



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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October 18, 2018

Darrell Nitschke
North Dakota Public Service Commission
600 East Boulevard, Dept. 408
Bismarck, ND 58505-0480

Re: 2018 Report Regarding Tree/Shrub Replacement Plan
Case No. PU-09-670

Dear Mr. Nitschke:

With this letter, Minnkota Power Cooperative, Inc. submits for filing its 2018 Report Regarding Tree/Shrub Replacement Plan for PU-09-670 – 345 kV Transmission Line – Center to Grand Forks. Please find 10 copies of the 2018 Report. Additionally, I have enclosed an Affidavit of Service.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and do not hesitate to contact me should you have additional questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Schmitz", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Samuel H. Schmitz
Staff Attorney
Minnkota Power Cooperative, Inc.
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366 PU-09-670 Filed: 10/18/2018 Pages: 8
2018 Report regarding tree and shrub replacement plan

Minnkota Power Cooperative, Inc.
Samuel Schmitz, Staff Attorney

STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA
BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
PU-09-670

REPORT REGARDING TREE/SHRUB REPLACEMENT PLAN:
SURVIVAL RATE, OCT. 2018, TREES/SHRUBS PLANTED 2013
SURVIVAL RATE, OCT. 2018, TREES/SHRUBS PLANTED 2014
SURVIVAL RATE, OCT. 2018, TREES/SHRUBS PLANTED 2015
SURVIVAL RATE, OCT. 2018, TREES/SHRUBS PLANTED 2016
SURVIVAL RATE, OCT. 2018, TREES/SHRUBS PLANTED 2017
NO TREES/SHRUBS PLANTED IN 2018

The Public Service Commission of North Dakota (the Commission) approved Minnkota Power Cooperative, Inc.'s (Minnkota) Tree and Shrub Replacement Plan for the 345 kV Transmission Line – Center to Grand Forks by Motion dated May 28, 2014. The approved plan provided that Minnkota will replace each tree/shrub removed for the Center to Grand Forks Transmission Line project (the Project) to be mitigated on a 2-for-1 basis. In the approved Replacement Plan, Minnkota indicated the total trees/shrubs to be replaced is 58,454 with at least 75% surviving for three years after the planting. As discussed in the 2017 Report, the weather during the summer of 2017 resulted in a higher than expected loss of trees. Because of the loss, Minnkota had more trees planted and has now planted a total of 72,071 trees/shrubs as shown on the Attached Exhibit 1. As of this filing, 50,694 trees/shrubs have survived, which is 86.7 percent of Minnkota's obligation in its Replacement Plan.

The approved plan provided that planted trees/shrubs will be inspected once each year for three years to determine the survival rate of the trees/shrubs and to determine whether additional plantings of trees/shrubs are necessary based on the survival rate. Minnkota is to submit a report regarding the survival rate of the trees/shrubs. This is the fifth report Minnkota is submitting to the Commission for this Project and it will provide a summary of all trees that we anticipate planting for this project, including the first plantings in 2013 through the last plantings in 2017.

Minnkota will submit an additional report on or before October 31 of each successive year until three years have elapsed after this final planting season, which final report is anticipated to be filed in 2020. Minnkota hereby submits this 2018 Report Regarding Tree/Shrub Replacement Plan.

1. TREES/SHRUBS PLANTED IN 2013 (Completed 2017)

As discussed in earlier reports, Minnkota had the opportunity to plant 1000 trees/shrubs in Burleigh County prior to the commissioning the power line. The planting was completed in conjunction with Burleigh County Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). These trees were inspected in October 2017 with a survival rate at 95%. 2017 was the final inspection and report for the trees planted in 2013.

2. TREES/SHRUBS PLANTED IN 2014 (Completed 2017)

As discussed in the 2015 report (Docket #362), Minnkota planted 328 trees during the 2014 planting season. In 2017, Minnkota submitted that these trees/shrubs were inspected in October 2017 with an 89% survival rate. 2017 was the third and final inspection and report for the trees planted in 2014.

3. SURVIVAL RATE, OCT. 2018, TREES/SHRUBS PLANTED IN 2015 (THIRD INSPECTION)

As discussed in the 2015 report (Docket #362), Minnkota had planted a total of 34,042 trees/shrubs in impacted counties along the transmission line. In Eddy County, 3,371 trees/shrubs were planted of which 2,657 have survived. In Foster County, 531 trees/shrubs were planted, of which 450 survived. In Grand Forks County, 4,463 trees/shrubs were planted, of which 2,883 survived. In Griggs County, 6,618 trees/shrubs were planted, of which 5,295 survived. In McLean County, 1,737 trees/shrubs were planted, of which 576 survived. In Nelson County, 2,424 trees/shrubs were planted, of which 915 survived. In Oliver County, 2,352 trees/shrubs were

planted, of which 1113 survived. In Sheridan County, 3,052 trees/shrubs were planted, of which 2,223 survived. In Steele County, 438 trees/shrubs were planted, of which 420 survived. In Wells County, 9,056 trees/shrubs were planted, of which 6,320 survived. Of the 34,042 trees/shrubs planted in 2015, 22,852 have survived through October 2018. This is a 67.1% survival rate.

Minnkota will have an inspection completed in the Fall of 2019 and will again report on the survival rate.

4. SURVIVAL RATE, OCT. 2018, TREES/SHRUBS PLANTED IN 2016 (SECOND INSPECTION)

In 2016, Minnkota had planted a total of 22,691 trees in impacted counties along the transmission line. In Burleigh County, 4,711 trees/shrubs were planted, of which 3,907 survived. In Eddy County, 3,178 trees/shrubs were planted, of which 2,792 survived. In Foster County, 998 trees/shrubs were planted, of which 849 survived. In Grand Forks County, 7,843 trees/shrubs were planted, of which 4,907 survived. In Griggs County, 1,288 trees/shrubs were planted, of which 1,031 survived. In McLean County, 2,313 trees/shrubs were planted, of which 1,293 survived. In Oliver County, 471 trees/shrubs were planted, of which 427 survived. In Sheridan County, 772 trees/shrubs were planted, of which 326 survived. In Wells County, 1,117 trees/shrubs were planted, of which 547 survived.

All of the trees/shrubs planted in 2016 were planted with cooperation of the landowners and the Natural Resource Conservation offices in the respective counties. Of the 22,691 trees/shrubs planted in 2016, 16,079 have survived through October 2016. This is a 70.8% survival rate. Minnkota will have an inspection completed in the Fall of 2019 and will again submit a report on the survival rate.

5. SURVIVAL RATE, OCT. 2018, TREES/SHRUBS PLANTED IN 2017 (FIRST

INSPECTION)

In 2017, Minnkota had planted a total of 14,089 trees in impacted counties along the transmission line. In Eddy County, 194 trees/shrubs were planted, of which 194 survived. In Grand Forks County, 4,388 trees/shrubs were planted, of which 4,012 survived. In McLean County, 698 trees/shrubs were planted, of which 475 survived. In Nelson County, 2,043 trees/shrubs were planted, of which 1,773 survived. In Oliver County, 5,608 trees/shrubs were planted, of which 3,534 survived. In Wells County, 1,079 trees/shrubs were planted, of which 948 survived.

All of the trees/shrubs planted in 2017 were planted with cooperation of the landowners and the Natural Resource Conservation offices in the respective counties. Of the 14,089 trees/shrubs planted in 2017, 10,936 have survived through October 2018. This is a 77.6% survival rate. Minnkota will have an inspection completed in the Fall of 2019 and will again submit a report on the survival rate.

6. NO TREES/SHRUBS WERE PLANTED IN 2018

No trees were planted in 2018. As indicated above, Minnkota has planted a total of 72,150 trees/shrubs since 2013. In the approved Replacement Plan, Minnkota indicated the total trees/shrubs to be replaced is 58,454 with at least 75% surviving for three years after the planting. As of this report, 50,694 trees/shrubs have survived giving a total trees/shrubs to be replaced survivability rate of 86.7%. Again, Minnkota will have an inspection completed in the Fall of 2019 and will again submit a report on the survival rate.

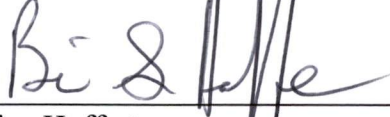
Minnkota Power Cooperative, Inc. respectfully asks the Public Service Commission to accept this 2018 Report as to:

- 1. The survival rate in October 2018 of trees/shrubs planted in 2013;**
- 2. The survival rate in October 2018 of trees/shrubs planted in 2014;**

3. **The survival rate in October 2018 of trees/shrubs planted in 2015;**
4. **The survival rate in October 2018 of trees/shrubs planted in 2016; and,**
5. **The survival rate in October 2018 of trees/shrubs planted in 2017.**

DATED this 1st day of October, 2018.

MINNKOTA POWER COOPERATIVE, INC.



Brian Hoffart
Property and Right-of-Way Manager
Minnkota Power Cooperative, Inc.
P.O. 13200
Grand Forks, ND 58208

Exhibit 1

Center to Grand Forks – 345 kV Transmission Line

Tree/Shrub Replacement Plan: Plantings and Inspections

PSC Docket PU-09-670

Planting Year	Number of Trees/shrubs Planted	2015 Inspection (% Survival)	2016 Inspection (% Survival)	2017 Inspection (% Survival)	2018 Inspection (% Survival)	2019 Inspection (% Survival)	2020 Inspection (% Survival)	Final Inspection Numbers
2013 Planting	1000	95%	95%	95%				950
2014 Planting	328	90%	90%	89%				291
2015 Planting	34,042		75.7%	67%	67.1%			22,852
2016 Planting	22,691			70%	70.8%			
2017 Planting	14,010				77.6%			
2018 Planting	0							
Total Planted	72,150							

Report Filed with PSC	Filed	Docket Item
2015 Inspection	October 1, 2015	362
2016 Inspection	September 28, 2016	363
2017 Inspection	October 20, 2017	364
2018 Inspection	October 18, 2018	
2019 Inspection		
2020 Inspection		

