

Development Timeline

Sept. 15, 1932

Philip Hockenberger Sr. and Harold Kramer invited 36 Columbus businessmen to meet at the Thurston Hotel in Columbus, Neb., to discuss reviving the long-dead Babcock plan to build a power canal near Columbus.

Those attending appointed a "Loup River Power Development Committee." to gather information concerning problems involved.

Members of that committee were:

C.B. Fricke, Chairman;
August Wegner,
C.N. McElfresh,
Dr. J.E. Meyer,
Dr. E.E. Koebbe,
A.R. Miller
C.C. Sheldon

The same afternoon, Hockenberger and Kramer traveled to Lincoln to file for original Loup District water rights, in Hockenberger's name, which included the Loup River, Shell Creek, Cedar River and Beaver Creek.

April 18, 1933

Governor Charles Bryan signed the Enabling Act (SF310) that allowed public power districts to organize in Nebraska.

April 24, 1933

Loup River Public Power Development Committee selected board members of the Loup River Public Power District. Selected were:

C.B. Fricke, president
Dr. J.E. Meyer, vice president
C.C. Sheldon, treasurer
Ed Lusinski of Platte Center
Edd Kelly of Monroe
A.R. Miller of Columbus
D.A. Becher of Columbus
Dr. E.E. Eoebbe of Columbus
A.H. Backus of Columbus
Phil Hockenberger Sr. of Columbus
August Ewert of Columbus

June 3, 1933

On this date, the first official meeting of the original Loup Board of Directors took place. The Board named Harold Kramer, manager; Fred Albert, chief engineer; and C. N. McElfresh and August Wagner, attorneys.

November 15, 1933

Public Works Administration approved \$7.3 million loan and grant for Loup Project. This was a tremendous economic boost to Columbus and Genoa. After the announcement came spontaneous celebrations began, which included the closing of businesses and torchlight parades in honor of the momentous occasion.

February 24, 1934

Governor Bryan signed Loup District water right.

April 14, 1934

Nebraska Supreme Court upheld constitutionality of the Enabling Act

August 21, 1934

First shovel of dirt moved in Loup Canal construction at Charles Wright farm near Genoa.

October 16, 1934

Actual excavation began of the Loup Canal on the James Donghus farm seven miles northwest of Columbus.

May 6, 1936

The Rural Electrification Administration approved a loan of \$391,000 to the Loup District to build 355 miles of rural lines in Platte County in order to serve 800+ rural customers.

March 5, 1937

The first day the Monroe Powerhouse began generating electricity that marked production of the first saleable power by Loup.

August 5, 1939

Original organizers of Loup organized Consumers Public Power District with headquarters in Columbus, as a source to market hydropower.



At left, one of the rotors for the project's powerhouses arriving at the Columbus Railroad Depot. Special rail lines were built to the Columbus Powerhouse to haul large equipment like the rotor pictured.

August 7, 1939

First meeting of Consumers Board of Directors: The same men sat on the boards of directors and served as officers of both Loup and Consumers.

Elected C.B. Fricke, president; Phil Hockenberger Sr., vice president; A.R. Miller, 2nd vice president; W.A. Boettcher, secretary; and C.C. Sheldon, treasurer.

May 1, 1940

Directors of the three original hydroelectric districts met to organize the Nebraska Public Power System. Organizers were the Loup, Platte Valley Public Power and Irrigation District and the Central Nebraska (Tri-County) Public Power and Irrigation District.

1942

Harold Kramer was instrumental in the formation of the American Public Power Association and took a six-month leave from his duties as Loup General manager to work in Washington to establish the organization.

December 7, 1942

Original organizers of Loup District filed for formation of Cornhusker Public Power District.

January 1, 1943

Loup District transferred its rural properties (987 miles of distribution lines and equipment to the newly organized Cornhusker Rural Public Power District for \$1.

Edd Kelly, a Loup District board member, named first general manager of new Cornhusker District.

December 2, 1946

Loup District Eastern Division, borrowed \$15 million, then loaned it to Omaha Public Power District to buy the private power company operating in Omaha.

April 1, 1949

Separation Agreement signed between Loup, Platte and Central Districts resulting in Central District withdrawing from NPPS.

1950

Loup's fifth best year for generation of electric power at 160,040,000 kwh.



May 1935: A Loup field party poses with one of the District's earliest trucks. The fellow on the left is Con Keating, who retired from Loup Power the summer of 1972.

1951

Loup's best year ever for generation of electric power at 167,697,000 kwh.

1957

Loup's third best year for generation of electric power at 166,573,000 kwh.

October 24, 1958

Construction began on Nebraska's first 230 kV line. The line ran from Ft. Randall dam, South Dakota to Columbus. A lease/purchase agreement called for Loup to own the line that would supply Nebraska with power from the Bureau of Reclamation via NPPS.

August 2, 1962

Ground Breaking Ceremony, Lake North.

1962

Loup's second best year for generation of electric power at 167,043,000 kwh.

May 1963

The Public Works Committee killed LB600, a legislative bill that provided for the elimination of the Loup Power District by forcing a merger of certain public power districts.

May 7, 1963

Senator Stryker, Rising City, moved on the floor of the legislature to bring LB 600 to the floor and place LB600 on General File. Motion passed.

May 8, 1963

Senator Terry Carpenter moved to reconsider the previous day's action on LB 600. Motion passed and the legislature then reversed the action of placing LB600 on General File, thus indefinitely postponing the forced merger bill.

May 16, 1963

Nebraska Legislature passed LB 220, creating among other things, the Nebraska Power Review Board, a body empowered to rule on construction of electric facilities throughout Nebraska as well as service areas for public power districts.

May 27, 1963

Lake North filled with water.

August 3, 1963

Public opening, Lake North.

October 30, 1964

The Nebraska Power Review Board approved the application of the Loup District to build a 230 KV transmission line from Columbus to Grand Island for internal strengthening of the NPPS transmission system.

August 3, 1965

Governor Morrison signed LB764 (the forced merger bill) that was passed by the Nebraska Legislature 38-7 (4 not voting).

November 19, 1965

Loup District challenged the constitutionality of the forced merger, LB 764, in the Nebraska courts.

1965

Loup's fourth best year for generation of electric power at 160,102,000 kwh.

January 7, 1966

District Judge C. Thomas White, ruled LB 764 as unconstitutional, preventing the forced merger.

June 24, 1966

The Nebraska Supreme Court affirmed White's decision Wittler vs. Baumgartner.

Opinion 144NW 2nd 62.

August 12, 1966

Severe flood caused an estimated \$600,000 damage to Loup Canal. Flood peak at Genoa was 129,000 cubic feet per second (cfs). The previous flood peak record set in 1947 was 90,000 cfs. The diversion dam was back in operation in less than two weeks.

March 31, 1967

Representatives of Loup and Consumers notified Nebraska Legislature that they were willing to sign an agreement for the realignment of public power organizations in the state.

April 11, 1967

Loup and Consumers signed the realignment agreement; Loup withdrew from NPPS and retained a four county service area in east-central Nebraska in order to resume operating as a locally owned, locally controlled utility to best serve their customers. The service area included the counties of Platte, Boone, Nance and Colfax.

May 15, 1967

Loup began providing retail service to communities in four county service area of Platte, Boone, Nance and Colfax.

January 1, 1969

Additional members were selected to the Board of Directors in order to represent the four county service area. Previously, all were from Platte County. New – Edward J. Svik, Clarkson; Lavern W. Kracl, Schuyler; Dr. F. J. Brown, Genoa; Robert C. Kayton, Cedar Rapids; H. Keith Newton, Albion. (Previous) Clarence J. Wittler, Herman A. Wolfe, Laird H. Loomis, Zack B. Howell, John C. Byrnes, and O.N. "Pete" Allen.

1970

Merger of Consumers and NPPS into Nebraska Public Power District

December 23, 1970

Bond Burning Ceremony – Loup Power District is debt free due to the trading of facilities and funds received from NPPD for transmission facilities.

May 1971

Several communities signed 15-year retail service agreements with Loup.

June 28, 1972

Loup District receives E.F. Scattergood award from APPA, a national award recognizing Loup for outstanding overall performance in the public power field.



Standing atop the skeleton of the Monroe Powerhouse under construction, 17-year old Ralph Schmidt hoses down cement, keeping it wet. The cement had to stay damp for 11 days.

1972

Loup purchased property for new office building located at 15th St. and 24th Ave.

March 1974

Loup moved into new general office building.

May 19, 1974

Public Open House for new general office building located at 2404 15th Street, Columbus, Neb.

1976

The community of Duncan became the 19th town to receive retail service from Loup (formerly a wholesale customer).

July 11, 1977

Newman Grove began receiving retail service from Loup, in which Loup purchased property, facilities and agreements with respect to the distribution system and related facilities from NPPD.

1978

Loup cited for outstanding achievements in outdoor recreation by the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission.

1980

Nebraska Power Association was created, which was the first formal structure representing all segments of public power in Nebraska. Max Kiburz, instrumental in its creation, was named first president.

August 6, 1980

Diversion reached record low at the Genoa Headworks – 66 cfs.

1980

Exchange of properties with Cornhusker – Loup acquired Sand and Thiele additions when annexed into the city of Columbus; Cornhusker acquired Olean area and north and south farm lines leading out of Tarnov substation and Loup acquired areas in the Columbus vicinity.

Loup entered into a contract with the City of Columbus for the Lost Creek Flood Control Project, in which Loup provided the use of canal facilities and right-of-way to Columbus at no charge.



A dry ditch, a very large dry ditch: the Loup power canal under excavation in 1935.

March 11, 1981

Proposal submitted for renewal of federal hydro license with Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

April 1981

Loup issued \$4.175 million in tax-exempt bonds.

Submit application for renewal of state water lease and was approved for renewal for an additional 50 years; until 2033.

1982

Generation in 1982 reached 150,822,000 kwh, placing 1982 among the 10 highest generation years.

Max Kiburz received the Distinguished Service Award from APPA for his outstanding contributions to public power systems locally and nationwide.

May 17, 1982

The community of Howells became the 20th town to receive retail service from Loup (formerly a wholesale customer).

January 1983

Generation topped the 6 billion kwh mark; January itself a record setting month with 14,209,000 kwh generated.

June 5, 1983

The 50th Anniversary of Loup Power District was celebrated with an Open House at the Columbus Pow-erhouse, drawing 2,060 visitors. In Loup's 50th year, assets were in excess of \$34 million.

1984

Loup received a thirty-year federal hydro license from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

1985

A Land and Water Conservation Fund Project Grant helped fund one-half of the cost of two new picnic shelters, complete with handicapped access, at Lake North Park and Loup Park.

December 31, 1985

City of Columbus presented a check of \$5 million to Loup to purchase distribution facilities in the area between Columbus's 1972 and 1985 city limits. The District agreed to pay the city 10 percent of the gross revenues in the area where they purchased the facilities.

August 29, 1986

The power canal was "de-watered" and inspected. It was found to be in "amazingly good shape." Water was diverted back into the canal on Sept. 8.

November 10, 1988

A joint meeting of Loup and Cornhusker board of directors was held to review a two-year study on the proposed consolidation of the two public power districts. Despite an assessment by consulting engineers, R. W. Beck and Associates, that an estimated 10-year savings of \$9,021,577 in operating costs "are reasonable and attainable," the Cornhusker Board of Directors voted not to pursue consolidation.

1992

Loup adopted seasonal rates for conservation, efficiency and cost-balancing reasons. Seasonal rates refer to eight months of low rates (winter) and four months of higher rates (summer). This was in response to a change to seasonal rates by Loup's power supplier.

July 17, 1992

Minnesota Corn Processors (MCP) was energized and with revenues around \$3 million per year, MCP becomes Loup's largest customer (with plans for expansion). In 2002, MCP was purchased by Archer Daniels Midland.

1993

Loup earned the APPA Electric Utility Safety Award for safe operating practices.

1994

Loup was named Columbus "Business of the Year" by the Columbus Telegram.

1995

Loup's energy requirements have grown to more than 1 billion kilowatt hours. The expansion and addition of new industries in the Columbus area attribute to the growth.

1996

Seventeen towns whose original 25-year distribution leases were up signed new 25-year distribution leases with the District.

1997

A new, more efficient trash rake replaced original trash rake at the Monroe Powerhouse.

The Nebraska Power Review Board approved a reapportionment of election subdivisions within Loup's service area. This move was prompted by a population shift.

Loup sets land aside for wildlife, public use areas.

1999

Loup was awarded the Golden Tree Award at the American Public Power Association's recent national meeting. To qualify for the award Loup planted a tree for every Loup customer. That's a total of more than 17,500 trees. Central Community College Foundation, Inc. recognizes Loup for its outstanding scholarship program in support of Central Community College's Columbus Campus. Loup is the number one provider in the business sector of scholarships to the college.

2000

Two Lakes Trail added to Loup Power's Lake North and Loup Park. The trail was awarded the Millennium 2000 Community Trail Award. New governors and excitors installed at both powerhouses.

2001

Duncan renewed its distribution lease for another 25 years.

2002

New trash rake installed at Columbus Powerhouse. Studies began to examine the rehabilitation of Loup's powerhouses.

2003 Loup Celebrates 70 years.