

LAKE WILSON SOLAR ENERGY LLC

MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

MPUC DOCKET NO. IP-7070/GS-21-792
MPUC DOCKET NO. IP-7070/CN-21-791
OAH DOCKET NO. 5-2500-39336

DIRECT TESTIMONY OF KOREDE OLAGBEGI

November 14, 2023

1 **I. INTRODUCTION AND QUALIFICATIONS**

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

3 A. My name is Korede Olagbegi. I am an Associate of Renewable Development,
4 with Invenergy LLC. My business address is One South Wacker Drive, Suite
5 1800 Chicago, IL 60606.

6 **Q. Please briefly describe your educational and professional background and**
7 **experience.**

8 A. I hold a bachelor's degree in Geology from The College of William and Mary, and
9 a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering from Columbia University. At
10 Invenergy, I take on the responsibility of leading the development of utility-scale
11 solar, wind and battery storage projects at various stages from inception to the
12 start of construction. In part, my work includes overseeing land acquisition
13 efforts, permitting, stakeholder and landowner relations, and working with
14 interdisciplinary teams and contractors as needed for project development, such
15 as environmental, engineering, legal, real estate, finance, and more. Prior to
16 Invenergy, I worked at the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) as an
17 engineer. My work at FERC, in part, included writing comprehensive reports
18 analyzing the economic, environmental, and cultural impacts of hydropower
19 projects, and performing environmental inspections of hydropower projects. I also
20 led coordination efforts with other federal agencies, managed compliance with
21 the Federal Power Act, and engaged in conversation with diverse stakeholders.

22 **Q. What is Invenergy's relationship to the proposed Lake Wilson Solar Energy**
23 **Center?**

1 A. Invenergy is the owner of Lake Wilson Solar Energy LLC and provides
2 development services for the project on behalf of Lake Wilson Solar Energy LLC
3 (Lake Wilson Solar).

4 **Q. What is your role with respect to the proposed Lake Wilson Solar Energy**
5 **Center?**

6 A. My role is to work towards the development of the proposed Lake Wilson Solar
7 Energy Center, performing much of the tasks I previously mentioned.

8 **Q. What schedules are attached to your Direct Testimony?**

9 A. My Statement of Qualifications is attached as **Schedule A** to my Direct Testimony.

10 II. OVERVIEW

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

12 A. The purpose of my testimony is to: (1) provide an overview of the Lake Wilson
13 Solar Center, a proposed combined solar energy generation and battery storage
14 facility (Project), including the layout and facility design, site selection, and
15 description of the proposed battery storage system; (2) provide updates to Lake
16 Wilson Solar's Site Permit Application (Application) filed on February 9, 2023; (3)
17 provide Lake Wilson Solar's comments on the Environmental Assessment (EA)
18 prepared by the Department of Commerce, Energy Environmental Review and
19 Analysis (DOC-EERA) for the Project; (4) provide Lake Wilson Solar's comments
20 on the Draft Site Permit (DSP); (5) provide an update on landowner outreach; and
21 (6) provide Lake Wilson Solar's response to the comments from the Minnesota
22 Department of Transportation (MnDOT) and the Minnesota Department of Natural
23 Resources (MDNR) filed during the comment period issued by the Minnesota

Public Utilities Commission (Commission) and the Minnesota Department of Commerce (DOC) on April 24, 2023, in the Notice of Public Information and EA Scoping Meeting.

III. UPDATES TO APPLICATION

Q. Have there been any updates to the Application?

A. Yes. Lake Wilson Solar has two main updates to the Application. First, we would like to amend the Project schedule provided in Section 1.3 of the Application. We now expect construction to commence in 2025, with commercial operations beginning by December 31 2027.

Second, we would like to amend the estimated temporary laydown area mentioned in Section 3.2.2 and 3.3.1 of the Application were we state the following:

“Temporary staging/laydown areas are currently proposed to be approximately 3-10 acres each and located in the eastern and central portions of the Project Area. Any additional temporary laydown yards that may be used during construction would be located within the fenced array areas.”

We now expect that there will be approximately five to ten laydown areas throughout the Project area. The size of the main laydown yard would be up to 15 acres and the other smaller staging areas spread out through the Project area would range from approximately 1-5 acres in size. This change comes after a discussion with our project managers who, after recent experiences constructing other solar projects, are concerned about the congestion of the space within the

1 laydown areas and the storing of materials on vegetation instead of in a laydown
2 area.

3 IV. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

4 **Q. Please provide a summary of the Project, including the proposed location**
5 **and proposed site.**

6 A. The Project is being proposed by Lake Wilson Solar in Leeds Township, Murray
7 County, Minnesota. The Project includes:

- 8 • Constructing and operating an up to 150-megawatt (MW) solar
9 energy generating facility (Solar Facility), and
- 10 • Installing a substation facility, an electrical collection system,
11 weather stations, an up to 95 MW battery energy storage system
12 (BESS), and a short 115-kilovolt (kV) overhead transmission line.

13 **Q. Why has Lake Wilson Solar proposed the Project?**

14 A. The Project will provide up to 150 MW of renewable power capacity and generate
15 approximately 332,800 megawatt hours (MWh) of renewable energy in its first
16 year of operation. Accounting for module degradation and averaging generation
17 over the anticipated life of the Project (35 years), the Project will generate an
18 average of approximately 313,000 MWh annually. Taking the average
19 generation, the Project will provide enough energy to power approximately
20 28,000 homes annually and prevent approximately 244,500 short tons of carbon
21 dioxide equivalent annually.¹ Additionally, the Project is designed to provide up

¹ This is based upon the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Greenhouse Gas Equivalencies Calculator and 313,000,000 kWh (313,000 MWhs) annual production PVsyst model.

1 to 95 MW of energy storage capacity through a BESS. The BESS component is
2 in part designed to reduce costs for interconnection customers and improve
3 wholesale market competition, allowing Lake Wilson Solar to create additional
4 energy and capacity value by maximizing the use of interconnection facilities and
5 network upgrades necessary to accommodate the solar generation component of
6 the Project. Additional detail is provided in Section 1.1 of the Project's
7 Application.

8 **Q. How much will the Project cost?**

9 A. The total installed capital cost for the entire Project will be approximately \$450 to
10 \$500 million.

11 **V. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (EA)**

12 **Q. Have you reviewed the EA prepared by DOC-EERA for the Project?**

13 A. Yes. DOC-EERA filed the EA on October 18, 2023. Included with the EA was a
14 DSP prepared by DOC-EERA. I have reviewed both the EA and the DSP.

15 **Q. Do you have any comments on the EA?**

16 A. Yes. The EA does not mention any aboveground cables and Lake Wilson Solar
17 would like to clarify that there will be two types of cabling, alternate-current (AC)
18 and direct-current (DC). Most of the cabling on site will be AC cables which will
19 be underground. However, the DC cables, which only run between blocks of
20 arrays and the Project inverters, may be underground or underhung beneath the
21 arrays depending on final design choice. As a general matter, electricity is
22 converted from DC to AC at the inverters, and then routed from there to the
23 substation via underground AC cabling. Section 3.1 of the Application provides a

1 clearer picture in this excerpt: "Solar energy generation begins with the installed
2 solar modules converting energy from sunlight into DC electrical power. Power
3 blocks of tracker rows are electrically connected in series by DC cabling, which
4 terminate at an inverter. Inverters convert the DC power from the modules to
5 34.5 kV AC power. AC electrical collection cables connect the inverters to the
6 Project Substation where the power is then stepped-up by one or more main
7 power transformers (MPT) from 34.5 kV to 115 kV, which is equal to the voltage
8 of the existing transmission infrastructure associated with the Xcel Energy
9 Fenton - Chanarambie 115 kV HVTL."

10 **Q. Do you have any comments on the DSP filed by DOC-EERA?**

11 A. Yes. We note that the DSP filed by DOC-EERA is largely consistent with the
12 sample site permit filed by the Commission in this docket on October 2, 2023,
13 with a few exceptions. We would like the DSP to include the following language
14 under the "Designated Site" heading in Section 3:

15 "The site maps show the Project Boundary and the approximate location of
16 the solar energy generating system and associated facilities within the
17 Project Boundary. The Commission sought to locate the solar energy
18 generating system and associated facilities in a way that minimizes the
19 overall potential human and environmental impacts of the Project, which
20 were evaluated in the permitting process. The Project Boundary serves to
21 provide the Permittee with the flexibility to make minor adjustments to the
22 layout to accommodate requests by landowners, local government units,
23 federal and state agency requirements, and unforeseen conditions

1 encountered during the detailed engineering and design process. The
2 Permittee shall make any modification to the location of the solar energy
3 generating system or associated facilities in such a manner to have
4 comparable overall human and environmental impacts and shall specifically
5 identify them in the site plan pursuant to Section 8.3.”

6 We believe that this language is largely consistent with the “Designated Site”
7 sections in recently issued site permits for solar projects in Minnesota. We also
8 think that the inclusion of this language would provide support for both maintaining
9 the Project Boundary as determined through the permitting process and allowing
10 Lake Wilson Solar the flexibility to make small adjustments when needed.

11 **Q. Do you have further comments on the EA, including the DSP?**

12 A. No, not at this time.

13 VI. RESPONSE TO MDNR’s COMMENTS

14 **Q. Have you reviewed the comments submitted by the MDNR on May 25,**
15 **2023?**

16 A. Yes, and I have several responses to the MDNR’s comments.

17 **Q. Can you address MDNR’s comments on adequate buffer and erosion**
18 **control in the Project area bordering an unnamed stream between?**

19 A. Yes. Lake Wilson Solar will ensure adequate buffer and erosion control are
20 maintained in accordance with Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA)
21 guidelines during Project construction and operation. As stated in Section 3.3.3 of
22 the Application, any disturbed areas not containing permanent facilities will be
23 stabilized with erosion control measures, such as silt fence, sediment control logs,

temporary seeding, and mulching as needed, until permanent vegetation has been established.

Q. Will the Project's security fencing be designed in compliance with the MDNR's Commercial Solar Siting Guidance?

A. Based on our review of MDNR's Commercial Solar Siting Guidance, we believe that the Project's proposed security fencing design is in line with the design considerations specified in the guidance.

Q. How will Lake Wilson Solar address impacts related to illuminated facilities?

A. Lake Wilson Solar will avoid or minimize impacts related to the Project's illuminated facilities by using shielded and downward facing lighting and lighting that minimizes blue hue.

Q. Can you elaborate on Lake Wilson Solar's plan for dust control during the Project's construction and operation?

A. Yes. Lake Wilson Solar will use best management practices to minimize dust emissions. Some of those practices may include watering or treating haul and access roads and other exposed dust producing areas, containment of excavated material, protection of exposed soil, soil stabilization, and treating stockpiles to control fugitive dust. Lake Wilson Solar will avoid the use of dust control products containing chlorides.

Q. Can you address MDNR's comments on wildlife-friendly erosion control?

1 A. Yes. Lake Wilson Solar will not use products containing plastic mesh netting or
2 other plastic components and will limit its erosion control blankets to the “bio-
3 netting” or “natural netting” types.

4 VII. RESPONSE TO MNDOT COMMENTS

5 **Q. Have you reviewed the comments submitted by the MnDOT on May 25, 2023?**

6 A. Yes, and I have several responses to the MnDOT’s comments.

7 **Q. Can you address MnDOT’s comments on the mitigation of soil impacts and**
8 **erosion control and the location of stormwater runoff ponds?**

9 A. Yes. Lake Wilson Solar will ensure that there are measures in place to mitigate
10 soil impacts, control erosion, and prevent stormwater runoff ponds from impacting
11 existing land and infrastructure around the Project area. As stated in Section
12 4.5.2.2 of the Site Permit Application, Lake Wilson Solar will develop an MPCA-
13 approved Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan for the Project prior to construction
14 that will include best management practices such as silt fencing (or other erosion
15 control devices), revegetation plans, and management of exposed soils to prevent
16 erosion. Additionally, the Project design will include the installation of stormwater
17 runoff ponds in accordance with MPCA regulations to collect and treat runoff from
18 the Project during its operation.

19 **Q. Can you respond to MnDOT’s suggestion that a MnDOT District Hydraulics**
20 **Engineer may need to review the Project to determine if a drainage permit**
21 **is needed for the Project?**

22 A. Yes. Lake Wilson Solar appreciates the suggestion from the MnDOT. Lake Wilson
23 Solar is willing to conduct stormwater runoff calculations and present that

1 information to MnDOT to show the Project would not increase runoff to the trunk
2 highway right of way for MnDOT trunk highway 30.

3 **Q. What is your response to MnDOT's suggestion that Lake Wilson Solar**
4 **obtain Oversize/Overweight (OSOW) permits?**

5 A. Lake Wilson Solar will seek OSOW permits as needed for the Project.

6 **Q. What is your response to MnDOT's suggestion that Lake Wilson Solar**
7 **coordinate with MnDOT when planning to haul oversize loads?**

8 A. Lake Wilson Solar will coordinate with MnDOT when planning to haul oversize
9 loads.

10 **VIII. LANDOWNER OUTREACH**

11 **Q. Have you had any interactions with landowners around or adjacent to the**
12 **Project?**

13 A. Yes. We have held meetings with non-participating landowners to address their
14 concerns. As a result of those meetings, additional landowners have agreed to be
15 part of the Project, but none will be hosting the Project's solar facilities because
16 their land is located outside of the Project area portrayed in the Site Permit
17 Application.

18 **Q. Did you receive a letter from Michael Ackerman?**

19 A. Yes.

20 **Q. What did you do about the letter Mr. Ackerman sent you?**

21 A. We set up a meeting with Mr. Ackerman on Thursday November 2, 2023, in
22 Slayton, Minnesota and ensured that there was an interpreter present to help
23 translate. At the meeting we addressed Mr. Ackerman's concerns regarding the

1 positioning of the solar panels near his property, the delineation of his property
2 line, Project fencing location, and the location of the Project's BESS. At the
3 meeting, Mr. Ackerman communicated his interest in signing a Project participation
4 agreement. We intend to follow up and finalize that agreement with him in the near
5 future.

6 IX. CONCLUSION

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

8 **A. Yes.**

Korede Olagbegi

kolagbegi@invenergy.com • 708-377-9803
 Invenergy LLC, 1 S Wacker Dr., Suite 1800, Chicago, IL, 60606

EDUCATION

Columbia University

B.S. in Chemical Engineering
 Via Dual Bachelor of Science Degree Program

New York, NY

The College of William & Mary

B.S. in Geology

Williamsburg, VA

EXPERIENCE

Invenergy LLC, Renewable Development

Project Developer

Chicago, IL

June 2022 – Present

- Spearhead cross-functional teams to draft a site permit application for a utility-scale solar and associated battery storage project at the state level in Minnesota.
- Oversaw the strategic land campaigns for an up to 300MW solar project and a 200MW wind project; made significant contributions to land campaigns of two additional utility-scale projects.
- Deliver presentations to landowners, the general public, and local/state governmental bodies at various stages of solar and wind projects. Effectively communicate project goals, benefits, and environmental impacts, fostering community engagement and support.
- Provide key financial & project related inputs for Request for Proposals (RFPs) for prospective off-takers.
- Oversee multiple projects simultaneously, prioritizing tasks and managing project scopes, budgets, and schedules.

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), Office of Energy Projects

Engineer—Division of Hydropower Administration & Compliance (DHAC)

Washington, D.C

June 2018 – May 2022

- Individually and collaboratively, as team lead or support, wrote reports analyzing the economics, and the environmental and cultural/historic effects of hydropower projects in relation to project construction, modification, operation, and maintenance, to achieve FERC's mission of providing safe, reliable, secure, and efficient energy.
- Assisted in performing on-site environmental inspections of hydropower projects.
- Oversaw the Division's federal power site land coordination program with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) — enabled the review and preparation of responses to the BLM for 100+ land use proposals.
- Utilized ArcGIS to georeference and review hydropower project site plans and power site land withdrawals.
- Facilitated conversations with third parties to create trust & understanding of FERC activities; provided solutions to project owners endeavoring to maintain regulatory compliance, and took on mentorship roles.

FERC, Office of Energy Projects

Intern— DHAC

Washington, D.C

May – August 2017

- Optimized compliance reporting by reviewing 1800+ deviation reports; made recommendations on how to reduce the reporting burden for both staff and project owners; Presented results to Senior Executive Service (SES) staff.

The College of William & Mary

Undergraduate Researcher (Geochemistry & Geomorphology)

Williamsburg, VA

- Examined sediment transport through the use of radionuclides to trace erosion across asymmetric hillslopes.
- Created and analyzed solar radiation maps using GIS; collected, prepared, and analyzed 100+ soil samples.

HONORS

- FERC Quality Service Award (2019, 2021) – “in recognition of quality service in the public interest”
- Columbia University Dean's list (x2); William & Mary Dean's list (x2); William & Mary Provost Award (x2)