



PROJECT PROFILE

Pole Restoration at Wiregrass Electric Cooperative

About Wiregrass

Wiregrass Electric Cooperative (WEC) was formed in 1939 to serve the electrical needs of rural areas in Alabama. WEC provides electric service to over 17,000 consumer-members in Houston and Geneva Counties and parts of Dale, Coffee, and Covington Counties with almost 3,200 miles of line.

The Situation

As neighboring utilities increasingly choose pole restoration over replacement, WEC too considered the benefits including the opportunity to capitalize the investment. Pole restoration has been capitalized by most Osmose restoration customers across the U.S. as both the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) Uniform System of Accounts reference "reinforcing and stubbing" in their Poles, Towers, and Fixtures capital account (364).

Why WEC Thinks Restoration Is a Great Option

- 1 Restoring reject poles immediately eliminates field risks and safety hazards.
- 2 Members' capital dollars are saved for other projects.
- 3 Member satisfaction remains high because problems are addressed quickly.

“ If I can extend the life of a pole 20 to 30 years, that is a big financial benefit to our members.

Jason Thrash,
Vice President, Engineering & Operations at WEC

The Solution

Jason Thrash, Vice President of Engineering and Operations at WEC, developed a four year work plan, with the assistance of a local RUS General Field Representative (GFR) that includes the use of pole restoration. The initial plan does not include the use of loan funds for this project. Regardless, Thrash needed to create a Continuing Property Record (CPR) for the steel truss restoration system so the work order accountants have a way to allocate costs. CPRs also contain detailed information about the property units, including details of installation, property age, and characteristics.

Pole replacements fall under the ordinary replacements section of a work plan. Ordinary replacements are included in plans to note controllable expenditures. GFRs provide support to potential borrowers with this type of documentation and associated narrative. Later, this document can be referenced if future questions arise.

With GFR approval, loan funds for wood pole restoration are available should WEC wish to use them for pole restoration items. Regardless if loan funds are used, Wiregrass will extend the useful life of their wood pole assets, using capital dollars, for a fraction of the cost of pole replacement.

80
number of poles WEC plans to restore in the first year

\$175,000
savings to WEC members year one

To contact your local Osmose professional, call 770.631.6995 or email poleinfo@osmose.com.