

September 2, 2011

VIA HAND DELIVERY

Mr. Darrell Nitschke
Executive Secretary
North Dakota Public Service Commission
600 E. Boulevard, Dept. 408
Bismarck, ND 58505-0480

**RE: Minnkota Power Cooperative, Inc.
345 kV Transmission Line – Center
to Grand Forks – Siting Application
Case No. PU-09-670**

Dear Mr. Nitschke:

Minnkota Power Cooperative, Inc. (“Minnkota”), submits this letter to the North Dakota Public Service Commission (“Commission”) to address the August 30, 2011 letter and accompanying information filed by the North Dakota State Lands Department (“NDSL D”), in which the NDSL D requested “reroutes” where Minnkota’s Project would cross certain School Trust parcels. In addition, Minnkota asks the Commission to consider two amendments to its proposed corridor that would enable Minnkota to consider landowner routing requests.

As noted in its Certificate of Corridor Compatibility application (“Application”), Minnkota has been in contact with the NDSL D regarding School Trust lands within the proposed Project corridor. However, the particular “reroutes” requested by the NDSL D in its letter were not identified by NDSL D until last week and, thus, could not be considered by Minnkota during the corridor selection process. The “reroutes” requested by the NDSL D would fall outside of the proposed corridor.

In order to allow Minnkota the opportunity to further analyze and consider the “reroutes” proposed by the NDSL D, Minnkota is not opposed to the Commission widening the corridor in the two “reroute” locations identified by the NDSL D. A description of how the corridor could be widened so that the NDSL D’s routing requests would fall within the corridor is provided in the attached Affidavit of Terry Fasteen, and maps depicting the potential corridor changes are also provided (*see* Exhibit 12c – September 1, 2011 and Exhibit 12j – September 1, 2011). Minnkota hereby waives any right it may have under N.D.C.C. § 28-32-25 to formal notice of and opportunity to cross-examine NDSL D regarding NDSL D’s August 30, 2011 filing.

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200 North Third Street, Suite 150
Bismarck, North Dakota

5E 107 PU-09-670 Filed 09/02/2011 Pages: 8
Affidavit of Terry Fasteen, Map of Proposed Route

OFF Modification
Minr Minnkota Power Cooperative, Inc.

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In addition to the proposed corridor changes to allow consideration of the NDSLDD's routing requests, Minnkota also requests that the Commission consider two additional corridor modifications that would enable Minnkota to consider routing options proposed by landowners. First, Minnkota requests that the corridor be widened approximately 500 feet to the southeast on a Minnkota-owned parcel located on the western end of the Project near the Center 345 kV Substation. The requested modification would enable Minnkota to shift the Project's anticipated right-of-way location so that it is located more on Minnkota's parcel than on the adjacent landowner's parcel, in accordance with the adjacent landowner's request. A map of the proposed route modification is provided as an exhibit to the enclosed Affidavit of Terry Fasteen (*see* Exhibit 12a – September 1, 2011).

Second, Minnkota requests that the corridor be modified on the eastern end of the Project near the Prairie Substation. Certain landowners have requested that the Project follow the quarter-section line so as to minimize impacts to farming; as such, Minnkota proposes to extend the corridor south to the quarter-section line in Section 13 in Oakville Township and in Sections 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 and a portion of 13 in Brenna Township. A map of the proposed route modification is provided as an exhibit to the enclosed Affidavit of Terry Fasteen (*see* Exhibit 12j – September 1, 2011).

Minnkota asks that the Commission consider these two proposed modifications as amendments to its Application if they can be considered without delaying issuance of an order on the Application. However, if addressing the modifications at this time would delay issuance of an order, Minnkota would prefer to request amendment of the corridor at the time that it submits a Route Permit application.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



MOLLIE M. SMITH

MMS/ms

Enclosures

cc: Mr. Gerad Paul (*w/o encl. – via e-mail*)
Mr. Mike Hennes (*w/o encl. – via e-mail*)
Mr. John Graves (*w/o encl. – via e-mail*)
Mr. Wally Lang (*w/o encl. – via e-mail*)
Mr. Brian Hunker (*w/o encl. – via e-mail*)

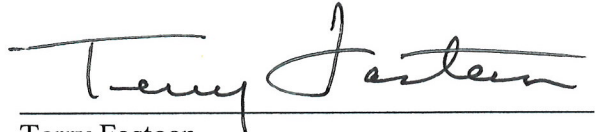
to the northwest in Section 13 in Mercer Township and in Sections 4, 5, 7, 8 and 18 in Pickard Township, all in Sheridan County. On Exhibit 12j – September 1, 2011, the corridor has been widened to the west in Section 1 in Fairfield Township and Sections 13, 24, 25 and 36 in Oakville Township, all in Grand Forks County.

4. That Minnkota has identified two other locations where modification of the corridor would allow Minnkota to consider route alignments requested by landowners.

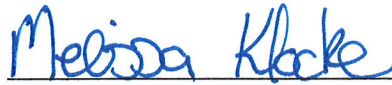
5. That the first proposed modification is on the western end of the Project where it leaves the Center 345 kV Substation. The modification requested would expand the corridor approximately 500 feet to the southeast on a Minnkota-owned parcel. The modification would enable Minnkota to shift the anticipated Project right-of-way so that it is located more on the Minnkota-owned parcel than on the adjacent landowner's parcel, as requested by that landowner. The modification is depicted on the attached Exhibit 12a – September 1, 2011.

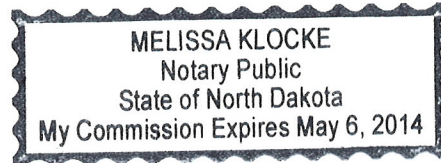
6. The second modification is on the eastern end of the Project as it approaches the Prairie Substation, and would affect Section 13 in Oakville Township and Sections 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18 in Brenna Township, all in Grand Forks County. Landowners have requested that the Project follow the quarter-section line so as to minimize impacts to farming; as such, Minnkota proposes to extend the corridor south to the quarter-section line in Section 13 in Oakville Township and in Sections 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 and a portion of 13 in Brenna Township. The modification is depicted on the attached Exhibit 12j – September 1, 2011.

FURTHER AFFIANT SAYETH NOT.


Terry Fasteen

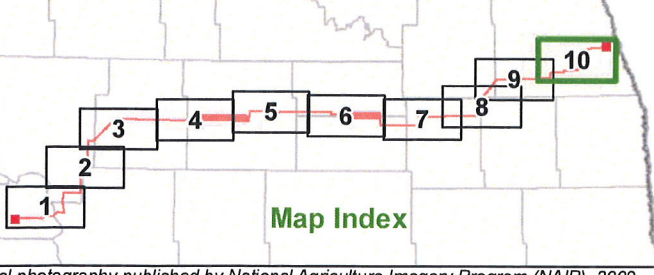
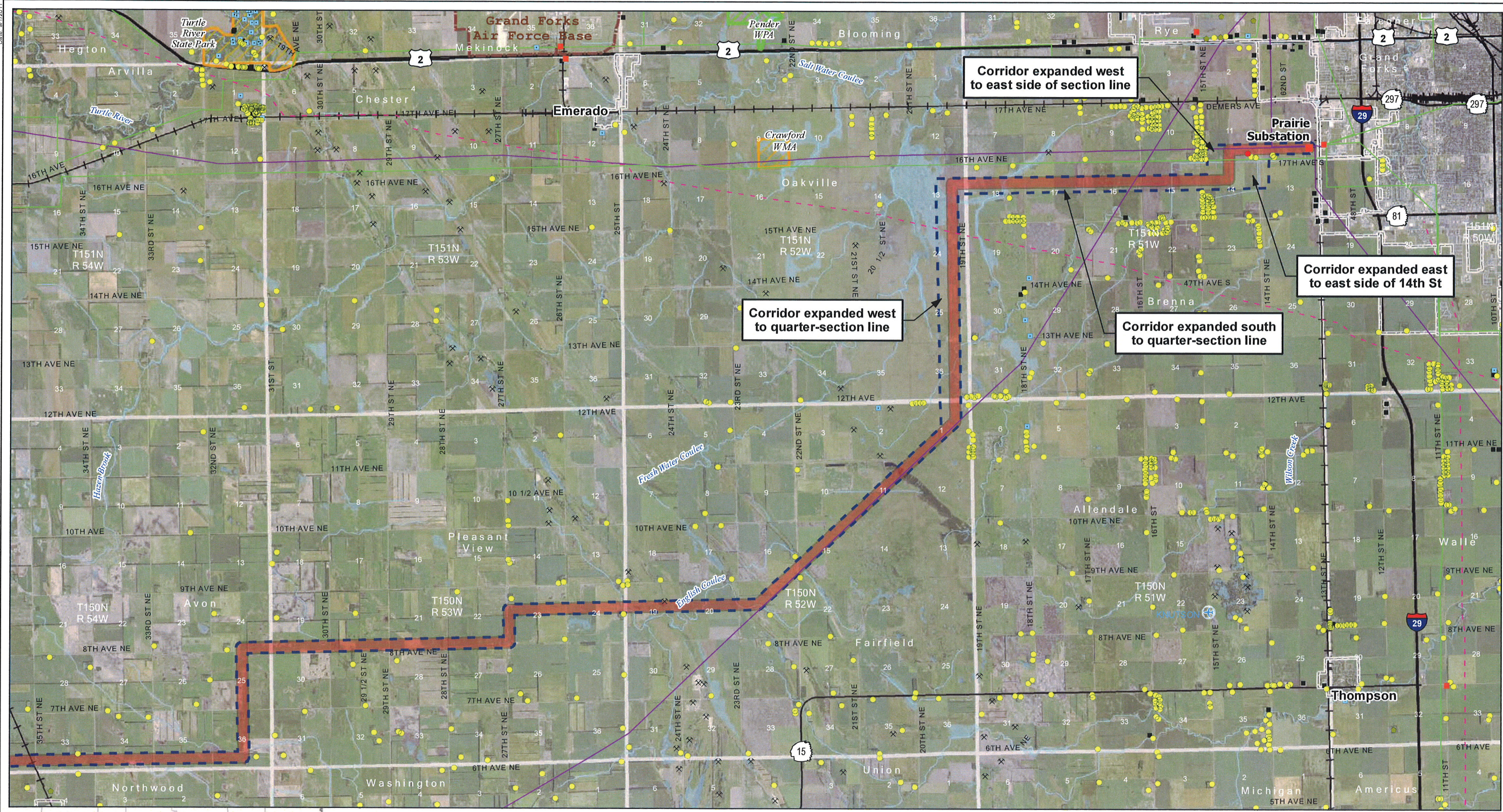
Subscribed and sworn to before me
this 2nd day of September, 2011.


Notary Public



4984108_1.DOC

Date: 9/1/2011
Path: \\sps-gis-filer\user\minkota\10900\map_docs\GIS\Map\Corridor\CenterToGrandForks\20110901\CGF_Ext12_11x17_1_top_CorridorLineCriteria_v2.mxd



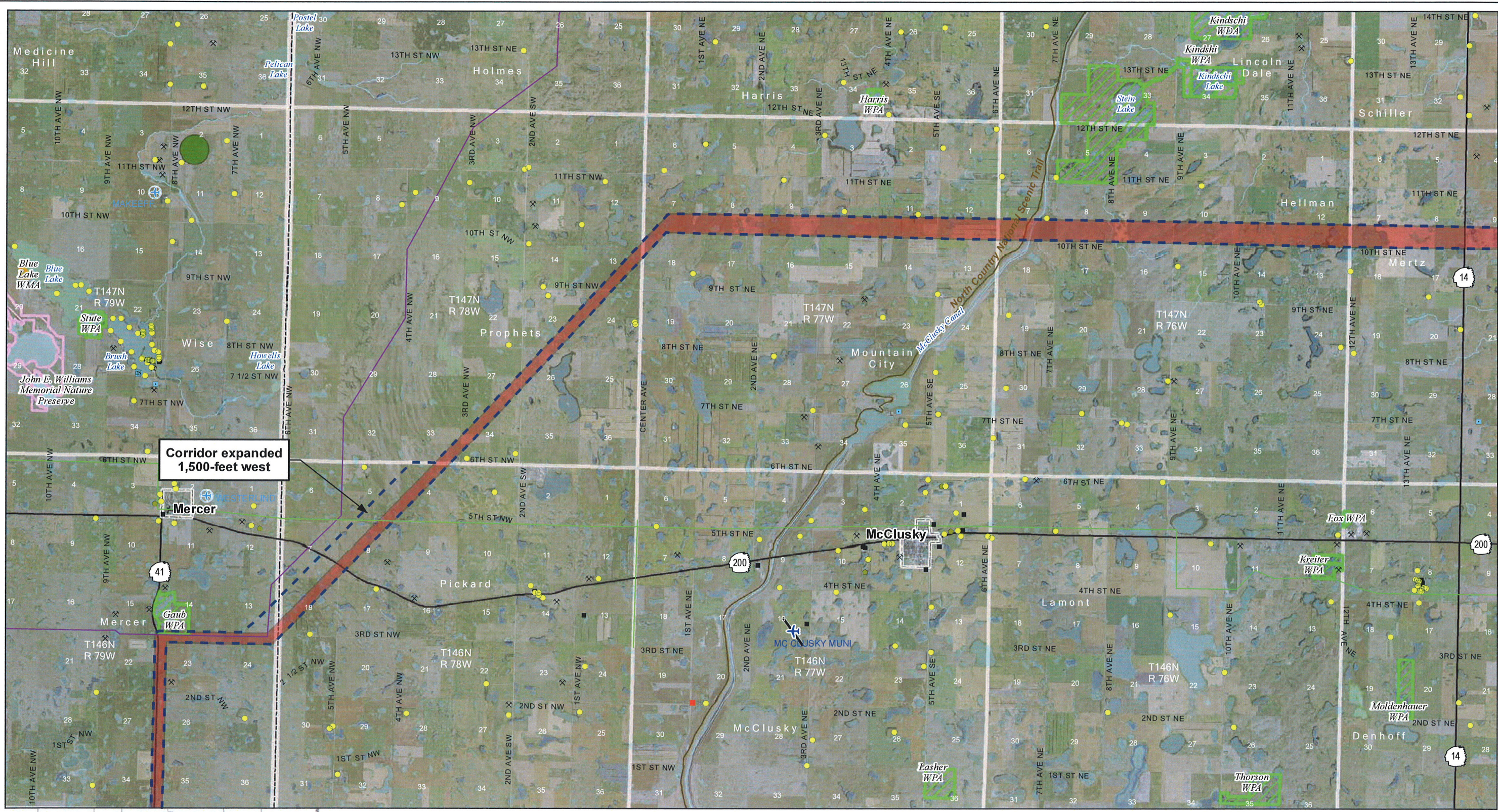
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|--|-----------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------------|
| Project Corridor (filed September 1, 2011) | Existing Transmission Lines | Home within Corridor | Wind Turbine |
| Project Corridor (updated August 10, 2011) | 400-kV DC | Home | State Park, Recreation Area or WMA |
| 230-kV Tie Line Corridor | 345-kV AC | School | USFWS WPA or WDA |
| Substation | 250-kV DC | Business | USFWS NWR |
| Laydown Area | 230-kV AC | Recreation | USBOR Land |
| | 115-kV or less AC | Gravel Pit or Mine | TNC Preserve |
| | Gas or Oil Pipeline | Dump or Landfill | |

Exhibit 12j - September 1, 2011
Modified Project Corridor
Center to Grand Forks Project
Minnkota Power Cooperative, Inc.

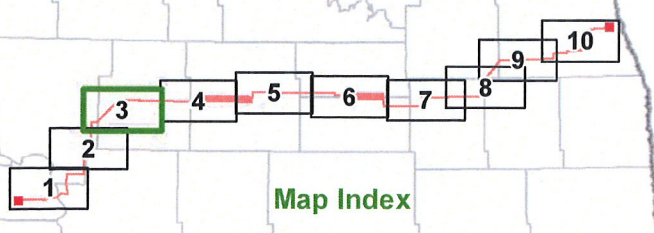
0 1 2 Miles
Scale 1:100,000

Aerial photography published by National Agriculture Imagery Program (NAIP), 2009.

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**Corridor expanded
1,500-foot west**



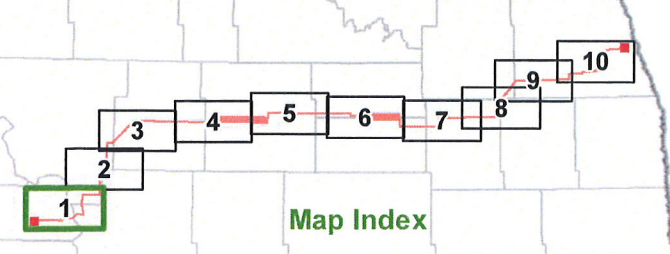
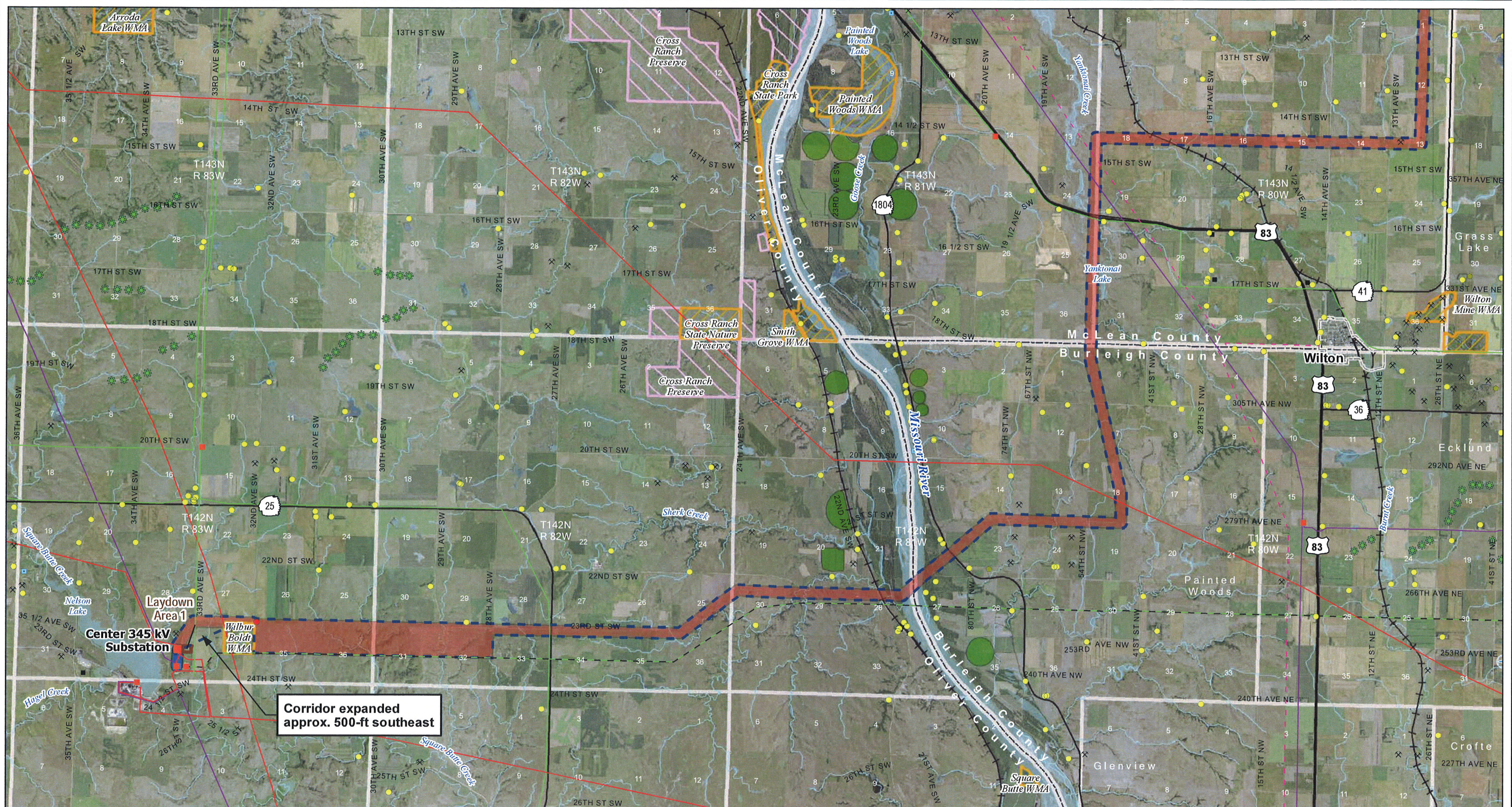
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|---|--|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Corridor (filed September 1, 2011) Project Corridor (updated August 10, 2011) 230-kV Tie Line Corridor Substation Laydown Area | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing Transmission Lines 400-kV DC 345-kV AC 250-kV DC 230-kV AC 115-kV or less AC Gas or Oil Pipeline | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home within Corridor Home School Business Recreation Gravel Pit or Mine Dump or Landfill | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wind Turbine State Park, Recreation Area or WMA USFWS WPA or WDA USFWS NWR USBOR Land TNC Preserve | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Irrigated Land Incorporated Area Public Airport Private Airport USGS River, Stream or Canal NWI Wetland |
|---|--|---|---|--|

Exhibit 12c - September 1, 2011
 Modified Project Corridor
 Center to Grand Forks Project
 Minnkota Power Cooperative, Inc.

0 1 2 Miles
 Scale 1:100,000

Aerial photography published by National Agriculture Imagery Program (NAIP), 2009.

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|--|-----------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------------|
| Project Corridor (filed September 1, 2011) | Existing Transmission Lines | Home within Corridor | Wind Turbine |
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| 230-kV Tie Line Corridor | 345-kV AC | School | USFWS WPA or WDA |
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| | 115-kV or less AC | Gravel Pit or Mine | TNC Preserve |
| | Gas or Oil Pipeline | Dump or Landfill | |
| | | Irrigated Land | Incorporated Area |
| | | | Public Airport |
| | | | Private Airport |
| | | | USGS River, Stream or Canal |
| | | | NWI Wetland |

Exhibit 12a - September 1, 2011
 Modified Project Corridor
 Center to Grand Forks Project
 Minnkota Power Cooperative, Inc.

0 1 2 Miles
 Scale 1:100,000

Aerial photography published by National Agriculture Imagery Program (NAIP), 2009.