.*

## Powerline *timeline*

Erosion of the south end of Hatteras Island has rapidly accelerated, posing a hazard to Ocracoke's service reliability. Work is scheduled to begin next month to install nearly 10,000 feet of additional submarine cable. It is just one of several major construction projects throughout the co-op's service territory to improve the resiliency of our electric system.

Learn more beginning on page F.



## Winter rates

Residential members will be billed according to the winter rate schedule beginning November 1. The per-kilowatt-hour (kWh) rate will decrease from the summer rate of 11.495¢ to 10.58¢.

A wholesale purchase power adjustment charge of \$5.00 per 1,000 kWh remains in effect for all rate schedules, both residential and commercial.





# Plugging in? Let us know



## AMEX:

*Approved  
for payment*

Thanks to much more favorable merchant fee rates, Tideland members may once again use American Express credit cards for electric bill payments. Tideland's billing software vendor successfully negotiated transaction fees, which are expected to save the co-op \$25,000 annually.

Members can pay by credit card multiple ways:

- Monthly draft
- Online member portal
- Mobile app
- Automated phone system: 800.882.1001
- In person at any of Tideland's four offices

Reminder: Individual credit card transactions are capped at \$1,500 each, regardless of card type. The minimum credit card transaction is \$10.00.

## Gauging electric vehicle adoption

Are you plugging in rather than filling up at the gas pump? We'd like to know!

In particular, we'd like to know if you have a charging station at your home or business and if so, what type?

Level 1 charging is done through a 120-volt outlet, which is the standard household size charging. This should not require extra equipment or installation. Depending on the vehicle type, it may take anywhere between 8 - 20 hours to charge your vehicle this way.

Level 2 charging uses a 240-volt outlet (usually intended for large appliances) and a charging station. Level 2 charging is three to five times faster than a Level 1 charger. Before installing a Level 2 charger, contact Tideland. We can help you

determine whether you have sufficient load capacity and if a service upgrade is necessary.

If you plan to build a new home or a garage addition, consider installing the wiring necessary to one day accommodate a Level 2 charging station.

All home and business owners should invest in and maintain quality surge protection. That's especially true if you have an electric vehicle charging station.

While we typically think of surge protection as protecting what's inside our home from what's outdoors, surges can easily be generated within the home. Electric vehicle owners should consider the additional installation of an AC power line surge protector.

# Message to members

## \$31 million work plan addresses capacity and coastal vulnerabilities

by **PAUL SPRUILL**

GENERAL MANAGER & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

As we near the reality of our first rate increase since January 2013, this issue of Tideland Topics builds on my July 2019 message recapping major projects completed during our last four-year construction work plan. In that time our net electric plant assets increased \$16.3 million, reflecting a significant investment in service reliability. Not surprisingly, long-term debt also increased \$8 million.

Our new work plan is no less aggressive as we manage the realities of an electrified life in such a beautiful yet vulnerable part of North Carolina. On pages F-H you will find descriptions of four major construction projects included in our current \$31.6 million, four-year work plan. Together the highlighted projects will account for just under \$9 million of the \$31 million investment required to continue hardening our electric system and increasing capacity to meet growing consumer demand. In some cases, we're opting for entirely new materials that will not only change the appearance of our infrastructure along many roadways but achieve greater du-

rability, enhancing both reliability and longevity.

Some project parameters and their timing were dictated by the unceasing forces of nature. Such is the case with the submarine cable extension slated for early 2020 on the rapidly eroding south end of Hatteras Island. Fortunately, we've had impeccable service from the existing submarine cable that is now nearing 20 years of service.

Every system investment is made with both current and future rate-payers in mind. We work hard to balance affordability and reliability. We're proud to have accomplished so much since 2013 while also implementing a rate decrease in July 2014. Furthermore, we have been able to issue member credits totaling more than \$12 million since 2013 through a combination of member capital credit refunds and wholesale power cost adjustment (WPCA) credits.

We'll continue to update you on significant construction projects as work progresses in Tideland territory.

## Right-of-way maintenance schedule

Tideland has hired Lucas Tree Experts to trim trees in our right-of-way. During November they will continue trimming on the Merritt circuit. They will be working on Trent Road and all side roads in that area.

Another Lucas crew will also be working on the Silver Hill circuit along Hwy. 306 and all side roads in that area.

## Holiday closing

Tideland offices will be closed November 28 and 29 for the Thanksgiving Holiday. Offices will re-open at 8 am on Monday, December 2.

Our call center will remain open and members may call 800.637.1079 for service. Please call 800.882.1001 to report power outages and make payments by phone. On-call crews remain on standby to address outages and safety hazards.

Gobble, gobble!

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# Hurricane Dorian Recovery Update

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE OCRACOKE OBSERVER



## Intelligent design

In March 2016, we told you about an experimental pole installation at Ocracoke. Highland Composite's Intelli-pole is rated to withstand winds in excess of 180 miles per hour. It is modular, which allows for easy transport and on-site assembly.

We installed it on a section of Highway 12 subject to frequent ocean overwash. While the pole did have to be realigned following Dorian, it didn't sustain any physical damage and continues to perform well in adverse conditions.



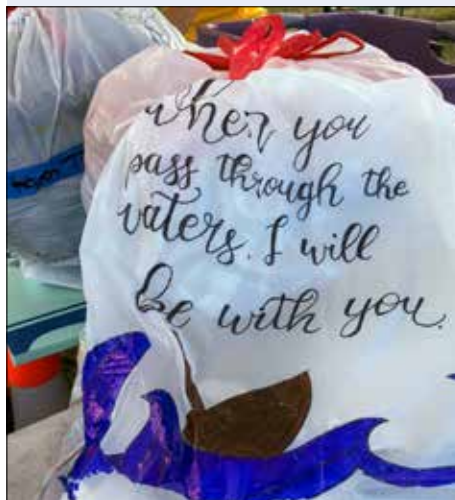
## Public assistance disaster relief approval softens financial hit for co-op ratepayers

On October 4, President Trump signed a major disaster declaration authorizing public assistance for the following Tideland served

counties impacted by Hurricane Dorian: Craven, Dare, Hyde, Pamlico and Washington. Tideland is one of the entities eligible for that relief to help offset costs associated with power restoration work following Dorian. Our revised estimate of total costs now stands at \$1.5 million.

The initial request for individual assistance was declined by FEMA on October 8.

In total, 416 electric meters on the island had to be pulled due to storm damage. At press time, 277 meters had been reinstalled with 139 services remaining disconnected.



The Baptists On Mission relief group set up a mobile laundry service at Ocracoke. Residents were able to drop off clothes and returned to find them washed and dried and put into bags that included an uplifting message. Photo courtesy of The Ocracoke Observer.



**Sophia Pugh**

## Engelhard lineman's daughter inspired to help

After a mid-September visit to Ocracoke with her father, Tideland EMC lineman Joe Pugh, Sophia Pugh was inspired to put pen to paper and create a hopeful image in the wake of Hurricane Dorian.

The 18-year-old's design immediately resonated with others with requests for T-shirts, decals and other keepsakes. The budding graphic designer worked with her

mother Teresa to locate a printer and then created a Facebook post to solicit orders. Sophia says 50 percent of the profits from each item sold will go to a family in need on the island. The rest will go towards her college fund.

To purchase items featuring Sophia's design, visit Gullrock Creations on Facebook.

## To My Ocracoke

*A Love Letter from NC's Poet Laureate*

*Distant Lover,*

*If coastal trails, marshes, and the hammock on the porch at the Crews Inn could talk, you'd already know and understand how deeply I am wooing you back to my heart. I love your rich vibrant heritage, your wild and untamed winds, your sea birds, and the lull of ocean that moves me to write and dance when I'm cruising in your arms.*

*Over and over again, you have called out to me and my band of writing mermaids to run away from our frenetic paces and sojourn to your maritime views and salty ghosts who guide our pens in the nakedness of your quiet nights. It is here where I remember to breathe deeply.*

*My Dear Ocracoke, I have seen you swimming in shallow waters before. I've heard you crying inside your fish nets, your crab pots, and slowly crawling back from the storm's lash.*

*But this time, far away, I too felt the gut-wrenching quiet screams you held back from the children. I felt the white-knuckled fear that bound you hostage throughout as your house swayed with an uninvited dancer.*

*I counted the days with you as you cried out for help. Over social media, Face Time, Instagram we wept together as I stumbled with you in and out of kitchens, bedrooms, porches covered in mud and storm debris.*

*I have been grieving your losses while celebrating your tenacious will to rise, reclaim, recover,*

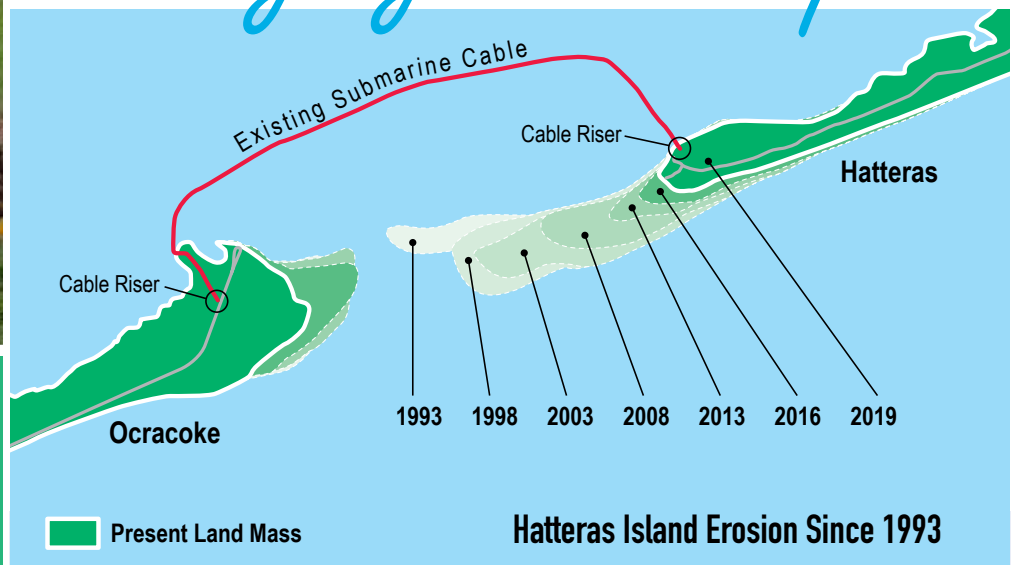


# OCRACOKE STRONG

*Sophia Pugh*



# Managing a changing landscape



## Pole patrol

In the spring of 2018, Tideland began an intensive four-year pole inspection project. Our contractor, Osmose Utilities Services, can be found in the field testing poles and performing both strength and load calculations.

By proactively testing poles, the co-op is able to improve system safety and resiliency by treating or replacing poles before they fail.

Acting on an Osmose inspection report, Tideland recently replaced 12 poles on the sub-transmission line between our Five Points and Washington substations.



## \$3.5 million submarine cable extension will counter rapid erosion of Hatteras south

In 2017, while the world was mesmerized by the sudden formation of Shelly Island alongside Hatteras Island's Cape Point, Tideland officials were focused on an entirely different patch of land just 15 miles west-southwest.

Known locally as "Pole Road" (ORV Ramp 55) this is where you'll find Tideland-owned poles and lines that serve as the connection between our delivery point at Cape Hatteras Electric Cooperative's Hatteras substation and our existing submarine cable to Ocracoke.

Since Hurricane Isabel in 2003, this section of shoreline has eroded 1.5 miles. The rate of

erosion significantly increased after 2012's Hurricane Sandy.

In 2015, Tideland began the process of seeking a Special Use Permit from the National Park

Service in anticipation of an eventual mitigation project. The time has come to implement those plans.

In early 2020, construction crews will begin installation of a 9,700-foot submarine

cable starting at the Graveyard of the Atlantic Museum. It will be spliced into the existing 20,450 feet of submarine cable that crosses Hatteras Inlet. Depending upon weather and other conditions the construction project will last between one and three months.



Pole Road. Photo courtesy of The Island Free Press.

## Merritt's \$1.6 million overhaul continues

### With 99 miles of overhead line, Merritt is the longest circuit on the co-op's 6-county system

This spring, Tideland began several construction projects to improve service reliability and increase capacity on Pamlico County's Merritt circuit. The current work projects include:

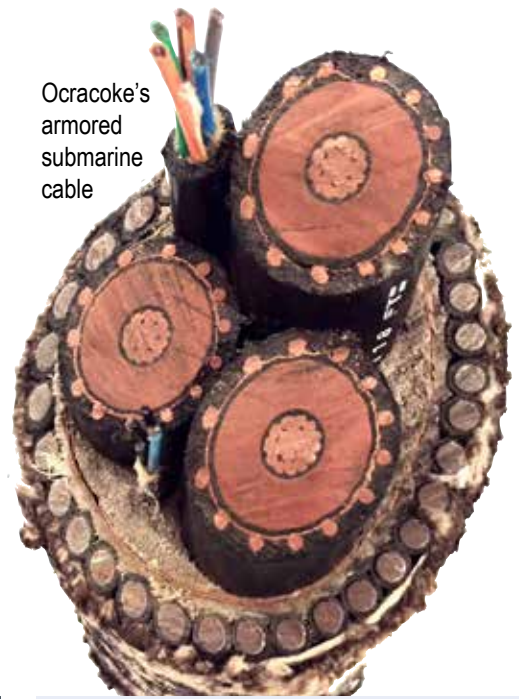
- Reconductor the three-phase line along Merritt circuit south. This will boost reliability and capacity. (\$345,000)
- Redirect the Merritt circuit exit from Silver Hill substation. This effectively reduces

the circuit's overall length 1 mile. (\$500,000)

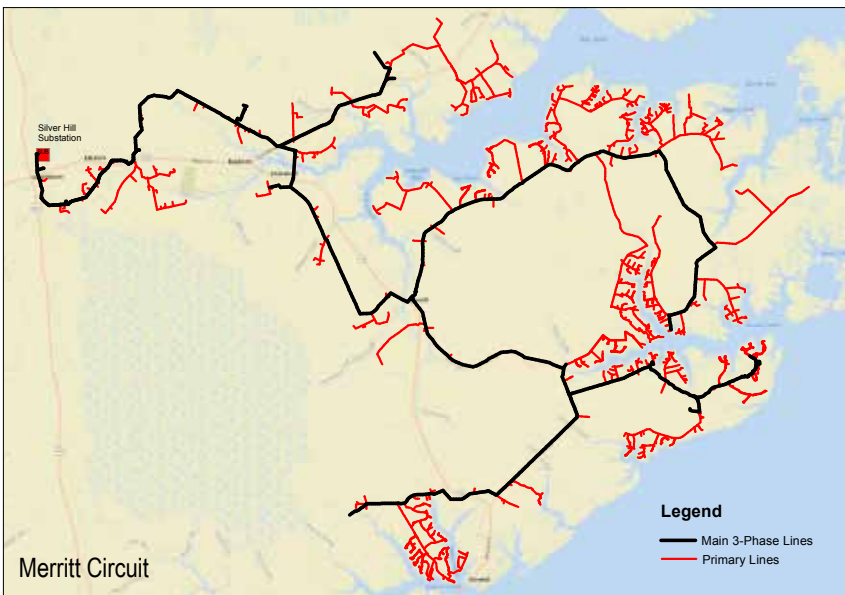
- Tree trimming in the rights-of-way. While this is an ongoing activity, we have aligned the current tree trimming schedule to coincide with the Merritt circuit construction projects. (\$305,000)

Once these projects are complete we will undertake the following:

Merritt Upgrades continue on Page H



Ocracoke's armored submarine cable



## Splice thrice

If you followed along during the events of the 2017 OBX Blackout, you were keenly aware of the delicate job it was to splice the Hatteras Island transmission line.

Tideland contractors will have quite the splicing job to undertake this winter as we install a submarine cable extension on the south end of Hatteras Island. Not only will crews have to splice each of the three electric lines, they'll be tasked with splicing the fiber optic cable as well that resides within the armored cable. That portion of the job alone is expected to take between 24 and 48 hours.

The connections will be made inside a splice box, which will then be filled with a composite material to guard against water intrusion. Thus far, the splice boxes on either end of the existing submarine cable have been problem free and are now nearing their twentieth year of service.

## Rocking resiliency with heavy metal

### 2015 tornado and May 2019 winds have twice snapped poles serving Washington substation

The co-op will invest \$2.7 million to rebuild the subtransmission line between our Five Points delivery point substation on Highway 32 and our Washington substation on Broad Creek Road.

Iron poles will replace all 141 existing wooden poles. To date, 12 have been installed and can be seen on Ambrose Road in Pinetown.



The subtransmission route between the Five Points and Washington substations.

## Merritt *upgrades*

Continued from Page G

- Reconnector the Merritt circuit three-phase along Trent Road (\$422,000)
- Build a new tie-line between the Merritt and Dawson Creek circuits. The new tie-line will travel from Kershaw Road to Orchard Creek Rd. (\$289,000)



The engineer's rendering of the eventual tie-line for the Merritt and Dawson Creek circuits

## Dowry *Creek*

The co-op will invest \$805,000 to rebuild and reconnector 15 miles of line on the Dowry Creek circuit. Work will begin near the Hyde County soybean crushing facility on Highway 45 and terminate north of Lake Phelps near Newland Road.



The engineer's rendering of improvements to the Dowry Creek circuit.

## Love *letter*

Continued from Page E

*repurpose, and resist. This is why I love you unconditionally.*

*Your arms hold a community of life that becomes legend. I know that I am not the only one that you hold so close that I can hear your heartbeat, but you have always made me think that it's only me.*

*I know about the time a few Thanksgivings ago when my family went to the beach and you decided to creep in. I think my mom (who is 103 years old now) was secretly waiting for you to open all the windows and doors at our home away from home.*



North Carolina Poet Laureate Jaki Shelton Green. Photo courtesy of Peter Vankovich.

*I thought it strange that my elderly, cautious, timid mom was rushing us out so she could nap on the couch alone in a house she didn't know. You rushed right in, tender breezes caressing her tiredness, covering*

*her spirits with a blanket of sweetness while she dreamed all afternoon about swimming with dolphins.*

*Under other circumstances, I would have been heartbroken that another human had experienced such gentleness from my distant lover of so many years. But, I have accepted your dalliances...a lover of all seasons and all generations.*

*My Dear Ocracoke, I am writing to you because you must never think that I would run away from you now in these troubled times. I am here, your distant lover, committed to holding you now and forever through the thick and thin of it all.*

*Your sunsets, your stray whispers, and our midnight full moon baths are all I need from you right now. I'm coming soon and I won't be surprised by all the lovers stroking your back... after all, it takes a village.*

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REAL POWER.

## Tideland Topics

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

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