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To:	BREC GOVT LIST
Subject:	***SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT/CHIEF OF STAFF: 'LONG, INTENSIVE PROCESS' AHEAD***
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*****SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT/CHIEF OF STAFF: 'LONG, INTENSIVE PROCESS' AHEAD*****

Contact: Riley Morningstar, Communications Manager
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Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative Chief of Staff and Senior Vice President Zach Hinton addressed members today about ongoing multi-day restoration efforts throughout our five-county service area.

A link to the video can be found here. A transcript of the full comments is posted below. We will continue to provide updates today.

TRANSCRIPT OF FULL REMARKS

"I've had an opportunity to talk to several Blue Ridge Electric employees who have 40-plus tenures at the co-op, and the recurring theme is that this is nothing that has been seen before in the 84-year history of our company. I think that's very important for our members to understand right now that our crews are working so tirelessly. Men and women of this co-op are working tirelessly to get the power back on, to assess the damage and we have got an army of crews that are here and that are coming to restore power as quickly as possible.

"To try and put this into perspective, we try to use broken poles as a metric. When you look at Hurricane Irma, which I was a part of seven years ago, that was in the 180-range. When you look at the tornado that hit Seneca and the surrounding areas in 2020, that was in the 200-plus range. We are well over 300 broken poles at this point and still counting. Those broken poles are the most time-intensive thing that we do.

"You're looking at three to four hours a pole per a good crew. A really good crew could three, maybe four a day and that's asking a lot of those folks and that is not the only thing that it takes to get the power back on. There are other things. Wires have to be hung and things like that that it takes. So I just say that to say this; it is a long, intensive process. It is a process that we are all committed to.

"We are working extremely hard and we are going to get everybody back on as quickly as we can. Our members have been great so far. We really appreciate our members' patience. We appreciate everybody willing to come together as a community to help out. We've had a lot of folks reach out to us asking how they can help. I just ask and beg of that continued patience.

“Right now, we’re not out of the woods yet. We’ve still got work to do, and obviously every day without power is another day that’s a trial and tribulation. We understand that and we get that. We understand the position our members are in because we’re members too, and our employees are members. Our employees are out of power right now. Their families are sitting in the dark as well.

“I can assure everybody that there’s a major sense of urgency on the part of Blue Ridge Electric and that sense of urgency will stay through to the last member’s on.”

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