

**Testimony on SB 2015**  
**House Appropriations Subcommittee**  
**John Harris, President & CEO**  
**Prairie Public Broadcasting**  
**March 7, 2023**

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today about the budget request for Prairie Public Broadcasting, North Dakota's public media network.

For the record, I am John Harris, President and CEO of Prairie Public Broadcasting.

Prairie Public began service to the citizens of North Dakota in 1964 with a single broadcast tower and since then has grown to provide public media services that impact the citizens of our entire state—from childhood through all phases of life.

Education is the cornerstone of Prairie Public's mission. We provide researched, high-quality digital resources and learning materials to students, educators, parents, counselors, librarians, and tech coordinators, and we conduct professional training opportunities to help them use those tools in our region's classrooms.

Prairie Public provides public media services that educate, involve, and inspire the people of the prairie region. Public media strengthens communities and helps them to prosper. The citizens of North Dakota know the importance of a strong and viable public media entity for our community. We are committed to respect for our audience, civil discourse, and lifelong learning.

In addition, Prairie Public has embraced our public safety mission to maximize our spectrum for the public good. Public television stations are the backbone of the WARN system of presidential alerts in times of national emergency. Prairie Public is vital to our state as a locally owned and operated media organization that can serve in times of crisis.

Even as public distrust of national institutions and media is at an all-time high, studies show that public broadcasters retain the trust of the American people as an essential resource for well-informed citizens.

Prairie Public is a reliable source for international, regional, and local news from the worlds of politics, business, science, and the arts. In fact, our network of television, radio, and online services was one of the most comprehensive and trusted sources for statewide election coverage and debates during the 2022 election—vital for thoughtful citizens and healthy societies. Our coverage of the North Dakota legislature helps you to serve your constituents and communicate the good work you accomplish.

In addition to broadcasting nationally produced television and radio programs such as *PBS NewsHour*, *Nature*, *NOVA*, *Masterpiece*, *Morning Edition*, and *All Things Considered*,

Prairie Public produces an extraordinary amount of quality programming that reflects North Dakota's history, culture, and issues of concern.

Our local productions cover topics ranging from community events to rural healthcare issues to legislative news. We partner with local agencies to help inform our citizens of critical issues that affect each and every one of us.

Prairie Public looks at the history and cultural aspects of our region with shows like *Esta Es Mi Casa*, *Women Behind the Plow*, and *Alba Bales House*. We celebrate local artists with our series *Prairie Musicians*. We interview newsmakers and difference makers every weekday on *Main Street* and weekly on *Prairie Pulse*.

The state of North Dakota has, for years, played a vital supporting role in the operation of our public media services. While the appropriation from the state of North Dakota does not cover all the expenses, many of the services would not be possible without state funding that provide the foundation for support from many other sources. It is important that North Dakota sustain its public media system.

On behalf of Prairie Public Broadcasting, I request funding of \$1,200,000 for operational support plus one time only funding of \$1,792,450 for the 2023-2025 biennial session for a total request of \$2,992,450. These funds, along with other resources from local and federal sources, will be used to continue Prairie Public's services to the citizens of North Dakota.

Prairie Public requests the state fund one time only support of \$1,792,450 to assist in the replacement of ten radio and five television transmitters. While these are not the total needs for Prairie Public, these transmitters are the backbone for delivering our services to North Dakota and require attention. Prairie Public has secured \$2,100,000 from the State of Minnesota for upgrades to the eastern part of our coverage area.

I cannot express enough the thanks Prairie Public and its members extend to you for your past support. In all the years Prairie Public has been broadcasting, technology keeps changing, but our mission to provide services that educate, involve, and inspire has not.

In closing, let me remind you that Prairie Public belongs to the citizens of our region, and with your support Prairie Public will continue to be a community leader and assist the state in achieving its goals of economic strength, educational quality, and pride in our rich heritage.

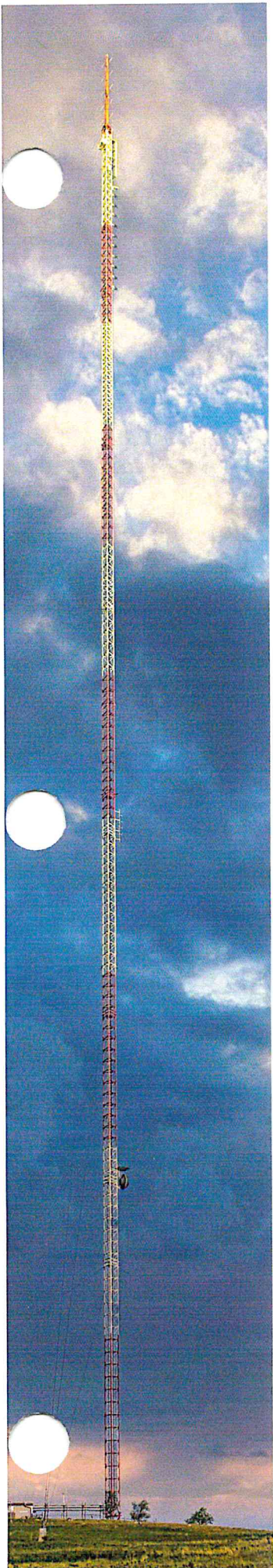
Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, thank you for your time and consideration.



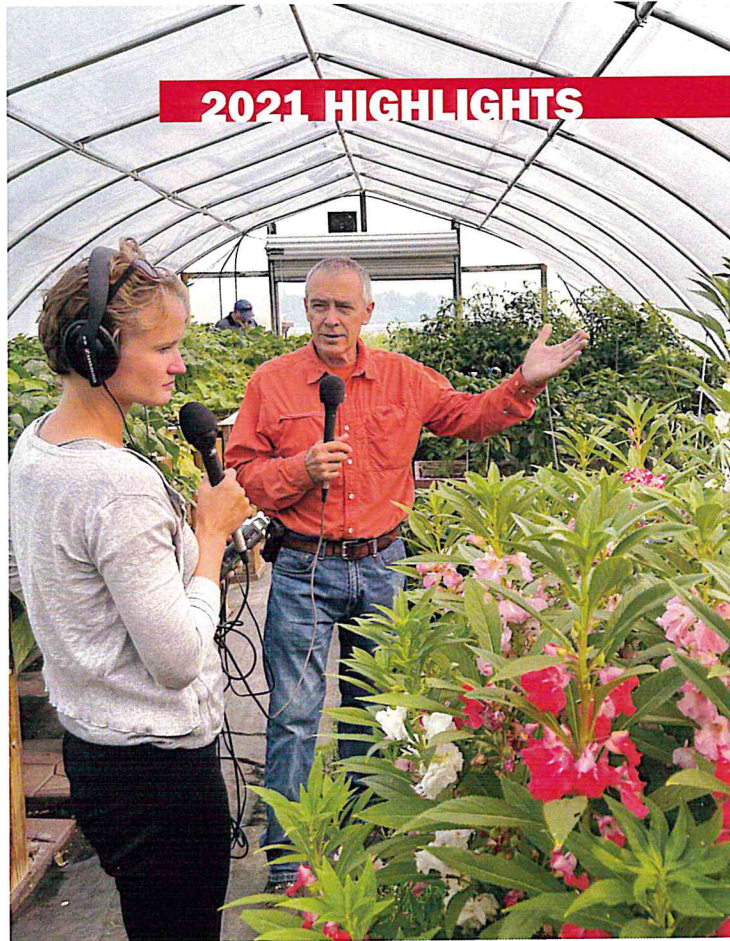
Prairie Public Broadcasting, Inc.

# COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT

Fiscal Year 2021  
October 1, 2020-  
September 30, 2021



## 2021 HIGHLIGHTS



We established an innovative **Youth Media Literacy** project to offer resources for today's learners and tomorrow's journalists.

Ten years after the Souris River exceeded record flood levels, **Main Street** reported about Minot's displaced residents, the officials who had to make tough decisions, and city leaders who continue to lead the recovery.



Nature Cat said "Tally Ho!" to families on **Prairie Public Day** in Medora.



Season 12 of **Prairie Mosaic** introduced us to the area artists, musicians, exhibits, history, and destinations that shape our region.

**HIGHLIGHTS** continue inside

## 2021 HIGHLIGHTS



Hundreds of children wrote and illustrated their own stories for the **PBS Kids Writers Contest**—especially meaningful for kids who attended school virtually this year.

The Board of Governors of the State Bar Association of North Dakota honored news director Dave Thompson with a Liberty Bell Award for promoting an understanding of government and encouraging a greater respect for the law and the courts.



We invited our prairie neighbors to Facebook Watch Parties to enjoy, together, the classic Prairie Public productions **One Shining Moment**, **Winnipeg in Bloom**, and **Scandinavian Traditions**.

**Prairie Pulse** celebrated its 18th season of serving as a town square for our region—a place where we all can learn about public affairs, newsmakers, destinations, arts, and culture.



In April, **The Great American Folk Show** celebrated its first tune-fest year on Prairie Public's radio network. Plans to expand this production are in the works for 2022.

Listeners were treated to a philosophical view of current events as **Philosophical Currents** with Jack Russell Weinstein became a new **Main Street** segment and podcast.

On September 25, Prairie Public celebrated the 40th anniversary of its first radio broadcast.



The **Prairie Public Presents** radio series partners with community to help us all experience the benefits of lifelong learning. The North Dakota Council on the Arts "Poetry Out Loud" competition and the "One Book One ND" and "GameChanger" events from Humanities North Dakota are just a few examples.



Prairie Public's board of directors established a diversity and inclusion policy to help us be better community members to everyone in our region and to help us consider ways in which we can engage a more diverse audience.

Radio intern Annie Prafcke's podcast series for Prairie Public, **Chinese Adoptees: Not Abandoned or Alone**, explores the complex identities of her own and three other adopted Chinese women.



Panel guests and 120 participants attended the much-anticipated premiere event for **Ésta Es Mi Casa – This Is My Home**, which was Prairie Public's contribution to the "Moving Lives Minnesota: Stories of Origin & Immigration" television and online initiative.

The popular series **Prairie Musicians** premiered season 13, turning the stage over to solo artists.

## PARTNERING ON THE PRAIRIE REGION

As a trusted public media station, Prairie Public significantly contributes to the rich fabric of life in our region—bringing us all closer together around shared cultural experiences.

As I reflect on Prairie Public's successes of 2021, I appreciate that our accomplishments are all thanks to the teamwork of our supporters, our community, and our staff. This collaboration is key and is a hallmark of the public media business model. We are simply responding to the community we serve.

Prairie Public is thriving, thanks to you, and that's what this community impact report is all about. You make it all possible. As always, thank you.



John E. Harris III  
Prairie Public  
President & CEO

## AWARD-WINNING MEDIA

In 2021, Prairie Public documentaries were honored with 42nd Annual Telly Awards and a Regional Emmy® Award.

**Wild Rice**  
Midwest Regional Emmy® Award

**Mandy Groom: Alcohol Ink Artist**  
Gold Telly

**The Northwest Angle: Minnesota's Best Kept Secret**  
Silver Telly

**Wild Rice**  
Bronze Telly

## COMMUNITY SUPPORTED MEDIA

Now more than ever, Prairie Public's work is a critical component for public health, safety, and social resilience. Member contributions support the voices that keep you company, the reporting that keeps you informed, and the conversations that keep you connected to your community.

### **Public television has established a reputation for trusted, ambitious media that educates and entertains.**

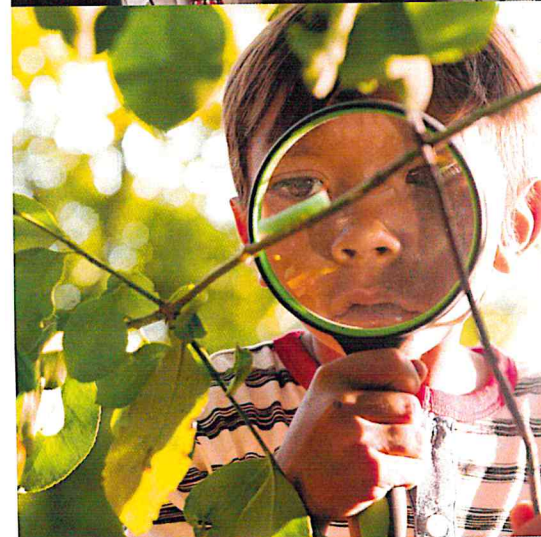
As storytellers and archivists, our television production crew collects the stories of our region and crafts them into video that's exceptionally watchable. Add award-winning programming from PBS, and the result is visual media that's valued and essential.

### **The unique power of public radio involves its listeners with their neighbors around the world and right outside their doors.**

Prairie Public's daily radio news coverage of our region is credible, fact-based, and respectful of the audience. Combined with trusted national and worldwide coverage from NPR and impressive music and entertainment programming, it's a vital public service for the prairie region.

### **Resources for educators strengthen our region's learning centers with tools that inspire students and their teachers.**

Public media is the nation's largest classroom—providing professional development and free classroom-ready lesson plans for educators, resources for parents and their children, and lifelong learning experiences for us all.



Prairie Public Broadcasting provides quality radio, television, and public media services that educate, involve, and inspire the people of the prairie region.

Prairie Public Broadcasting is a trusted public media service dedicated to building an exciting and productive future for our region and its people by offering a window on the world and creating a forum for discussion of important issues.

When you support Prairie Public, your contribution goes to work to make great television and radio programs happen. It works to secure the very best of PBS and NPR programming, along with high-quality, original productions created to meet your interests and needs.

Individual and community support is a crucial part of Prairie Public's success, and this annual report celebrates our dedicated partners and contributors.



Prairie Public is a member of the Public Broadcasting Service, a private, nonprofit corporation that provides quality television programming and related services.



Prairie Public is a member of NPR, a privately supported, nonprofit membership organization that serves its audience in partnership with independently operated, noncommercial public radio stations.

# ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT

for the Year Ending 9/30/21 • Prairie Public Broadcasting, Inc.

Sources	Television		Radio		Total
	Amount	%	Amount	%	
Membership	\$1,623,917	20%	\$597,054	22%	\$2,220,971
Underwriting	\$124,539	2%	\$140,864	5%	\$265,403
Corporation for Public Broadcasting	\$2,002,482	24%	\$391,027	15%	\$2,393,509
Local Production Funding	\$60,127	1%	\$36,642	2%	\$96,769
State of North Dakota	\$541,640	7%	\$180,000	7%	\$721,640
State of Minnesota	\$641,742	8%	\$0	0%	\$641,742
Grants <sup>1</sup>	\$332,573	4%	\$0	0%	\$332,573
Fees, Rents	\$800,137	9%	\$350,164	13%	\$1,150,301
Charitable Gaming	\$1,208,383	14%	\$595,174	22%	\$1,803,557
Planned Giving <sup>2</sup>	\$812,099	10%	\$357,372	13%	\$1,169,471
Other	\$82,814	1%	\$28,752	1%	\$111,566
<b>TOTAL SOURCES</b>	<b>\$8,230,453</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$2,677,049</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$10,907,502</b>
<b>Uses</b>					
Programming & Production	\$2,018,481	34%	\$1,061,266	42%	\$3,079,747
Engineering	\$1,235,572	21%	\$329,078	13%	\$1,564,650
Administration	\$998,030	17%	\$491,568	20%	\$1,489,598
Fundraising	\$343,308	6%	\$74,526	3%	\$417,834
System Upgrade & Other	\$324,055	6%	\$72,599	3%	\$396,654
Change in Prairie Public Endowment	\$964,019	16%	\$474,815	19%	\$1,438,834
<b>TOTAL USES</b>	<b>\$5,883,465</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$2,503,852</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$8,387,317</b>
EXCESS (DEFICIT) SOURCES OVER USES	\$2,346,988		\$173,197		\$2,520,185

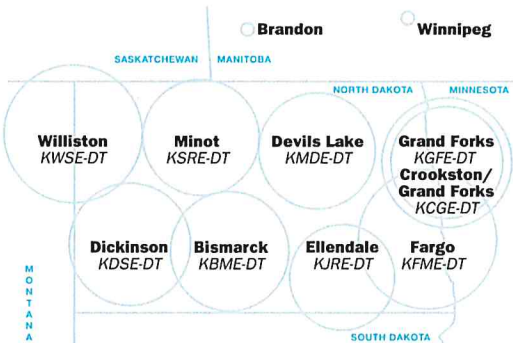
Financial data provided from Eide Bailly LLP audited financial statements of Prairie Public Broadcasting, Inc.

Due to declining interest rates, long term investments held for long-term needs such as equipment purchases were redeemed at maturity at are now being held in short term investments. These amounts are excluded from sources listed.

1. Grants include unrestricted support for operations and grants for capital construction and equipment from the Federal Communication Commission.

2. Planned giving includes contributions to Endowment Funds, Interest Earnings, and Realized and Unrealized Gains from Endowment Funds.

Local support comprised of membership and underwriting is the largest source of unrestricted support for Prairie Public Broadcasting, Inc.



**Prairie Public Broadcasting, Inc.**  
Television  
Radio  
Education Services  
Enterprises

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701-224-1700

**Prairie Public Television (Manitoba), Inc.**  
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Winnipeg MB R3C 4B3

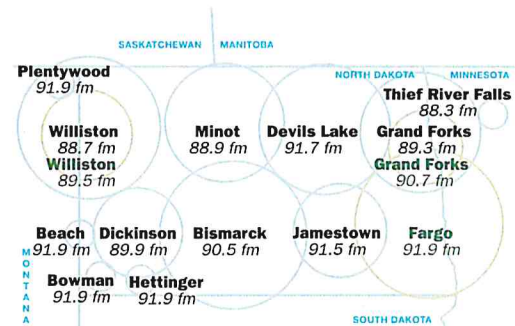
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## Radio

Beach . . . . .	<b>91.9 fm</b>	Hettinger . . . . .	<b>91.9 fm</b>
Bismarck . . . . .	<b>90.5 fm</b>	Jamestown . . . . .	<b>91.5 fm</b>
Bowman . . . . .	<b>91.9 fm</b>	Minot . . . . .	<b>88.9 fm</b>
Devils Lake . . . . .	<b>91.7 fm</b>	Thief River Falls . . . . .	<b>88.3 fm</b>
Dickinson . . . . .	<b>89.9 fm</b>	Williston . . . . .	<b>88.7 fm</b>
Fargo* . . . . .	<b>91.9 fm</b>	Williston* . . . . .	<b>89.5 fm</b>
Grand Forks . . . . .	<b>89.3 fm</b>	Plentywood MT . . . . .	<b>91.9 fm</b>
Grand Forks* . . . . .	<b>90.7 fm</b>		*Roots, rock, and jazz

Listeners can choose from three radio formats and can access them all with an HD radio, online at [prairiepublic.org](http://prairiepublic.org), or with the Prairie Public app.

**FM1** Classical music featuring **Prebys on Classics** plus public radio's signature news and entertainment programs.

**FM2** Roots, rock, and jazz featuring **Into the Music with Mike Olson** and **World Café**, plus two hours of **Morning Edition** on weekdays and **Sounds Eclectic, Mountain Stage**, and **Acoustic Cafe** on the weekends

**FM3** Roots, rock, and jazz with **Morning Edition** and **All Things Considered, Marketplace**, and interviews and discussion on **Main Street**.

## Television

Bismarck . . . . .	<b>.KBME</b>	Fargo . . . . .	<b>.KFME</b>
Crookston/Grand Forks	<b>.KCGE</b>	Grand Forks . . . . .	<b>.KGFE</b>
Devils Lake . . . . .	<b>.KMDE</b>	Minot . . . . .	<b>.KSRE</b>
Dickinson . . . . .	<b>.KDSE</b>	Williston . . . . .	<b>.KWSE</b>
Ellendale . . . . .	<b>.KJRE</b>	Manitoba, Canada	<i>via cable</i>

Prairie Public broadcasts four television program streams. Viewers who use a rooftop antenna receive all four. Viewers who use cable, dish, or satellite services will receive Prairie Public's primary schedule, and perhaps one or more additional program streams.

**1 Prairie Public** Prairie Public's high definition schedule, which is also available online at [video.prairiepublic.org/livestream](http://video.prairiepublic.org/livestream)

**2 World** Nonfiction, science, nature, news, public affairs, and lifelong learning programs.

**3 The MN Channel** High-definition programs produced in and about North Dakota, Manitoba, Minnesota, and the region.

**4 PBS Kids** The number one educational media brand for kids offers opportunities to explore new ideas and new worlds through television.