

APPENDIX A

Agency Coordination

April 13, 2023

VIA ELECTRONIC DELIVERY

[NAME
TITLE
Address
XXXXXX]

Re: *Benton Solar Energy Project, Benton County, Minnesota*

To [NAME]:

Benton Solar, LLC (Benton), a wholly owned, indirect subsidiary of NextEra Energy Resources, LLC (NextEra), is writing to request your comments on the proposed Benton Solar Energy Project (Project). The Project is a 100-megawatt (MW) alternating current (AC) nameplate capacity solar energy conversion facility to be located in Benton County, Minnesota.

The Project is designed for operation at a capacity of over 50 MW and thus is subject to the Minnesota Public Utility Commission's (Commission's) siting authority jurisdiction. Therefore, Benton will seek a Site Permit from the Commission under Minnesota Statutes Section 216E.04 (Subdivision 2(8)), and Minnesota Rules 7850.2800 – 7850.3900.

The Project will be situated within an approximately 3,077.3-acre Project area located in Township (T) 36 North (N), Range (R) 29 West (W), Sections 7, 18, 19 and 30; and T36 N, R30 W, Sections 12-14, 23-26, and 34-36. The Project site plan has not been finalized at this time; however, the Project is likely to include the following facilities:

- Solar panels/modules
- Gravel access roads
- Inverters
- Underground collection lines
- Security fencing
- An operations and maintenance building
- A substation

The Project also will include an associated generation-tie line (gen-tie). Benton anticipates that the gen-tie will meet the relevant definition of a high-voltage transmission line in Minnesota Statutes Section 216E.01 (Subdivision 4). Therefore, Benton anticipates seeking a Route Permit from the Commission and intends to prepare a standalone Route Permit application. Benton will provide you with separate correspondence describing the gen-tie and requesting your associated comments.

To facilitate your review of the Project, we have enclosed a figure and corresponding shapefiles depicting the Project area. Project facilities will occupy only a portion of the Project area.

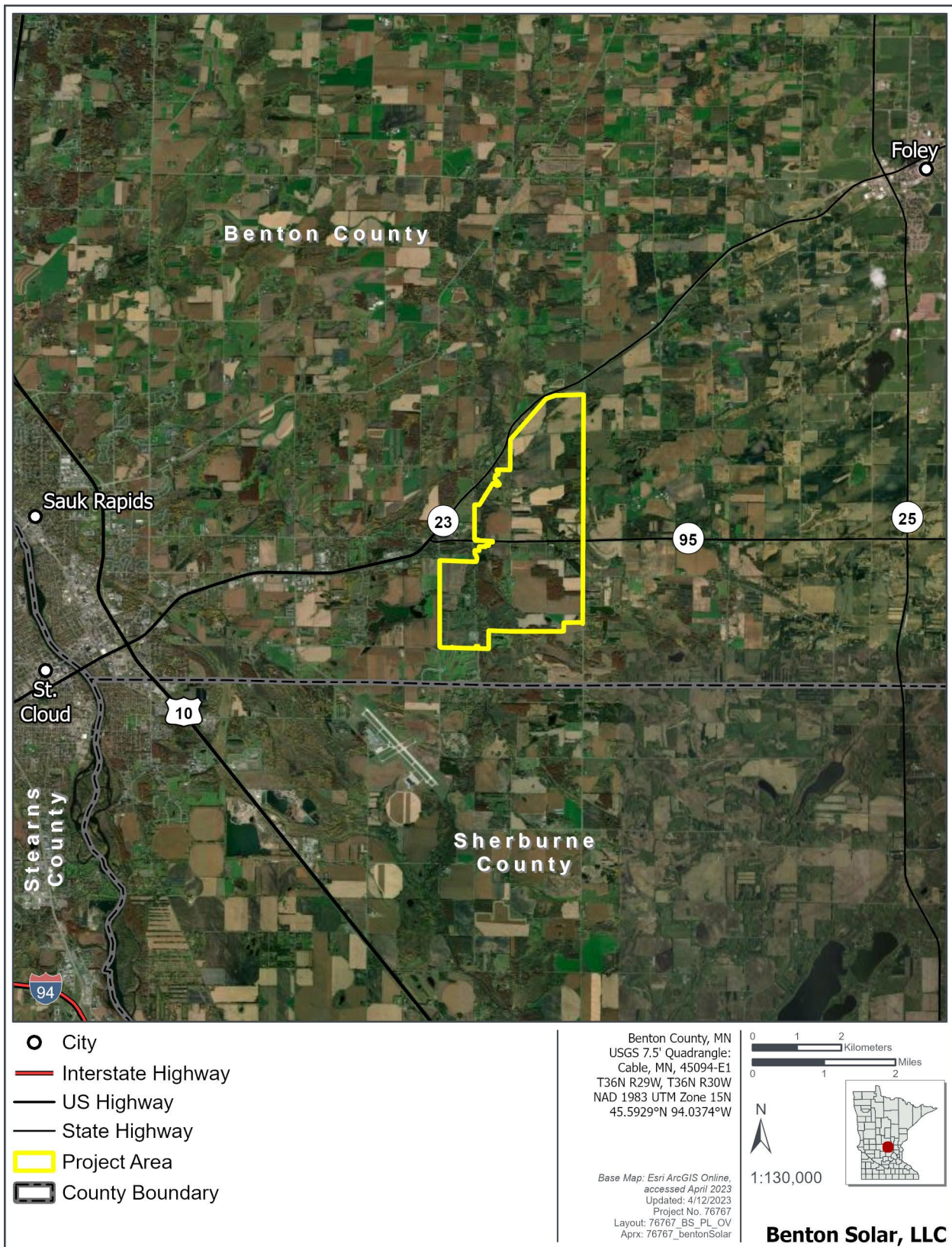
We appreciate and welcome any comments your agency may have regarding the Project and resources under your jurisdiction, and respectfully ask for receipt of your comments by May 10. If you would like to request additional information or have questions regarding this matter, please contact me at (561) 446-3380 or Brittney.Paxson@nexteraenergy.com.

Respectfully,

/s/ Brittney Paxson

Brittney Paxson
Project Manager, Development
Benton Solar, LLC
700 Universe Blvd.
Juno Beach, FL 33401
(561) 446-3380
Brittney.Paxson@nexteraenergy.com

**ATTACHMENT 1:
PROJECT AREA FIGURE**



From: [Paxson, Brittney](#)
To: [Macdonald, Cody](#); [Kely Wabnitz](#); [Sarah Sappington](#)
Subject: FW: Benton Solar Energy Project, Benton County, Minnesota
Date: Thursday, April 13, 2023 2:27:34 PM
Attachments: [image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)
[image006.png](#)
[image003.png](#)

Thanks,
Brittney Paxson
Project Manager, Development
NextEra Energy Resources
(561) 446-3380 mobile
700 Universe Blvd.
Juno Beach, FL 33401



From: Collins, Melissa (DNR) <Melissa.Collins@state.mn.us>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 1:08 PM
To: Paxson, Brittney <Brittney.Paxson@nexteraenergy.com>
Cc: Wilson, Grant (DNR) <grant.wilson@state.mn.us>; Warzecha, Cynthia (DNR) <cynthia.warzecha@state.mn.us>; Rasmussen, Elizabeth (She/Her/Hers) (DNR) <Elizabeth.Rasmussen@state.mn.us>
Subject: RE: Benton Solar Energy Project, Benton County, Minnesota

Hi Brittney,

I am replying to your email regarding the Benton Solar Energy Project on behalf of Grant Wilson. I would be your point of contact with Minnesota DNR to provide early coordination on utility-scale solar site plans prior to the filing of the PUC application. At that point, Cynthia Warzecha, our energy planner, will take over as the DNR point of contact during the PUC coordination process. Please include Cynthia in future communications regarding this project.

The DNR has developed a thorough guidance document for the development of solar sites: [DNR's 2023 Commercial Solar Siting Guidance](#). Project proposers are also required to prepare a [Vegetation Establishment and Management Plan](#) for all utility-scale solar projects (≥50 megawatts). If you have not already, I recommend that you review these documents as you develop your project plans and let me know if you have any questions. I am happy to meet to discuss any aspects of these documents or your specific plans in more detail. I also recommend that you submit this project for review to [Minnesota Conservation Explorer](#), in order to coordinate with the DNR on any potential impacts to state-listed rare species and

required avoidance measures as you develop your site plans.

Thank you,

Melissa Collins

Regional Environmental Assessment Ecologist | Ecological and Water Resources

Pronouns: She/her/hers

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

1200 Warner Road

St. Paul, MN 55106

Phone: 651-259-5755

Email: melissa.collins@state.mn.us

mndnr.gov



From: Paxson, Brittney <Brittney.Paxson@nexteraenergy.com>

Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 9:40 AM

To: Wilson, Grant (DNR) <grant.wilson@state.mn.us>

Cc: Herzig, Danell <Danell.Herzig@nexteraenergy.com>; Macdonald, Cody <Cody.Macdonald@nexteraenergy.com>; Mcqueen, Jake <Jake.Mcqueen@nexteraenergy.com>; Kely Wabnitz <kmertz@swca.com>; Sarah Sappington <SSappington@swca.com>

Subject: Benton Solar Energy Project, Benton County, Minnesota

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Hi Grant,

Benton Solar, LLC (Benton), a wholly owned, indirect subsidiary of NextEra Energy Resources, LLC (NextEra), is writing to request your comments on the proposed Benton Solar Energy Project (Project). The Project is a 100-megawatt (MW) alternating current (AC) nameplate capacity solar energy conversion facility to be located in Benton County, Minnesota.

We appreciate and welcome any comments your agency may have regarding the Project and resources under your jurisdiction, and respectfully ask for receipt of your comments by May 10.

Thanks,

Brittney Paxson
Project Manager, Development
NextEra Energy Resources
(561) 446-3380 mobile
700 Universe Blvd.
Juno Beach, FL 33401



From: [Paxson, Brittney](#)
To: [Macdonald, Cody](#); [Kely Wabnitz](#); [Sarah Sappington](#)
Subject: FW: Benton Solar Energy Project, Benton County, Minnesota
Date: Thursday, April 13, 2023 3:09:55 PM
Attachments: [image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)
[image006.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[BentonSolarProjectArea_20230406.zip](#)
[Wilson_Benton Solar Project_2023Apr13.pdf](#)
[BentonSolarMap.pdf](#)

fyi

Thanks,
Brittney Paxson
Project Manager, Development
NextEra Energy Resources
(561) 446-3380 mobile
700 Universe Blvd.
Juno Beach, FL 33401



From: Vickery, Martha L (DNR) <martha.vickery@state.mn.us>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 2:58 PM
To: Paxson, Brittney <Brittney.Paxson@nexteraenergy.com>
Cc: Rokala, Joe A (DNR) <joe.rokala@state.mn.us>; Wilson, Grant (DNR) <grant.wilson@state.mn.us>
Subject: FW: Benton Solar Energy Project, Benton County, Minnesota

Hello:

We (Lands and Minerals Division) are not accustomed to being asked for a general review of an entire project. We do reviews when we get an application for a utility crossing license crossing for specific state lands and public waters. We process and approve that application and issue a license.

We cannot sink much time into a resource and technical review process until we have an application in front of us.

Also, there is not enough or the right type of information to allow us to pre-review the proposal as provided. There is no information on where the infrastructure is going to be or how power will be routed off the site, therefore, I don't know if you will need to apply for utility crossing licenses or not.

I am attaching a map that reflects the outline of the 3,000-plus acres you are indicating as the project area, along with an overlay three public watercourses within the area, and one or two lakes. If there are crossings of any of these watercourses, utility licenses will be required.

You can also read in general about the instructions, fees, and statutes involved in utility licensing by using this [link](#) to the website.

Please let me know if you have any follow-up questions.

Martha Vickery

Central Region Operations Coordinator | Lands and Minerals Division

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

1200 Warner Road

St. Paul, MN 55106

Phone: 651-259-5792

Fax: 651-772-7977

Email: martha.vickery@state.mn.us
mndnr.gov



From: Wilson, Grant (DNR) <grant.wilson@state.mn.us>

Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 10:10 AM

To: Lais, Dan R (DNR) <dan.lais@state.mn.us>; Vickery, Martha L (DNR) <martha.vickery@state.mn.us>; Harper, Liz (She/Her/Hers) (DNR) <elizabeth.harper@state.mn.us>; Collins, Melissa (DNR) <Melissa.Collins@state.mn.us>

Subject: FW: Benton Solar Energy Project, Benton County, Minnesota

Dan, Liz, Martha, and Melissa,

Can you advise on this request for review/comment?

Grant

Grant L. Wilson

Central Region Director

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

Phone: 651.259.5635

From: Paxson, Brittney <Brittney.Paxson@nexteraenergy.com>

Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 9:40 AM

To: Wilson, Grant (DNR) <grant.wilson@state.mn.us>

Cc: Herzig, Danell <Danell.Herzig@nexteraenergy.com>; Macdonald, Cody <Cody.Macdonald@nexteraenergy.com>; Mcqueen, Jake <Jake.Mcqueen@nexteraenergy.com>;

Kely Wabnitz <kmertz@swca.com>; Sarah Sappington <SSappington@swca.com>

Subject: Benton Solar Energy Project, Benton County, Minnesota

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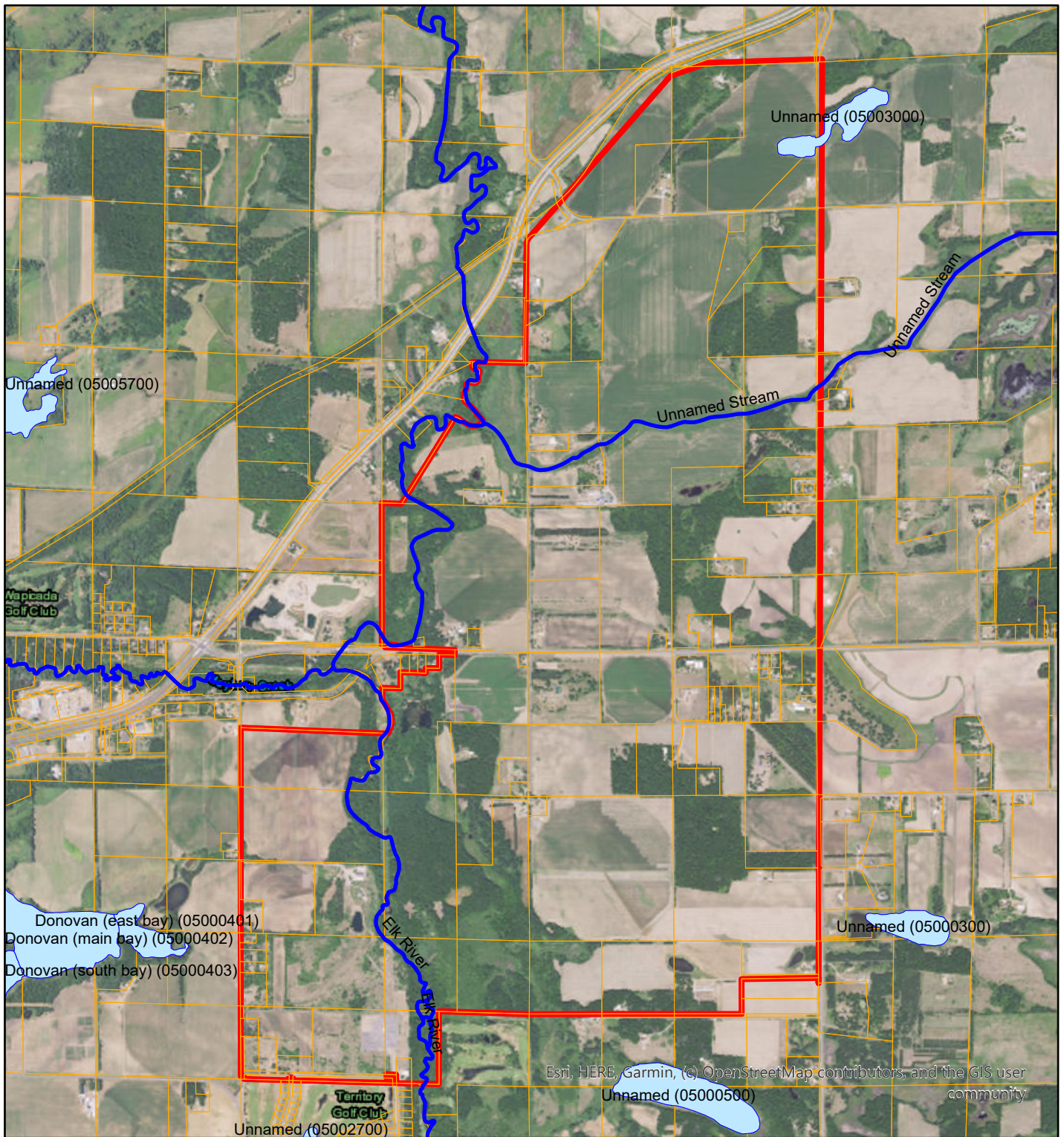
Hi Grant,

Benton Solar, LLC (Benton), a wholly owned, indirect subsidiary of NextEra Energy Resources, LLC (NextEra), is writing to request your comments on the proposed Benton Solar Energy Project (Project). The Project is a 100-megawatt (MW) alternating current (AC) nameplate capacity solar energy conversion facility to be located in Benton County, Minnesota.

We appreciate and welcome any comments your agency may have regarding the Project and resources under your jurisdiction, and respectfully ask for receipt of your comments by May 10.

Thanks,
Brittney Paxson
Project Manager, Development
NextEra Energy Resources
(561) 446-3380 mobile
700 Universe Blvd.
Juno Beach, FL 33401





Proposed Benton Solar with Public Waters

- All Available Parcels in Minnesota (For Internal Use Only)
- Public Water Watercourse
- Public Ditch/Altered Natural Watercourse
- Public Waters Basins
- Aquatic Management Area - AMA
- Fish Management Area - FMA
- Scientific and Natural Area - SNA

- State Forest Land
 - Other Forest Land
 - State Parks
 - State Park Recreation Areas
 - State Park Waysides
 - Wildlife Management Area - WMA
 - BentonSolarProjectArea_20230406
- 0 0.2 0.4 0.8 Miles

From: [Paxson, Brittney](#)
To: [GraggJohnson, Kelly \(ADM\)](#)
Cc: [Macdonald, Cody](#); [Kely Wabnitz](#); [Sarah Sappington](#)
Subject: RE: Benton Solar Energy Project, Benton County, Minnesota (SHPO No 2023-1118)
Date: Monday, April 17, 2023 9:48:18 AM
Attachments: [image002.png](#)

Thank you Kelly, appreciate the quick response.

Thanks,
Brittney Paxson
Project Manager, Development
NextEra Energy Resources
(561) 446-3380 mobile
700 Universe Blvd.
Juno Beach, FL 33401



From: GraggJohnson, Kelly (ADM) <kelly.graggjohnson@state.mn.us>
Sent: Friday, April 14, 2023 5:20 PM
To: Paxson, Brittney <Brittney.Paxson@nexteraenergy.com>
Subject: RE: Benton Solar Energy Project, Benton County, Minnesota (SHPO No 2023-1118)

Hi Brittney – We previously provided comments on this project to SWCA Environmental Consultants and copied Cody MacDonald and Jake McQueen of Next Era. Please see the attached letter. We look forward to reviewing the results of the Phase I archaeological survey when they become available.

Also, please remove David Mather from your email correspondence.

Thanks,

Kelly



Kelly Gragg-Johnson (she/her) | Environmental Review Program Specialist

50 Sherburne Avenue, Suite 203
Saint Paul, MN 55155
(651) 201-3285 | kelly.graggjohnson@state.mn.us

Please [subscribe to receive SHPO notices](#) for the most current updates regarding office hours, accessing research files, or changes in submitting materials to the SHPO.

To access historic resource information please visit our webpage on [Using SHPO's Files](#).

[Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#) | [Twitter](#)

-

From: Paxson, Brittney <Brittney.Paxson@nexteraenergy.com>

Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 9:37 AM

To: GraggJohnson, Kelly (ADM) <kelly.graggjohnson@state.mn.us>; Mather, David (ADM) <david.mather@state.mn.us>

Cc: Herzig, Danell <Danell.Herzig@nexteraenergy.com>; Macdonald, Cody <Cody.Macdonald@nexteraenergy.com>; Mcqueen, Jake <Jake.Mcqueen@nexteraenergy.com>; Kely Wabnitz <kmertz@swca.com>; Sarah Sappington <SSappington@swca.com>

Subject: Benton Solar Energy Project, Benton County, Minnesota

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Hi Kelly and David,

Benton Solar, LLC (Benton), a wholly owned, indirect subsidiary of NextEra Energy Resources, LLC (NextEra), is writing to request your comments on the proposed Benton Solar Energy Project (Project). The Project is a 100-megawatt (MW) alternating current (AC) nameplate capacity solar energy conversion facility to be located in Benton County, Minnesota.

We appreciate and welcome any comments your agency may have regarding the Project and resources under your jurisdiction, and respectfully ask for receipt of your comments by May 10.

Thanks,
Brittney Paxson
Project Manager, Development
NextEra Energy Resources
(561) 446-3380 mobile
700 Universe Blvd.
Juno Beach, FL 33401



From: [Paxson, Brittney](#)
To: [Macdonald, Cody](#); [Kely Wabnitz](#); [Sarah Sappington](#)
Subject: Fwd: Benton Solar Energy Project, Benton County, Minnesota
Date: Monday, April 17, 2023 11:16:22 AM

Brittney Paxson
NextEra Energy Resources
Project Manager Development
[\(561\) 446-3380](#) mobile

From: Sierra Cotter <scotter@co.benton.mn.us>
Sent: Monday, April 17, 2023 11:11:21 AM
To: Steffenson, Cade (BWSR) <cade.steffenson@state.mn.us>; Paxson, Brittney <Brittney.Paxson@nexteraenergy.com>
Cc: Roxanne Achman <RAchman@co.benton.mn.us>
Subject: RE: Benton Solar Energy Project, Benton County, Minnesota

Hi Brittney,
From a WCA standpoint, Cade is correct. A level 2 wetland delineation will be necessary prior to finalization. I have also included Roxanne, the Director of Land Services, so she can chime in from a zoning perspective, if needed. Both myself and Roxanne attended a meeting last year with Nextera Energy and therefore we have had a small introduction into the company and its goals. Please let me know if you have specific questions for us in the meantime.

Thank you,
Sierra Cotter

From: Steffenson, Cade (BWSR) <cade.steffenson@state.mn.us>
Sent: Monday, April 17, 2023 9:51 AM
To: Brittney.Paxson@nexteraenergy.com
Cc: Sierra Cotter <scotter@co.benton.mn.us>
Subject: FW: Benton Solar Energy Project, Benton County, Minnesota

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Good morning Brittney. This was sent my way for prelim BWSR comments on your proposed solar project. My role is specific to areas of the project that may affect/impact wetlands under the Wetland Conservation Act (WCA-MR 8420). WCA is a locally administered rule (Benton County Dept of Development). I am involved via the Technical Evaluation Panel (TEP) along with LGU, DNR, and SWCD staff. My comment would be to recommend a wetland delineation be completed for those areas proposed (or considered) for placement of any roads, infrastructure, panels or other areas that may be disturbed. This will assist you in planning efforts and avoidance of wetland impacts to the extent possible.

Often times at this phase you could consider a level 1 delineation for planning purposes, but will

need to conduct a level 2 (onsite) delineation prior to finalization. A wetland consultant can also help you decide which options work for you at this phase.

Feel free to reach out to me or the LGU (cc'd) with any questions.

Cade Steffenson
Wetland Specialist
Board of Water & Soil Resources
Office (320) 223-7073
Cell (218) 820-0811

From: Paxson, Brittney <Brittney.Paxson@nexteraenergy.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 9:48 AM
To: Felix-Gerth, Annie (BWSR) <annie.felix-gerth@state.mn.us>
Cc: Herzig, Danell <Danell.Herzig@nexteraenergy.com>; Macdonald, Cody <Cody.Macdonald@nexteraenergy.com>; Mcqueen, Jake <Jake.Mcqueen@nexteraenergy.com>; Kely Wabnitz <kmertz@swca.com>; Sarah Sappington <SSappington@swca.com>
Subject: Benton Solar Energy Project, Benton County, Minnesota

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Hi Annie,

Hope all is well. Benton Solar, LLC (Benton), a wholly owned, indirect subsidiary of NextEra Energy Resources, LLC (NextEra), is writing to request your comments on the proposed Benton Solar Energy Project (Project). The Project is a 100-megawatt (MW) alternating current (AC) nameplate capacity solar energy conversion facility to be located in Benton County, Minnesota.

We appreciate and welcome any comments your agency may have regarding the Project and resources under your jurisdiction, and respectfully ask for receipt of your comments by May 10.

Thanks,
Brittney Paxson
Project Manager, Development
NextEra Energy Resources
(561) 446-3380 mobile
700 Universe Blvd.
Juno Beach, FL 33401

From: [Paxson, Brittney](#)
To: [Kotch Egstad, Stacy \(DOT\)](#)
Cc: [Herzig, Danell](#); [Macdonald, Cody](#); [Mcqueen, Jake](#); [Kely Wabnitz](#); [Sarah Sappington](#); [Peterson, Keith \(DOT\)](#)
Subject: RE: Benton Solar Energy Project, Benton County, Minnesota
Date: Friday, April 21, 2023 2:43:00 PM
Attachments: [image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)
[image006.png](#)

Thank you Stacy,

We will review and follow up with any outstanding questions.

Thanks,
Brittney Paxson
Project Manager, Development
NextEra Energy Resources
(561) 446-3380 mobile
700 Universe Blvd.
Juno Beach, FL 33401



From: Kotch Egstad, Stacy (DOT) <stacy.kotch@state.mn.us>
Sent: Tuesday, April 18, 2023 10:52 AM
To: Paxson, Brittney <Brittney.Paxson@nexteraenergy.com>
Cc: Herzig, Danell <Danell.Herzig@nexteraenergy.com>; Macdonald, Cody <Cody.Macdonald@nexteraenergy.com>; Mcqueen, Jake <Jake.Mcqueen@nexteraenergy.com>; Kely Wabnitz <kmertz@swca.com>; Sarah Sappington <SSappington@swca.com>; Peterson, Keith (DOT) <keith.peterson@state.mn.us>
Subject: RE: Benton Solar Energy Project, Benton County, Minnesota

Good Morning Brittney,

At first glance and understanding that the physical project boundary will not encompass MnDOT TH 95 right-of way, below are initial comments on the project:

1. Areas of TH 23 where MnDOT looks to have right-of-way extending into the project area will need to be cross-referenced thoroughly and adjusted as needed.
2. MnDOT OES map layer shows 1 contaminated site within and 2 additional MPCA sites at the project boundary (65th Ave north of TH 95 and 55th Ave south of TH 95). These findings will likely be covered during your work with MPCA.
3. MnDOT OES map layer shows your project boundary overlapping a Cultural Resources Unit Historically Sensitive Area (no further details can be provided). These findings will likely be covered during your work with SHPO.

4. When available, MnDOT is interested in viewing the project's collection system and associated facilities for review of their potential effects on TH 23 and TH 95.
5. Future MnDOT District 3 construction projects can be found here: [MnDOT D3 Projects](#)

Thank you for the opportunity for early review and comment on this proposed project.

Please reach out once you have more project details that may affect MnDOT rights-of-way.

Stacy Kotch Egstad

Utility Routing & Siting Coordinator | Office of Land Management

Minnesota Department of Transportation

395 John Ireland Blvd Mailstop 678

St. Paul, MN. 55155

O: 651-366-4635

mndot.gov/



From: Paxson, Brittney <Brittney.Paxson@nexteraenergy.com>

Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2023 9:43 AM

To: Kotch Egstad, Stacy (DOT) <stacy.kotch@state.mn.us>

Cc: Herzig, Danell <Danell.Herzig@nexteraenergy.com>; Macdonald, Cody <Cody.Macdonald@nexteraenergy.com>; Mcqueen, Jake <Jake.Mcqueen@nexteraenergy.com>; Kely Wabnitz <kmertz@swca.com>; Sarah Sappington <SSappington@swca.com>

Subject: Benton Solar Energy Project, Benton County, Minnesota

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Hi Stacy,

Hope all is well. Benton Solar, LLC (Benton), a wholly owned, indirect subsidiary of NextEra Energy Resources, LLC (NextEra), is writing to request your comments on the proposed Benton Solar Energy Project (Project). The Project is a 100-megawatt (MW) alternating current (AC) nameplate capacity solar energy conversion facility to be located in Benton County, Minnesota.

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Thanks,

Brittney Paxson
Project Manager, Development
NextEra Energy Resources
(561) 446-3380 mobile
700 Universe Blvd.
Juno Beach, FL 33401

