

APPENDIX B – BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES



Rural Development

6/24/2020

Rural Utilities Service

1400 Independence
Ave SW, Room 0221
Stop 1567
Washington, DC
20250

Ms. Sarah Quamme
Wisconsin Field Office Supervisor
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
4101 American Boulevard East
Bloomington, MN 55425

Voice 202.720.1430
Fax 1.844.496.7794

Subject: Notification of Intent to Initiate Section 7 Consultation
Nemadji Trail Energy Center (NTEC) Project
City of Superior, Douglas County, Wisconsin

Dear Ms. Quamme:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Rural Utilities Service (RUS) is preparing an environmental assessment (EA) for the proposed Nemadji Trail Energy Center (NTEC) Combined-Cycle Project (Project). South Shore Energy, LLC (SSE), a subsidiary of ALLETE, Inc., and Dairyland Power Cooperative (Dairyland; collectively the Owners), are jointly constructing the Project in the City of Superior, Douglas County, Wisconsin. Dairyland is seeking financial assistance from RUS to finance their portion of the Project. Burns & McDonnell Engineering Company, Inc. (Burns & McDonnell) is assisting RUS with the preparation of the EA for the proposed Project. At this time, RUS is initiating consultation with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) regarding the potential impacts from the Project on federally protected species. By this letter, RUS is providing USFWS its assessment of these potential impacts and requests USFWS concurrence or other feedback on this assessment. Following is a description of the proposed Project facilities, overview of the habitats potentially impacted by the Project, and a discussion of the potential Project impacts to those species identified for the Project area of Douglas County. The proposed Project is:

Nemadji Trail Energy Center (NTEC) Combined-Cycle Project

IPaC Consultation Code: 03E17000-2020-SLI-1290

At the direction of RUS, Burns & McDonnell obtained a U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) official species list to identify the threatened, endangered, proposed and candidate species, as well as proposed and final designated critical habitat, that may be affected by the Project. A copy of the official IPaC results is provided in Appendix A. This assessment was prepared to determine to what extent the proposed action may affect the federally listed species protected under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

FEDERAL ACTION

The RUS is acting as the lead Federal agency for the Project, and any final action by the RUS related to the Project is subject to compliance with other relevant Federal laws and

regulations. The proposed Federal action is a decision by the RUS to provide financing for the Project. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the USFWS are participating in the environmental review process and will also be issuing their own final decisions. The USACE will be considering whether to issue a Clean Water Act Section 404 permit and Rivers & Harbors Act Section 10 permit for placement of structures (e.g., poles) and temporary matting in wetlands, clearing in forested wetlands, and for the crossing of one navigable water of the U.S. (i.e., Nemadji River).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Project includes the construction and operation of the approximately 625-megawatt (MW) gas turbine NTEC generation facility, natural gas supply pipeline, 345-kilovolt (kV) transmission line, new switching station, relocation of existing natural gas pipeline and transmission line, staging areas, and laydown yards (see Plan & Profile Drawings in Appendix B and Project Figures in Appendix C). Pending regulatory approvals, construction activities are estimated to start in Q3 2020 and finish in 2025.

NTEC Generation Facility Site

The NTEC generation facility site for the Project would be east of the existing Enbridge Energy Superior Terminal Facility, along the northwest bank of the Nemadji River and southeast of the intersection of 31st Avenue East and Grand Avenue in the City of Superior (Appendix C). The NTEC site is accessible from US Highway 2/US Highway 53 via 31st Avenue East. The NTEC site is approximately 26.3 acres in size. It is currently partially wooded with a parking lot and small stormwater pond in the northwest corner. Existing transmission lines and a natural gas pipeline cross the site.

345-kV Transmission Line

The Owners will construct a 345-kV transmission line between the generation facility north of the Nemadji River and a new, approximately 14-acre switching station (installed and owned by American Transmission Company [ATC]) located on the west side of Lyman Lake Road, approximately 1,680 feet south of the intersection of Lyman Lake Road and County Road Z in the City of Superior (Appendix C). The 345-kV transmission line route is approximately 3.7 miles in length and occurs primarily in existing transmission line right-of-way (ROW) corridors through the City of Superior, Town of Superior, and the Town of Parkland in Douglas County. The 345-kV transmission line would be constructed as a single-circuit 345-kV line or as a double-circuit 345/161-kV line with the existing 161-kV Line No. 160, which is owned by Superior Water, Light & Power (SWL&P), an ALLETE company. Existing ROW will be used where the proposed transmission line is double circuited with the existing 161-kV transmission line. Additional ROW of approximately 25 feet along portions of the existing ROW is expected to be required to accommodate the new transmission line.

Natural Gas Supply Pipeline

SWL&P, an ALLETE company will construct a 16-inch diameter natural gas pipeline between the NTEC site north of the Nemadji River and an existing Great Lakes Gas Transmission Company (GLGT) natural gas transmission pipeline located south of County Route C and west of Windmill Road (Appendix C). The 16-inch diameter natural

gas pipeline will be 100 percent owned and operated by SWL&P and located in the City of Superior and the Town of Parkland in Douglas County. The route is approximately 6.8 miles in length and occurs mostly in existing natural gas pipeline ROW corridors.

Natural Gas Pipeline Relocation

SWL&P, an ALLETE company will remove, abandon, and relocate an existing 10-inch diameter natural gas pipeline at the NTEC site (Appendix C). Approximately 1,200 feet of natural gas pipeline would be removed and abandoned. The natural gas pipeline would be relocated approximately 250 feet west of its current location and around an existing stormwater drainage pond at the generation facility site. The relocated pipeline would be approximately 1,000 feet long. Construction laydown area for the natural gas pipeline relocation activities would be in a previously disturbed area adjacent to the existing stormwater drainage pond at the NTEC generation facility site.

Transmission Line Relocation

To accommodate the new generation facility and new transmission line, the existing electric transmission lines that cross the NTEC generation facility site and the Nemadji River would be relocated (Appendix C). The relocation of the existing 115-kilovolt (kV) (Line No. 132), 115-kV (Line No 761), and 161-kV (Line No 160) lines (the relocation routes) would occur prior to the start of construction for the generation facility. Transmission line removal and relocation will be confined to the 50-foot-wide right-of-way (ROW), along access routes, and at laydown and staging areas. To the extent practicable, existing roads or ROW would be used for construction access. Most disturbances would likely occur in the area immediately surrounding the existing transmission line pole locations, relocated pole locations, and conductor pulling sites within the transmission line relocation footprint. In areas where access cannot be gained from existing roads, some disturbance from vehicular traffic may also occur. Disturbance in these areas may include clearing of vegetative cover, grading, placing construction matting for temporary access roads, soil compaction, vehicular tracking, and topsoil disturbance.

Staging Area (Laydown Yard 1)

The staging area for the generation facility is approximately 24.8 acres in size and includes an existing 1.2-acre disturbed area and 23.6-acre staging area. The staging area is located along the northwest side of 31st Avenue and northeast of the intersection of 31st Avenue East and Grand Avenue in the City of Superior (Appendix C). Several existing transmission lines and oil and gas pipelines cross the parcel containing the staging area.

Laydown Yards (Laydown Yards 2 and 3)

Two laydown yards will be used during construction of the 345-kV transmission line and the 16-inch diameter natural gas supply pipeline. The laydown yards are located along

24th Avenue East and County Route Z in the City of Superior in Douglas County (Appendix C). Both areas are currently being used as equipment storage areas.

FIELD ASSESSMENT

Initial desktop efforts indicated that the Project would impact upland and wetland broadleaved deciduous forest, upland and wetland shrublands, and forage grasslands and wet meadow communities. To characterize the available habitats within the Project footprint, Burns & McDonnell biologists conducted habitat assessment field surveys of the Project footprint. Field surveys for the Project occurred in 2016, 2017, and 2018. The results of the habitat assessment field surveys are provided below. Additionally, Endangered Resources (ER) Reviews for the Project were completed by a Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) certified environmental reviewer. The ER Reviews were submitted to the WDNR Bureau of Endangered Resources and responses, including the Certified ER Reviews for the Project, were received on December 26, 2018. Approximately 1.9 acres of the northwestern corner of the approximately 26.3-acre NTEC generation facility site consists mostly of a developed, low intensity area, associated with an existing storm water pond and onsite parking area. The NTEC generation facility site also includes approximately 10.1 acres of broadleaved deciduous upland and wetland forest community consisting mostly of quaking aspen (*Populus tremuloides*), common buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*), and black willow (*Salix nigra*). Upland and wetland shrubland communities consisting of red-osier dogwood (*Cornus sericea*), tatarian honeysuckle (*Lonicera tatarica*), gray alder (*Alnus incana*), and meadow willow (*Salix petiolaris*), total approximately 7.8 acres of the NTEC generation facility site. Forage grassland and wetland meadow communities that include species such as reed canarygrass (*Phalaris arundinacea*) and woolgrass (*Scirpus cyperinus*), occur mostly along the existing utility corridors and cover approximately 7.2 acres of the site.

A portion of the NTEC generation facility site has been previously disturbed by the installation and maintenance of natural gas and overhead electrical transmission lines. Additionally, the eastern portion of the generation facility site was once a homestead site. The native vegetation community has been altered and common plant species that are tolerant of disturbance dominate the area. This area does provide habitat for wildlife species that are opportunistic and tolerant of human disturbance. No federally protected species were observed at the NTEC generation facility site; however, some areas of the generation facility site include suitable habitat for federally protected species. Forested areas of the generation facility site could provide potential habitat for the northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*), although no potential summer roost trees for the northern long-eared bat (trees with exfoliating bark, hollows, and snags) were observed during the site visit. Due to the generation facility site's proximity to the Nemadji River and Lake Superior, the forested areas at the site could provide potential roosting and nesting sites for the bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*); however, no bald eagle stick nests were observed at the generation facility site.

The existing utility corridors where the 345-kV transmission line route, transmission line relocation, and 16-inch diameter natural gas pipeline route will be constructed have been previously disturbed. The native vegetation community along these existing utility corridors has been altered and common plant species that are tolerant of disturbance dominate the area. Maintained utility and transportation corridors within the footprint of the Project consist primarily of forage grassland and wetland meadow communities and include species such as American red raspberry (*Rubus idaeus*), Canada goldenrod (*Solidago canadensis*), Kentucky bluegrass (*Poa pratensis*), Canada thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), parasol whitetop (*Doellingeria umbellata*), and garden valerian (*Valeriana officinalis*). Common wetland grasses and forbs that are present in the emergent wetland meadow and wetland shrub/scrub habitats of the existing utility corridors include reed canarygrass, woolgrass, inland rush (*Juncus interior*), and greater bladder sedge (*Carex intumescens*), broadleaf cattail (*Typha latifolia*), and ostrich fern (*Matteuccia struthiopteris*). The existing utility corridors provide habitat for wildlife species that are opportunistic and tolerant of human disturbance; however, potential habitat for roosting and nesting sites for the bald eagle is present along the Nemadji River and adjacent floodplain. No federally protected species were observed along the 345-kV transmission line, transmission line relocation, or 16-inch diameter natural gas pipeline route during field surveys.

The switching station would be constructed within forested and scrub-shrub wetlands that consist mostly of quaking aspen, common buckthorn, and black willow with western brackenfern (*Pteridium aquilinum*), bigleaf aster (*Eurybia macrophylla*), and stinging nettle (*Urtica dioica*) in the understory. The forested area where the switching station would be constructed did not include potential summer roost trees for the northern long eared bat (trees with exfoliating bark, hollows, and snags). No protected plant or wildlife species were observed at the switching station site during the site visits.

Although the staging area has been previously disturbed in the recent past by the construction and maintenance of the existing utility lines, the staging area includes emergent marsh and forested wetland habitats that included common species such as quaking aspen, common buckthorn, giant goldenrod (*Solidago gigantea*), reed canarygrass, and broadleaf cattail. Some upland, grassland habitat is present in the footprint of the staging area. This area does provide habitat for wildlife species that are opportunistic and tolerant of human disturbance.

Laydown Yards 2 and 3 for the Project are currently being used as equipment storage areas. No potential habitat for federally protected species is present at either of the laydown yards.

SPECIES CONSIDERED AND EVALUATED

Based upon the construction activities outlined above and the resulting disturbance to the existing environment, RUS evaluated the potential of the Project to affect federally listed threatened or endangered species or critical habitats that are known to occur, or could potentially occur within the vicinity of the proposed Project area. To assess these potential effects, Burns & McDonnell reviewed available information for Douglas County. According to the USFWS IPaC tool, there are 4 threatened and 2 endangered

species likely to occur within the vicinity of the Project in Douglas County (Table 1). Critical habitat has not been designated within the vicinity of the Project. Additionally, Burns & McDonnell also evaluated the potential of the Project to affect the bald eagle and golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*). Both the bald eagle and golden eagle, which may occur in Douglas County, are protected by the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA) and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA).

Table 1: Federally Protected Species Known or Likely to Occur within the Vicinity of the NTEC Project

Common Name	Scientific Name	Federal Status
Canada lynx	<i>Lynx canadensis</i>	Threatened
Gray wolf	<i>Canis lupus</i>	Endangered
Northern long-eared bat	<i>Myotis septentrionalis</i>	Threatened
Piping plover	<i>Charadrius melodus</i>	Endangered
Red knot	<i>Calidris canutus rufa</i>	Threatened
Fassett's locoweed	<i>Oxytropis campestris</i> var. <i>chartacea</i>	Threatened

Source: USFWS IPaC results (Appendix A).

SPECIES INFORMATION

Canada Lynx

The distribution of Canada lynx in North America is closely associated with the distribution of North American boreal forest. The range of Canada lynx populations extends into the boreal/hardwood forest ecotone in the eastern United States. Within this forest type, Canada lynx are most likely to occur in areas that receive deep snow and have high-density populations of snowshoe hares, the principal prey of Canada lynx. The Project would have **no effect** on the Canada lynx because suitable habitat for the Canada lynx, which includes large tracks of boreal/hardwood forest with high-density populations of snowshoe hares, is not present within the Project area. The area within the vicinity of the Project includes forest separated by public roads and developed areas in the City of Superior and surrounding townships.

Gray Wolf

The wide range of habitats in which gray wolves can thrive reflects their adaptability as a species, and includes temperate forests, mountains, tundra, taiga, and grasslands. Most areas of large contiguous forest in northern and central Wisconsin appear suitable for wolves, although they do more readily select the most remote areas on the landscape for establishing territories and raising pups. Wolf packs select areas with a high percentage of forest and other wildlands (generally > 90% wildlands), low densities of roads, low human densities, and few farms. Wolves seem to avoid urban areas, lakes with extensive development, and other developed landscapes.

The Project would have **no effect** on the gray wolf because large contiguous tracks of forest are not present within the Project area. Forested areas within the vicinity of the Project are separated by rural residences, public roads, and developed areas in the City of Superior and surrounding townships. The gray wolf is known to occur in Douglas

County, away from the populated areas in and around the City of Superior. According to WDNR NHI data, no den sites have been recorded in the vicinity of the Project.

Northern Long-eared Bat

Northern long-eared bat (NLEB) habitat use changes over the course of the year and varies based on sex and reproductive status. During the summer, NLEB forage and roost in forests and woodland stream corridors where snags and tree species with exfoliating bark are present. NLEB roost under exfoliating bark and in the cavities of live trees and snags with a diameter at breast height (dbh) of 3 inches or greater. NLEB forage for insects in forests, along stream corridors, over ponds, and at the edges of forests and farm fields. This species has also been found roosting in man-made structures such as barns, sheds, and under bridges and culverts. During the winter, NLEB hibernate in caves and abandoned mines.

Reproductive females and their young are highly vulnerable to mass mortality during their maternity period (June 1 – July 31) because they aggregate in maternity colonies. Young NLEBs start flying by 18 to 21 days after birth and therefore cannot leave the roost for several weeks after birth. Forested areas adjacent to the Project could provide potential habitat for the northern long eared bat. Snags that include potential summer roost trees for the northern long-eared bat were observed during the site visit along Bear Creek, adjacent to Study Area. No potential summer roost habitat was observed at the NTEC generation facility or switching station site and no caves were identified within the Project area.

Forest clearing has the potential to impact the NLEB if suitable roost trees and foraging habitat are present. Construction of the NTEC generation facility would permanently impact approximately 7.1 acres of forest (approximately 4.6 acres of the quaking aspen forest in the northeastern portion of the site and approximately 2.5 acres of the mixed quaking aspen and black willow forest in the southeastern portion of the site). Construction of the switching station would impact approximately 14 acres of woody vegetation in forested lands and shrubland habitats. To comply with WDNR guidance and the ESA 4(d) rule for the NLEB, tree clearing for the Project would not occur from June 1 – August 15. Based on this assessment and implementation of the tree clearing restriction during construction, the Project **may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect** the NLEB.

Piping Plover

The piping plover prefers large isolated cobble beaches on the shores of Lakes Michigan and Superior. The USFWS has designated critical habitat for the piping plover along portions of the shoreline of Lake Superior in Douglas County; however, the designated critical habitat for the piping plover is not located within the vicinity of the Project. The Project would have **no effect** on the piping plover because no suitable beach or shore habitat is present in the Project Area. Additionally, the Project would not result in the adverse modification to the designated critical habitat for the piping plover that occurs along the shores of Lake Superior because the Project does not occur within or adjacent to the designated critical habitat for the piping plover.

Red Knot

Red knot is an Arctic breeder that occurs uncommonly in Wisconsin during its migration. The red knot typically migrates along the eastern seaboard of North America. Red knots occasionally migrate through continental North America. During its migration the red knot can be found on beaches, sandbars of major rivers, salt flats, and mudflats of reservoirs, bays, and estuaries where it forages for small invertebrates. In Wisconsin, the red knot may occur along coastal sandy beaches of Lake Superior and Lake Michigan from mid-May to early June in spring and from mid-July to early November in fall. The Project would have **no effect** on the red knot because no beach or shore habitat is present in the Project Area.

Fassett's Locoweed

Fassett's locoweed is found in sandy, fluctuating lakeshores. Its appearance is sporadic depending on water level. Blooming occurs early May through late June; fruiting occurs late June through late July. The optimal identification period for this species is late May through late July. The Project would have **no effect** on Fassett's locoweed because no open sandy lakeshores or beach habitat is present in the Project Area or would be affected.

Eagles

Both the bald eagle and golden eagle may occur in Douglas County. In the State of Wisconsin, bald eagles are generally found nesting or roosting in forested areas near large bodies of water. Potential bald eagle nesting habitat is present along Nemadji River; however, no bald eagles or bald eagle nests were observed during field surveys that occurred within the Project area. Golden eagles are considered a nonbreeding, infrequent inhabitant in Wisconsin and are found wintering in more rugged, bluff areas along major rivers and the edges of woodland-scrub habitat in valley floors, riparian areas, and over areas dominated by shrub. No golden eagles or golden eagle nests were observed during field surveys that occurred within the Project Area.

While the bald eagle was removed from the Federal Endangered Species list in August 2007, it is still federally protected by the BGEPA and the MBTA. Eagles can be sensitive to human disturbance, especially during the breeding and nesting seasons. Per the USFWS National Bald Eagle Management Guidelines (2007), human activity within 660 feet of an active nest should be avoided from January 15 – July 30. No bald eagle nests were observed during field surveys that occurred within the Project Area; however, if a bald eagle nest should be identified within the Project Area, the USFWS National Bald Eagle Management Guidelines (2007) would be followed. Based on this assessment and implementation of the National Bald Eagle Management Guidelines if a bald eagle nest is discovered, it was determined that the Project would have **no effect** on the bald eagle or golden eagle.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of this assessment, RUS has determined that the Project **may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect** the NLEB and would have **no effect** on the Canada lynx, gray wolf, piping plover, red knot, Fassett's locoweed, bald eagle and golden eagle.

At this time, RUS, respectfully requests your review of the proposed Project and your concurrence with the findings of this report. If you have any questions about the proposed Project or the contents of this letter, you may contact me by email at dennis.rankin@usda.gov , or by phone at 202-720-1953.

Sincerely,

DENNIS RANKIN

DENNIS RANKIN
Environmental Protection Specialist
USDA, Rural Utilities Service

Attachments:

Appendix A – USFWS IPaC Results
Appendix B – Plan & Profile Drawings
Appendix C – Project Figures

CC: Brad Foss, Dairyland Power Cooperative
Dan McCourtney, ALLETE, Inc.
Stephen Thornhill, Burns & McDonnell

APPENDIX A – USFWS IPAC RESULTS



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Green Bay Ecological Services Field Office
2661 Scott Tower Drive
New Franken, WI 54229-9565
Phone: (920) 866-1717 Fax: (920) 866-1710

In Reply Refer To:

May 15, 2020

Consultation Code: 03E17000-2020-SLI-1290

Event Code: 03E17000-2020-E-04142

Project Name: Nemadji Trail Energy Center (NTEC) Project

Subject: List of threatened and endangered species that may occur in your proposed project location, and/or may be affected by your proposed project

To Whom It May Concern:

The attached species list identifies any federally threatened, endangered, proposed and candidate species that may occur within the boundary of your proposed project or may be affected by your proposed project. The list also includes designated critical habitat if present within your proposed project area or affected by your project. This list is provided to you as the initial step of the consultation process required under section 7(c) of the Endangered Species Act, also referred to as Section 7 Consultation.

Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 requires that actions authorized, funded, or carried out by Federal agencies not jeopardize federally threatened or endangered species or adversely modify designated critical habitat. To fulfill this mandate, Federal agencies (or their designated non-federal representative) must consult with the Service if they determine their project "may affect" listed species or critical habitat.

Under 50 CFR 402.12(e) (the regulations that implement Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act) the accuracy of this species list should be verified after 90 days. This verification can be completed formally or informally. You may verify the list by visiting the ECOS-IPaC website <http://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/> at regular intervals during project planning and implementation and completing the same process you used to receive the attached list. As an alternative, you may contact this Ecological Services Field Office for updates.

Please use the species list provided and visit the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Region 3 Section 7 Technical Assistance website at - <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/endangered/section7/s7process/index.html>. This website contains step-by-step instructions which will help you determine if your project will have an adverse effect on listed species and will help lead you through the Section 7 process.

For all **wind energy projects** and **projects that include installing towers that use guy wires or are over 200 feet in height (e.g., communication towers)**, please contact this field office directly for assistance, even if no federally listed plants, animals or critical habitat are present within your proposed project or may be affected by your proposed project.

Although no longer protected under the Endangered Species Act, be aware that bald eagles are protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (16 U.S.C. 668 *et seq.*) and Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 U.S.C. 703 *et seq.*), as are golden eagles. Projects affecting these species may require measures to avoid harming eagles or may require a permit. If your project is near an eagle nest or winter roost area, see our Eagle Permits website at <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/midwestbird/EaglePermits/index.html> to help you determine if you can avoid impacting eagles or if a permit may be necessary.

We appreciate your concern for threatened and endangered species. The Service encourages Federal agencies to include conservation of threatened and endangered species into their project planning to further the purposes of the Act. Please include the Consultation Tracking Number in the header of this letter with any request for consultation or correspondence about your project that you submit to our office.

Attachment(s):

- Official Species List
-

Official Species List

This list is provided pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, and fulfills the requirement for Federal agencies to "request of the Secretary of the Interior information whether any species which is listed or proposed to be listed may be present in the area of a proposed action".

This species list is provided by:

Green Bay Ecological Services Field Office

2661 Scott Tower Drive

New Franken, WI 54229-9565

(920) 866-1717

Project Summary

Consultation Code: 03E17000-2020-SLI-1290

Event Code: 03E17000-2020-E-04142

Project Name: Nemadji Trail Energy Center (NTEC) Project

Project Type: POWER GENERATION

Project Description: The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Rural Utilities Service (RUS) is preparing an environmental assessment (EA) for the proposed Nemadji Trail Energy Center (NTEC) Combined-Cycle Project (Project). South Shore Energy, LLC (SSE), a subsidiary of ALLETE, Inc., and Dairyland Power Cooperative (Dairyland; collectively the Owners), are jointly constructing the Project in the City of Superior, Douglas County, Wisconsin. Dairyland is seeking financial assistance from RUS to finance their portion of the Project. Burns & McDonnell Engineering Company, Inc. (Burns & McDonnell) is assisting RUS with the preparation of the EA for the proposed Project. At the direction of RUS, Burns & McDonnell is obtaining this U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) official species list to identify the threatened, endangered, proposed and candidate species, as well as proposed and final designated critical habitat, that may be affected by the Project.

The Project includes the construction and operation of the approximately 625-megawatt (MW) gas turbine NTEC generation facility, natural gas supply pipeline, 345-kilovolt (kV) transmission line, new switching station, relocation of existing natural gas pipeline and transmission line, staging areas, and laydown yards. Pending regulatory approvals, construction activities are estimated to start in Q3 2020 and finish in 2025.

The NTEC generation facility site for the Project would be east of the existing Enbridge Energy Superior Terminal Facility, along the northwest bank of the Nemadji River and southeast of the intersection of 31st Avenue East and Grand Avenue in the City of Superior. The NTEC site is approximately 26.3 acres in size. It is currently partially wooded with a parking lot and small stormwater pond in the northwest corner. Existing transmission lines and a natural gas pipeline cross the site.

The Owners will construct a 345-kV transmission line between the generation facility north of the Nemadji River and a new, approximately 14-acre switching station (installed and owned by American Transmission

Company [ATC]) located on the west side of Lyman Lake Road, approximately 1,680 feet south of the intersection of Lyman Lake Road and County Road Z in the City of Superior. The 345-kV transmission line route is approximately 3.7 miles in length and would be constructed as a single-circuit 345-kV line or as a double-circuit 345/161-kV line with the existing 161-kV Line No. 160, which is owned by Superior Water, Light & Power (SWL&P), an ALLETE company. Existing ROW will be used where the proposed transmission line is double circuited with the existing 161-kV transmission line. Additional ROW of approximately 25 feet along portions of the existing ROW is expected to be required to accommodate the new transmission line.

SWL&P will construct a 16-inch diameter natural gas pipeline between the NTEC site north of the Nemadji River and an existing Great Lakes Gas Transmission Company (GLGT) natural gas transmission pipeline located south of County Route C and west of Windmill Road. The 16-inch diameter natural gas pipeline will be 100 percent owned and operated by SWL&P. The route is approximately 6.8 miles in length and occurs mostly in existing natural gas pipeline ROW corridors.

SWL&P will remove, abandon, and relocate an existing 10-inch diameter natural gas pipeline at the NTEC site.

To accommodate the new generation facility and new transmission line, the existing electric transmission lines that cross the NTEC generation facility site and the Nemadji River would be relocated. The relocation of the existing 115-kV (Line No. 132), 115-kV (Line No 761), and 161-kV (Line No 160) lines (the relocation routes) would occur prior to the start of construction for the generation facility.

Project Location:

Approximate location of the project can be viewed in Google Maps: <https://www.google.com/maps/place/46.645494481286406N92.00558364495936W>



Counties: Douglas, WI

Endangered Species Act Species

There is a total of 6 threatened, endangered, or candidate species on this species list.

Species on this list should be considered in an effects analysis for your project and could include species that exist in another geographic area. For example, certain fish may appear on the species list because a project could affect downstream species.

IPaC does not display listed species or critical habitats under the sole jurisdiction of NOAA Fisheries¹, as USFWS does not have the authority to speak on behalf of NOAA and the Department of Commerce.

See the "Critical habitats" section below for those critical habitats that lie wholly or partially within your project area under this office's jurisdiction. Please contact the designated FWS office if you have questions.

-
1. [NOAA Fisheries](#), also known as the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), is an office of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration within the Department of Commerce.

Mammals

NAME	STATUS
Canada Lynx <i>Lynx canadensis</i> Population: Wherever Found in Contiguous U.S. There is final critical habitat for this species. Your location is outside the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/3652	Threatened
Gray Wolf <i>Canis lupus</i> Population: U.S.A.: All of AL, AR, CA, CO, CT, DE, FL, GA, IA, IN, IL, KS, KY, LA, MA, MD, ME, MI, MO, MS, NC, ND, NE, NH, NJ, NV, NY, OH, OK, PA, RI, SC, SD, TN, TX, VA, VT, WI, and WV; and portions of AZ, NM, OR, UT, and WA. Mexico. There is final critical habitat for this species. The location of the critical habitat is not available. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/4488	Endangered
Northern Long-eared Bat <i>Myotis septentrionalis</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9045	Threatened

Birds

NAME	STATUS
<p>Piping Plover <i>Charadrius melodus</i></p> <p>Population: [Great Lakes watershed DPS] - Great Lakes, watershed in States of IL, IN, MI, MN, NY, OH, PA, and WI and Canada (Ont.)</p> <p>There is final critical habitat for this species. Your location is outside the critical habitat.</p> <p>Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/6039</p>	Endangered
<p>Red Knot <i>Calidris canutus rufa</i></p> <p>No critical habitat has been designated for this species.</p> <p>Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1864</p>	Threatened

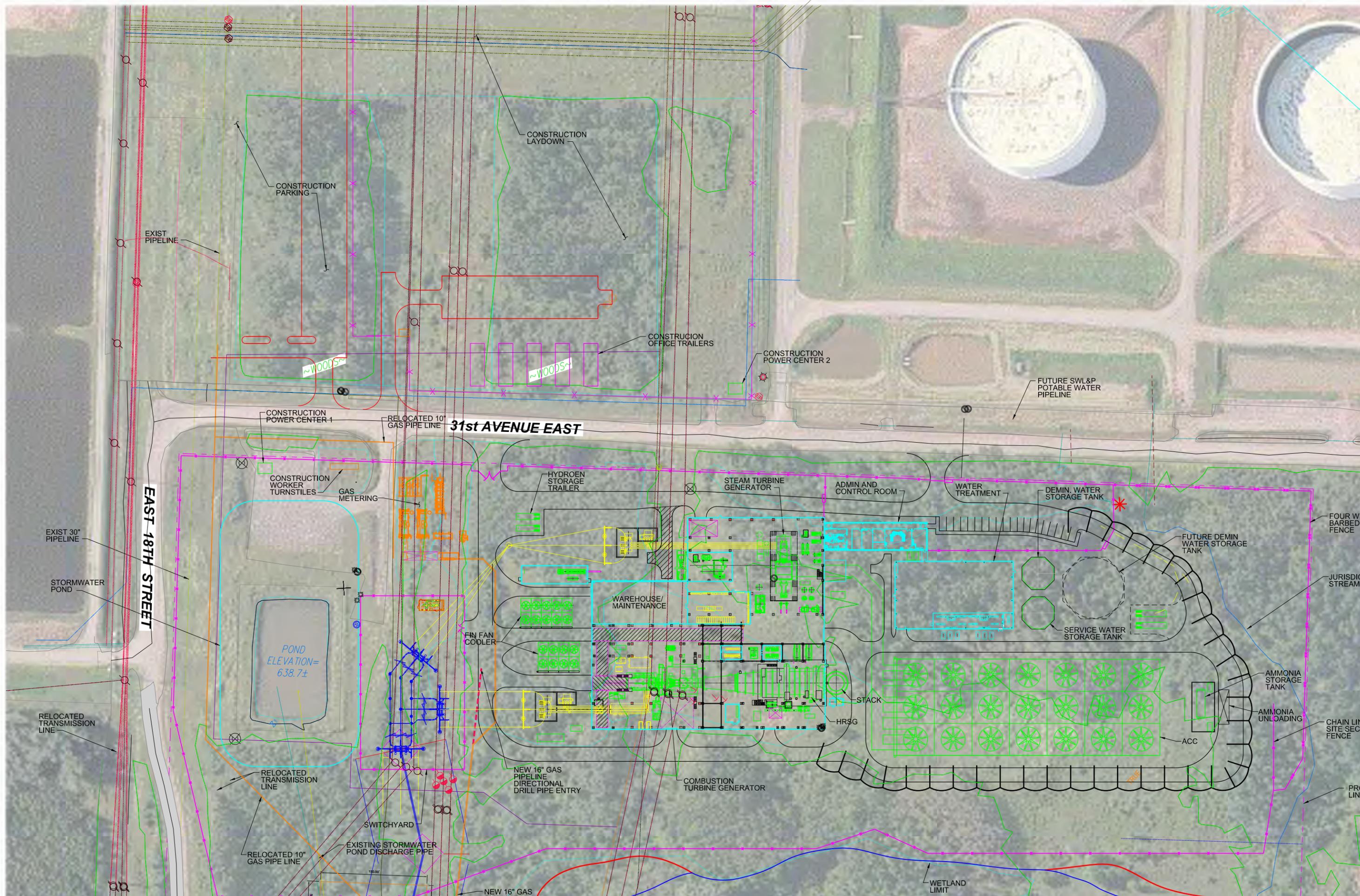
Flowering Plants

NAME	STATUS
<p>Fassett's Locoweed <i>Oxytropis campestris var. chartacea</i></p> <p>No critical habitat has been designated for this species.</p> <p>Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/209</p>	Threatened

Critical habitats

THERE ARE NO CRITICAL HABITATS WITHIN YOUR PROJECT AREA UNDER THIS OFFICE'S JURISDICTION.

APPENDIX B – PLAN & PROFILE DRAWINGS



Scale For Microfilming
 Millimeters
 Inches

CONSTRUCTION PARKING

CONSTRUCTION LAYDOWN

EXIST PIPELINE

CONSTRUCTION OFFICE TRAILERS

CONSTRUCTION POWER CENTER 2

FUTURE SWL&P POTABLE WATER PIPELINE

31st AVENUE EAST

CONSTRUCTION POWER CENTER 1

RELOCATED 10" GAS PIPE LINE

CONSTRUCTION WORKER TURNSTILES

GAS METERING

HYDROGEN STORAGE TRAILER

STEAM TURBINE GENERATOR

ADMIN AND CONTROL ROOM

WATER TREATMENT

DEMIN. WATER STORAGE TANK

FUTURE DEMIN WATER STORAGE TANK

FOUR WIRE BARBED W FENCE

JURISDICTION STREAM F

EAST 18TH STREET

EXIST 30" PIPELINE

STORMWATER POND

POND ELEVATION= 638.7±

WAREHOUSE/ MAINTENANCE

FIN FAN COOLER

STACK

HRSG

SERVICE WATER STORAGE TANK

AMMONIA STORAGE TANK

AMMONIA UNLOADING

CHAIN LINK SITE SECUR FENCE

RELOCATED TRANSMISSION LINE

RELOCATED TRANSMISSION LINE

RELOCATED 10" GAS PIPE LINE

SWITCHYARD

EXISTING STORMWATER POND DISCHARGE PIPE

NEW 16" GAS PIPELINE DIRECTIONAL DRILL PIPE ENTRY

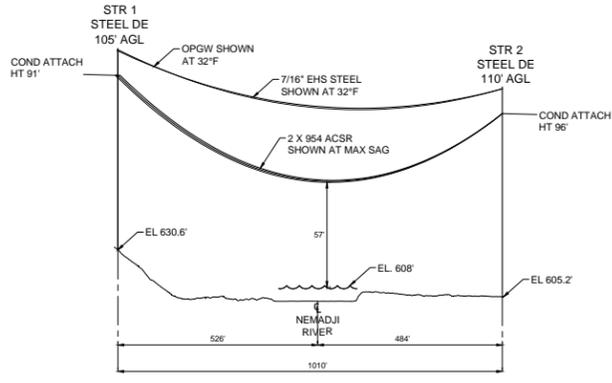
COMBUSTION TURBINE GENERATOR

NEW 16" GAS PIPELINE

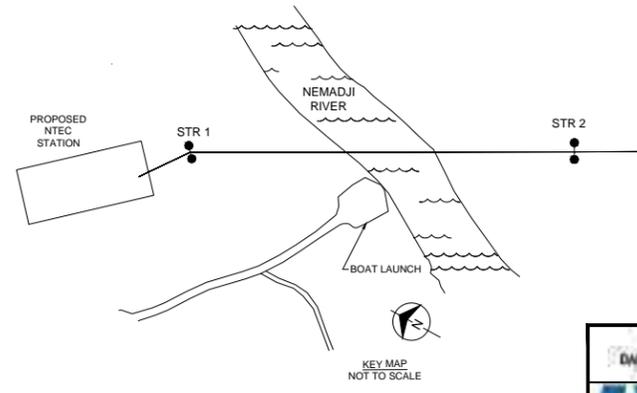
WETLAND LIMIT

PROP LINE

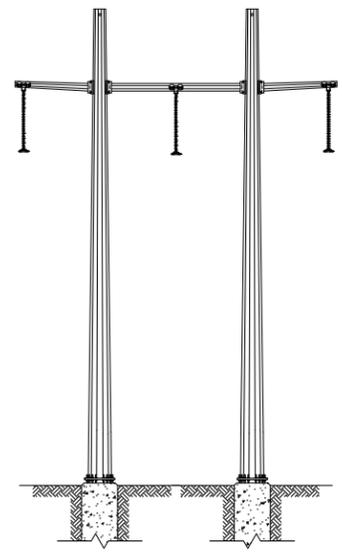
PROFILE VIEW
LOOKING NORTHEAST



PLAN VIEW
LOOKING NORTHEAST



STR 1 & 2



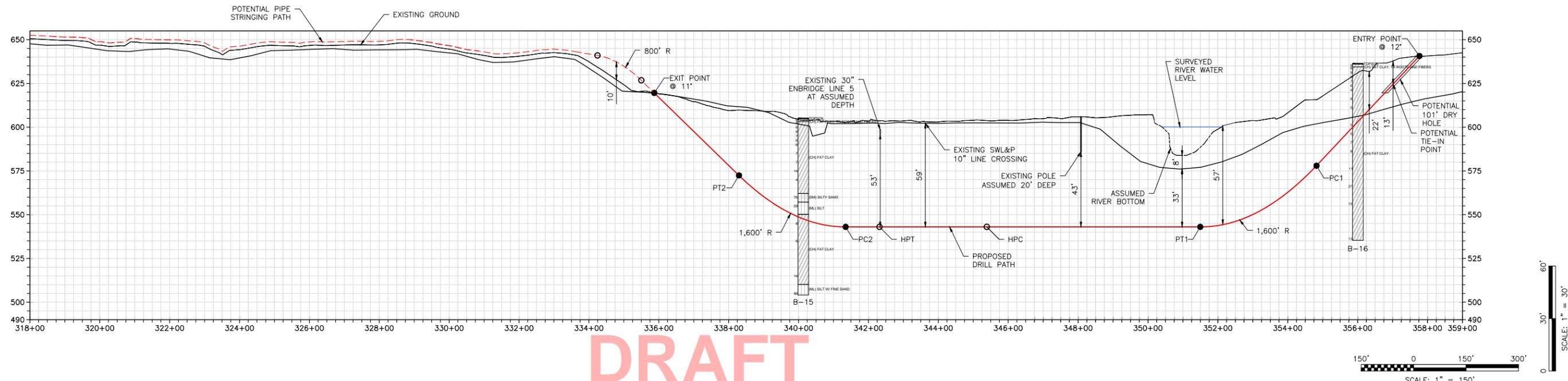
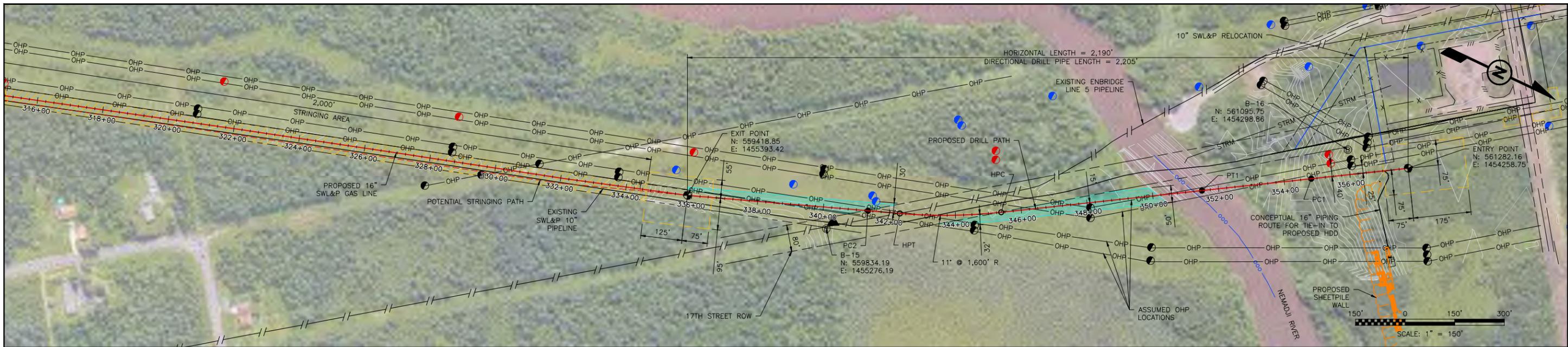
- NOTES
1. NEMADJI RIVER 100 YR. FLOOD ELEVATION IS 608' BASED ON FEMA FLOOD MAP DATED FEBRUARY 2, 2012
 2. REQUIRED CLEARANCE TO NEMADJI RIVER ASSUMED TO BE 57' BASED ON 2017 NESC CLEARANCE TO RIGGING/ LAUNCHING AREAS 2000 ACRES.
 3. VERTICAL CLEARANCE TO 100 YR. FLOOD EL. WILL BE MAINTAINED UNDER THE WEATHER CASE RESULTING IN THE GREATEST CONDUCTOR SAG.
 4. (1) 48 FIBER OPGW AND (1) 7/16" EHS STEEL TO BE USED AS SHIELDING WIRES.
 5. (3) 2 X 954 CARDINAL ACSR TO BE USED AS 345KV CONDUCTOR.

PRELIMINARY - NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

		MINNESOTA POWER & DAIRYLAND POWER NTEC TRANSMISSION LINE SINGLE CIRCUIT 345KV NEMADJI RIVER CROSSING SUPERIOR, WISCONSIN	project no.	106604
			contract no.	
			EXHIBIT B-2	

COPYRIGHT © 2018 BURNS & McDONNELL ENGINEERING COMPANY, INC.

www.dairylandpower.com | P:\Dairyland\NTEC\Projects\NTEC\NTEC_TRANSMISSION\CADD\BIM\BIM_01\10-20-2018\10-27-DDB.MXD



DRAFT



DIRECTIONAL DRILL DATA		
DESCRIPTION	STATION (ft)	ELEVATION (ft)
ENTRY AT 12°	357+77.00	640.61'
PC1 (1,600' R)	354+82.25	577.96'
PT1	351+49.59	543.00'
HPC (1,600' R)	345+38.75	543.00'
HPT AT 11°	342+31.57	543.00'
PC2 (1,600' R)	341+34.80	543.00'
PT2	338+29.50	572.40'
EXIT AT 11°	335+87.00	619.53'
HORIZONTAL DISTANCE (ft) = 2,190.00'		
DIRECTIONAL DRILL PIPE LENGTH (ft) = 2,205.45'		

- GENERAL NOTES**
- PLACEMENT OF HORIZONTAL DRILLING RIG IS NOT FIXED BY DESIGNATION OF ENTRY AND EXIT POINTS. DRILLING RIG PLACEMENT AND/OR THE USE OF DUAL RIGS SHALL BE AT CONTRACTOR'S OPTION, AS LONG AS THE DRILLING RIG IS PLACED INSIDE APPROVED WORKSPACE BOUNDARIES.
 - CONTRACTOR IS TO CONTACT UTILITY LOCATIONS/NOTIFICATION SERVICE FOR THE CONSTRUCTION AREA.
 - CONTRACTOR IS TO POSITIVELY LOCATE AND STAKE ALL EXISTING UNDERGROUND FACILITIES. ANY FACILITIES LOCATED WITHIN 10 FEET OF THE DESIGNED DRILL PATH SHALL BE EXPOSED.
 - CONTRACTOR IS TO MODIFY DRILLING PRACTICES AND DOWNHOLE ASSEMBLIES AS NECESSARY TO PREVENT DAMAGE TO EXISTING FACILITIES.
 - NORTHINGS AND EASTINGS ARE IN US SURVEY FEET REFERENCED TO WISCONSIN STATE PLANE NORTH, NAD83 ELEVATIONS ARE IN US FEET.
 - DRILLED PATH STATIONING IS IN FEET BY HORIZONTAL MEASUREMENT AND IS REFERENCED TO THE CONTROL POSITION ESTABLISHED FOR THE DRILLED SEGMENT.
 - DRILL PATH COORDINATES REFER TO CENTERLINE OF PIPE.
 - ALL UTILITY LOCATIONS WERE ESTABLISHED BY A COMBINATION OF CLIENT PROVIDED DATA, 811 TICKET FIELD MARKINGS, AND THE USE OF ELECTRONIC UTILITY LOCATING SYSTEMS.
 - CONTRACTOR TO ACTIVELY MONITOR THE AREA FOR IMPACTS THAT COULD OCCUR AS A RESULT OF TRENCHLESS OPERATIONS (E.G. SETTLEMENT, HEAVE, AND DRILLING FLUID FLOW).
 - GEOTECHNICAL DATA IS PRESENTED FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY. REFERENCE SHOULD BE MADE TO THE FINAL GEOTECHNICAL INVESTIGATION REPORT FOR FULL DETAILS REGARDING SUBSURFACE DESCRIPTIONS AND IDENTIFIED CONDITIONS.
 - TOPOGRAPHIC SURVEY WAS PROVIDED BY LSC SURVEY.
 - THE EXISTING PERMANENT EASEMENT LOCATION WAS ESTABLISHED BY COMPILING DOCUMENTATION PROVIDED BY SUPERIOR WATER LIGHT & POWER. LAKE SUPERIOR CONSULTING GIVES NO WARRANTY, EXPRESSED OR IMPLIED, AS TO THE ACCURACY, RELIABILITY, OR COMPLETENESS OF THE SHOWN EXISTING PERMANENT EASEMENT LOCATION.
 - IMAGERY SOURCE: GOOGLE EARTH (2017).
 - NTCC FACILITY AREA PIPING AND SHEETPILE WALL, DEPTHS OF EXISTING POWER POLES AND LOCATIONS OF PROPOSED POLES WERE PROVIDED BY SWL&P.

RECOMMENDED TOLERANCES	
ITEM	TOLERANCE
PILOT HOLE ENTRY ANGLE	INCREASE ANGLE UP TO 1° (STEEPER). NO DECREASE IN ANGLE ALLOWED.
PILOT HOLE ENTRY LOCATION	AS PER COORDINATES PROVIDED BY COMPANY. NO CHANGES WITHOUT COMPANY APPROVAL.
PILOT HOLE EXIT ANGLE	INCREASE ANGLE UP TO 1° (STEEPER) OR DECREASE UP TO 2° (FLATTER).
PILOT HOLE EXIT LOCATION	UP TO 20 FEET BEYOND OR 10 FEET SHORT OF THE EXIT STAKE. BETWEEN 5 FEET LEFT AND 5 FEET RIGHT OF CENTERLINE.
PILOT HOLE DEPTH	UP TO 2 FEET ABOVE THE DESIGN DRILL PROFILE OR 10 FEET BELOW THE DESIGN DRILL PROFILE.
PILOT HOLE ALIGNMENT	SHALL REMAIN WITHIN 5 FEET LEFT OR RIGHT OF THE HDD CENTERLINE.

LEGEND	
	PROPOSED 16" SWL&P PIPELINE
	EXISTING 10" SWL&P PIPELINE
	PROPOSED 10" SWL&P RE-ROUTE
	EXISTING EASEMENT
	PROPOSED EASEMENT
	ROAD ROW
	WATERBODY
	TEMPORARY WORKSPACE
	EXISTING FOREIGN LINE
	EDGE OF ROAD
	STRM
	OHP
	OHP
	ADDITIONAL TEMPORARY WORKSPACE
	WETLAND
	PROPOSED ADDITIONAL EASEMENT
	RECTIFIER
	DRILLED PATH ENTRY/EXIT POINT
	SOIL BORE LOCATION
	EXISTING POWER POLE
	PROPOSED 345KV POWER POLE
	PROPOSED 115/161KV POWER POLE
	COHESIVE SOILS, UCS, LBS/FT ² N VALUES
	MATERIAL GRAPHIC
	MATERIAL DESCRIPTION (COLOR)

REVISION			APPROVAL				
REV No	DATE	DESCRIPTION	CAD	CHK	ENG	APP	PM
R2	01/05/18	PRELIMINARY DESIGN	CEF	JAM	RJS	JRS	AGG
R3	01/24/18	PRELIMINARY DESIGN	CEF	JAM	RJS	JRS	AGG
R4	09/06/18	ISSUED FOR DISCUSSION	CEF	JAM	RJS	JRS	AGG
R5	10/19/18	ISSUED FOR DISCUSSION	CEF	JAM	IAH	RJS	AGG

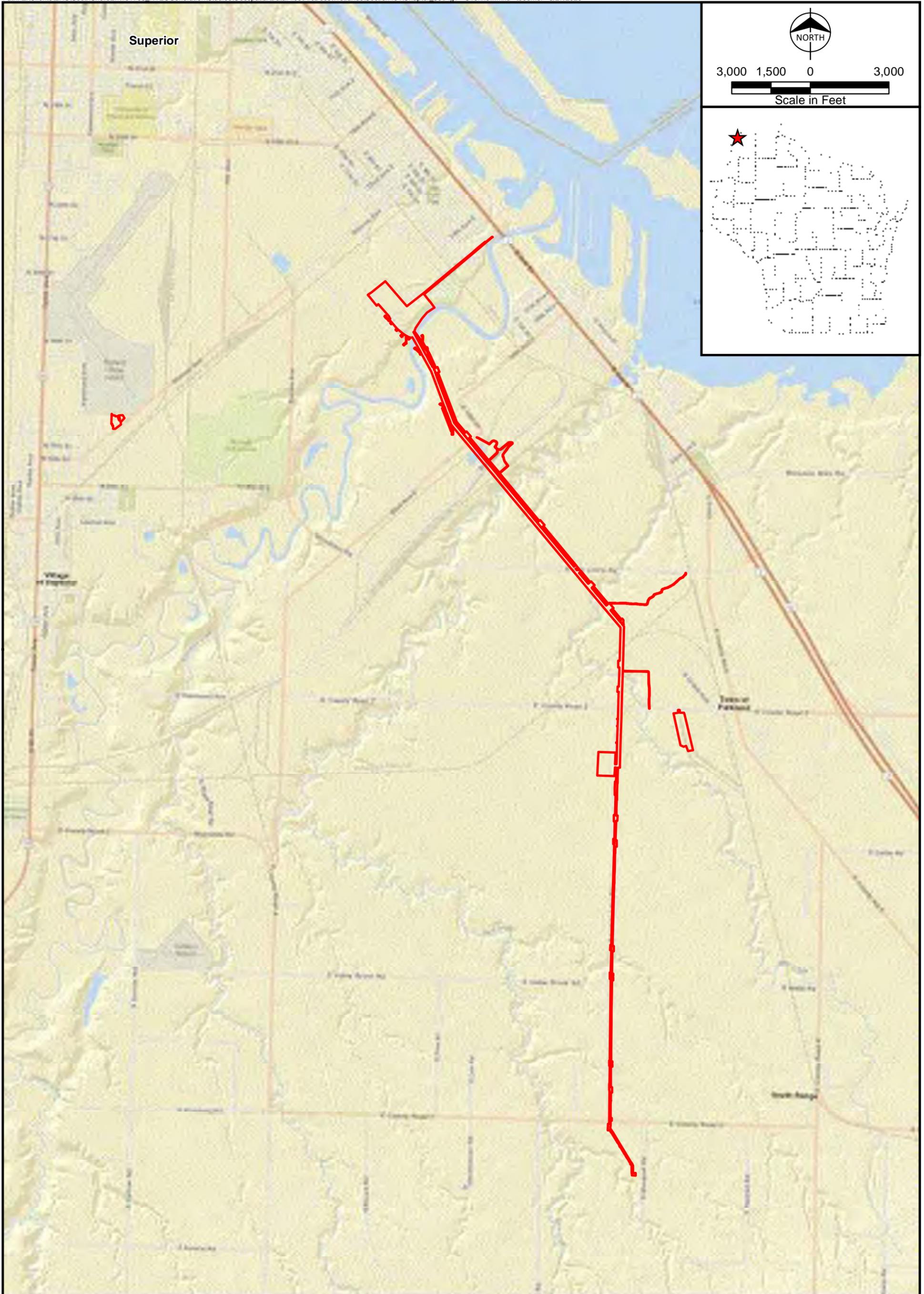
LAKE SUPERIOR CONSULTING
EXCELLENCE & INTEGRITY
130 West Superior Street, Suite 500, Duluth, MN 55802
www.LSCConsulting.com
218.727.3141

SWL&P
AN ALLETE COMPANY

PROJECT INFORMATION	
SWL&P NATURAL GAS LATERAL PIPELINE TO NEMADJI TRAIL ENERGY CENTER DOUGLAS COUNTY, WI	
LSC PROJECT NUMBER	00217650455

DRAWING INFORMATION	
HORIZONTAL DIRECTIONAL DRILL DESIGN NEMADJI RIVER CROSSING	
SCALE NOTED	17455.1-M.8.5-007-R5
PLOTTED SIZE: ANSI EXPAND D (34x22)	

APPENDIX C – PROJECT FIGURES



 Project Area

Figure C-1
Project Location
NTEC Project
Superior, Wisconsin

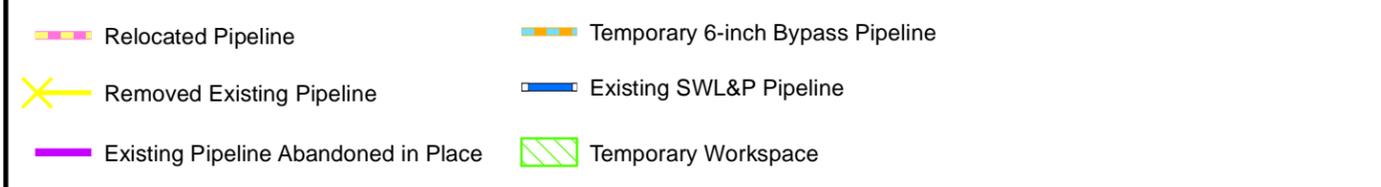
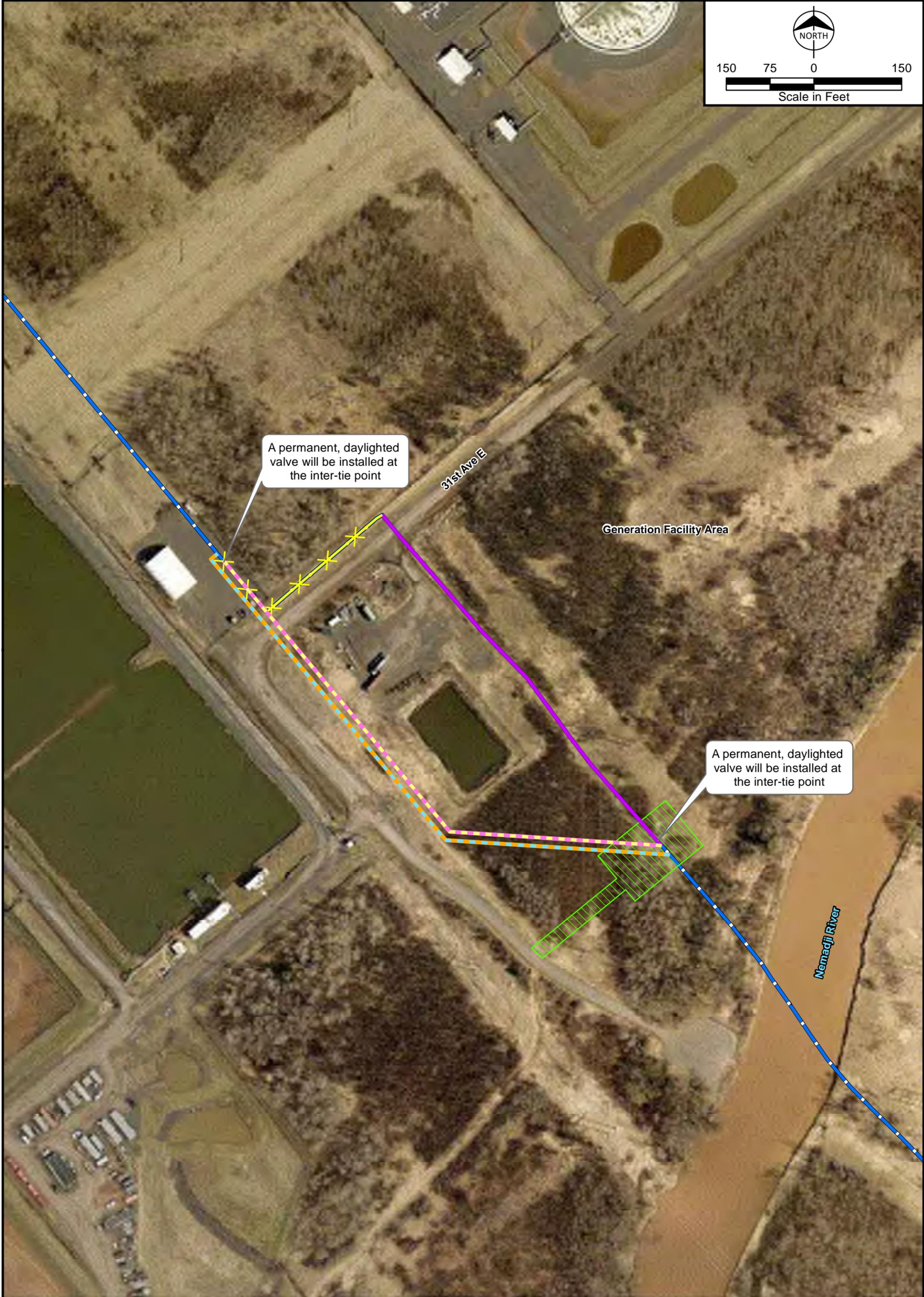
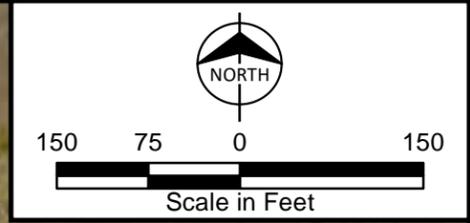
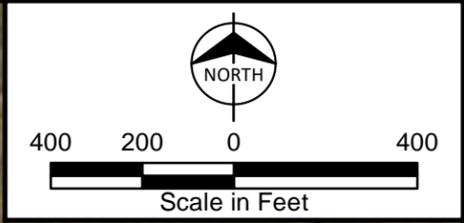
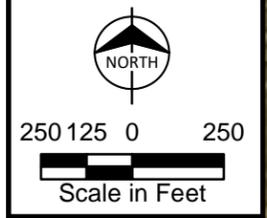


Figure C-2
Natural Gas Pipeline
Relocation Components
NTEC Project
Superior, Wisconsin



	Relocations	Collocations	Removals
Temporary Access Road	SWLP 160	SWLP 160/761	SWLP 160 Removal
Temporary Workpad	SWLP 168	SWLP 168/GRE	SWLP 168 Removal
New/Relocated Structure	SWLP 761		SWLP 761 Removal
Structure to be Removed			

Figure C-3
Transmission Relocation
Components
NTEC Project
Superior, Wisconsin

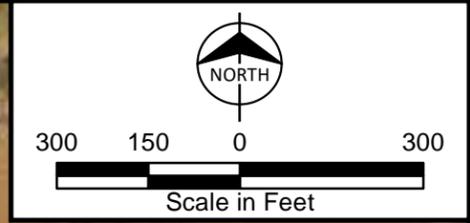


Potable water intake ties into existing pipeline at this location

Sanitary water discharge ties into existing sewer system at this location

- Primary Facility Footprint
- Laydown/Construction Staging Area
- Parking Area
- Fence
- Fiber Line (10' ROW)
- Expanded Stormwater Pond
- 10" Gas Backup Pipeline (50' ROW)
- Existing Water Discharge Pipe
- Potable Water Intake (20' ROW)
- Sanitary Water Discharge (20' ROW)

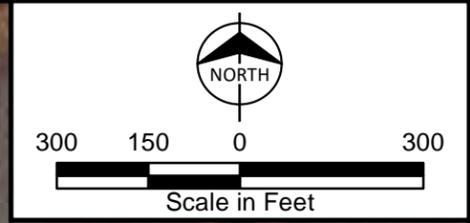
Figure C-4
Generation Facility Components
NTEC Project
Superior, Wisconsin



- | | | | | | | | |
|--|------------------------|--|--------------------------------|--|----------------|--|-------------|
| | Right-of-Way (ROW) | | Temporary Clear Span Bridge | | In ROW Access | | Pipe Trench |
| | Laydown | | Temporary Workspace | | Off ROW Access | | |
| | Meter Station Boundary | | Additional Temporary Workspace | | HDD Area | | |



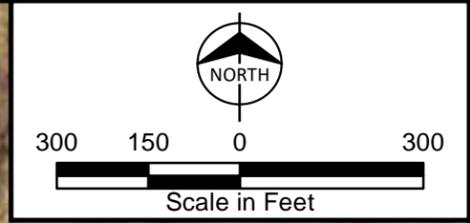
Figure C-5.1
Natural Gas Pipeline Components
NTEC Project
Superior, Wisconsin



- | | | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|-------------|
| Right-of-Way (ROW) | Temporary Clear Span Bridge | In ROW Access | Pipe Trench |
| Laydown | Temporary Workspace | Off ROW Access | |
| Meter Station Boundary | Additional Temporary Workspace | HDD Area | |



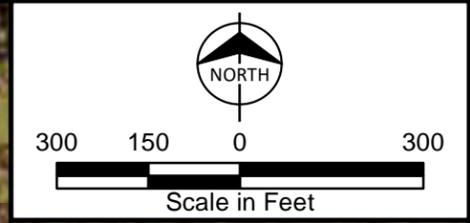
Figure C-5.2
Natural Gas Pipeline Components
NTEC Project
Superior, Wisconsin



- | | | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|-------------|
| Right-of-Way (ROW) | Temporary Clear Span Bridge | In ROW Access | Pipe Trench |
| Laydown | Temporary Workspace | Off ROW Access | |
| Meter Station Boundary | Additional Temporary Workspace | HDD Area | |



Figure C-5.3
Natural Gas Pipeline Components
NTEC Project
Superior, Wisconsin



- | | | | | | | | |
|--|------------------------|--|--------------------------------|--|----------------|--|-------------|
| | Right-of-Way (ROW) | | Temporary Clear Span Bridge | | In ROW Access | | Pipe Trench |
| | Laydown | | Temporary Workspace | | Off ROW Access | | |
| | Meter Station Boundary | | Additional Temporary Workspace | | HDD Area | | |



Figure C-5.4
Natural Gas Pipeline Components
NTEC Project
Superior, Wisconsin

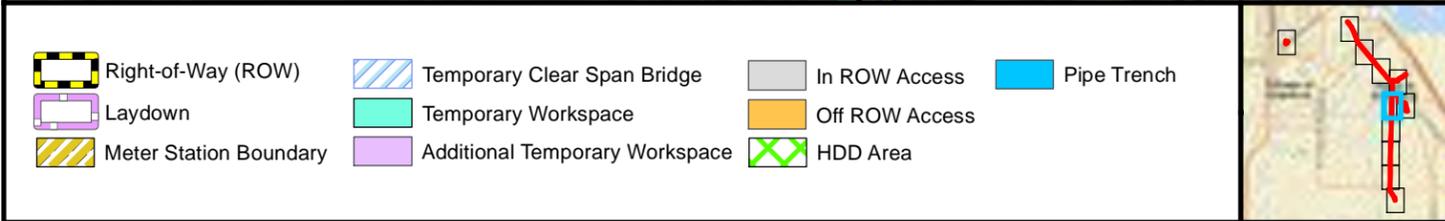
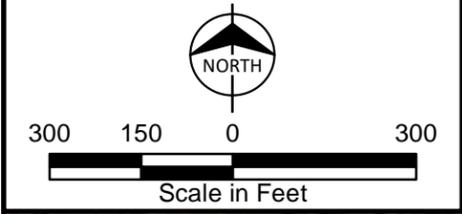
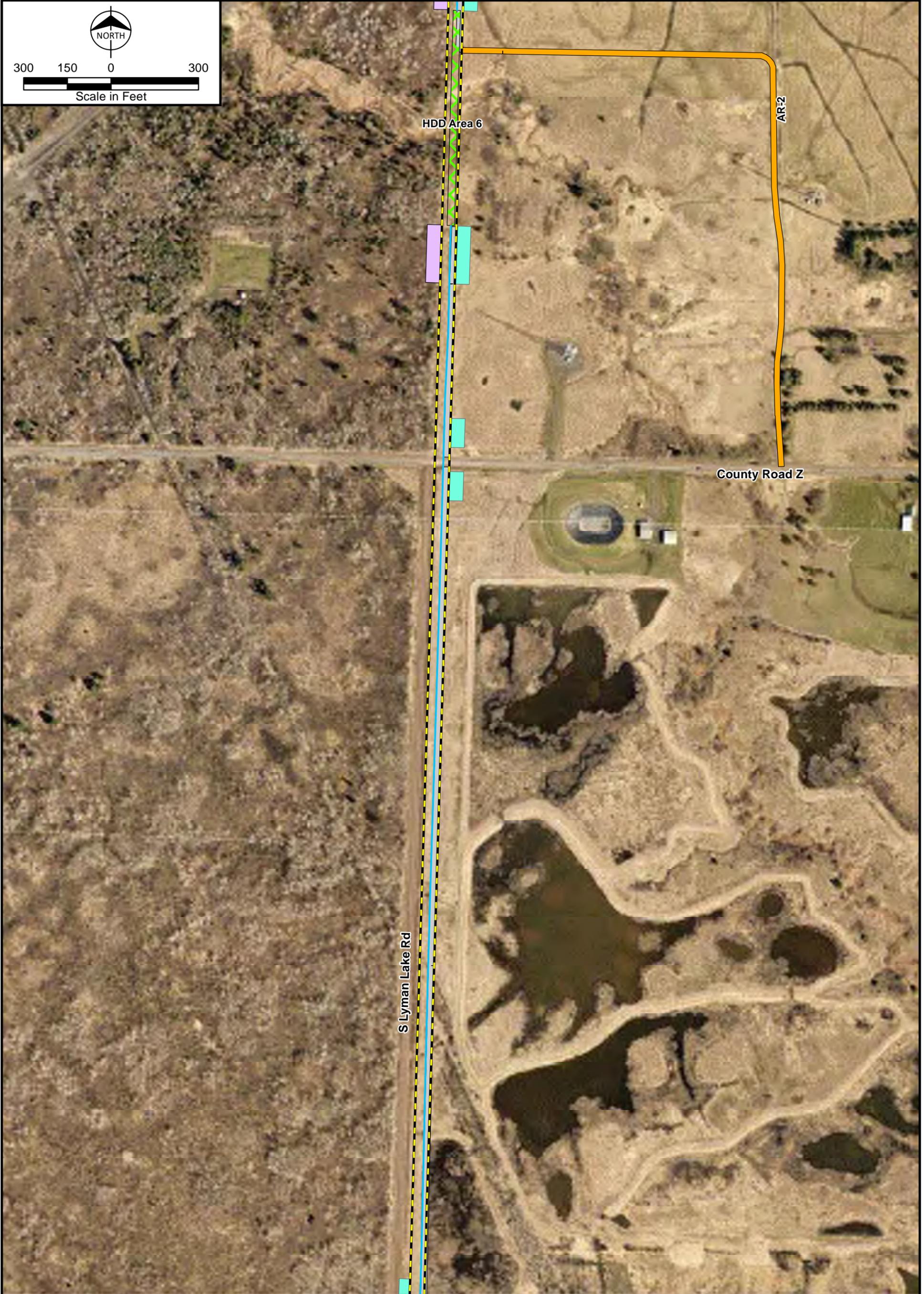


Figure C-5.5
 Natural Gas Pipeline Components
 NTEC Project
 Superior, Wisconsin



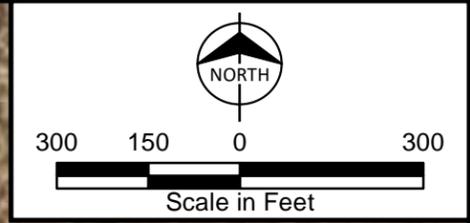
HDD Area 8

S Lyman Lake Rd

- | | | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|-------------|
| Right-of-Way (ROW) | Temporary Clear Span Bridge | In ROW Access | Pipe Trench |
| Laydown | Temporary Workspace | Off ROW Access | |
| Meter Station Boundary | Additional Temporary Workspace | HDD Area | |



Figure C-5.6
Natural Gas Pipeline Components
NTEC Project
Superior, Wisconsin



- | | | | | | | | |
|--|------------------------|--|--------------------------------|--|----------------|--|-------------|
| | Right-of-Way (ROW) | | Temporary Clear Span Bridge | | In ROW Access | | Pipe Trench |
| | Laydown | | Temporary Workspace | | Off ROW Access | | |
| | Meter Station Boundary | | Additional Temporary Workspace | | HDD Area | | |

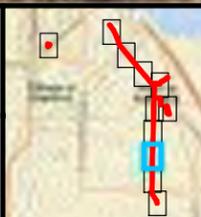
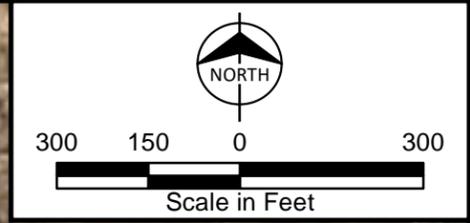


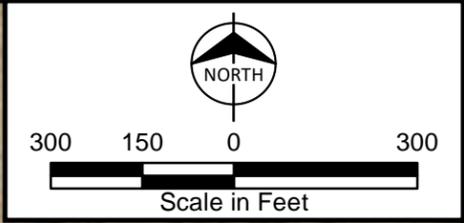
Figure C-5.7
Natural Gas Pipeline Components
NTEC Project
Superior, Wisconsin



- | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |



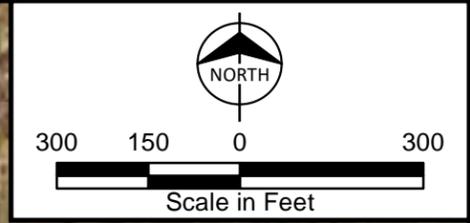
Figure C-5.8
Natural Gas Pipeline Components
NTEC Project
Superior, Wisconsin



- | | | | | | | | |
|--|------------------------|--|--------------------------------|--|----------------|--|-------------|
| | Right-of-Way (ROW) | | Temporary Clear Span Bridge | | In ROW Access | | Pipe Trench |
| | Laydown | | Temporary Workspace | | Off ROW Access | | |
| | Meter Station Boundary | | Additional Temporary Workspace | | HDD Area | | |



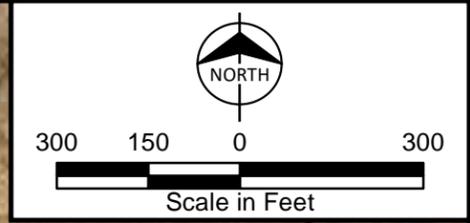
Figure C-5.9
Natural Gas Pipeline Components
NTEC Project
Superior, Wisconsin



- | | | | | | | | |
|--|------------------------|--|--------------------------------|--|----------------|--|-------------|
| | Right-of-Way (ROW) | | Temporary Clear Span Bridge | | In ROW Access | | Pipe Trench |
| | Laydown | | Temporary Workspace | | Off ROW Access | | HDD Area |
| | Meter Station Boundary | | Additional Temporary Workspace | | | | |



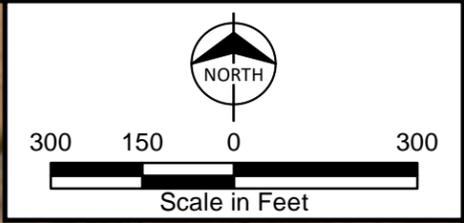
Figure C-5.10
Natural Gas Pipeline Components
NTEC Project
Superior, Wisconsin



- | | | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|-------------|
| Right-of-Way (ROW) | Temporary Clear Span Bridge | In ROW Access | Pipe Trench |
| Laydown | Temporary Workspace | Off ROW Access | |
| Meter Station Boundary | Additional Temporary Workspace | HDD Area | |



Figure C-5.11
Natural Gas Pipeline Components
NTEC Project
Superior, Wisconsin



- | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Right-of-Way (ROW) | Temporary Clear Span Bridge | In ROW Access |
| Laydown | Temporary Workpad | Off ROW Access |
| Switchyard | Structure Foundations | Great River Energy Shifted ROW |

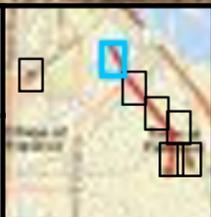
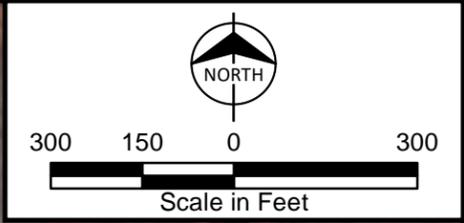


Figure C-6.1
Transmission Line Components
NTEC Project
Superior, Wisconsin



This area represents Great River Energy's required ROW shift of their existing ROW to accommodate the Project's proposed transmission line



- | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Right-of-Way (ROW) | Temporary Clear Span Bridge | In ROW Access |
| Laydown | Temporary Workpad | Off ROW Access |
| Switchyard | Structure Foundations | Great River Energy Shifted ROW |

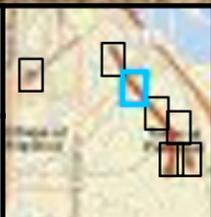
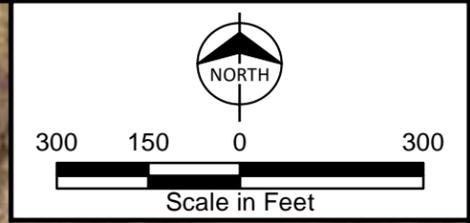


Figure C-6.2
Transmission Line Components
NTEC Project
Superior, Wisconsin



- | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Right-of-Way (ROW) | Temporary Clear Span Bridge | In ROW Access |
| Laydown | Temporary Workpad | Off ROW Access |
| Switchyard | Structure Foundations | Great River Energy Shifted ROW |

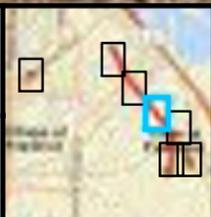
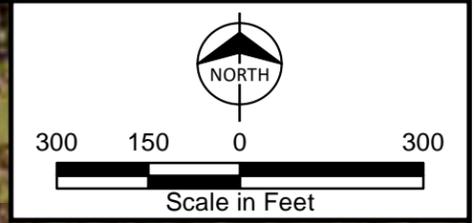


Figure C-6.3
Transmission Line Components
NTEC Project
Superior, Wisconsin



- | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Right-of-Way (ROW) | Temporary Clear Span Bridge | In ROW Access |
| Laydown | Temporary Workpad | Off ROW Access |
| Switchyard | Structure Foundations | Great River Energy Shifted ROW |



Figure C-6.4
Transmission Line Components
NTEC Project
Superior, Wisconsin



- | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Right-of-Way (ROW) | Temporary Clear Span Bridge | In ROW Access |
| Laydown | Temporary Workpad | Off ROW Access |
| Switchyard | Structure Foundations | Great River Energy Shifted ROW |

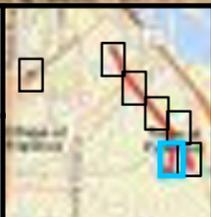
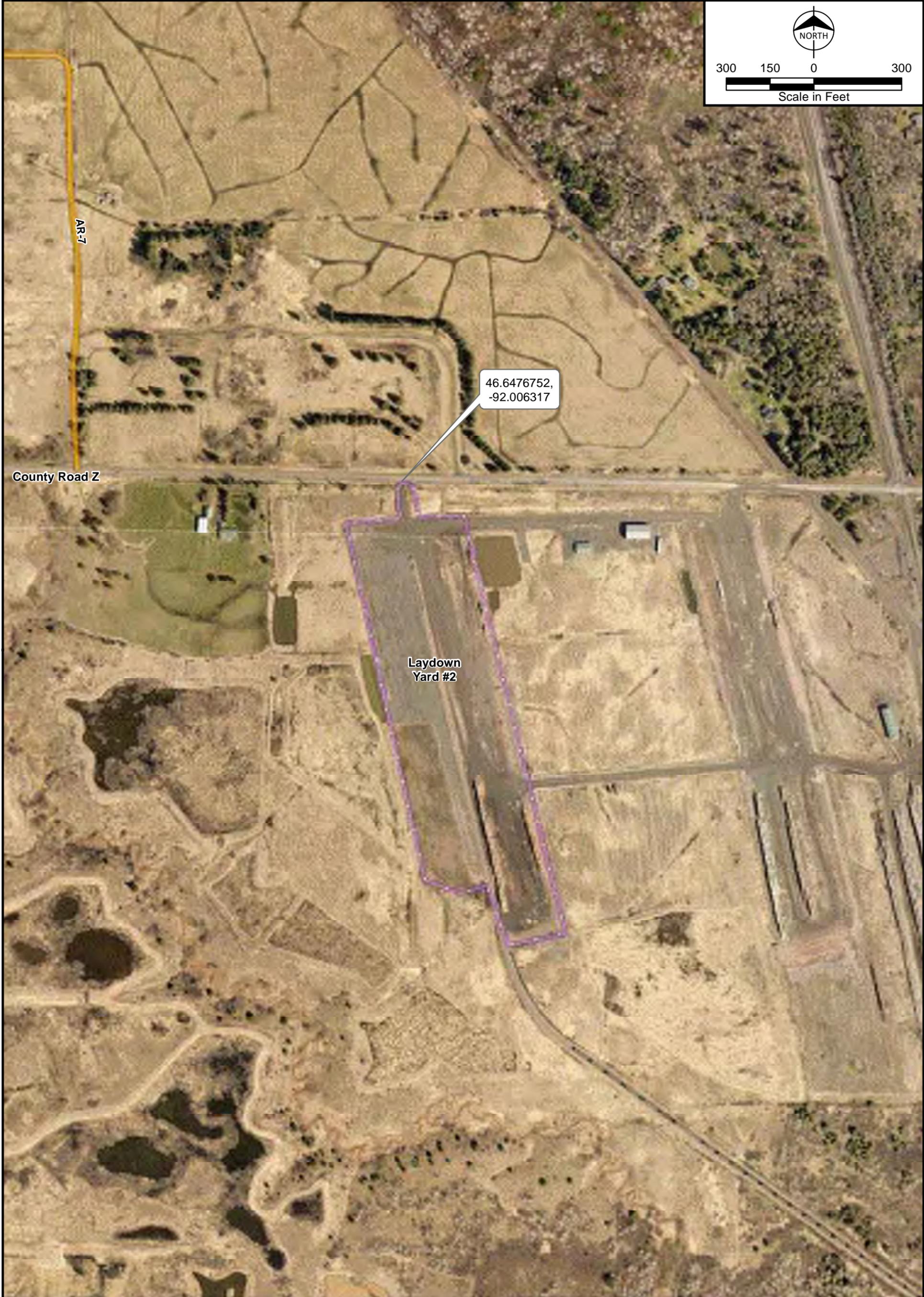
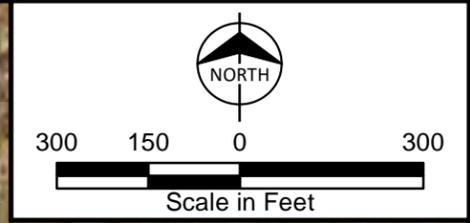


Figure C-6.5
Transmission Line Components
NTEC Project
Superior, Wisconsin



- | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Right-of-Way (ROW) | Temporary Clear Span Bridge | In ROW Access |
| Laydown | Temporary Workpad | Off ROW Access |
| Switchyard | Structure Foundations | Great River Energy Shifted ROW |

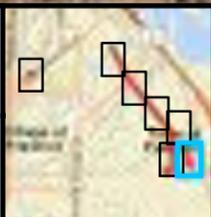


Figure C-6.6
Transmission Line Components
NTEC Project
Superior, Wisconsin



- | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Right-of-Way (ROW) | Temporary Clear Span Bridge | In ROW Access |
| Laydown | Temporary Workpad | Off ROW Access |
| Switchyard | Structure Foundations | Great River Energy Shifted ROW |



Figure C-6.7
Transmission Line Components
NTEC Project
Superior, Wisconsin



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Green Bay Ecological Services Field Office
2661 Scott Tower Drive
New Franken, WI 54229-9565
Phone: (920) 866-1717 Fax: (920) 866-1710

In Reply Refer To:

September 02, 2020

Consultation Code: 03E17000-2020-TA-1290

Event Code: 03E17000-2020-E-06408

Project Name: Nemadji Trail Energy Center (NTEC) Project

Subject: Verification letter for the 'Nemadji Trail Energy Center (NTEC) Project' project under the January 5, 2016, Programmatic Biological Opinion on Final 4(d) Rule for the Northern Long-eared Bat and Activities Excepted from Take Prohibitions.

Dear Brian Roh:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) received on September 02, 2020 your effects determination for the 'Nemadji Trail Energy Center (NTEC) Project' (the Action) using the northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*) key within the Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) system. This IPaC key assists users in determining whether a Federal action is consistent with the activities analyzed in the Service's January 5, 2016, Programmatic Biological Opinion (PBO). The PBO addresses activities excepted from "take"^[1] prohibitions applicable to the northern long-eared bat under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA) (87 Stat.884, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.).

Based upon your IPaC submission, the Action is consistent with activities analyzed in the PBO. The Action may affect the northern long-eared bat; however, any take that may occur as a result of the Action is not prohibited under the ESA Section 4(d) rule adopted for this species at 50 CFR §17.40(o). Unless the Service advises you within 30 days of the date of this letter that your IPaC-assisted determination was incorrect, this letter verifies that the PBO satisfies and concludes your responsibilities for this Action under ESA Section 7(a)(2) with respect to the northern long-eared bat.

Please report to our office any changes to the information about the Action that you submitted in IPaC, the results of any bat surveys conducted in the Action area, and any dead, injured, or sick northern long-eared bats that are found during Action implementation. If the Action is not completed within one year of the date of this letter, you must update and resubmit the information required in the IPaC key.

This IPaC-assisted determination allows you to rely on the PBO for compliance with ESA Section 7(a)(2) only for the northern long-eared bat. It **does not** apply to the following ESA-protected species that also may occur in the Action area:

- Canada Lynx, *Lynx canadensis* (Threatened)
- Fassett's Locoweed, *Oxytropis campestris var. chartacea* (Threatened)
- Gray Wolf, *Canis lupus* (Endangered)
- Piping Plover, *Charadrius melodus* (Endangered)
- Red Knot, *Calidris canutus rufa* (Threatened)

If the Action may affect other federally listed species besides the northern long-eared bat, a proposed species, and/or designated critical habitat, additional consultation between you and this Service office is required. If the Action may disturb bald or golden eagles, additional coordination with the Service under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act is recommended.

[1]Take means to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct [ESA Section 3(19)].

Action Description

You provided to IPaC the following name and description for the subject Action.

1. Name

Nemadji Trail Energy Center (NTEC) Project

2. Description

The following description was provided for the project 'Nemadji Trail Energy Center (NTEC) Project':

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Rural Utilities Service (RUS) is preparing an environmental assessment (EA) for the proposed Nemadji Trail Energy Center (NTEC) Combined-Cycle Project (Project). South Shore Energy, LLC (SSE), a subsidiary of ALLETE, Inc., and Dairyland Power Cooperative (Dairyland; collectively the Owners), are jointly constructing the Project in the City of Superior, Douglas County, Wisconsin. Dairyland is seeking financial assistance from RUS to finance their portion of the Project. Burns & McDonnell Engineering Company, Inc. (Burns & McDonnell) is assisting RUS with the preparation of the EA for the proposed Project. At the direction of RUS, Burns & McDonnell is obtaining this U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) official species list to identify the threatened, endangered, proposed and candidate species, as well as proposed and final designated critical habitat, that may be affected by the Project.

The Project includes the construction and operation of the approximately 625-megawatt (MW) gas turbine NTEC generation facility, natural gas supply pipeline, 345-kilovolt (kV) transmission line, new switching station, relocation of existing natural gas pipeline and transmission line, staging areas, and laydown yards. Pending regulatory approvals, construction activities are estimated to start in Q3 2020 and finish in 2025.

The NTEC generation facility site for the Project would be east of the existing Enbridge Energy Superior Terminal Facility, along the northwest bank of the Nemadji River and southeast of the intersection of 31st Avenue East and Grand Avenue in the City of Superior. The NTEC site is approximately 26.3 acres in size. It is currently partially wooded with a parking lot and small stormwater pond in the northwest corner. Existing transmission lines and a natural gas pipeline cross the site.

The Owners will construct a 345-kV transmission line between the generation facility north of the Nemadji River and a new, approximately 14-acre switching station (installed and owned by American Transmission Company [ATC]) located on the west side of Lyman Lake Road, approximately 1,680 feet south of the

intersection of Lyman Lake Road and County Road Z in the City of Superior. The 345-kV transmission line route is approximately 3.7 miles in length and would be constructed as a single-circuit 345-kV line or as a double-circuit 345/161-kV line with the existing 161-kV Line No. 160, which is owned by Superior Water, Light & Power (SWL&P), an ALLETE company. Existing ROW will be used where the proposed transmission line is double circuited with the existing 161-kV transmission line. Additional ROW of approximately 25 feet along portions of the existing ROW is expected to be required to accommodate the new transmission line.

SWL&P will construct a 16-inch diameter natural gas pipeline between the NTEC site north of the Nemadji River and an existing Great Lakes Gas Transmission Company (GLGT) natural gas transmission pipeline located south of County Route C and west of Windmill Road. The 16-inch diameter natural gas pipeline will be 100 percent owned and operated by SWL&P. The route is approximately 6.8 miles in length and occurs mostly in existing natural gas pipeline ROW corridors.

SWL&P will remove, abandon, and relocate an existing 10-inch diameter natural gas pipeline at the NTEC site.

To accommodate the new generation facility and new transmission line, the existing electric transmission lines that cross the NTEC generation facility site and the Nemadji River would be relocated. The relocation of the existing 115-kV (Line No. 132), 115-kV (Line No 761), and 161-kV (Line No 160) lines (the relocation routes) would occur prior to the start of construction for the generation facility.

Approximate location of the project can be viewed in Google Maps: <https://www.google.com/maps/place/46.645494481286406N92.00558364495936W>



Determination Key Result

This Federal Action may affect the northern long-eared bat in a manner consistent with the description of activities addressed by the Service's PBO dated January 5, 2016. Any taking that may occur incidental to this Action is not prohibited under the final 4(d) rule at 50 CFR §17.40(o). Therefore, the PBO satisfies your responsibilities for this Action under ESA Section 7(a)(2) relative to the northern long-eared bat.

Determination Key Description: Northern Long-eared Bat 4(d) Rule

This key was last updated in IPaC on May 15, 2017. Keys are subject to periodic revision.

This key is intended for actions that may affect the threatened northern long-eared bat.

The purpose of the key for Federal actions is to assist determinations as to whether proposed actions are consistent with those analyzed in the Service's PBO dated January 5, 2016.

Federal actions that may cause prohibited take of northern long-eared bats, affect ESA-listed species other than the northern long-eared bat, or affect any designated critical habitat, require ESA Section 7(a)(2) consultation in addition to the use of this key. Federal actions that may affect species proposed for listing or critical habitat proposed for designation may require a conference under ESA Section 7(a)(4).

Determination Key Result

This project may affect the threatened Northern long-eared bat; therefore, consultation with the Service pursuant to Section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (87 Stat.884, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) is required. However, based on the information you provided, this project may rely on the Service's January 5, 2016, *Programmatic Biological Opinion on Final 4(d) Rule for the Northern Long-Eared Bat and Activities Excepted from Take Prohibitions* to fulfill its Section 7(a)(2) consultation obligation.

Qualification Interview

1. Is the action authorized, funded, or being carried out by a Federal agency?
Yes
2. Have you determined that the proposed action will have "no effect" on the northern long-eared bat? (If you are unsure select "No")
No
3. Will your activity purposefully **Take** northern long-eared bats?
No
4. [Semantic] Is the project action area located wholly outside the White-nose Syndrome Zone?
Automatically answered
No
5. Have you contacted the appropriate agency to determine if your project is near a known hibernaculum or maternity roost tree?

Location information for northern long-eared bat hibernacula is generally kept in state Natural Heritage Inventory databases – the availability of this data varies state-by-state. Many states provide online access to their data, either directly by providing maps or by providing the opportunity to make a data request. In some cases, to protect those resources, access to the information may be limited. A web page with links to state Natural Heritage Inventory databases and other sources of information on the locations of northern long-eared bat roost trees and hibernacula is available at www.fws.gov/midwest/angered/mammals/nleb/nhisites.html.

Yes

6. Will the action affect a cave or mine where northern long-eared bats are known to hibernate (i.e., hibernaculum) or could it alter the entrance or the environment (physical or other alteration) of a hibernaculum?

No

7. Will the action involve Tree Removal?

Yes

8. Will the action only remove hazardous trees for the protection of human life or property?

No

9. Will the action remove trees within 0.25 miles of a known northern long-eared bat hibernaculum at any time of year?

No

10. Will the action remove a known occupied northern long-eared bat maternity roost tree or any trees within 150 feet of a known occupied maternity roost tree from June 1 through July 31?

No

Project Questionnaire

If the project includes forest conversion, report the appropriate acreages below. Otherwise, type '0' in questions 1-3.

1. Estimated total acres of forest conversion:

21.1

2. If known, estimated acres of forest conversion from April 1 to October 31

7.1

3. If known, estimated acres of forest conversion from June 1 to July 31

0

If the project includes timber harvest, report the appropriate acreages below. Otherwise, type '0' in questions 4-6.

4. Estimated total acres of timber harvest

0

5. If known, estimated acres of timber harvest from April 1 to October 31

0

6. If known, estimated acres of timber harvest from June 1 to July 31

0

If the project includes prescribed fire, report the appropriate acreages below. Otherwise, type '0' in questions 7-9.

7. Estimated total acres of prescribed fire

0

8. If known, estimated acres of prescribed fire from April 1 to October 31

0

9. If known, estimated acres of prescribed fire from June 1 to July 31

0

If the project includes new wind turbines, report the megawatts of wind capacity below. Otherwise, type '0' in question 10.

10. What is the estimated wind capacity (in megawatts) of the new turbine(s)?
0