

# THE POWER SOURCE

IGNITING THE FUTURE OF FLORIDA



**June 2025**

**Sonya Montgomery**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

*The Desoto Group*

***Sonya, can you describe how Desoto Group intersects with the energy industry.***

The Desoto Group is a full-service EPC (Engineering, Procurement, and Construction) firm specializing in energy infrastructure. Since founding the company in 2010, our mission has been to design, build, and maintain transmission and distribution systems.....Read More

***As a full-service EPC firm, name one of the largest projects you have been part of and the contributions to energy delivery.***

One of our largest-and most impactful-projects was our hurricane response and power restoration work in partnership with Mississippi Power and Alabama Power Company following Hurricane Francine. In the aftermath of the storm, the Desoto Group mobilized multiple crews across the region to assess damage, replace downed lines, and rebuild critical transmission infrastructure.....Read More

***A minority-owned business founded by you, Desoto Group employs electrical linemen, gas pipefitters, and arborist across the country. What has surprised you the most about your work within the industry***

For me there are two things. One -What has surprised me most is the incredible resilience and collaborative spirit within the energy industry, especially when facing challenges like storm restoration or adapting to new energy transition solutions. Two - It's also been deeply rewarding to see the impact that a diverse.....Read More

**Included in this issue:**

**Power Profile: June 2025**  
**Sonya Montgomery**

**News From the Florida PSC**

- Approval of Duke Florida's Solar Expansion
- TECO PPA With Hillsborough County

**Talen Energy Expands Nuclear Energy Relationship with Amazon**

**Chesapeake Utilities Corporation Appoints Abhijit Bhatwadekar as CIO**

**E&Y US announces Hala Ballouz of EPE as an Entrepreneur Of The Year®**

**SouthStar Energy Services Piloting Full Supply Chain Emissions Tracking**

**50% Hydrogen Blend Testing Successfully Completed at Georgia Power's Plant McDonough-Atkinson**

**Read Full Interview**



# News From the Florida Public Service Commission

## Florida PSC Approves First Phase of Duke's Solar Expansion

"The Florida Public Service Commission (PSC) recently approved cost recovery for the first phase of Duke Energy Florida, LLC's (DEF) Solar Base Rate Adjustment (SoBRA) plan, including four projects that add approximately 300 megawatts (MW) of new solar generation. The approved solar center projects include the Sundance (74.9 MW) in Madison County, Rattler (74.9 MW) in Hernando County, Half Moon (74.9 MW) in Sumter County, and Bailey Mill (74.9 MW) in Jefferson County. Project in-service dates range from July 2025 through May 2026. The four projects are expected to provide a total benefit of \$924.4 million, including avoided costs and tax credits.

The approved annual revenue requirement for the four projects is \$73.3 million. For a residential customer using 1,000 kilowatt-hours (kWh) a month, this translates to a base rate increase of approximately \$0.47 to \$0.56 per project, partially offset by fuel savings of about \$0.17 per project due to reduced natural gas consumption. The final rate impact will be known after start of operations. [Read More](#)

## PSC Approves TECO Renewable PPA with Hillsborough County

The Florida Public Service Commission (PSC) today approved cost recovery for Tampa Electric Company's (TECO) power purchase agreement with Hillsborough County, which supports renewable energy generation and improves fuel diversity. Under the 10-year agreement, Hillsborough County may deliver up to 35 megawatts (MW) of firm capacity from its waste-to-energy facility located within the utility's service area, beginning with 16 MW in June 2025. TECO will pay a flat rate of \$37 per megawatt-hour (MWh) with no annual escalation and no separate capacity charges. The agreement is expected to save TECO customers approximately \$2.9 million.

"This power purchase agreement adds fuel diversity to Tampa Electric's energy portfolio while offering long-term savings for customers," said PSC Chairman Mike La Rosa. "It's a smart investment in renewable energy that benefits TECO's system reliability and its customers."

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## Opinion: Florida's Economy Can be Bolstered by Stronger Utility Partnerships

This summer, I'll be in Tallahassee to speak at a regulatory hearing before the Florida Public Service Commission about one of the most promising — and often overlooked — economic development opportunities in the country: data centers.

Florida stands at a pivotal moment. With the right strategy, the state could unlock a new era of growth driven by digital infrastructure. But without thoughtful collaboration between regulators, utilities, and private-sector leaders, that opportunity may pass Florida by.....[Read More](#)



# Talen Energy Expands Nuclear Energy Relationship with Amazon

**Talen enters power purchase agreement for 1,920 megawatts of carbon-free electricity at full quantity to support Amazon operations, and explore SMR technology**

Talen Energy Corporation, recently announced that it has expanded its existing nuclear energy relationship with Amazon to provide carbon-free energy from Talen’s Susquehanna nuclear power plant to Amazon Web Services (“AWS”) data centers in the region.

Under the terms of a new power purchase agreement (“PPA”), Talen will supply electricity to Amazon for operations that support AI and other cloud technologies at Amazon’s data center campus adjacent to Susquehanna, with the ability to deliver to other sites throughout Pennsylvania. Talen and Amazon will also explore building new Small Modular Reactors (“SMRs”) within Talen’s Pennsylvania footprint and pursue expanding the nuclear plant’s energy output through uprates, with the intent to add net-new energy to the PJM grid.

Under the expanded PPA, at the full contract quantity, Talen will provide Amazon with 1,920 megawatts of carbon-free nuclear power through 2042, with options to further extend its duration. The power delivery schedule will ramp over time, expecting to achieve the full volume no later than 2032, with the potential to meaningfully accelerate. This long-term transaction will significantly decrease Talen’s market risk and minimize its reliance on the Federal nuclear production tax credit.

*“Our agreement with Amazon is designed to provide us with a long-term, steady source of revenue and greater balance sheet flexibility through contracted revenues. We remain a first mover in this space and intend to continue to execute on our data center strategy,”* said Talen President and Chief Executive Officer Mac McFarland. *“Talen is well-positioned to support Amazon’s energy needs as it invests further in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.”*

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## Chesapeake Utilities Corporation Appoints Abhijit Bhatwadekar as Chief Information Officer



Chesapeake Utilities Corporation (NYSE: CPK) announced the appointment of Abhijit (“Abhi”) Bhatwadekar as vice president and chief information officer (CIO), effective June 13, 2025.

In his new role, Bhatwadekar will lead Chesapeake Utilities’ technology strategy and operations, with responsibility for IT infrastructure, enterprise applications, cybersecurity, data management and vendor partnerships. As CIO, he will play a critical role in aligning technology initiatives with business objectives, supporting the Company’s growth strategy and driving continued digital transformation across the organization.

“Abhi brings deep experience in leading enterprisewide technology initiatives and delivering transformative business solutions,” said Jeff Householder, chair of the board, president and CEO of Chesapeake Utilities Corporation. “His strategic mindset, leadership capabilities and record of operational excellence will be instrumental as we continue to advance our business transformation goals through innovation and enhanced technology capabilities.” [Read More](#)

## Ernst & Young US announces Hala Ballouz of EPE as an Entrepreneur Of The Year® 2025 Gulf South Awardee



Ernst & Young LLP (EY US) recently announced that Hala Ballouz, Co-Founder, Board Chair, and Chief Vision Officer of Electric Power Engineers, was named an Entrepreneur Of The Year 2025 Gulf South Award winner. Entrepreneur Of The Year is the preeminent competitive awards program for entrepreneurs and leaders of high-growth companies. For 40 years, EY US has celebrated ambitious entrepreneurs who are transforming industries, impacting communities and creating long-term value. Ballouz was chosen by an independent panel of past winners, top CEOs and business leaders. Judges assessed candidates on long-term value creation, entrepreneurial spirit, purpose-driven commitment and significant growth and impact.

“It’s an incredible honor to be named a Gulf South winner of the EY Entrepreneur Of The Year Award, and it’s a testament to the vision and grit of the entire EPE team,” said Ballouz, who served as President and CEO of Electric Power Engineers for 18 years. “It’s inspiring to be recognized alongside such extraordinary leaders, and I’m grateful to EY for championing entrepreneurship and celebrating the power of bold ideas to drive real-world impact.”

[Read Hala’s Blog](#)

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## SouthStar Energy Services Piloting Full Supply Chain Emissions Tracking



SouthStar Energy Services, one of the nation's leading natural gas marketing companies, recently announced that it has become the first retail energy marketer in the U.S. and one of the first companies in the energy industry to pilot a new methane and greenhouse gas emissions tracking tool called MiQ's MethaneScout™. This initiative signifies a pilot rollout before MethaneScout's full market launch in the summer of 2025.

"SouthStar is committed to a sustainable future, which includes supporting lower-emissions natural gas and the infrastructure that processes and transports it," said Michael Braswell, CEO of SouthStar Energy Services. "We are excited to see how MiQ's MethaneScout can help provide added transparency to our energy sourcing, further bolstering our leadership position in supporting lower-emissions natural gas delivery."

MethaneScout is an innovative emissions-tracking platform that enables gas marketers, regulators, and end-users to evaluate enhanced emissions data at every stage of the natural gas and LNG supply chains. Developed by MiQ and based on the MiQ Supply Chain Emissions Protocol, the platform compiles and evaluates data reliability using Data Quality Indicators (DQIs) derived from principles and requirements for developing life-cycle assessments as outlined by ISO standards. [Read More](#)

## 50% Hydrogen Blend Testing Successfully Completed at Georgia Power's Plant McDonough-Atkinson

Georgia Power and Mitsubishi Power have successfully completed a second trial blending hydrogen and natural gas fuels at both partial and full load on an M501GAC natural gas turbine at Georgia Power's Plant McDonough-Atkinson in Smyrna, Georgia. The demonstration project is the first to validate 50%\* hydrogen fuel blending on an advanced class gas turbine, and the largest test of this kind in the world to date, with the 50% blend providing an approximately 22% reduction in CO2 emissions compared to 100% natural gas. Several tests were conducted prior to the 50% blend demonstration including multiple blend percentages that ranged from 5% to 50%, and testing occurred across several weeks in May and June.

"Natural gas serves a critical role in our generation mix, providing flexibility, baseload power and quick response to customer demand, and will continue to be an important fuel as we plan to meet the energy needs of a growing Georgia through a diverse portfolio of generation resources," said Rick Anderson, senior vice president and senior production officer for Georgia Power. "At Georgia Power, innovative testing such as this is just one way we help ensure we can deliver reliable and affordable energy for customers for decades into the future, and reduce our overall emissions. Investments we're making in our fleet and power grid today will benefit future generations, and I'm very proud of the team at Plant McDonough-Atkinson and Mitsubishi Power for their dedication to this project and safely completing this test." [Read More](#)

