

Wood Pole Replacement Program (FY08-FY09)

Transmission put itself on the path to a levelized wood pole replacement program about 6 years ago. The objective is a centrally managed, systematic program that is funded and resourced on a stable, sustainable basis and that avoids reliability problems by meeting or exceeding wood pole standards. The project proposal covers age and condition-based replacements (TLM program). It does not cover replacements due to expansions or upgrade of the system (these replacements are included in project-specific investment proposal. About 1,300 poles are replaced each year due to age. Normally, cross arms and other structures, including guy wires/anchors, are replaced at the same time.

The program encompasses about 75,000 wood poles involving about 200 lines (5,000 circuit miles), including 69 kV, 115kV and 230 kV lines.

- About two dozen of these lines are WECC-rated
- A majority of BPA's 2000 miles of fiber are carried on wood poles
- The large majority of poles are associated with 115kV lines

This program is critical because structurally weakened poles represent hazards to BPA personnel, others on the rights-of-way, and, in some cases, the general public. Loss of fiber optic facilities due to wood pole failures interrupt critical communications, and many of the 115 kV wood pole lines deliver power to isolated areas, sometimes in radial-feed configurations. Given their often remote locations, difficult access, weather conditions, and time of year, wood pole failures can cause extended outages. When out of operation, they can cause loss of load in local areas and can impact the overall flexibility in the NW grid.

Approval for this program is for FY 2008 and FY 2009 and total capital cost, including AFUDC and overheads over that time period, is estimated to be \$9.7 million.