

NEWS RELEASE
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PSC Approves Permit for Northern Divide Wind Project and Associated Transmission Line

BISMARCK, ND – The North Dakota Public Service Commission (PSC) today approved a siting permit for the Northern Divide Wind Project and associated transmission line in Burke County. The wind farm will have a capacity of approximately 200 megawatts and will consist of up to 74 wind turbine generators and associated facilities. The project will also include a 41-mile long, 345-kilovolt transmission line that starts at the wind farm in Burke County and extends to Basin Electric’s Tande Substation in Mountrail County.

“NextEra worked closely with the North Dakota Game and Fish and U.S. Fish and Wildlife to address the concerns identified by these expert agencies in the first permitting process. As a result, Northern Divide Wind is significantly different in its impacts to wetlands and wildlife than the Burke Wind project was,” said Commissioner Julie Fedorchak who holds the siting portfolio. “The project is significantly smaller, has far less impact to native prairie and far fewer impacts to wetlands. In my assessment, with these significant changes and the lack of objection from these wildlife agencies the project now meets the legal standard of minimal impact that’s necessary for a permit.”

Northern Divide Wind, LLC (a wholly-owned, indirect subsidiary of NextEra Energy Resources), submitted an application for this revised project after a previous project in Burke County was denied a permit by the Commission due to concerns by U.S. Fish and Wildlife and the North Dakota Game and Fish Department about the impacts on wildlife. The new project incorporates the following modifications:

- Northern Divide has relocated 44 of the original 78 turbines to areas with less impact to wetlands and wildlife using recommendations from the wildlife agencies. The turbines were moved away from key Northern Pintail Duck breeding habitat.
- The project area was reduced by approximately 52 percent. Approximately 7 percent of the project area consists of native prairie and none of the turbines will be on unbroken native grasslands. The company states that the project is located predominantly on cropland, which will reduce the impact to upland birds. Further, the transmission line will be located in mostly tilled cropland and co-located with existing roads where possible.
- Northern Divide submitted evidence that the current project area encompasses 950 wetland features as compared to the previous Burke Wind Project that encompassed 2,470 wetland features. Northern Divide has committed to avoiding all direct impacts to wetlands by boring and by maintaining appropriate water and soil conservation practices during construction.

- Northern Divide has committed to avoiding turbines near known grouse leks, to avoid impacts to any suitable Dakota Skipper habitats, and minimize the potential for adverse impacts to raptor nests.
- Northern Divide has addressed concerns related to the transmission line by committing to marking the transmission line with bird flight diverters, assuring the line will be located in areas that are unsuitable habitat for the Sprague's Pipit, and indicating that no new permanent roads will be built for the transmission line.
- Northern Divide's application outlined that they have worked with both the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the North Dakota Game and Fish Department to develop the current project. U.S. Fish and Wildlife has not submitted any objections to the current project. The company has worked with the North Dakota Game and Fish Department to address their concerns and the agency has stated in correspondence that the new layout considerably reduces the potential impacts to important wildlife resources.

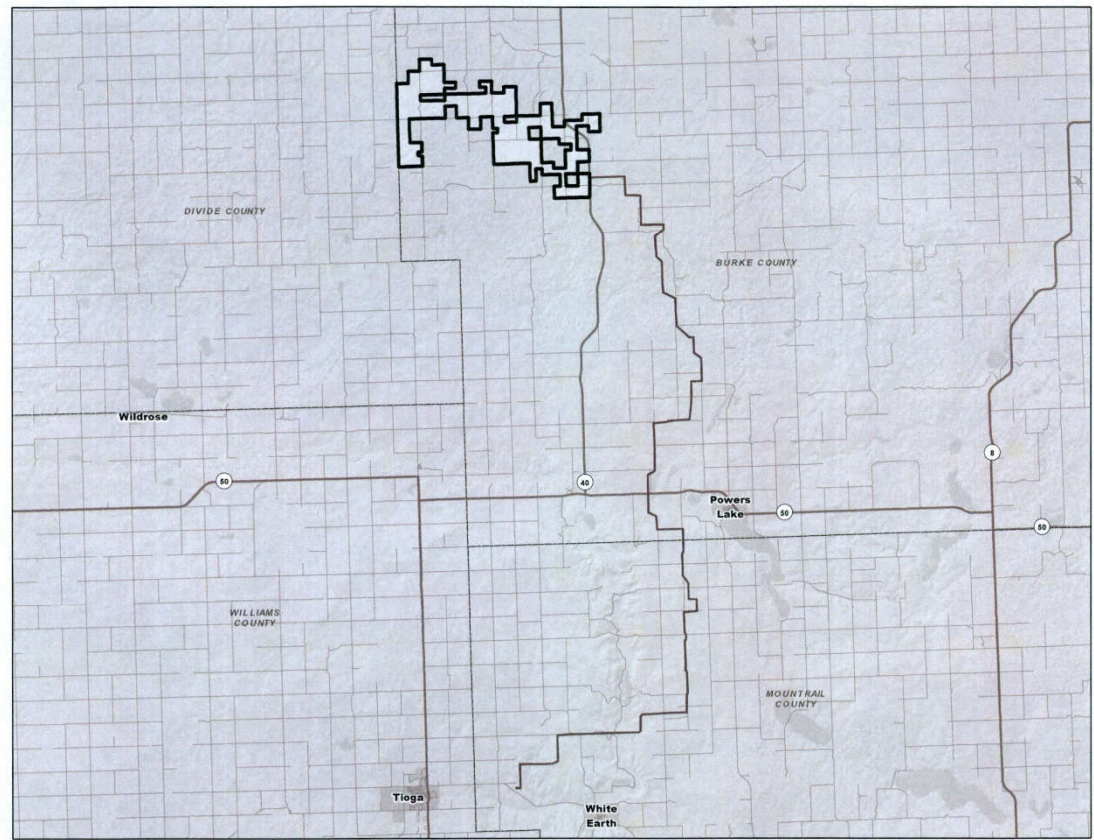
“I continue to believe America is over-saturating our electric grid with intermittent energy at the expense of baseload energy,” said Commissioner Randy Christmann. “But this is a siting case that must be decided based on the law in North Dakota’s Siting Act, as written by the Legislature, and this project meets the requirements of the Siting Act.”

Estimated cost of the project is \$300 million for the wind project and \$30 million for the transmission line. (Note to the media: A map showing the proposed location of the wind project and transmission line has been provided to you for use with any announcements/stories you print.)

The North Dakota Public Service Commission is a constitutionally created state agency with authority to permit, site and regulate certain business activities in the state including electric and gas utilities, telecommunications companies, power plants, electric transmission lines, pipelines, railroads, auctioneers, commercial weighing devices, pipeline safety and coal mine reclamation. For more information, contact the Public Service Commission at (701) 328-2400 or www.psc.nd.gov.

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Legend

- County Road
 - State/Federal Highway
 - County Boundary
- Site Plan**
- Northern Divide Wind Energy Center Project Area
 - Northern Divide 345-kV Transmission Line Right-of-Way

Northern Divide Wind, LLC
Case Nos. PU-19-376 & PU-19-377

Northern Divide Wind Energy Center
Burke County, ND

345 kV Transmission Line Project
Burke & Mountrail Counties, ND

