

NORTH DAKOTA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
NORTHERN DIVIDE ENERGY STORAGE, LLC
NORTHERN DIVIDE ENERGY STORAGE PROJECT
AMENDED APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF SITE COMPATIBILITY

CASE NO. PU-24-371

DECEMBER 12, 2025

**PREPARED TESTIMONY OF
CLINT SCHERB**

I. Introduction and Background

Q1. Please state your name, by whom you are employed, and your business address.

A. My name is Clint Scherb. I am employed by NextEra Energy Resources, LLC (“NextEra Energy Resources”). My business address is 700 Universe Blvd., Juno Beach, Florida 33408.

Q2. What is your position with NextEra Energy Resources?

A. I am a Project Manager of Infrastructure Development for NextEra Energy Resources. Northern Divide Energy Storage, LLC, (“Northern Divide Energy Storage”) is a wholly owned, indirect subsidiary of NextEra Energy Resources.

Q3. Can you briefly provide an overview of NextEra Energy Resources?

A. NextEra Energy Resources, through its subsidiaries and affiliates, develops energy generation projects throughout the United States and Canada. NextEra Energy Resources is one of the largest energy infrastructure companies in the world, with more than 3,000 megawatts (“MW”) of operational energy storage capacity across North America. NextEra Energy Resources operates more than 33,000 MW of generation capacity in North America. In North Dakota, NextEra Energy Resources’ subsidiaries own and/or operate 16 wind facilities and two gas pipelines, with additional wind energy and energy storage projects currently in development.

Q4. Briefly describe your professional experience.

A. I have over 10 years of management experience as a business owner, disaster relief coordinator, consultant, and energy infrastructure developer. I also have 8 years of service with the United States Marine Corps and 12 years of service in law enforcement as a Deputy Sheriff in South Florida.

Q5. What is your role with respect to the Northern Divide Energy Storage Project (“the Project”)?

A. As a Project Manager of Development, I oversee the Project’s siting and permitting processes, until commercial operations begin.

Q6. Are you familiar with the contents of Northern Divide Energy Storage’s Amended Application for a Certificate of Site Compatibility for the Project (“the Application”), which is marked as Exhibit No. 1?

A. Yes. I am familiar with the contents of the Application.

Q7. Does this Amended Application accurately describe the Project?

A. Yes, the Application accurately describes the Project.

Q8. Have there been any changes to the Project since Northern Divide Energy Storage filed its Amended Application with the Commission?

A. There have been no major changes to the Project; however, I do need to update a statement from the Application. On page 23, in section 3.1.1 of the Application, the statement reads: “Northern Divide Energy Storage has not finalized the Battery type for the Project.” This statement should now read “Northern Divide Energy Storage has selected the US Made “LG” Lithium Ion Batteries”.

Q9. What entity will construct, own, and operate the Project?

A. Northern Divide Energy Storage will be responsible for constructing, owning, operating, and maintaining the Project, as well as fulfilling the conditions set forth by the Commission if the Commission grants the requested Certificate. Northern Divide Energy Storage will secure a third-party engineering, procurement, and construction (“EPC”) contractor to

1 manage and complete construction of the Project. Following construction, Northern Divide
2 Energy Storage will own, operate, and maintain the Project.

3 **Q10. What is the purpose of your testimony?**

4 A. My testimony provides an overview of the Project, including its development history,
5 interconnection, site selection, land acquisition, local permitting, landowner coordination,
6 and benefits.

7 **II. Description of the Project**

8 **Q11. Please describe the Project, its general location, proposed capacity, and associated**
9 **facilities.**

10 A. The Project is a 100-MW battery energy storage system (“BESS”), with a four-hour
11 duration, equating to 400 MWh of total energy capacity. This means that if the facility was
12 discharging energy at 100% of its output rate, it would take four hours for the BESS to
13 discharge its entire 400 MWh capacity.

14 I will provide a general overview of the Project and its components, and my
15 colleague Michael Bettis will go into further detail in his testimony. The Project Area
16 encompasses approximately 21 acres (including Northern Divide Wind, LLC’s existing
17 substation) in Burke County, North Dakota (the “Project Area”), and includes the
18 construction of energy storage system containers, which will house the battery modules.
19 After construction, the BESS infrastructure will occupy seven acres, in addition to the
20 existing substation, which occupies 1 acre. Each battery module is equipped with a battery
21 management system that continuously monitors and regulates critical parameters, such as
22 voltage, temperature, and state of charge, to maintain operational integrity and safety. The
23 Project will also include the construction of a Power Conversion System to convert the
24 direct current stored within the BESS to alternating current suitable for grid integration.
25 The Power Conversion System will ensure the efficient and reliable transfer of energy
26 between the BESS and the grid. Additionally, an electrical collection system will be
27 constructed to connect the BESS to the Northern Divide Wind Energy Center’s (the “Wind
28 Energy Center”) existing collection substation by installing the necessary control and
29 safety equipment to facilitate the safe transfer of energy.

1 Additional facilities associated with the Project include inverters, transformers,
2 underground cables, and other ancillary facilities, such as a supervisory control and data
3 acquisition system, an electrical collection system, site access and parking, fencing and
4 security, signage, and stormwater facilities.

5 Temporary facilities may be required for the construction phase of the Project, such
6 as a construction laydown area for any equipment and a construction management facility,
7 and/or intersection improvements to facilitate over-length turning. Any temporarily
8 affected areas will be restored to pre-construction conditions, to the extent practicable after
9 construction has been completed.

10 **Q12. Please explain the history and the need for the Project.**

11 A. The Project is being developed adjacent to the existing Northern Divide Wind Energy
12 Center to help meet growing demand for reliable capacity and to alleviate congestion on
13 the grid, while utilizing already existing infrastructure.

14 Northern Divide Energy Storage has executed an energy storage agreement
15 (“ESA”) with Basin Electric Power Cooperative (“Basin Electric”) for a duration of 24.5
16 years. The Project, scheduled to begin operations in December 2026, will align with the
17 term of Northern Divide Wind’s purchase power agreement (“PPA”) with Basin Electric
18 for the existing Wind Energy Center. In other words, the Project’s ESA and the Wind
19 Energy Center’s PPA will conclude at the same time in 2050. The ESA is expected to
20 alleviate transmission congestion and mitigate pricing volatility.

21 Ancillary services from a utility-scale BESS are services that support the reliability
22 of the power grid, such as frequency regulation, voltage control, and spinning reserves.
23 These services are vital for balancing the grid’s supply and demand, ensuring stability, and
24 helping to restore power after an outage. BESS are well-suited for providing these services
25 due to their fast response times.

Q13. Please describe the Project’s interconnection arrangements.

A. The Project will connect to and share the Wind Energy Center’s collection substation, transmission, and point of interconnection, which has been studied by the Southwest Power Pool (“SPP”). Northern Divide Energy Storage has executed a Surplus Interconnection Service Generator Interconnection Agreement with the interconnecting transmission utility, Basin Electric, and SPP. The Surplus Interconnection Agreement allows the BESS to connect to the grid through the shared use of the existing collection substation and transmission line, without exceeding the original interconnection limit of the Wind Energy Center’s Generator Interconnection Agreement. Simply put, the combined energy output will not exceed the original wind interconnection limits.

Q14. What factors make the Project Area a good site for energy storage?

A. Northern Divide Energy Storage selected the Project Area based on its proximity to the Wind Energy Center infrastructure, including the existing collection substation and 345-kilovolt (“kV”) transmission line. By siting the Project adjacent to the Wind Energy Center, Northern Divide Energy Storage aims to minimize impacts on the surrounding community, enhance operational efficiency, and condense development into a compact area.

Q15. What is the status of land acquisition for the Project?

A. Northern Divide Energy Storage has purchased the land for the Project Area. An underground collection system will connect the BESS with the existing collection substation, which is located on a parcel that Northern Divide Wind already owns. Northern Divide Energy Storage plans to enter into an agreement with Northern Divide Wind to connect the BESS to the substation and to utilize the existing approach from North Dakota Highway 40 for access to the Project.

Q16. Please describe the local permitting efforts related to the Project.

A. Northern Divide Energy Storage presented the Project to the Burke County Planning and Zoning Commission and the Burke County Commissioners on February 21, 2023, and, again, on May 21, 2024. On August 29, 2024, Northern Divide Energy Storage met with the Burke County Planning and Zoning Commission to discuss various topics, including

development, permitting, economics, environmental and safety concerns, employment, community involvement, zoning ordinances, public education, and the Conditional Use Permit. From November 2024 through July 2025, Northern Divide Energy Storage regularly attended meetings with Burke County to discuss amendments to the Burke County Zoning Regulations related to BESS. Northern Divide Energy Storage also met with the Burke County Emergency Management and presented an overview of the Project as well as information (and answers to any questions) from a subject matter expert in battery fire safety on September 24, 2024. On August 21, 2025, Northern Divide Energy Storage filed a conditional use permit application with Burke County. On October 7, 2025, the Project's conditional use permit was unanimously approved by the Burke County Planning and Zoning Board and the Burke County Commission. A copy of the permit will be filed with the Commission.

Q17. What are the Project's estimated costs?

A. The estimated total cost to construct the Project is approximately \$128.6 million.

Q18. Explain Northern Divide Energy Storage's proposed timeline for construction and operation of the Project.

A. Subject to receipt of Commission approval, road restrictions, and weather conditions, Northern Divide Energy Storage currently anticipates beginning construction of the Project in April or May 2026, as weather conditions allow. Major equipment deliveries are expected to take place in June and July 2026. Northern Divide Energy Storage proposes to complete construction in time to place the Project into commercial operations by December 2026. The Project anticipates the construction to include 99 battery containers and 33 inverters at the "beginning of life" and will incrementally install additional batteries and inverters to maintain (not increase) the nameplate capacity, as the existing battery capacity naturally degrades. This process is known as augmentation. The Project anticipates that, with augmentation, there will be 129 battery containers and 43 inverters on site at the Project at the end of the Project's life.

Q19. Provide a brief overview of the Project's construction process.

A. Final contract negotiations are underway with a provider of engineering, procurement, and construction services to procure materials and construct the Project on behalf of Northern Divide Energy Storage. This contractor is an industry leader in utility construction and has significant experience building grid-scale energy storage systems while maintaining a respectable safety record.

Once the necessary siting approvals are received from the Commission for the Project, several activities must be completed prior to the proposed commercial operation date. Most of the activity relates to equipment delivery and construction of the facilities. Pre-construction, construction, and post-construction activities for the Project will include:

- Transporting material and equipment to the Project site via truck delivery on public roads;
- Preparing the Project site, including grading and minor earthwork to support the installation of storm water management facilities (*i.e.*, retention basins), perimeter fencing, foundations, and internal access roads;
- Installing BESS components;
- Integration, commissioning, and testing operations; and
- Commencing commercial operations.

Q20. How does the construction of an energy storage system compare to that of a wind energy facility?

A. The construction of a BESS facility is generally within a considerably smaller area than a wind energy facility. To put the Project's size into perspective, the Project's permanent features will occupy approximately 7 acres. A wind project involves widespread construction across many miles for turbines, access roads, and collection lines, while a BESS is typically limited to a single, contained site. For this Project, all construction activities, including material storage and the laydown area, are located within one contiguous footprint, on one landowner's property, and accessed by a single haul route. As a result, there is no need for crews or equipment to travel between multiple locations, making construction more compact, controlled, and less noticeable than a typical wind

1 project. The Project will also utilize existing interconnection infrastructure, avoiding the
2 need for additional transmission like a typical wind project would require.

3 **Q21. How does Northern Divide Energy Storage plan to minimize local impacts from**
4 **construction?**

- 5 A. Northern Divide Energy Storage is committed to minimizing local impacts and ensuring
6 oversight of the EPC contractor and the overall Project. We will maintain communication
7 with Burke County and the residents in the area to provide construction updates and allow
8 for additional opportunities to hear local comments.

9 The Project was sited in a location only accessible from State Highway 40 and the
10 existing approach to the collection substation (which will be extended to the project site).
11 The heavy equipment and component haul route is anticipated to only utilize State and US
12 Highways, limiting any potential impacts to County or Township roadways. The EPC
13 contractor will obtain all required haul permits during the construction phase.

14 **Q22. How will the Project mitigate dust during the construction process?**

- 15 A. The Project will control and minimize dust during construction by implementing
16 reasonable precautions appropriate to site conditions.

17 With the Project located adjacent to a paved State Highway, and no gravel roads
18 being utilized for any heavy equipment deliveries, the potential for excessive dust is
19 limited. The Project will maintain coordination with Burke County and the Road and
20 Bridge Department for any applicable road use or dust mitigation plans throughout the
21 Construction Phase.

22 **Q23. How will the Project manage noxious weeds within the Project Area?**

- 23 A. To prevent and control the spread of noxious weeds during construction, Northern Divide
24 Energy Storage will develop a noxious weed management plan, which it will submit for
25 approval to the Burke County Weed Control Officer. The EPC contractor will be
26 responsible for implementing best management practices in accordance with the plan. This
27 includes ensuring that all equipment arrives on-site free of weed seeds, managing soil
28 disturbance to minimize weed propagation, and coordinating with Northern Divide Energy

Storage and regulatory agencies to comply with local and state weed management requirements.

Q24. What roads are necessary for the construction and operation of the Project?

A. Material and equipment needed to construct the BESS will reach the site via on-road truck delivery on North Dakota Highway 40. The majority of truck deliveries will be for BESS components (*e.g.*, energy storage system cabinets and controller, power conversion systems) and aggregate material (*e.g.*, gravel, rock). Northern Divide Energy Storage plans to construct internal access roads when preparing the Project site for construction. During construction, Northern Divide Energy Storage will coordinate with the Burke County Road and Bridge Department to obtain a Road Use Agreement for the use of county roads during construction.

III. Operations and Maintenance and Project Decommissioning

Q25. Discuss the local personnel who will be involved in operating and maintaining the Project.

A. Northern Divide Energy Storage will operate and maintain the Project with one to two full-time local operations and maintenance (“O&M”) employees dedicated to the BESS facility. The full-time local O&M staff responsibilities will include routine inspections, system monitoring, and maintenance activities to support the safe and efficient operation of the energy storage system. The O&M staff for the BESS will be based in Columbus, North Dakota and work out of the existing Wind Energy Center O&M facility located adjacent to the Project.

Q26. Are you familiar with the requirements set forth in the Commission’s Certification Relating to Order Provisions and Tree and Shrub Mitigation Specifications?

A. Yes.

Q27. Will Northern Divide Energy Storage comply with these requirements?

A. Yes. Northern Divide Energy Storage has executed the Certification provisions committing the Company to comply with the document's requirements. This Certification is marked as Exhibit No. 2.

Q28. What is the estimated life of the Project?

A. The estimated life of the Project is up to approximately 35 years. As technology continues to evolve, the life of the Project may be extended with future upgrades.

Q29. What are Northern Divide Energy Storage's plans regarding decommissioning of the Project?

A. The Project will be decommissioned at the end of its life, with recycling considered for components that are capable of and suitable for recycling, as most of its components are recyclable. The materials used in battery energy storage facilities retain value even after the end of the battery's contractual term. At the end of the battery's useful life, the battery cells may either be repurposed for another use (second-life) or recycled, as most of the materials used in lithium-ion cells can be recovered and recycled at the end of their useful life. Many of NextEra Energy Resources' subsidiaries' battery-manufacturing suppliers offer to reclaim their batteries for recycling, allowing the parts to be reused in new products. Consistent with best practices and industry standards, Northern Divide Energy Storage will engage a North Dakota-licensed engineer to develop a comprehensive decommissioning plan. The decommissioning plan will outline the process for retiring the Project at the end of its useful life and include a cost estimate based on the parameters of the plan.

IV. Public Outreach

Q30. Explain Northern Divide Energy Storage's outreach to the public and with local political subdivisions regarding the Project's development.

A. Northern Divide Energy Storage undertook public outreach with Burke County and agencies throughout the history of the Project. During the Project's development, Northern Divide Energy Storage worked with Burke County officials and other stakeholders to

1 address feedback and concerns and to ensure the Project met local requirements, including
2 meeting with County officials and other interested stakeholders to discuss the Project.

3 **Q31. Please describe some of the economic benefits of the proposed Project.**

4 A. The Project will have positive economic impacts for the local population, including
5 employment and property and sales tax revenue. Northern Divide Energy Storage has
6 purchased the land where the Project is located, providing a benefit to the landowner.

7 Businesses near the Project would not be significantly disrupted by construction or
8 operation of the Project. The Project will create up to 100 temporary construction jobs
9 over the approximately six-month construction period, with the number of workers on-site
10 at any given time varying depending on the phase of construction. To the extent that local
11 construction contractors are used for portions of the construction, total wages and salaries
12 paid to construction contractors and workers in Burke County will contribute to the total
13 personal income of the region. Expenditures made for equipment, energy, fuel, operating
14 supplies, and other products and services will benefit businesses in the County and state.
15 During construction, out-of-town laborers will likely use lodging facilities in and around
16 the cities in Burke County.

17 It is likely that general skilled labor is available either in the County or the state to
18 serve the basic infrastructure and site development needs. Specialized labor will be
19 required for certain components of Project development. It is likely that this labor will be
20 imported from other areas of the state, the region, or other states. Balancing the use of
21 local construction contractors and imported specialized construction contractors will likely
22 alleviate any labor relations issues.

23 **V. Conclusion**

24 **Q32. In your opinion, will the Project's location and operation produce minimal adverse**
25 **effects on the citizens of North Dakota?**

26 A. Yes. As outlined in my testimony, the Project has been diligently sited to comply with this
27 Commission's siting criteria and Burke County zoning regulations in order to minimize
28 potential impacts to existing land uses, infrastructure, and local residents. Additionally,
29 the Project will provide significant benefits to the electrical grid, local community, and the

1 state. My colleague Michael Bettis will go into further details on the safety measures of
2 the Project in his testimony. For these reasons, and as demonstrated throughout the
3 Amended Application, supporting filings, and my testimony, the Project will produce
4 minimal adverse effects.

5 **Q33. In your opinion, will the Project's location and operation have minimal adverse**
6 **environmental effects?**

7 A. Yes. The Project is sited in a location that has been carefully chosen to minimize any
8 adverse environmental effects. My colleague Dina Brown will go into further details on
9 the Project's environmental studies and the siting measures taken during her testimony later
10 in the hearing.

11 **Q34. In your opinion, does the Project ensure continued system reliability and integrity**
12 **and that energy needs are met and fulfilled in an orderly and timely fashion?**

13 A. Yes. The Project will provide a significant benefit to the electrical grid system by storing
14 surplus energy that would otherwise be considered excess generation, as outlined in my
15 testimony. My colleague Michael Bettis will go into further details on the technical
16 operations of battery energy storage systems during his testimony.

17 **Q35. Does this conclude your direct testimony?**

18 A. Yes.