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MISSOURI PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

FILE NO.

EA-2022-0234

DIRECT TESTIMONY

OF

LAMARGO SWEEZER-FISCHER

ON

BEHALF OF

NEXTERA ENERGY TRANSMISSION SOUTHWEST, LLC

JULY 7, 2022

CONTENTS

I. Introduction 3

II. NEET Southwest's Operational and Technical Capabilities 4

III. NEET Southwest's Operation and Maintenance of the Wolf Creek-Blackberry Project 8

IV. NEET Southwest Satisfies the Commission's Requirements for Issuing a Certificate of Convenience and Necessity 15

V. Conclusion 17

I. INTRODUCTION

Q. Please state your name and business address.

A. My name is LaMargo Sweezer-Fischer. I work for NextEra Energy Transmission, LLC ("NEET") at 15430 Endeavor Drive, Jupiter, Florida 33478.

Q. What is your position with NEET?

A. I am employed by NextEra Energy Transmission, LLC ("NEET") as Senior Director, Operations. NEET is an indirect, wholly-owned subsidiary of NextEra Energy, Inc. ("NextEra Energy"). As the Senior Director, Operations for NEET, I am responsible for directing the safe, reliable, and cost-effective operations of NEET's operating transmission facilities across North America, including those owned by NEET's subsidiaries, to ensure operational excellence via the comprehensive application of processes, procedures, and standards for transmission operations. In this capacity, I have responsibility for control center operations, transmission line and substation field asset operations, installation, and maintenance for current NEET assets, including those of New Hampshire Transmission, LLC ("NHT"), Lone Star Transmission, LLC ("Lone Star") in Texas, Trans Bay Cable LLC ("Trans Bay Cable") and Horizon West Transmission, LLC ("Horizon West") in California, GridLiance High Plains LLC ("GridLiance HP") in Kansas and Oklahoma, NextEra Energy Transmission New York, LLC ("NEETNY"), and NextBridge Infrastructure LP ("NextBridge") in Ontario, Canada.

Q. Please describe your educational background and employment experience.

A. In 1999, I started my career at Florida Power & Light Company ("FPL") in substation engineering and have held various positions at FPL and affiliated companies. Since July of 2020, I have held my current position of Senior Director of Operations for NEET. I earned a Master of Business Administration from Florida Atlantic University in 2003 and a bachelor's

degree in electrical engineering graduating summa cum laude from Tuskegee University in 1999. I am also a graduate of the Harvard Business School Advanced Management Program.

Q. Have you previously provided testimony before the Missouri Public Service Commission or any other state regulatory commission?

A. I submitted direct written testimony in support of NEET's acquisition of GridLiance HP in 2020, in Commission Case No. EM-2021-0114. I have also testified in support of NEET Southwest's application for a certificate of convenience and necessity in Docket No. 22-NETE-419-COC, pending before the Kansas Corporation Commission.

Q. What is the purpose of your testimony?

A. The purpose of my testimony is to demonstrate NEET Southwest's qualifications to provide the proposed project and provide support as to why the project is in the public interest. Specifically, my testimony: (1) provides background and overview information on the technical and operational capabilities of NEET Southwest, as well as its parent and affiliate companies; (2) describes, in general, the development of the Wolf Creek-Blackberry 345 kilovolt ("kV") transmission line project ("Wolf Creek-Blackberry Project" or the "Project"); (3) describes NEET Southwest's plan for operating and maintaining the Project; (4) explains why NEET Southwest has the technical and operational capability to operate and maintain the Project; and (5) addresses why the project is in the public interest from a reliability and public safety perspective.

Q. Are you sponsoring any schedules or exhibits as part of your direct testimony?

A. Yes, I sponsor Schedule MSF-1, which was prepared under my direct supervision and control.

II. NEET SOUTHWEST'S OPERATIONAL AND TECHNICAL CAPABILITIES

Q. Please generally describe NEET Southwest.

A. As NEET Southwest witness Becky Walding describes in her Direct Testimony in this matter, NEET Southwest is a direct, wholly-owned subsidiary of NEET. NEET was formed in 2007 to leverage NextEra Energy experience and resources in developing, designing, constructing, owning, operating, and maintaining transmission facilities. NEET Southwest was formed to develop, design, construct, own, operate, and maintain transmission facilities in the Southwest Power Pool, Inc. ("SPP") region. NEET's and NEET Southwest's indirect parent, NextEra Energy, is the world's largest electric utility by market capitalization. NextEra Energy's principal businesses are FPL, Florida's largest electric utility serving approximately 5.7 million customer accounts, and NextEra Energy Resources, LLC ("NEER"), the largest generator of renewable energy from the wind and sun in North America. NEET Southwest, through its immediate parent company, NEET, leverages the experience, expertise, and resources of NextEra Energy.

Q. Does NEET Southwest or any of its parent or affiliate companies own and operate any transmission assets?

A. While the Project will be NEET Southwest's first transmission asset, the NextEra Energy companies collectively own and operate approximately 11,800 miles of transmission lines and over 1,000 substations across North America, making NextEra Energy one of the industry's largest and most experienced transmission utilities. For example, in Texas, the NextEra Energy team has designed, permitted, constructed, operated, and maintained Lone Star's approximately 347 miles of 345 kV transmission lines similar to the Project. Additionally, other NEET subsidiaries are active in every regional transmission organization ("RTO") and independent system operator ("ISO") in the U.S. These entities were among the first non-incumbents to be

awarded transmission construction projects by system operators and utility commissions in California, New York, Texas, and Ontario, Canada.

Q. Please describe NEET Southwest's technical and operational expertise.

A. As a subsidiary of NextEra Energy, NEET Southwest is fully supported by the Operations teams that work for FPL, NEER, and various NEET subsidiaries, including Lone Star and Trans Bay Cable. The NextEra Energy companies operate under a support services model, which enables the overall organization to apply a best practices philosophy, a highly skilled workforce, and economies of scale across all of its companies, including NEET Southwest. Through this model, NextEra Energy employs experienced operation and support service personnel assigned to the Project. This organization at NextEra Energy is called "Power Delivery" and is responsible for all assets that deliver electricity to customers. The Power Delivery group employs over 3,200 highly experienced operations and maintenance professionals with an industry-leading track record in safety and reliability. The NextEra Energy companies offer vast experience in building, operating, and maintaining transmission infrastructure throughout the U.S. and Canada and a proven ability to do so with industry-leading safety, reliability, and cost-effectiveness.

Q. How do NEET Southwest and its parent and affiliate companies view safety and reliability of service?

A. Safety is a core value and a cornerstone of our commitment to the health and well-being of our customers, our employees, and the community. It is of utmost importance to NextEra Energy that our employees and the public remain injury-free each and every day. At NextEra Energy, we have embraced a ZeroToday! safety culture, an initiative to drive employees' safe behaviors and practices in daily work supported by Human Performance Excellence tools to help

an individual maintain positive control of a work situation, avoiding risks that can turn into unsafe conditions and the Voluntary Protection Program ("VPP") of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration ("OSHA"). In VPP, management, labor, and OSHA establish cooperative relationships at workplaces that have implemented a comprehensive safety and health management system.

NextEra Energy and its subsidiaries also place a strong emphasis on reliability of service. For example, System Average Interruption Duration Index ("SAIDI") is a well-known and widely used measure in the utility industry, representing the average time that a customer is out of service in a year due to outages of a non-major event. SAIDI is the best overall indicator for reliability since it encompasses two other standard industry-recognized reliability metrics: System Average Interruption Frequency Index and Customer Average Interruption Duration Index. For more than a decade, FPL has attained the best overall transmission and distribution system reliability among all Florida investor-owned utilities, as measured by SAIDI. In 2021, FPL's SAIDI was approximately 49 percent better than other Florida investor-owned utilities and approximately 63 percent better than the 2021 EEI national average. Relative to 2009, FPL's SAIDI improved by approximately 45 percent in 2021.

In fact, FPL has been named one of the most reliable utilities in the industry year over year and maintains top decile reliability metrics. In 2021, PA Consulting recognized FPL with the Outstanding Reliability Performance Award for the Southeast metropolitan region for the eighth straight year, the Outstanding Technology & Innovation Award for the fifth time in eight years, and the Outstanding System Resiliency Award for the first time ever, as well as with the National Reliability Excellence Award for the sixth time in the last seven years.

Q. What is NEET Southwest's and its parent and affiliate companies' approach to cybersecurity?

A. NextEra Energy is committed to protecting its employees, business partners, customers, and clients from malicious cyber acts. Prescriptive measures are used to safeguard information collected, processed, stored, and transmitted while maintaining the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of information and technology systems necessary for the company's daily operations.

The NextEra Energy cybersecurity program strategically aligns cybersecurity with our business goal, to reduce risk, to build a culture that is aware of cybersecurity, and to increase confidence with our internal and external stakeholders. In addition to having strong internal cybersecurity controls, we perform regular external assessments of our cybersecurity program maturity using industry-recognized frameworks. The results of this assessment are used to define the strategic direction of the program to address gaps or risk items identified. We also perform external testing across nearly all technology systems in the company to search for signs of malicious compromise. This engagement lasts for several weeks and is performed by recognized industry experts. Lastly, due to the scale of NextEra Energy's programs, we work closely with industry peers, trade associations, Department of Energy programs, and the National Laboratories to benchmark program capabilities and share cyber threat information. We continue to make significant investments to reduce our risk of a successful cybersecurity attack and are recognized across the sector as a leader in this space.

III. NEET SOUTHWEST'S OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF THE WOLF CREEK-BLACKBERRY PROJECT

Q. What is the Wolf Creek-Blackberry Project?

A. The Wolf Creek-Blackberry Project is a 345 kV transmission line that will interconnect two existing substations – the Wolf Creek Substation, which is owned by Evergy Kansas Central, Inc. ("Evergy"), and the Blackberry Substation, which is owned by Associated Electric Cooperative, Inc. ("AECI"). The Project route is anticipated to traverse two counties in the State of Missouri and five counties in the State of Kansas. As NEET Southwest's other witnesses testify, the Project will provide economic benefits to ratepayers and transmission customers by facilitating the transfer of lower cost generation from west to east while relieving congestion.

Q. What is NEET Southwest's operations and maintenance plan for the project?

A. As I have discussed, NEET Southwest will draw on a wide range of resources from within NextEra Energy to ensure its success in constructing, operating, and maintaining the Project. The Project will be directly serviced by two new locally based staff, dedicated to the day-to-day field maintenance activities of the Project, ensuring safe and reliable operation. This staff will be supported by seventy (70) existing NextEra Energy technical staff in the region. In addition, NEET Southwest will seek continuation of maintenance and emergency support from its vendor Brink Constructors, Inc. All staff will be trained for restoration response and maintenance of the 345 kV transmission facilities utilized in the Project. The local staff will manage 24/7 event response and troubleshooting of unplanned outages. The two new field maintenance staff, dedicated to the Project, will be located at a new office which NEET Southwest currently expects to be in the area between Pittsburg, Kansas and the mid-point of the Project. If needed, support staff from NEET Southwest affiliate NextEra Energy Resources ("NEER"), which has existing facilities in the region, will provided backup for the Project's dedicated staff.

Additionally, the Project will be monitored on a 24/7 basis by NEET Southwest's affiliate, Lone Star, from its primary and backup control centers located in Austin, Texas. Further technical support will be provided by NEET Southwest affiliate Florida Power & Light Company's Power Delivery team subject matter experts in Florida and specialized support vendors in the region.

Q. Please provide an overview of NEET Southwest's plans for restoration of safe and adequate service after significant, unplanned/forced outages of the Project.

A. NEET Southwest, working with its affiliates in the Project region, has a plan for responding to emergencies. As noted above, Lone Star will provide 24/7 oversight of the Project and coordinate with the interconnection parties, including SPP. The control center, upon notification of an emergency, will immediately respond by contacting NEET Southwest's local field maintenance staff. The field maintenance staff may also receive automatic notification of an outage event and begin implementing their response protocol. The field maintenance lead will determine initial actions to take and coordinate with the control center staff, who will update the interconnecting parties and SPP of the situation as necessary. If site attendance is required, personnel who live locally near the event site will be dispatched first to the site. Depending on weather conditions, these staff typically arrive on site within 30-60 minutes and report findings. In the interim, support contractors are made aware of the event and will prepare their resources in accordance with the Project's restoration plans. Pictures and video calls from the event site assist contractors in determining the needed resources. Depending on the time of day and time of year, contractor resources typically arrive on site within three to four hours.

Q. Does NEET Southwest have a plan for restoring service for operation of the Project in the face of natural disasters, such as tornadoes and winter storms in the Project area?

A. Yes. NEET Southwest, working with its affiliates in the Project region, has a restoration plan that will be implemented in response to an outage or other emergency condition. NEET Southwest's plan has five primary purposes:

1. Document potential materials, equipment, technical personnel, and resources available for use in restoring the line after an outage has occurred, assuming failure of a facility component required for energized operations or safety, such as wiring or structure;
2. Provide process outlines and critical decision-making information for use in the event of structural failure;
3. Provide the initial conceptual plan to be enhanced as the Project design details and operations strategies are developed;
4. Serve as a training plan for engineering, management, and field personnel; and
5. Provide decision makers with a single source reference for critical design, engineering, construction, and access to information for use in the event of a structure or component failure.

NEET Southwest's restoration plan provides details of materials and spares needed for restoration work, and it includes:

- Structures to be kept on-hand for restoration
- Mats – For portions of the project with terrain requiring matting
- Equipment – Equipment requirements
- Special Equipment – Winches, hydraulic cutters, tracked loaders, anchor installation tooling, and numerous other items to complete the restoration plan equipment requirements
- Miscellaneous Materials – The inventory of line restoration materials will be defined during detailed design and construction. The material requirements will match the materials installed on the line for the response region supported by each facility

The response plan assumes that scalability is required. This allows for the distribution of resources and materials at more than one site to provide the ability to appropriately respond to single isolated events while also being able to mobilize to another part of the project to support a larger event or multiple events.

NEET Southwest and its contractor, Brink Constructors, Inc., have developed a plan to

replace one mile of line and structures and return the line to service in seven days. The plan breaks down the time to complete key work to meet the overall timeline of seven days. The key assumption is the timeline is not materially impacted by access or weather delays.

Q. Will NEET Southwest maintain vegetation near the Project?

A. Yes. Vegetation management is necessary to ensure the reliability of the Project and for public safety. Work relating to vegetation control is conditional based on the treatments specified for the many plant species found throughout the route. NEET Southwest's standard easement, which NEET Southwest expects to use to acquire easement rights for the Project, contains language that allows NEET Southwest to trim and remove trees and shrubs on the easement to maintain its transmission lines. It also allows NEET Southwest to remove trees adjacent to the easement to the extent such trees present some structural defect and are tall enough to impact or affect NEET Southwest's facilities (commonly referred to as "hazard trees"). A copy of an example easement agreement is provided as Schedule DM-2 to the Direct Testimony of NEET Southwest witness Daniel Mayers. This is an example of an agreement, and the terms may be modified as needed based upon discussions with landowners.

Q. How will the Project impact the ability to farm in the area outside of the easement area?

A. Mr. Mayers describes how the Project's design features, including its monopole design, will minimize impacts on landowners. In my experience, during the Project's operations, we expect the existence of the transmission line should not affect the ability of landowners to farm. In the very rare circumstances that NEET Southwest would need to access land outside of the easement area (*e.g.*, to access the Project under emergency conditions), affected landowners will be compensated for damages, including crop losses.

Q. What will be the impact of the Project on the ability to farm in areas within the easement area?

A. I would expect there to be minimal impact on farming operations within the easement area, based upon the significant number of transmission line miles that NEET Southwest's affiliates have constructed and operate in rural areas utilizing monopoles similar to the ones that NEET Southwest proposes to use for the Project. Farmers can continue to use the land under the transmission lines. As Mr. Mayers describes, NEET Southwest's monopole design allows for farming up to the base of each structure foundation, which is four to five feet in diameter. In addition, the average length of the spans is approximately 900 feet between structures, and the general absence of guys and anchors, limits the amount of land taken out of production.

Q. What is the impact of transmission line facilities on the ability to engage in livestock and grazing activities within the easement area?

A. Again, I would expect the impacts to be minimal. In my experience, it is quite common for grazing and other livestock activities to coexist around transmission line structures. The monopole design associated with the Project should further enhance that co-existence, as there will be a limited number of guy wires or anchors that would impact access to the easement area or a landowner's ability to mow.

Q. How will NEET Southwest utilize the Lone Star Transmission control centers to monitor the Project?

A. NEET Southwest has entered into an affiliate support services agreement with Lone Star in order for Lone Star's control center operations personnel to perform the 24/7 operational coordination for the Project. Lone Star employs five North American Electric Reliability Corporation ("NERC")-certified transmission operators who continuously staff the state-of-the-art

control center around-the-clock to monitor and operate transmission lines for a number of NEET subsidiaries across the country.

Q. Why is it appropriate for the Lone Star control center to monitor the Project?

A. Lone Star is highly qualified to monitor the Project and will provide continuous monitoring and coordination of the Project. Lone Star was included on the NERC Compliance Registry as a Transmission Owner and Transmission Planner on October 14, 2010 and was certified by NERC and the Texas Reliability Entity as a Transmission Operator for Lone Star's 345 kV transmission facilities in 2012. Lone Star's transmission line is of similar design to the Project as it utilizes spun-concrete monopole structures with the same conductor type that will be utilized for the Project. Additionally, the Lone Star Transmission Control Center successfully operates and monitors assets in the California Independent System Operator ("CAISO") and the PJM Interconnection ("PJM") for NEET subsidiary transmission projects.

Q. Please describe the technical capability of the Lone Star control center in more detail.

A. The existing control center operating team members are NERC-certified Transmission Operators and are or will be NERC-certified Reliability Coordinators by September 2022. The control center team members are required to be experts with analysis and problem solving, compliance, process/project management, communications, and leadership. System operators are responsible for monitoring and controlling the reliable transfer of power on the transmission facilities including reactive dispatch and supervision of all activities within the Lone Star Control Center. The System Operators complete restoration plan training or training with program objectives based on NERC and Regional Reliability Organization standards, ISO operating procedures, and applicable regulatory requirements.

IV. NEET SOUTHWEST SATISFIES THE COMMISSION'S REQUIREMENTS FOR ISSUING A CERTIFICATE OF CONVENIENCE AND NECESSITY

Q. Are you familiar with the Commission's requirements for issuing a certificate of convenience and necessity ("CCN")?

A. Yes. While I am not an attorney, I am familiar with the MSPC's *Tartan*[1] factors used for granting a CPCN approval.

Q. Which of the Commission's requirements do you address in your direct testimony?

A. NEET Southwest satisfies the following of the Commission's applicable requirements:

- The applicant must be qualified to provide the proposed service; and
- The proposed service must be in the public interest.

Q. Does NEET Southwest have the technical and managerial expertise to build and operate the project?

A. Yes. As stated in more detail above, and as NEET Southwest witnesses Becky Walding, Daniel Mayers, and Amanda Finnis also testify, NEET Southwest will draw upon the resources of the NextEra Energy organization to ensure its successful execution of the Project. NextEra Energy, and the affiliates and contractors who will participate in the Project meet and exceed the qualifications to build and operate the Project safely, efficiently, and economically. This Project will bring together experts from a variety of fields, each of whom has years of special expertise in their field as it relates to the construction and/or operation of transmission lines.

[1] *In re Tartan Energy Company, L.C. dba Southern Missouri Gas Company*, Case No. GA-94-127 (Sept. 1994).

Along with the resources discussed more specifically throughout my testimony, NEET Southwest will have access to the following affiliate resources for this Project:

- Engineering and Construction Organization – consisting of over 150 engineers and construction project managers with substantial experience in large-scale energy infrastructure projects;
- Integrated Supply Chain – consisting of over 400 sourcing and procurement specialists that leverage NextEra Energy's significant purchasing power and relationships with strategic industry vendors; this team procured $16 billion in materials and services in 2021 alone;
- Environmental Services – consisting of over 100 environmental subject matter experts, specialized in minimizing project impact to the environment, as well as reducing permitting and schedule risk to projects;
- Power Delivery – consisting of over 3,200 highly experienced operations and maintenance team members with an industry-leading track record in safety and reliability;
- Regulatory and Legal – consisting of over 100 attorneys and regulatory specialists, with particular expertise in federal, state, and local regulatory proceedings for the energy sector.

In sum, NEET Southwest and its family of affiliates and contractors building and operating this Project meet the necessary technical and managerial qualifications to manage this Project successfully.

Q. Will the Project negatively impact public safety?

A. No, as stated in detail above, safety is a core value and a cornerstone of our commitment to the health and well-being of our customers, our employees, and the community. The NextEra Energy companies offer vast experience in building, operating, and maintaining transmission infrastructure throughout the U.S. and Canada and a proven ability to do so with industry-leading safety, reliability, and cost-effectiveness, as exemplified in each of the operations listed on Schedule MSF-1.

V. CONCLUSION

Q. Should the Commission grant NEET Southwest a CCN?

A. Yes, the Commission should grant NEET Southwest a CCN for the reasons discussed in my testimony.

Q. Does this conclude your testimony?

A. Yes, it does.

BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI

In the Matter of the Application of NextEra Energy Transmission Southwest, LLC for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity to Construct, Install, Own, Operate, Maintain, and Otherwise Control and Manage a 345 kV Transmission Line and associated facilities in Barton and Jasper Counties, Missouri	)	File No. EA-2022-0234

Affidavit of LaMargo Sweezer-Fischer

1. My name is LaMargo Sweezer-Fischer. I am the Senior Director, Operations at NextEra Energy Transmission, LLC at 15430 Endeavor Drive, Jupiter, Florida 33478.

2. I have read the above and foregoing Direct Testimony and the statements contained therein are true and correct to the best of my information, knowledge, and belief.

3. I am authorized to make this statement on behalf of NextEra Energy Transmission Southwest, LLC.

4. Under penalty of perjury, I declare that the foregoing is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

/s/ LaMargo Sweezer-Fischer
LaMargo Sweezer-Fischer
Senior Director, Operations
NextEra Energy Transmission, LLC

Date: July 7, 2022