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Grid Resilience and Innovation Partnerships Program: Arkansas Valley Electric Cooperative Corporation Awarded U.S. Department of Energy Grant

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The United States Department of Energy (“DOE”) has previously selected Arkansas Valley Electric Cooperative Corporation (“AVECC”) for a Smart Grid Grant (“Grant”).

The Grant is awarded pursuant to the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law by DOE’s Grid Deployment Office.

The Grant is stated to be administered pursuant to the 10.5-billion-dollar DOE Grid Resilience and Innovation Partnerships Program, whose purpose is stated to enhance grid flexibility and improve the resilience of the power system against:

...growing threats of extreme weather and climate change.

A focus of the program is to accelerate the deployment of transformative projects that will ensure the reliability of the power sector’s infrastructure.

The AVECC grant’s stated purpose is to increase efficiency, reliability, and flexibility through the development of a smart grid using proven industry technologies that are connected and controlled by supervisory control and data acquisition software. The proposed grid-enhancing technologies are described as including advanced metering infrastructure, vacuum fault interrupter circuit reclosers, conservative voltage reduction, capable regulators, and real-time feedback.

The cost shares are stated to be as follows:

- Federal cost share: \$18,304,363
- AVECC cost share: \$18,310,825

The project location is northwest and south Arkansas.

Benefits are stated to include:

- Increased device coordination and decreased restoration times by improving fault isolation and faster response times during outages.
- Proper load management system balancing, voltage awareness, power factor correction, fast outage management, and early event detection by visualizing the entire distribution grid’s health and load information from a remote location.

- Layered security approach consisting of both hardware and software securities, anti-malware technology, and proprietary protocols.
- Replacement of outdated oil-filled equipment with vacuum interrupter equipment.
- 80% of service area receiving smart grid upgrades.
- Decreased maintenance expenditures.
- Training workforce focused on the design, installation, operation, and maintenance of smart grid technologies.

A copy of the DOE description of the Grant can be downloaded [here](#).