

US Electric Utilities & IPPs

Utilities to Own For a Rainy Day

Equities

Americas
Electric Utilities

Julien Dumoulin-Smith

Analyst

julien.dumoulin-smith@ubs.com

+1-212-713 9848

Michael Weinstein

Associate Analyst

michael.weinstein@ubs.com

+1-212-713 3182

Paul Zimbardo

Associate Analyst

paul.zimbardo@ubs.com

+1-212-713 1033

Fed steps closer to making its move, how will you react?

On Wednesday 15 of 17 Fed officials said they anticipate increasing interest rates later this year although seemingly the rate of increases will be moderate. [As we highlighted yesterday](#), utilities appear fairly priced with the historical ten-year Treasury correlation indicating -5% relative underperformance based on UBSe 3% YE2016 forecast and from a bond yield standpoint, we see implied upside for utilities at ~11%. Despite the macro factors sending a mixed message, we still see themes and names that we believe are ripe for outperformance. We specifically focus on NextEra Energy (NEE), TECO Energy (TE), and Edison International (EIX) as three equities benefitting from strong stories that should help insulate them from a Federal Reserve storm.

Not all utilities are created equal so pick and choose themes carefully

We continue to view five themes as key: (1) High growth; (2) SMid-caps that are potential M&A targets; (3) ROE tracking mechanisms that can enhance EPS growth for Illinois and California utilities; (4) Structural reforms in state policy; and (5) Power exposure, although we recommend caution. Another growing theme, in our view, is the shift from transmission growth to gas & electric distribution hardening with companies including PEG and PPL proposing large distribution improvement plans for gas and electric, respectively, but this is more of a subset of the high-growth theme.

Recent weakness in NEE, EIX, and TE creates opportunity for attractive entry

All three names have felt pressure from concerns that we believe are unfounded, including lack of renewables pipeline expansion (NEE), penalties and political pushback over SONGS (EIX), or inability to close the Coal transaction (TE). In each of these cases the relative P/Es have fallen to their lowest point since at least mid-2014, in our view presenting the opportunity to add high-quality utility exposure at reasonable prices.

Figure 1: Thematic Ways To Play Utilities

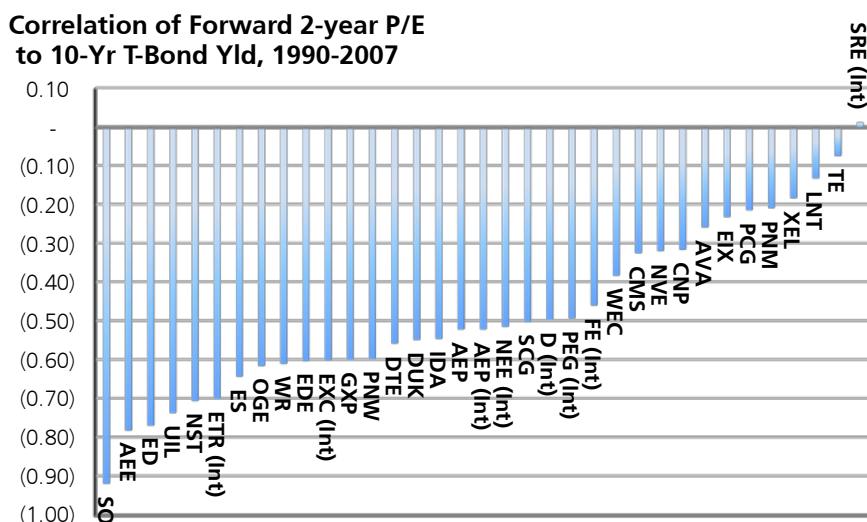
High Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EIX • TE 	Structural Reform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EIX • CMS/DTE
SMid-Cap M&A Targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PNW • TE 	Power / Renewables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DYN • NEE
ROE Trackers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IL: AEE, EXC • CA: EIX, PCG, SRE 		

Source: UBS

How to Position Yourself In the Sector

Three of our top picks (NextEra, Edison International, and TECO) have faced weakness as of late and have drawn additional investor interest. We view Edison and TECO in particular as two of the better-positioned names from a thematic standpoint, with inherent factors that help to mitigate concerns of rising interest rates. NextEra also has an above-average growth rate but we highlight the largest Florida utility for its renewables prowess vs other utilities.

Figure 2: Correlation of Forward 2-year P/E to 10-Yr T-Bond Yld, 1990-2007



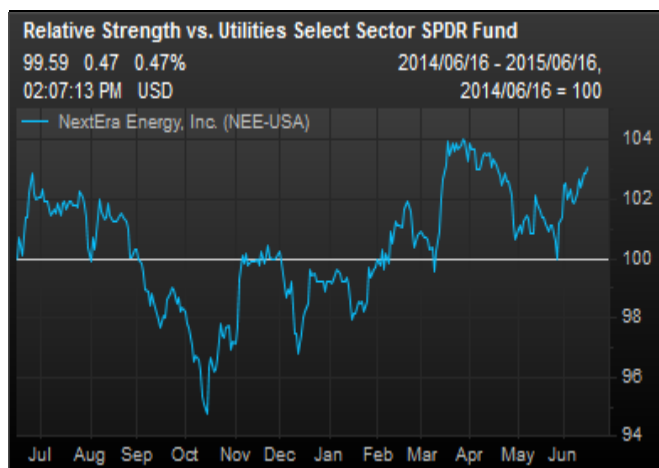
Source: FactSet

Further details are available in our recent report, ['Fighting the Fed'](#).

(1) NextEra Energy (NEE): \$118 Price Target

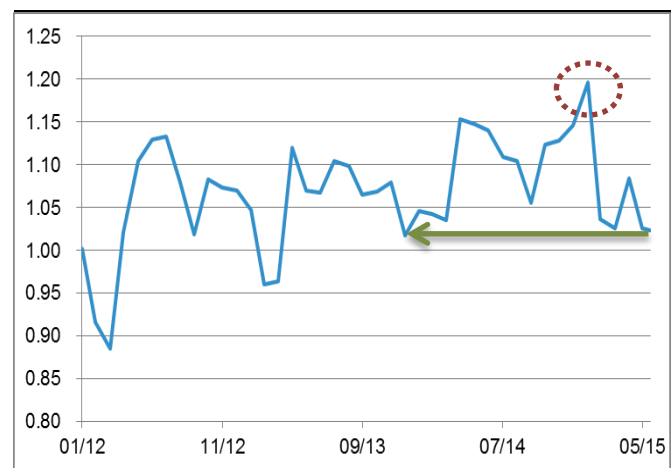
In January NextEra was trading at its largest relative P/E premium vs utilities (120%) but was lagging peers until its March Analyst Day when shares gapped higher. NEE is now trading in line with utilities peers (102% relative P/E), a level that we last touched briefly in December 2013. Over this period the average P/E premium was 107%, indicating to us that investors likely oversold shares, implying ~\$5/sh improvement simply from returning to its historical premium. We think P/E is not the most appropriate way to view NEE given the heavy renewables and pipeline but provides a decent proxy for trends. We attribute the recent weakness to concerns that, while relevant, are overblown, in our view.

Figure 3: NEE TTM Relative Performance



Source: FactSet

Figure 4: NEE P/E Relative to Utilities



Source: FactSet

Weighing on the primary debates

- (a) **Regulated M&A – After Hawaii is Oncor Next?:** Investors continue to maintain a negative view of the pending Hawaii Electric transaction given the lack of initial accretion on the price paid. We reiterate that we do not include any incremental from the Hawaiian deal in our valuation as our initial analysis showed approximately breakeven economics. We acknowledge that there are potential upside levers that could improve the upside for the deal, but our bullish viewpoint on NEE is not contingent on improvement in HE.

With respect to Oncor we see this deal as unlikely for NEE. The latest outperformance in the first half of June appears related to Oncor excitement. On June 10, media reports cited NEE as a "frontrunner" in the bankruptcy auction, with EFH possibly naming NEE as the stalking horse bidder (opening bidder to set the floor) in the next few weeks for an 80% stake in Oncor. We also wrote that while a takeover by NEE could be accretive, the lack of a similar tax advantage most likely keeps its bid uncompetitive vs HUNT/HIFR.

We would not rule-out further M&A and see this as one of the clearest avenues for management to deploy its cash from NEP recycling (drop-downs and IDRs). There are three

- i. **O&M Synergies:** Management emphasized opportunity to find less efficient utilities, leveraging synergies to improve the earned ROE of any target. Given the wide disparity in the efficiency metrics across utilities of different sizes, we believe NEE could be looking for an opportunity where it can excel in reducing the cost structure.
- ii. **Parent re-leveraging:** Any deal would accompany substantial incremental leverage to maximize the value proposition. A primary reason why the HE deal was a share-for-share transaction was a desire to make the transaction tax-free for HE shareholders. NEE could repurchase shares and essentially lever up the deal, a playbook we would expect to see followed in any future NEE transaction.

- iii. **Parent credit quality halo:** Secondary effects including supporting the parent credit rating for further infra investments. Mgmt emphasized further regulated acquisitions could allow it to diversify into high-risk infrastructure investments like Gathering & Processing.

(b) Slow development updates: Unlike renewable development peers, NEE is more conservative both operationally and when it comes to sending messages to the Street. Between the Analyst Day and April earnings management converted ~500MW of renewables from its 2015-2018 pipeline forecast into its NEER backlog (to 2.6GW from 2.1GW) with the total origination platform backlog/pipeline midpoint unchanged at 4.9GW. The lack of new pipeline additions is driven by an abundance of caution. Unlike renewable development peers which probability weight opportunities, management opts for a conservative approach. Bottom line, more renewables are coming and we see NextEra as well positioned to capture the opportunities. We see opportunities around Ontario solar, wind, and storage as particularly intriguing.

We acknowledge investor concerns around the lack of incremental renewables pipeline in 2017/2018 but view this as coming in time. This lack of new additions is likely driven by an abundance of caution.

Figure 5: Recent Changes in NEER's Backlog and Pipeline

Update Date	Backlog	2015-2016F	2017-2018F	Total
1Q15	2,616	1,000	1,250	4,866
Investor Day	2,114	1,400	1,350	4,864
Change	502	(400)	(100)	2

Source: Company Filings and UBS Estimates

In contrast to our valuation for SunEdison, we conservatively do not ascribe a benefit for the developer margin that NEE generates.

Assuming 2.0GW per annum, of development at ~\$1.50/watt with a 15% EBITDA margin would imply \$5/sh of total value.

Since NEE holds its renewables on its own balance sheet for a longer period of time than solar rivals do, we ascribe an EV / EBITDA multiple on the cash flows rather than an explicit DevCo multiple. Further relative to the \$3/sh value we ascribe in our existing SOP for the 'Pipeline', this more solar-oriented valuation would have a further \$2/sh uplift on our existing \$118/sh target.

Looking at NEE through the DevCo valuation of SUNE

Figure 6: How Much Value from DevCo Valuation Approach?

DevCo Margins for NEER	
Annual Build	2,000 MWs
Build Cost	1,500 \$/kW
Total Dev Cost	3,000
Dev Margin %	15 %
Dev Margin (\$ Mn)	450
EV/EBITDA on DevCo	5 x
Value Uplift	2,250 \$ Mn
Value Uplift per Share	4.85 \$/sh
Dev Pipeline value in our SOP	2.98
Incremental Value Uplift	1.86

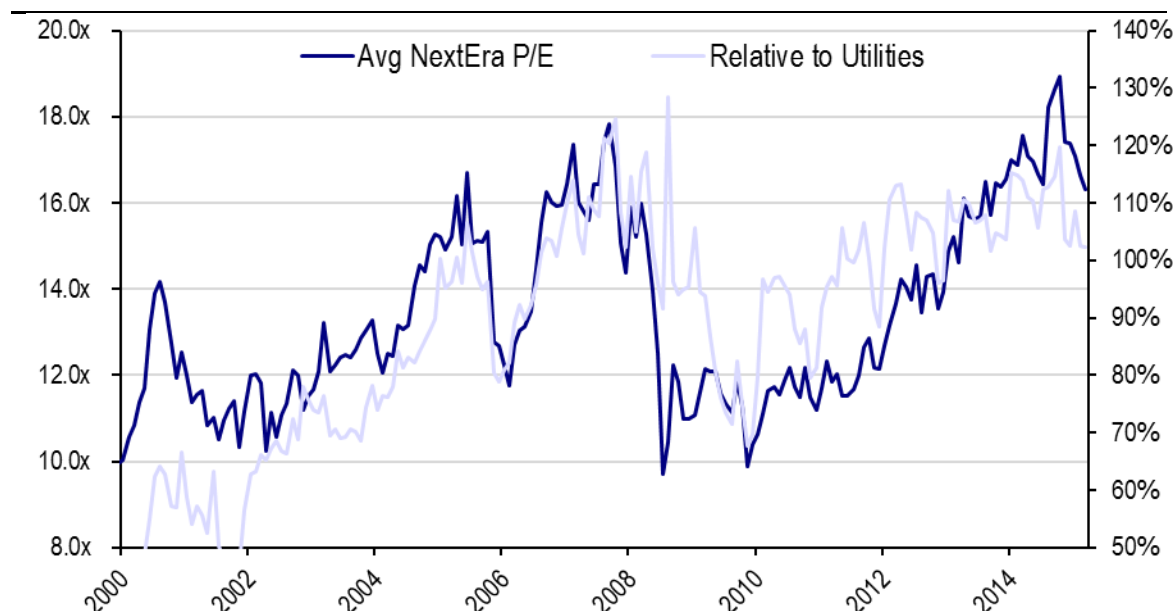
Source: Company reports and UBS estimates

(c) **What does the Sunshine state look like beyond 2016? Rate case risk offset by gas ratebasing opportunity:** Under the current rate settlement FP&L has a 9.5-11.5% ROE band and has achieved the top-end by utilizing its depreciation reserve, Project Momentum O&M reductions initiatives, and Generation Base Rate Adjustments (GBRA) for plant in-service milestones. NEE achieved this ROE in 2014 and guided to the same ROE in 2015 but tempered expectations for the balance of the rate settlement at 10.5-11.5%. NextEra enjoys a favorable relationship with the Florida PSC but perhaps one of the largest risks to the story relates to what the return profile of FP&L looks like beyond 2016. Every 50bp change in the earned ROE relates to \approx \$0.15EPS and we ascribe a premium valuation to this segment, magnifying the impact of any return reduction.

For context, the average ROE request in pending rate cases is \sim 10.5% and we anticipate PSC Staff and intervenor pushback given the sharp declines in equity and debt costs of capital lately. Downside towards the national authorized ROE of \sim 10% suggests a seemingly 'worst case' scenario \$7/sh drag; however, there are offsets, primarily regulated returns on gas reserves and solar investments. We anticipate the Florida Public Service Commission (PSC) formalizing guidelines for further natural gas reserve investments in the upcoming months.

Although 2017E growth could be a bit weaker than expectations given the potential ROE headwinds, NEE has provided 2018 EPS guidance of \$6.50-\$7.00.

Figure 7: Average NextEra P/E and Relative P/E



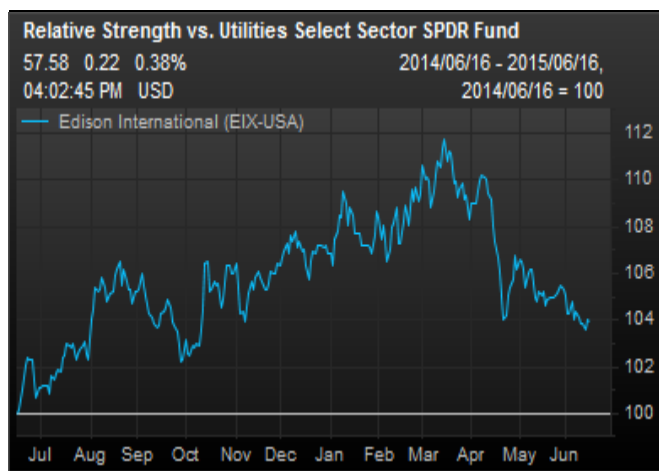
Source: FactSet and UBS Estimates

(2) Edison International (EIX): \$70 Price Target

The catalyst underlying Edison International's recent weakness is easy to identify and relates to the ex-parte developments in California. Following our recent meetings in California earlier this month with CPUC Chairman Picker, TURN, ORA, and EIX the message was unambiguously against a reopening of the SONGS settlement. Shares could remain volatile given the rhetoric but we anticipate EIX returning to a premium valuation as investors grow more comfortable with the situation. As we mentioned in our recent [EIX upgrade note](#), even the full \$648Mn potential fine would trim \$1/sh from our valuation.

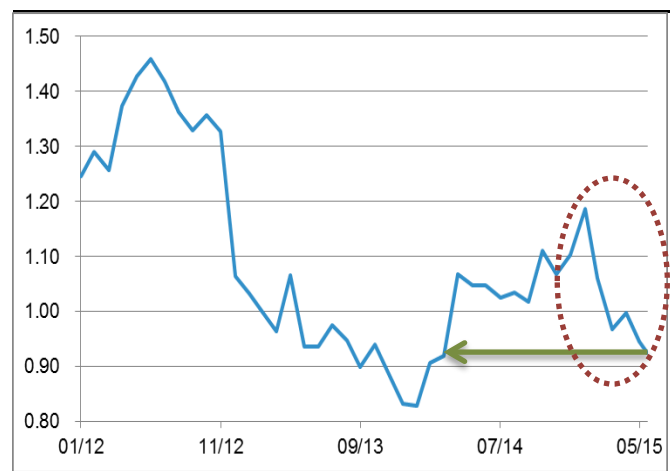
Further details on the latest in California are available in our note '[Calming Concerns on California](#)'.

Figure 8: EIX TTM Relative Performance



Source: FactSet

Figure 9: EIX P/E Relative to Utilities



Source: FactSet

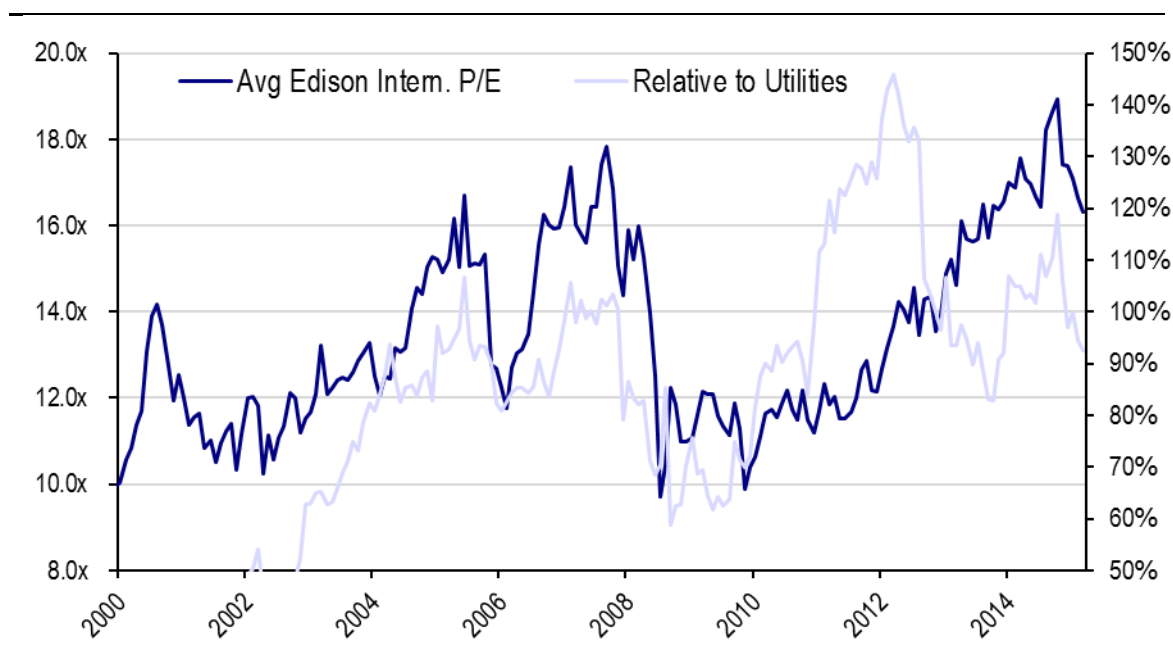
- (a) **We see little sympathy from Picker for ORA's proposed ex-parte penalty:** While ORA and TURN both continue to oppose a reopening of the SONGS settlement, they both support a penalty for EIX's "egregious" violation of ex-parte rules during the negotiations. ORA's requested \$648M penalty represents the maximum benefit they believe they could have achieved if they had been given everything they initially asked for in the beginning of the negotiating process. Our impression is that this figure is a vast overreach, especially given that the usual penalty for ex-parte discussion is \$50k per instance. We think ORA's argument that a higher figure is warranted because the violations were "especially egregious and may have tainted the outcome" is somewhat belied by ORA's continued support for the outcome in lieu of litigation.

Furthermore, while TURN also supports a penalty of some sort, the organization notably does not stand behind or repeat the \$648M figure. In any event, President Picker appeared highly unsympathetic to accusations of ex-parte violations in general, noting that they amount to little more than squabbling among insiders included on the service lists. In our view, the public interest is probably not served terribly well by limiting informal discussion on important topics, especially with industry experts. We think the demands of insiders to be informed of ex-parte communications with other insiders is a broader symptom of distrust of regulators to treat everyone fairly, least of all the ratepaying public they serve. To us, it is this lack of trust that must be resolved and we think

new laws being considered to further limit communications are unlikely to improve either the climate or the ability of California to forge a sensible path forward toward achieving its greenhouse gas reduction goals.

- (b) ROE review likely to be kicked out by 1-year again:** Among the chief recent updates, we sense openness from parties in California to extend once more their current ROE construct for a further year following a similar deal earlier this year. Status quo; the triennial cost of capital case would need to be filed for the three IOUs next April. We see this as having been a growing concern for many investors, seeing this as a key uncertainty on the 2016 calendar. Given the existing band structure in place – and a wider acknowledgement that bond rates have failed to move ‘out of bounds’ - there was no rush to review the rates.

Figure 10: Average Edison International P/E and Relative P/E



Source: FactSet and UBS Estimates

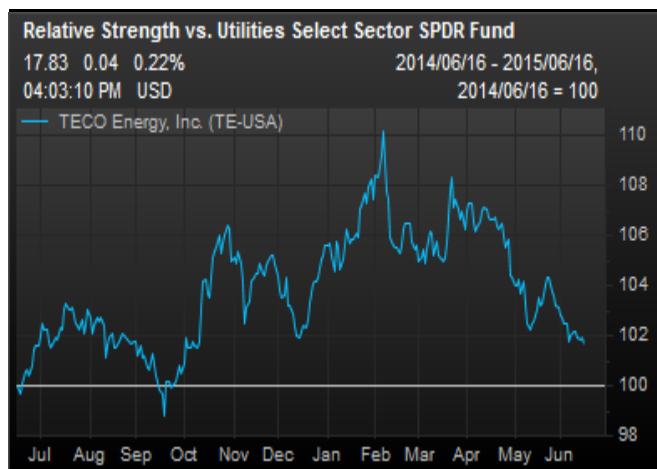
(3) TECO Energy (TE): \$22 Price Target

While the underperformance for NextEra and Edison International has been relatively apparent, TECO has lost almost all of its gains with little news. The troubled process to sell TECO Coal has drawn headlines and investor focus but it is ultimately immaterial. As with EIX, TECO is now trading at a discounted relative P/E when we believe it should be trading at a premium: after the coal divestiture is completed, we view this as an above-average growth rate regulated SMid utility with the potential for an acquisition, checking almost all of the boxes for ideal utility exposure in a rising interest rate environment (high parent leverage is a negative).

We suspect re-rating could begin early in 2H with July 3rd firm sale of the coal business without financial close conditions, followed by several capex opportunity updates implicit from NEE's efforts to ratebase gas, add solar, and further around LNG peak shaving in NM in September. The primary risk to our Buy rating relates to the company's relatively higher payout and div yield, at the higher end of the sector in a rising rate environment. We flag its status as a smid-cap, faster-growing

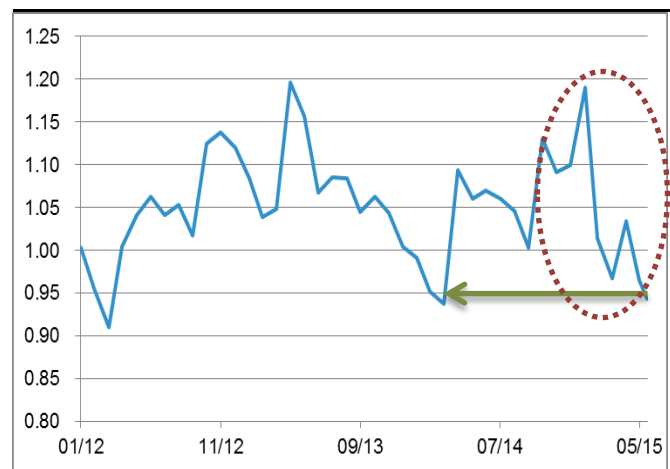
and recent reinitiation of DPS growth after a multi-year hiatus as all positive technical improving its defensive characteristics.

Figure 11: TE TTM Relative Performance



Source: FactSet

Figure 12: TE P/E Relative to Utilities



Source: FactSet

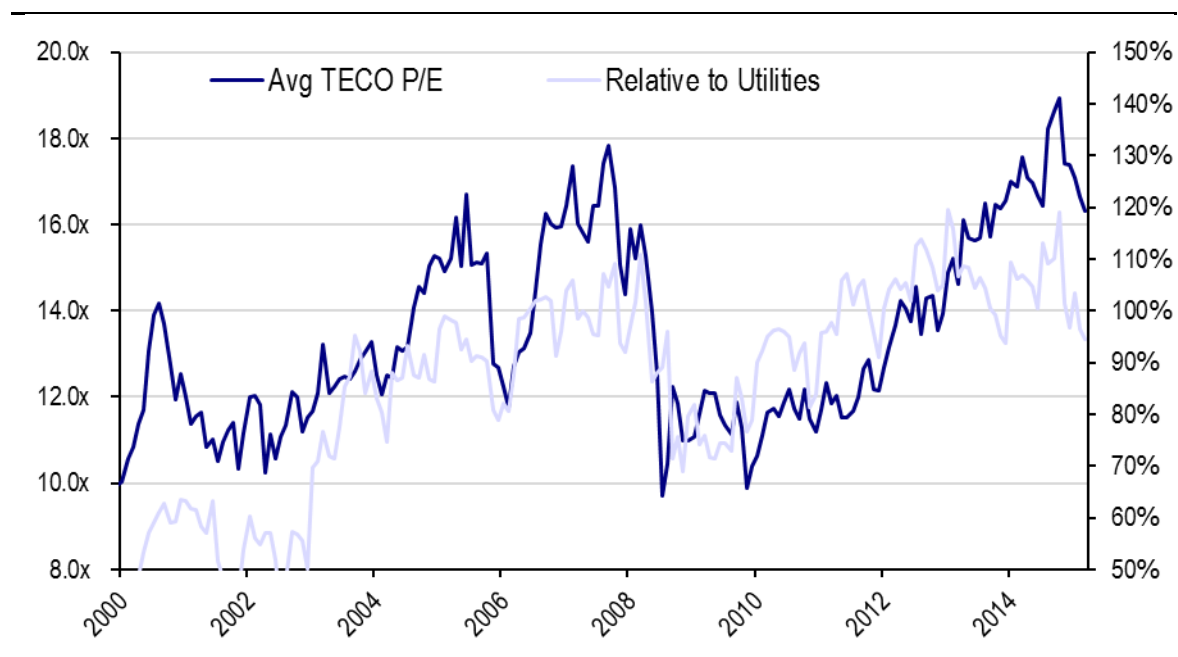
- (a) **Moving on to Coal 'Plan B':** Last Monday TECO announced that it has signed a non-binding letter of intent with a new potential purchaser of TECO Coal. The agreement with Cambrian Coal (owned by Booth Energy) has not yet been terminated but can be terminated by either TECO or Cambrian with a nominal penalty paid to TECO. The original Cambrian deal was originally announced in October 2014 and was subsequently amended down to \$80Mn (\$0.34/sh) of base proceeds. Neither the name of the new potential party nor the expected proceeds were disclosed by TECO. Importantly TECO stated that the new potential partner is not expected to need third-party financing like Cambrian did and TECO believes that a deal could close by July 3rd, indicating that additional disclosures could be forthcoming in the near future. This latest development is consistent with TECO's management comments that a 'Plan B' was to work with parties who were previously interested in acquiring the segment (they were recently engaged with upwards of four potential other counterparties on a deal).

We view the development of a new potential Coal counterparty as a positive but we think the purchase price could very well be below the previous \$80Mn deal price.

- (b) **Proactively avoiding rate case risk:** Investor attention continues to gravitate to the latest developments on the coal divestiture but in our view the real story investors should be focusing on relates to the Florida and New Mexico rate cases. When we met with management at the AGA Financial Conference last month they appeared confident in their ability to stay-out of rate cases in both jurisdictions. While the settlement precludes any rate hike prior to January 1st, 2018, the latest statements from management suggest it will continue to earn near its authorized ROE for the foreseeable future (seemingly through 2018 and 2019). Bottom line, we expect shares to continue to re-rate around further consolidation in the sector.

No rate cases in foreseeable future

Figure 13: Average TECO P/E and Relative P/E



Source: FactSet and UBS Estimates

Statement of Risk

Risks for Utilities and Independent Power Producers (IPPs) primarily relate to volatile commodity prices for power, natural gas, and coal. Risks to IPPs also stem from load variability, and operational risk in running these facilities. Rising coal and, to a certain extent, uranium prices could pressure margins as the fuel hedges roll off Competitive Integrations. Further, IPPs face declining revenues as in the money power and gas hedges roll off. Other non-regulated risks include weather and for some, foreign currency risk, which again must be diligently accounted in the company's risk management operations. Major external factors, which affect our valuation, are environmental risks. Environmental capex could escalate if stricter emission standards are implemented. We believe a nuclear accident or a change in the Nuclear Regulatory Commission/Environment Protection Agency regulations could have a negative impact on our estimates. Risks for regulated utilities include the uncertainty around the composition of state regulatory Commissions, adverse regulatory changes, unfavorable weather conditions, variance from normal population growth, and changes in customer mix. Changes in macroeconomic factors will affect customer additions/subtractions and usage patterns.

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Sell	FSR is > 6% below the MRA.	12%	20%
Short-Term Rating	Definition	Coverage ³	IB Services ⁴
Buy	Stock price expected to rise within three months from the time the rating was assigned because of a specific catalyst or event.	less than 1%	less than 1%
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Source: UBS. Rating allocations are as of 31 March 2015.

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CMS Energy Corporation ¹⁶	CMS.N	Buy	N/A	US\$32.35	17 Jun 2015
DTE Energy Co. ^{2, 4, 5, 6a, 16}	DTE.N	Buy	N/A	US\$74.98	17 Jun 2015
Dynegy, Inc. ^{2, 4, 5, 6a, 16}	DYN.N	Buy	N/A	US\$33.37	17 Jun 2015
Edison International ^{2, 4, 6a, 16}	EIX.N	Buy	N/A	US\$57.99	17 Jun 2015
Exelon Corp. ^{4, 5, 6a, 6b, 7, 16}	EXC.N	Neutral	N/A	US\$34.18	17 Jun 2015
NextEra Energy ^{2, 4, 6a, 16}	NEE.N	Buy	N/A	US\$100.70	17 Jun 2015
PG&E Corporation ¹⁶	PCG.N	Neutral	N/A	US\$50.80	17 Jun 2015
Pinnacle West Capital Co. ^{6a, 16}	PNW.N	Neutral	N/A	US\$57.30	17 Jun 2015
Sempra Energy ^{2, 4, 5, 16, 18}	SRE.N	Buy	N/A	US\$104.37	17 Jun 2015
TECO Energy Inc. ¹⁶	TE.N	Buy	N/A	US\$17.97	17 Jun 2015

Source: UBS. All prices as of local market close.

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