

Exhibit No. _____
Issues: Technical Capabilities
Witness: LaMargo Sweezer-Fischer
Type: Direct Testimony
Sponsoring Party: NextEra Energy Transmission, LLC
Case No. EM-2020-_____
Date Testimony Prepared: October 20, 2020

MISSOURI PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

CASE NO. EM-2020-_____

DIRECT TESTIMONY OF LAMARGO SWEEZER-FISCHER

SENIOR DIRECTOR, OPERATIONS
NEXTERA ENERGY TRANSMISSION, LLC

ON BEHALF OF NEXTERA ENERGY TRANSMISSION, LLC AND
NEXTERA ENERGY TRANSMISSION INVESTMENTS, LLC

OCTOBER 20, 2020

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1 **I. INTRODUCTION**

2 **Q. Please state your name and business address.**

3 A. My name is LaMargo Sweezer-Fischer. My business address is 15430 Endeavor Drive,
4 Jupiter, Florida 33478.

5 **Q. By whom are you employed and in what capacity?**

6 A. I am employed by NextEra Energy Transmission, LLC (“NEET”) as Senior Director,
7 Operations. NEET is an indirect wholly-owned subsidiary of NextEra Energy, Inc.
8 (“NextEra Energy”).

9 As the Senior Director of Operations for NEET, I am responsible for directing the
10 safe, reliable, and cost-effective operations of NEET assets, including those of its
11 subsidiaries owning and operating transmission facilities across North America to ensure
12 operational excellence via the comprehensive application of processes, procedures, and
13 standards for transmission operations. In this capacity, I have responsibility for control
14 center operations, transmission line and substation field asset operations, installation, and
15 maintenance for current NEET assets, such as those of New Hampshire Transmission, LLC
16 (“NHT”), Lone Star Transmission, LLC (“Lone Star”) in Texas, and Trans Bay Cable LLC
17 (“TBC”) and Horizon West Transmission, LLC (“Horizon West”) in California.

18 **Q. On whose behalf are you testifying?**

19 A. I am submitting this direct testimony on behalf of NEET and its direct wholly-owned
20 subsidiary, NextEra Energy Transmission Investments, LLC (“NETI”). NEET and NETI
21 are two of the Joint Applicants in this proceeding.

1 **Q. Please describe your professional background.**

2 **A.** In 1999, I started my career at Florida Power & Light Company (“FPL”) in substation
3 engineering, and have held various positions at FPL and affiliated companies. Since July
4 of this year, I have held my current position of Senior Director of Operations for NEET. I
5 earned a Master of Business Administration from Florida Atlantic University in 2003 and
6 a bachelor’s degree in electrical engineering graduating summa cum laude from Tuskegee
7 University in 1999. My resume is attached as Schedule SF-1.

8 **Q. Has this Direct Testimony been prepared by you or under your direct supervision?**

9 **A.** Yes, it has.

10 **Q. Have you previously testified before the Missouri Public Service Commission**
11 **(“Commission”)?**

12 **A.** No, I have not.

13 **Q. What is the purpose of your Direct Testimony?**

14 **A.** The purpose of my testimony is to: (1) describe the technical and operational capabilities
15 of NEET and of the NextEra Energy corporate organization; (2) provide details regarding
16 NextEra Energy’s extensive operational, safety, reliability, and cybersecurity expertise;
17 and (3) support a determination by the Commission that the Proposed Transaction will not
18 adversely affect the operations, reliability, safety, or quality of transmission service on
19 GridLiance High Plains LLC’s (“GridLiance HP”) transmission facilities in Missouri.

20 **II. NEXTERA’S OPERATIONAL AND TECHNICAL CAPABILITIES**

21 **Q. Please generally describe NEET.**

22 **A.** Mr. Eric Gleason, President of NEET, provides a detailed description of NEET and its
23 various affiliates in his Direct Testimony. At a high level, NEET is the parent company of
24 various NextEra Energy subsidiaries that own and operate regulated transmission facilities

1 outside of Florida. NEET's subsidiaries own, operate, and develop significant high-voltage
2 transmission infrastructure across the United States.

3 In particular, NEET is the direct parent company of:

- 4 • Lone Star, which owns, operates, and maintains approximately 330 miles
5 of double-circuit 345 kilovolt ("kV") transmission lines and six substations
6 within the Electric Reliability Council of Texas region;
7
- 8 • NHT, which owns operates, and maintains a 345 kV substation connecting
9 a major generating facility to the ISO New England transmission grid in
10 New Hampshire;
11
- 12 • TBC, which owns, operates, and maintains an approximately 53-mile, ±200
13 kV submarine high-voltage direct current transmission system in San
14 Francisco, California area; and
15
- 16 • Horizon West, which owns, operates, and maintains a 230 kV substation in
17 San Diego County, California and is developing another high-voltage
18 substation project in northern California.

19 NEET's other assets include a 280-mile, 230 kV transmission project under
20 construction in Ontario, Canada and a 20-mile, 345 kV transmission project in pre-
21 construction development in New York. As described in Mr. Gleason's Direct Testimony,
22 NEET's subsidiaries are also developing other projects in earlier stages of development
23 throughout the U.S.

24 **Q. How does NEET operate these transmission assets?**

25 A. As the Senior Director of Operations for NEET, I oversee NEET's Operations personnel
26 that are responsible for the operation and maintenance ("O&M") of NEET's transmission
27 facilities. NEET's Operations personnel operate and monitor these facilities 24 hours a
28 day, seven days a week from North American Electric Reliability Corporation-certified
29 control centers located in Austin, Texas and Pittsburg, California. NEET also utilizes

1 significant support in the O&M of its transmission facilities from its affiliates within the
2 NextEra Energy organization.

3 **Q. Please generally describe other relevant NextEra Energy subsidiaries.**

4 A. As described by Mr. Gleason, NextEra Energy's principal subsidiaries are: (1) FPL, one
5 of the largest, cleanest, and lowest cost rate-regulated electric utilities in the U.S. that
6 serves 5 million homes and businesses – more than 10 million people – in the state of
7 Florida; (2) Gulf Power Company (“Gulf Power”), an integrated utility serving more than
8 470,000 customer accounts in the Florida Panhandle; and (3) NextEra Energy Resources,
9 LLC, which, together with its affiliate entities, is the world's largest producer of renewable
10 energy from the wind and sun.

11 **Q. Please generally describe NextEra Energy's subsidiaries' technical and operational**
12 **expertise.**

13 A. NextEra Energy has a nationally recognized O&M team. NextEra Energy employs time-
14 tested, robust practices for staffing, operating, and maintaining its facilities using the
15 appropriate mix of local, on-the-ground expertise and affiliate support to ensure safe and
16 reliable operations of its utility facilities. Across the NextEra Energy organization, there
17 are more than 750 power system professionals including engineers, technicians, and other
18 staff with expertise in all aspects of transmission and substation equipment installation,
19 operation, maintenance, and repair.

20 FPL is a top-quartile electric utility nationally in terms of both reliability and O&M
21 cost performance (\$/retail megawatt-hour). FPL is a top-quartile electric utility nationally
22 in terms of both reliability and O&M cost performance (\$/retail megawatt-hour). FPL
23 owns and operates approximately 7,278 miles of transmission in its service territory in the

1 east and the lower west coasts of Florida. In addition to FPL, NextEra Energy's subsidiary
2 Gulf Power owns and operates approximately 1,669 miles of transmission lines.

3 Personnel from FPL's Transmission and Substation team are involved in the O&M
4 of all of NextEra Energy's subsidiaries' high-voltage transmission assets, which
5 encompass approximately 86,765 miles of high-voltage transmission and distribution lines,
6 and 989 substations. FPL's experience includes owning, operating, and maintaining
7 transmission assets and associated control systems, working with various municipalities
8 and permitting agencies, maintaining good relationships with the affected communities and
9 agencies during times of construction and maintenance, successfully minimizing impacts
10 on sensitive environmental areas, and protecting wildlife habitats. In addition, through its
11 ownership of these significant utility resources, NextEra Energy subsidiaries also have
12 significant leverage with key suppliers and vendors, which often translates into enhanced
13 technical capabilities as well as reduced cost.

14 **Q. How does NextEra Energy view safety and reliability of service?**

15 A. Safety is a core value and a cornerstone of our commitment to the health and well-being of
16 our customers, our employees, and the community. It is of utmost importance to NextEra
17 Energy that our employees and the public remain injury-free each and every day. At
18 NextEra Energy, we have embraced a *ZeroToday!* safety culture supported by Human
19 Performance Excellence tools and the Voluntary Protection Program of the Occupational
20 Safety and Health Administration.

21 NextEra Energy and its subsidiaries also place a strong emphasis on reliability of
22 service. For example, System Average Interruption Duration Index ("SAIDI") is a well-
23 known and widely used measure in the utility industry, representing the average time that

1 a customer is out of service in a year due to outages of a non-major event. SAIDI is the
2 best overall indicator for reliability since it encompasses two other standard industry
3 recognized reliability metrics: System Average Interruption Frequency Index and
4 Customer Average Interruption Duration Index. For more than a decade, FPL has attained
5 the best overall transmission and distribution system reliability among all Florida investor-
6 owned utilities, as measured by SAIDI. In 2019, FPL's SAIDI was approximately 44
7 percent better than other Florida investor-owned utilities and approximately 61 percent
8 better than the national average. Relative to 2009, FPL's SAIDI improved by
9 approximately 38 percent in 2019.

10 In fact, FPL has been named one of the most reliable utilities in the industry year
11 over year, and maintains top decile reliability metrics. PA Consulting recognized FPL in
12 2019 with the Outstanding Technology and Innovation Award, as well as with the National
13 Reliability Excellence Award for the fourth time in the last five years. Also in 2019, the
14 Edison Electric Institute awarded FPL with its Emergency Assistance Award for its
15 contributions in rebuilding the energy grid after Hurricane Michael impacted communities
16 in Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina and for its contributions in restoring power to hard-
17 hit North Carolina communities following Hurricane Florence, as well as for FPL's
18 assistance to utilities following the historic Camp Fire in northern California.

19 **Q. Please describe NextEra Energy's approach to cybersecurity.**

20 A. NextEra Energy is committed to protecting its employees, business partners, customers,
21 and clients from malicious cyber acts. Decisive and prescriptive measures are used to
22 safeguard information collected, processed, stored, and transmitted while maintaining the

1 confidentiality, integrity, and availability of information and technology systems necessary
2 for the company's daily operations.

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

17 **III. THE PROPOSED TRANSACTION WILL NOT ADVERSELY IMPACT THE**
18 **OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF THE GRIDLIANCE HP MISSOURI**
19 **ASSETS**

20 **Q. Please describe the transmission facilities that GridLiance HP currently owns in**
21 **Missouri.**

22 A. As described in the Direct Testimony of Mr. Brett Hooton, GridLiance HP currently owns
23 certain transmission facilities in Christian and Greene Counties, Missouri (the "Southwest
24 Missouri Assets"). Mr. Hooton testifies that the day-to-day O&M work on the transmission
25 facilities is governed by a Master Services Agreement ("MSA"), which GridLiance HP and

1 the City of Nixa entered into on March 31, 2018, and a Maintenance Agreement with BBC
2 Electrical Services, Inc. (“BBC Electrical Maintenance Agreement”).

3 **Q. If the Proposed Transaction is approved, how will these facilities be operated and**
4 **maintained going forward?**

5 A. After closing the Proposed Transaction, NEET and GridLiance HP will continue to utilize
6 O&M services under the MSA and the BBC Electrical Maintenance Agreement.
7 Therefore, the Southwest Missouri Assets will continue to be operated and maintained
8 much as they are today. The Southwest Missouri Assets also will remain under the
9 operational control of the Southwest Power Pool, Inc. (“SPP”) and will continue to be
10 utilized to provide transmission service under the rates, terms, and conditions set forth in
11 the SPP Open Access Transmission Tariff. Thus, the Proposed Transaction will not impact
12 the safe and reliable operation of the Southwest Missouri Assets.

13 **Q. Will NEET retain GridLiance HP’s existing employees?**

14 A. Yes, as part of the Proposed Transaction, Mr. Gleason testifies that NEET plans to retain
15 the current employees of GridLiance Management, LLC, which provides support services
16 to GridLiance HP. From an operations perspective, this will ensure the continuity of
17 GridLiance HP’s experience and personnel in its continued ownership of the Southwest
18 Missouri Assets.

19 **Q. How will NEET’s and NextEra Energy’s technical and operational capabilities**
20 **benefit GridLiance HP and support the operation of the Southwest Missouri Assets?**

21 A. While the day-to-day O&M of the Southwest Missouri Assets will continue to be
22 performed pursuant to the MSA with the City of Nixa and the BBC Electrical Maintenance
23 Agreement, as they are today, once the Proposed Transaction closes and GridLiance HP
24 becomes a NEET subsidiary, GridLiance HP will become part of an experienced utility
25 holding company with extensive operational, technical, safety, reliability, and

1 cybersecurity expertise. GridLiance HP will benefit by having access to this expertise and
2 the economies of scale available to its NextEra Energy affiliates. For example, GridLiance
3 HP will have access to the more than 750 professionals that provide significant
4 transmission O&M expertise to NextEra Energy's existing transmission facilities.
5 GridLiance HP will benefit from NextEra Energy's extensive supplier and vendor
6 relationships. GridLiance HP also will be able to access NextEra Energy's extensive
7 cybersecurity program. Being part of the larger NextEra Energy organization will allow
8 GridLiance HP to augment its current O&M of the Southwest Missouri Assets with this
9 extensive expertise and resources.

10 **Q. Does this conclude your Direct Testimony?**

11 **A.** Yes, it does.

NextEra Energy Transmission



LaMargo Sweezer-Fischer Senior Director of Operations - NextEra Energy Transmission

LaMargo Sweezer-Fischer is senior director of operations for NextEra Energy Transmission (NEET), a NextEra Energy (NEE) subsidiary, where she directs operations and maintenance for NEET's transmission and substation assets across the United States and Canada.

Mrs. Sweezer-Fischer previously served the NEE subsidiaries, NextEra Energy Resources and Florida Power & Light (FPL), by serving as the senior director of power generation solar and energy storage engineering and operations support services where she directed technical services and reliability efforts for NEER and FPL's fleet of solar and energy storage generating assets; as well as senior director of power generation technology and innovation where she directed technology and innovation development for NextEra Energy's operating fleet of fossil, solar, and wind generating assets. She has also previously served as general manager of power delivery reliability where she was responsible for reliability performance across FPL's 35-county service territory. During this time, FPL was recognized with the PA Consulting Reliability One award in back to back years as the most reliable electric utility in the nation. LaMargo also has served FPL by managing smart grid device deployment and strategy, capacity planning, equipment performance, customer power quality and strategic continuous improvement initiatives. Mrs. Sweezer-Fischer worked in substation engineering from 1999 to 2005.

Mrs. Sweezer-Fischer earned a Master of Business Administration from Florida Atlantic University and a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering graduating summa cum laude from Tuskegee University and is a certified six sigma blackbelt.

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI**

In the Matter of the Joint Application of)
GridLiance High Plains LLC,)
GridLiance GP, LLC, and)
GridLiance Holdco, LP (“GridLiance”))
NextEra Energy Transmission Investments, LLC,)
and NextEra Energy Transmission, LLC)
 (“NextEra Entities”))
for approval of the Acquisition of GridLiance by)
the NextEra Entities)

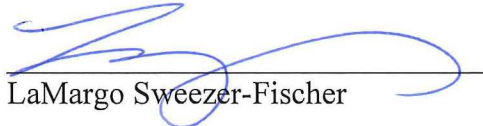
Case EM-

AFFIDAVIT OF LAMARGO SWEEZER-FISCHER

STATE OF FLORIDA)
) ss
COUNTY OF PALM BEACH)

LaMargo Sweezer-Fischer, being first duly sworn upon her oath, states:

1. My name is LaMargo Sweezer-Fischer. I am the Senior Director of Operations for NextEra Energy Transmission, LLC.
2. Attached hereto and made a part hereto for all purposes is my Direct Testimony, having been prepared in written form for introduction into evidence in this proceeding.
3. I have knowledge of the matter set forth herein. I hereby swear and affirm that my answers contained in the attached testimony to the questions therein propounded, including any attachments thereto, are true and accurate to the best of my knowledge, information and belief.



LaMargo Sweezer-Fischer

Subscribed and sworn before me this 19th day of October, 2020.



