



LCEC RECEIVES FEDERAL GRANT TO BEGIN \$10,000,000 GRID UPGRADE PROJECT TO MITIGATE WILDFIRE RISKS

Lovington, NM—December 11, 2024—Lea County Electric Cooperative, Inc. (LCEC) has received 70% funding for the \$10,000,000 project from the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and will provide a cost share of about 30% to enhance wildfire protection and resilience in the communities it serves by making critical upgrades to its electric system.

LCEC is a member of a consortium of 38 electric co-ops and other rural utilities selected to receive federal funding through the Wildfire Assessment and Resilience for Networks project, or “WARN.”

[Lea County Electric Cooperative](#) will use its funding to minimize wildfire risks through various initiatives such as pole inspection and replacement programs, upgrading breaker and recloser systems, installing raptor protection on our distribution network, conducting infrared inspections of substations, and upgrading critical transmission lines with non-wood poles. We are also advancing our standards for pole sizing and classing, implementing robust cybersecurity measures to protect our substation Real Time Automation Controls (RTAC), and deploying advanced metering infrastructure. Furthermore, we are enhancing our Bronco substation with System Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) and electronic relaying, alongside improving communications between substations and our system’s control center.

Led by [Holy Cross Energy](#) in coordination with [NRECA Research](#), WARN will provide more than \$145 million in wildfire mitigation funding to co-ops across 16 states in the central and western United States to drive energy resilience in high-risk rural areas.

“Electric cooperatives are focused on leveraging innovative solutions to meet tomorrow’s energy needs,” said NRECA CEO Jim Matheson. “This infrastructure funding is an important step as electric co-ops work to harden systems against wildfires and enhance the reliability of the grid. These projects hold tremendous potential for local communities as their co-ops unlock new ways to use technology to help mitigate wildfires and keep the lights on.”

Working together, consortium members will share lessons learned and expertise and provide real world data to create an advanced analysis tool to identify the likely impacts of utility-ignited wildfires on regional electricity supplies and local communities.

WARN funding comes from DOE’s Grid Resilience and Innovation Partnerships program created under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law

Established in May 1949, Lea County Electric Cooperative, Inc. is a member-owned cooperative headquartered in Lovington, New Mexico, with branch offices in Tatum, New Mexico, and Plains, Texas.