GRID RESILIENCE AND INNOVATION PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM

Established by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the U.S. Department of Energy's Grid Deployment Office is administering a historic $10.5 billion investment via the Grid Resilience and Innovation Partnerships (GRIP) program to enhance grid flexibility, improve the resilience of the power system against growing threats of extreme weather and climate change, and ensure American communities have access to affordable, reliable, clean electricity when and where they need it.

SECO Energy's Improving Resiliency Through Grid Hardening Project consists of multiple inter-related components that SECO Energy has developed in response to the need for accelerated resilience efforts. Multiple tropical storms and hurricanes have crossed directly through SECO Energy's service territory with winds and flooding causing damage and disruptions. SECO Energy's proposed project will enhance resilience by undergrounding overhead utility lines; hardening existing poles and increasing line capacity; replacing aging, inefficient equipment; and expanding load capacity with a new distribution substation. These components are the infrastructure upgrades necessary to not only mitigate these risks but also support the modernization of the grid, support growing community capacity needs, deliver reliable power, and lessen the impact of environmental and energy disparity prevalent in the small, rural, disadvantaged communities (DACs) served by SECO Energy. The project will improve reliability and outage restoration times and underground 33 miles of distribution lines to improve grid reliability against extreme weather events.

Anticipated Outcomes and Benefits

- Underground more than 30 miles of overhead distribution lines and harden overhead wires and poles over 29 miles.
- Commitment to direct 44% of the total project investment to DACs throughout SECO Energy’s service territory. Currently 47% of the members impacted by this project are located within Justice40 census tracts, representing 22 of the 49 Justice40 tracts within SECO Energy’s service territory.
- Commitment that all additional crew hires will be from the local service territories and 100% of the external contractors hired to supplement crews will be sourced from the local service territory.
- Commitment to coordinate assistance and resource matching for improvement projects and understand specific needs from community leadership when deploying residential underground conversion projects in DACs, like Royal, FL.
- Commitment to develop communications tools specifically targeting DACs for bill payment assistance and energy efficiency programs and tools.
- One-third of the current employees of SECO Energy are members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local Union 108, and SECO Energy maintains a workplace environment that ensures workers have a free and fair chance to join a union.

PROJECT DETAILS

- **Project:** Improving Reliability Through Grid Hardening
- **Applicant/Selectee:** Sumter Electric Cooperative, Inc. d/b/a SECO Energy
- **GRIP Program:** Grid Resilience Utility and Industry Grants (Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, Section 40101(c))
- **Federal cost share:** $52,857,560
- **Recipient cost share:** $17,619,190
- **Project Location:** Florida
- **Project type:** System Hardening

HELPFUL LINKS

- Grid Resilience and Innovation Partnerships Program
- About the Grid Deployment Office

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