

Wood Pole Lines Sustain Program FY10-13

BPA's wood pole transmission lines (4,774 miles) are an aging asset, with over 40% of the lines exceeding 50 years of age, and over 12% exceeding 60 years of age. In general, these lines are original vintage and contain a variety of obsolete components, including insulators, conductors, guy systems, and structure types. The most recent depreciation study from 2004 shows that the average expected life of a wood pole is about 55 years, but this reflects wood poles replaced for all reasons, not just physical conditions. In the past, the program focused on replacing wood poles older than the average expected life that were compromised by rot or other forms of physical damage. Minimal attention was paid to other components of the lines. This reactive approach was adequate in the past, and line performance has been acceptable. It is now recognized that this approach is too limited because the backlogs of needed replacements are growing and risks to the reliability and availability of the wood pole system is at increasing risk. This program focuses on rebuilding, reconductoring wood transmission lines and replacing wood pole structures to mitigate risk of line component failures resulting in unplanned outages and adverse impacts to load serving customers.

The program capital cost, including AFUDC and overheads, is estimated to be \$162.6 million. This initial 4-year phase of the long-term strategy will end September 30, 2013.