

CLIENT SUCCESS STORY

# How Optioneer™ accelerated corridor planning at a major West Coast Utility.

A major West Coast Electric Utility, serving customers across approximately 50,000 square miles, faced rapidly escalating infrastructure demands and stringent regulatory requirements.



77% reduction in  
planning time.



Routes averaging 15%  
less expensive than  
previously proposed.



Automated cost estimate  
within 10-15% of later-  
stage detailed estimate.



## THE CHALLENGE

“It often takes a full year just to propose an initial route, and even then, we encounter unexpected issues during permitting.”

Traditionally transmission corridor planning process took 6 to 24 months per project. Frequently encountering costly delays, stakeholder misalignments, and regulatory challenges.

Project budgets commonly exceeded initial estimates by around 1/3 due to unforeseen permitting hurdles and late-stage design changes.

This major West Coast utility needed to identify potential risks early, avoiding costly surprises and accelerating overall project development.

## THE PROCESS

Optioneer was implemented across a series of significant transmission corridor development projects, encompassing both new corridor siting and upgrades to existing lines across voltages from 69 kV to 500 kV.

Throughout these two-month projects, Optioneer rapidly generated and evaluated hundreds of routing scenarios against critical criteria including; estimated cost, environmental impacts, fire risk zones, habitat preservation requirements, engineering feasibility, and regulatory compliance.

Corridor options were evaluated using 17 quantitative metrics. These were selected to align with regulatory standards, mitigate risks and support the utility's project goals.

Optioneer's in-built collaboration features enabled cross-team environmental specialists, engineers and project managers to rapidly assess alternatives and build defensible narratives using a data-informed baseline. Providing rapid iteration during workshops and faster insights, leading to improved communication and reduced revisions.

## THE RESULTS

**Reduction in planning time:** Optioneer cut route analysis from 6 months to 6 weeks, saving months of labor and consulting fees.

**Improved cost estimation accuracy:** Optioneer's early cost estimates were within 10-15% of later engineering validations, enabling accurate budgeting and reducing unforeseen expenses.

**Discovery of more economical routes:** Optioneer found viable corridor alternatives averaging 15% cheaper than initial proposals. Identifying opportunities that were previously missed due to volume, manual analysis limits, biases, and time pressure.

**Enhanced cross-functional collaboration:** By leveraging unlimited user seats, Optioneer broke down team silos and brought internal and external multi-disciplinary teams onto one platform. This enabled earlier identification of issues, such as avoiding protected habitats, and reduced the risk of costly late-stage changes

**77%** reduction in route development and assessment time.

**6 week** average desktop routing study turnaround time.

**10%** margin between cost estimates and actual.

“Optioneer provided the transparency and speed we needed—tasks previously taking weeks now happen in hours, without compromising quality.”

Throughout this development, Optioneer successfully identified optimized routing solutions. Not only for entirely new transmission corridors, but for upgrading existing transmission lines within established rights of way.

Given the success of this project, the Utility intends to integrate Optioneer across future transmission corridor planning efforts. Additionally, the Utility aims to leverage Optioneer’s numerous evaluation and generation capabilities to strengthen its competitive position in regional transmission bids.

As the Utility continues to grow and change, Optioneer’s modular and scalable design will grow with it. Optioneer is configurable to suit different initiatives and will adapt as workflows evolve, ensuring lasting value across future projects.

Reach out today and see how Optioneer can help streamline your project planning.

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