

**Community Partnership for Energy Planning**

# **Utility Search Conference<sup>SM</sup>**

## **Executive Summary**

**Airport Hotel Marriott  
Tampa, Florida  
November 28-29, 2007**

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## **Preface**

Progress Energy Florida (PEF) hired STAR Group, LLC (STAR Group) to design and facilitate a local community public involvement process in connection with the potential transmission investment in a ten county region in Florida. This local community process is part of a statewide outreach effort by Progress Energy to inform the public and obtain input on the possible construction of new transmission infrastructure to support continued growth in Florida.

Working with PEF, STAR Group identified and convened a Leadership Team made up of local leaders in the counties of Hillsborough, Pinellas, Pasco and Polk counties to direct the planning for a Utility Search Conference – a two-day conference to discuss transmission and related issues of importance to PEF and its stakeholders. The Leadership Team determined the Focus Question for the conference, identified key stakeholder groups, determined the criteria for participant selection and selected the conference participants. In addition, members of the Leadership Team served on the Background Report Committee, overseeing the development of a Background Report on the Community Partnership for Energy Planning.

UtiliPoint International (UtiliPoint), an independent engineering firm, was hired to prepare the Background Report. UtiliPoint prepared the Background Report by compiling and analyzing information supplied to it by Progress Energy and reviewed by members of the Background Report Committee. The report was mailed to conference participants prior to the conference.

The Community Partnership for Energy Planning Utility Search Conference was held at the Airport Hotel Marriott in Tampa, Florida on November 28-29, 2007. Forty-seven community leaders committed to attend the two-day conference. They were selected from a list of over 80 nominees. Conference attendees represented government officials, local businesses, large energy users, environmental and alternative energy advocates, civic organizations, public and private land use planners, large landowners and utilities. Several observers attended, but did not participate in, the conference.

This Proceedings document contains a record of the issues discussed and the recommendations developed by the conference participants.

## **Focus Question**

The focus statement and question below were developed by the Leadership Team as a reference point to guide the discussions held during the two-day conference.

*“Progress Energy Florida is considering construction of new, and expansion of existing, transmission facilities in several counties. The goal is to ensure the continued reliable delivery of needed electricity. Transmission facilities are planned from a proposed power plant in Levy County to the Tarpon Springs area, from Tarpon Springs to Kathleen in Polk County and from Levy County to Leesburg. These proposed transmission facilities could affect the counties of Citrus, Lake, Levy, Marion, Hernando, Hillsborough, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk, and Sumter.*

*What would be the most cost-effective, most efficient routes with minimal impacts for these new transmission facilities?”*

## **Most Probable Future**

In the absence of collaboration and quality recommendations from the community regarding utility infrastructure, what will our community look like in 10 years?

### **Most Probable Future Statement**

Our communities will experience higher energy costs, inefficient delivery system and declining quality of life.

## **Most Desirable Future**

What will our community look like in 10 years if we are able to collaborate and provide quality recommendations to Progress Energy Florida regarding utility infrastructure?

### **Most Desirable Future Statement**

Effectively utilize all resources to achieve compact mixed-use clustered development with open space and connected systems of conservation lands and working agriculture. Create a regional culture of collaboration for infrastructure development including shared linear corridors (electric, water, roads, etc.) leading to more aesthetic communities and cost efficient projects satisfying increasing customer demands through alternate energy technologies, incentives, conservation and customer education resulting in predictable costs and clean green communities that attract great jobs and families.

## **Barriers**

What barriers will prevent us from achieving our most desirable future?

### **Consolidated Barrier List**

- Costs – finite funding – cost escalation
- Public apathy
- NIMBY
- Lack of synchronized vision and plans and conflicting agency missions
- Lack of intergovernmental cooperation
- Conflicting regulations
- Eminent domain issues (condemnation)
- Politics at all levels
- Permitting process
- Bureaucracy at all levels
  - Conflicting interest are embedded in all barriers

## Criteria

What criteria would you use to site new utility infrastructure?

### Consolidated Criteria

What are the top criteria you would use in siting new utility infrastructure?

- Co-location w/ other present and future parallel infrastructure
- Costs: LLC, Alternatives, land availability, distance, who pays
- Compatibility w/ existing and future growth plans and visions (hard and green infrastructure)
- Coordinate planning, regulatory agency and public participation
- Avoid environmentally sensitive areas
- Safety
- Meet customer demand
- Easily approved

### Progress Energy Criteria

- Community/Public Input
- Land Use/Real Estate  
Examples: residences, major developments, schools, conservation lands and parks, existing linear facilities, Native American reservations, industrial and extractive land uses
- Environmental/Archaeological and Historical Considerations  
Examples: Protected species, eagle nests, wetland area, 100-year flood plain, archaeological resource sites, historical resource sites, visual impact
- Safety/Reliability  
Examples: Safety conditions under construction, maintenance and operation, adequate supply to meet various demand conditions
- Cost/Economics  
Examples: costs, constructability

## Corridor Opportunity Recommendations

Participants were presented with several maps identifying possible corridor opportunities for new transmission lines and were asked to identify (a) where were the identified corridors consistent with the community's articulated criteria (see above), (b) where were the identified corridors inconsistent with the community's articulated criteria, and (c) what additional information should PEF consider relative to the identified corridors.

The information presented below represents the report out given by each of the small break-out groups and corresponds with each group's set of maps.

### **Group 1**

- 1.) Compatible to Hudson Ave
- 2.) Compatible to SR 52 (route 2)
- 3.) Not compatible
- 4.) *This point unintentionally omitted*
- 5.) *This point unintentionally omitted*
- 6.) This area is set aside as preserve to offset impacts of Suncoast Parkway, concern that if incremental area needed to be added it may not be possible.
- 7.) Compatible
- 8.) Critical wildlife areas  
Along SR 54 is not compatible because of the development occurring there
- 9.) Compatible
- 10.) Additional ROW on eastern side, if could take additional ROW on Hillsborough side to stay out of environmental lands and Hillsborough is considering buying environmental lands. A good solution is if ROW is expanded to include a road to the ELAP area would create an alternate route to the ELAP which would solve a community traffic concern with new ELAP.
- 12.) is compatible all the way through Kathleen (Southern route probably best way to go).
- 13.) 301 is scheduled to be widen so not sure if this an opportunity
14. and 15.) Not compatible – wetlands, seems cost-prohibitive

### **Group 6**

Are EMFs an issue in existing corridor that has existing 500/230kV if another 500kV is added? Spring Hill dense, Starkey land is disturbed land but well protected. Start on western path, cross to center path and take to Tarpon - preferred because it has minimum impact, already disturbed land. The southern path is a no brainer from Tarpon to Kathleen. Wouldn't have to buy land, can

rebuild existing ROW. Should not look at Suncoast Parkway because of existing legislation.

## **Group 2**

Most prefer center route for all the same reasons Group 6 mentioned. Western route has too much residential. The Suncoast has too many conflicts at Southern End there is a landowner (Dr. Blanco) and should expect a lot of legal resistance. One group member disagreed – thinks Suncoast can be used (see “Minority Opinion” below) SR 54 would be difficult to get new ROW. Doing a town center, Starkeys are planning development; believe rebuilding existing line would have least impact.

Challenge in Hillsborough is communities have developed plans and zoning restrictions – Keystone, Lutz, etc. New Tampa adopted a visionary plan and Plant City is in process of adopting a plan in NE quadrant. Caution – existing corridor does cross all these issues. TECO problem in Egypt Lake is going to make Hillsborough very sensitive. Found a potential alternative (labeled as “K”) that could minimize community resistance. “K” does have some existing residential communities. Also SR54 segment is one of the worst traffic and looking at improving. “K” existing 115kV – if converted would require substation rebuilds and interaction with other utilities. It’s even difficult to get addition ROW for road improvement.

Minority Opinion: Corridor diversity is important for reliability and flexibility down the road. If transmission was DC (rather than AC) would need less ROW. On east side of Suncoast can put trails and ultimately rail. Want to get south of SR54 and then get back up to Tarpon. And then go along SR54 and SR56, avoid sensitive land and headwaters.

## **Group 3**

Consensus southern route is best (for reasons already expressed). West route to Tarpon – a lot of development, while there is an existing ROW a rebuild would require “heavy coordination” - cost/political just seems too high – many retirees. The eastern route is along Suncoast. Center path – if corridor can be redesigned to stay largely within the existing corridor that would be ideal (replace lattice with monopoles). SR54 because of designs on the area, and environmental areas - each infrastructure issue is individual ROW which can create 1000 foot ROW; caveat is it is possible to develop if there’s good coordination between PEF, county, water board, all utility providers in area.

Starkey's sold much of land, left with 2500 acres, to west Long Leaf (traditional neighborhood development), 1000 acres being developed – traditional, also going to put in conservation, along SR54 putting town center, corridor is fairly wide because existing water, road, etc. Quite a bit of design in that SR54 area. The potential impact – If line on North side, there's the Tampa Bay Water Line, on south side there is physical space available but could impact future traffic plans.

## **Group 5**

Lattice tower – remove and replace with monopole

First started looking at East-West route. Examined existing 69kV – Has it been considered? Starts somewhere around Cabbage Hill substation. Southern most route seems most desirable because of existing ROW.

Segments along SR41 and 75 – dense urban environment in spots

SR 54 – development plans seem a challenge.

500 kV circuit – Western most route goes through highest density so likely most expensive. The existing 290ft ROW seems very desirable (center route) despite environmental considerations. Eastern most route along Suncoast seems positive but environmental concerns and then would need to have to go through urban area around SR54.

Most desirable route would be 11 to 2. [Note: these are number designations for "dots" put on maps]

Question: Is there any ability to rebuild the existing 500kV/230kV (North-South)? PEF Response: Are looking at it but studies are not completed yet. One issue is meeting EMF standards, may require widening corridor.

Question: TECO relationship – Would TECO be willing to have you rebuild their poles ("H" frame) East-West? PEF Response: Would need to look into.

Question: Can you put towers over existing gas line? PEF Response: Can put it parallel but not likely directly over.

## **Additional Recommendations**

What else would you recommend Progress Energy do to assist the community in achieving the Most Desirable Future?

- Coordination among State, regional, and local → state agencies, PEF and utilities (present and future)
- Promote/encourage new technologies, smart growth design (energy efficiency), DRI design, county building and energy codes (insist they be incorporated into new facilities)
- Greater PEF Participation in growth management planning
  - Communications (EMF, Lake Egypt)
  - PEF use its talents to take the lead with other corridor agencies to produce bolder, long-term solutions to co-location, designs, etc. and apply to this project ASAP.
- While PEF has people and programs for working with local governments and agencies, the visibility in our communities is short of the need. Include more in depth discussions with large landowners – well in advance.
- Cost effective measures (Life Cycle Costs)
- Improve hardware design to enhance aesthetics and wildlife protection and allow for uses in ROW
- Low impact construction techniques - an enhanced ROW habitat
- Increase focus on energy conservation/efficiency (all levels), i.e. change building codes
  - Encourage distributed generation
  - Assistance with conservation and energy efficiency
- Roll out with other WCF utilities on a consistent, comprehensive green program and sell it aggressively
- Early and full disclosure of the specifics of the 3 alternative corridors and identified concerns by corridor
- Increase PEF visibility in our community with local governments and agencies

## **Remarks by Dale Oliver**

### **Vice President of Transmission, Progress Energy Florida**

Dale is responsible for transmission operations and planning in Florida. A 10-minute break was taken so that Dale could confer with others about the recommendations.

Dale extended his thanks to everyone for participating in the process. This was an opportunity for PEF to listen to your concerns as we take this project forward. As you have probably seen this project and process is something of a magnitude probably no utility has undertaken it the past 20 years.

The project is a massive undertaking. What's important to Progress Energy is gaining a better understanding of what is important to you. For example, we are pursuing energy efficiency ([www.savethewatts.com](http://www.savethewatts.com)), and renewable energy, and investment in existing/new plants).

#### **Communication/Collaboration/Coordination/Cooperation**

We certainly can improve. We haven't taken on a project of this magnitude, so we are getting back into this type of effort and the Utility Search Conference is just one example of how we intend to improve our activities in this area.

**State/regional/local coordination** – PEF needs to do more in the planning areas. It is very difficult to get all utilities in the same room to get them to agree. But if we do understand what groups we need to be a part of we will work to be part of those groups.

**Statewide Plan:** Florida Reliability Coordinating Council (FRCC) – We do joint transmission studies. The federal government is also getting involved in how joint costs are divided. This can certainly be improved, and there is much activity going on to do just that.

**Energy Codes** – PEF has been involved at state level but has not been as involved at the local level. I'm hearing we need to get more involved at the local level and will need to get to the right people in PEF and get back with a response. Input was provided from the USC participants that if PEF could even be an information resource that would be very helpful and Dale responded that is a role PEF can certainly perform.

**Growth Management Planning** – There are so many groups around the state looking at this. Much of the discussion has been mostly about water, land use and transportation, but is now moving to utilities and is something PEF needs to be more of a participant in.

**Cost Effective Measures and Life Cycle Costs** – WE plan to use existing corridors where possible and improved designs (monopoles). I think you will see designs that have much less aesthetic impacts. We also do not use wood poles any longer for these reasons – they don't stand up to high wind forces and have higher maintenance costs. In distribution we are now undergrounding many of new installations (around 80 percent). But with high voltage underground there just isn't much experience because it is so rarely used. And there are tradeoffs – overhead has more frequent outages but short durations and underground has fewer outages but much longer in duration. Technology is improving however, and we are staying on top of developments in this area.

**Distributed generation** – It is an emerging technology and as it improves we could see neighborhoods wanting their own power. Publix's is one we are working with on standby generation. We need to continue to work on.

**Aesthetics** – We are going to do everything possible such as monopoles, using existing ROW, and compact designs.

**Wildlife Protection** – We do work with wildlife entities (Wild Turkey Federation, as an example) to create habitats, put in nesting, etc.

**Multiple Use on ROW** – Trails have been used in the past. We are working with state to open up trails where lines cross state lands.

**Energy Efficiency/conservation** – Go to Save the Watts website where you will find multiple programs to enhance efficiency in homes. PEF has gone into low income areas and done blanket energy efficiency audits on hundreds of homes. Conservation is interesting because it can involve changing our habits. Homes today are 25 percent larger and using much more energy (plasma TV's, computers). We are trying to change culture, not easy to do. Uphill effort but willing to continue doing many things.

**Rollout with West Coast Florida utilities on energy efficiency/conservation** – The reality is we are regulated by the Public Service Commission (PSC). The programs for investor owned utilities are not identical, but similar. But for other entities such as Withlacoochee, municipals do not fall under PSC so they can do what they want. We, however, all look at what each other is doing, but I doubt there will ever be identical programs used by all utilities because of the regulatory structure. Just not likely to see one "Save the

Watts" program for all. There is a meeting today where all four IOU's are getting together today to discuss their programs to share best practices. PEF is being very aggressive. We ran a broad TV and bill stuffer campaign earlier this year, and we are seeing people taking advantage of the offering, so programs subscriptions are increasing. It is important to us to continue to get the message out there.

**Early and full disclosure of corridor** – The process is different here than what we will be using in Community Working Group (CWG) and public meetings. Those meetings will be much more focused on the corridor issues.

**Increase PEF visibility in Communities** – A "must do" and even more critical in areas where PEF is not the service provider. I think you will see us more involved in your communities.

Question: Are you going to bring three groups together?

PEF Response: We have discussed doing this and may get CWG groups together periodically to share information.

Thank you again for your participation. This is something we haven't done in 20 years and is a mammoth undertaking for PEF. We recognize your time is valuable and we will take these recommendations forward for further consideration.

## **Regulatory Agencies**

The USC participants requested that more information on the key regulatory processes and agencies involved in approving a new power plant and associated facilities, such as transmission.

At the state level, the process is governed in large part by the **Power Plant Siting Act** (PPSA), ss. 403.501-.518, F.S., which is the State's process for the licensing of large power plants (see [http://www.dep.state.fl.us/siting/Programs/Power\\_Plant\\_Siting\\_Overview.htm#GenInfo](http://www.dep.state.fl.us/siting/Programs/Power_Plant_Siting_Overview.htm#GenInfo) for more information). The PPSA was "designed to provide a streamlined process for the development of energy infrastructure, which is necessary for the health, welfare, and protection of the citizens of the state, while protecting the public and the environment from the impacts of the infrastructure".

A new nuclear plant and associated facilities must also undergo a federal review under a process known as the Combined License (COL) Application (see <http://www.nrc.gov/reactors/new-licensing/col-appl-guide.html> for more information).

While there are numerous agencies involved in the process of permitting and approving a new power plant and associated transmission, there are three agencies that must approve the need or design of the project:

**Florida Public Service Commission (<http://www.psc.state.fl.us/>):** The PSC has regulatory authority over the state's 5 investor-owned electric utilities (including Progress Energy); 7 investor-owned natural gas utilities; and more than 180 investor-owned water and wastewater utilities in 36 counties. A proposed power plant in Florida must obtain a "Need Determination", which is a formal process required under s. 403.519, F.S., and is conducted by the Public Service Commission (PSC). The PSC reviews the need for the generation capacity which would be produced by the proposed facility in relation to the needs of the region, and to the state as a whole. An applicant is required to have an affirmative determination of need from the PSC in order to obtain a certification for the new power plant.

**Florida Department of Environmental Protection and the Florida Siting Board ([http://www.dep.state.fl.us/mainpage/about/about\\_dep.htm](http://www.dep.state.fl.us/mainpage/about/about_dep.htm)):** The DEP protects, conserves and manages Florida's natural resources and enforces the State's environmental laws. A new power plant certification is issued by either the Siting Board (Governor & Cabinet), or, under a revised law, by the Secretary of DEP on behalf of the Siting Board in a non-contested case. In either instance, DEP is the lead agency for coordination of the siting process,

and has its own jurisdiction for many of the activities which the certification is in lieu of, just like any other agency. The DEP provides a flow chart of the certification process at

[http://www.dep.state.fl.us/siting/Programs/Flow\\_Charts/PPSA-Flowchart--shows%20incompleteness-FedPermits.pdf](http://www.dep.state.fl.us/siting/Programs/Flow_Charts/PPSA-Flowchart--shows%20incompleteness-FedPermits.pdf).

**Federal Nuclear Regulatory Commission** (<http://www.nrc.gov/reactors/new-reactor-licensing.html>): The COL application is filed with the NRC, which regulates the construction and operation of new commercial nuclear power facilities. The NRC is responsible for issuing standard design certifications, early site permits, construction permits, operating licenses, and combined licenses for commercial nuclear power facilities.

## **APPENDIX A - USC Participants**

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## **APPENDIX B - Background Report Advisors**

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## **APPENDIX C - Leadership Team**

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