

Morrow County's new wind farm owner featured in Wall Street Journal article

Company grew from small Florida utility to world's largest operator of wind and solar farms



NextEra Energy is seeking to become large windfarm operator here.

By David Sykes

Editor's note: Florida-based company NextEra Energy has been approved to build a new 292-tower wind farm straddling both Morrow and Umatilla counties. It was recently featured in an extensive Wall Street Journal article June 19. Following is a report on the article detailing the history and operation of Morrow County's newest corporate investor.

Billed as both the world's largest operator of wind and solar farms and also America's most valuable power company (market capitalization of \$74 billion) NextEra traces its roots back to a small Florida electrical utility. Created in 1925 the company originally owned power plants, water facilities, gas plants, ice companies, laundry services and even an ice cream business in Florida. Now it is a Fortune 200 company with over 45,000 megawatts of generating capacity, revenues of over \$17 billion per year and about 14,000 employees throughout the U.S. and Canada.

According to the WSJ, despite the company's focus on green energy development, it has deliberately tried to operate "under the radar" and out of the public eye when it comes to the "altruistic motives" of the renewable business. Instead the company has worked hard to maintain strict business and financial guidelines and grow a profitable and successful company.

NextEra has also learned how to use government subsidies and tax breaks to build a successful renewable energy business model. The U.S. government expects power companies to generate \$4.8 billion in renewable-energy tax credits this year, and

NextEra will be the largest beneficiary of them. It has reportedly used \$401 million of these credits over the past three years to offset its own taxes and also sells its tax credits to other corporations interested in lowering their tax bills. Congress passed the production tax credit late in 1992 to benefit the wind energy.

The company faces a deadline on the wind tax credits however, since these credits will start to expire in 2020. The expiring tax cuts may be one reason NextEra has been pushing the Oregon Department of Energy recently to expedite the company's request to revise its Wheatridge construction plans in Morrow County.

NextEra last year purchased the Wheatridge wind farm project from lone farmer and wind developer Jerry Rietmann and his partners. Rietmann and his group had put the project together including leases and other ground work, selling the "ready to go" wind farm to NextEra. However, NextEra is now waiting to hear if its requested revisions on wind tower and blade height, addition of a battery storage facility and other adjustments will be approved by the state. If it looks like an extended decision on the changes could delay construction of the project past the 2020 tax credit expiration deadline, will the Wheatridge project be cancelled? That question has not been answered. Some people believe if the wind tax credits are not extended, company such as NextEra will shift their focus to solar electrical facilities, which can still benefit from the credits.

Another advantage to NextEra in its green and renewable energy business, is when states began to

mandate utilities to derive a certain percentage of their power from renewables. There are currently 29 states covering 56 percent of electricity sales that have mandates. Oregon has mandates to utilities for renewables, but for some reason hydro power from Bonneville dams is not considered a renewable energy.

Utilities across the country that face state mandates do not have the ability to build wind farms, so they request bids to purchase the power from someone else. NextEra has done many of the additions because its large purchase of turbines is able to make the best deals from manufacturers and fund projects using its cash and lines of credit to avoid financing costs. Also, to keep risks low, the company doesn't make capital outlays until they have long-term agreements to sell the output electricity of their wind farms.

NextEra has 28,000 megawatts of wind and solar projects in various states of permitting and leasing. It said it plans to expand that to 40,000 megawatts over the next two years. Last year its renewable development section generated \$2.9 billion in net income for the company.

The company still operates the Florida utility where it all began, but now receives one third of its revenue from renewable energy projects. Renewable generating has been going up across the U.S., with reportedly half the power generating capacity in the country last year coming from wind and solar, as compared to 29 percent in 2010. The company is also now expanding past just utility customers and is building wind farms and solar projects for large corporations such as Google.

ORDINANCE

-Continued from PAGE ONE

Below is a complete reading of the proposed ordinance:

SECTION 1. Definitions. The words "public parks" as used herein shall mean and include all recreational properties owned and controlled by the City of Heppner, Oregon.

SECTION 2. Rules and Regulations. For the conduct of persons using or frequenting the public parks of Heppner, Oregon, the following rules and regulations to be observed and enforced within said public parks are hereby established:

A. Fires. No person shall build any fire within public parks except in a designated stove or fire-place. However, cooking stoves may be used within public parks if used in safe operating conditions. No fire or stove shall be left unattended and every fire or stove shall be extinguished before its user leaves the park area.

B. Animals. No person shall in any manner pursue, kill, injure, hunt or molest any bird or animal within any park.

C. Dogs. No person shall permit any dog to run at large within any public park, and all dogs shall be kept in control on a leash at all times. Owners of dogs or other animals damaging or destroying park property shall be liable for the full value of the property damaged or destroyed, in addition to impounding fees and the penalty imposed for violation of this ordinance.

D. Motor Vehicles. No motor vehicle, trailers, or motorcycles shall be operated, stopped, parked or left standing any place in a public park except on public roads and designated parking areas or as otherwise approved by the City Administration.

E. Hours. No person shall use or frequent public parks between the hours of 9 p.m. and 6 a.m., except during special occasions or events as may be authorized by the City Administration.

F. Waste Materials. No person shall scatter, discard or dispose of any garbage, bottles, broken glass, tin cans, or paper, litter or waste materials within pub-

lic parks. All such material must be placed in designated receptacles. It shall be a violation of this ordinance for any person to haul household garbage, rubbish or trash to the city park and deposit the same in the park or on public property.

G. Sanitation. No person shall blow, spread or place any nasal or other bodily discharge, or urinate or defecate within parks excepting directly an appropriate public restroom facility.

H. Plants, Structures. No person shall pick, mutilate, dig or remove from a public park any plant or plants or in any way deface or mutilate, bum, destroy, defile, graffiti, or remove any railing, building, seat, fence, park facility, decorative item, any other structure or tree within a public park.

I. Signs. No person shall erect signs, markers or inscriptions of any type within the limits of a public park without a specific permission from the City Administration. Temporary signs posted no more than 24 hours are permitted.

J. Soliciting. No person while in a public park may operate a concession, either fixed or mobile, or engage in the business of soliciting, selling or peddling any liquids, or edibles for human consumption, or distribute circulars, or hawk, peddle or vend any goods, wares or merchandise, or set up or use a public-address system in a public park without a specific written permit from the City Administration.

K. Public Nuisance. No person shall use abusive, threatening, boisterous, vile, obscene or indecent language, or gestures in a public park, nor shall any person cause, attempt to cause, or bring about any public nuisance. Drunken and/or disorderly conduct shall be deemed a public nuisance and shall be cause for expulsion from the public park.

L. Public Drinking Fountains. No person shall willfully mark, scratch, disfigure, deface or in any manner injure any public drinking fountain in the city, or throw, place or deposit in any cup or basin of

same any cigar or cigarette stub, or any other matter of refuse whatever.

M. Permits Required. Permits shall be required for the assembly of persons in the city park to which the general public is invited when it is reasonably expected that such assembly will be attended by 25 or more persons. The City Council may require the person, persons, club group, organization, corporation to furnish police, fire, medical, sanitary and clean-up services. Permits shall also be required for music, art, religious and other shows and/or displays in public parks.

N. Ordinances and Statutes. All ordinances and statutes of the Federal, State, and City shall apply to and be in full force and effect within public parks.

O. Alcoholic Beverages. No person shall be visibly intoxicated within public parks.

P. Supplement Rules and Regulations. The City may supplement the above rules and regulations by resolution. Rules and regulations shall be posted at public parks.

SECTION 3. Penalties. Any violation of this ordinance is a Class C Infraction.

SECTION 4. Park Trespass. Any peace officer or City employee may exclude any person who violates any provision of this or any other applicable City ordinance, or any of the laws of the State of Oregon from any or all City parks for a period not to exceed 120 days.

(a) Written notice shall be given to any person excluded from any City parks). Such notice shall specify the dates and places of exclusion. It shall be signed by the issuing party; warning of consequences for failure to comply shall be prominently displayed on the notice.

(b) A person receiving such notice may appeal to the City Administrator to have the written notice rescinded or the period shortened. An appeal must be filed with the City Administrator within five days of receiving

OTPR to be held in August



The Oregon Trail Pro Rodeo is scheduled for Aug. 17 and 18. According to the news release new and exciting things are expected, offering non-stop excitement and entertainment. Returning to the 2018

show will be Hashbrown the clown and Dan Burns in the Spur 'Em barn. Showcased events will be the ranch rodeo scramble, last man standing bronc riding, wild horse racing, Morrow County amateur tie down

roping and open barrel racing, mutton busting and the hide race.

Additional information is available on the Oregon Trail Rodeo Facebook page. More information will soon follow.

A Whimsical night with Nathan & Justin



Free Admission
Live Music Concert & Prime Rib Dinner

Where: Gateway Café (168 Main, Heppner)

When: **July 7, 2018 @ 6 PM**

Reservation for Dinner : Voice: 541-676-6000
Text: 541-980-2014 Facebook Msg: Gateway Cafe

Seating are limited!!!
Hope to see you there!!!! **MUSIC**

DEADLINE FOR ALL NEWS AND ADS

MONDAY 5:00 PM



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