



UTILITIES CO.

A Division of MDU Resources Group, Inc.

400 North Fourth Street  
Bismarck, ND 58501  
(701) 222-7900

April 19, 2017

Executive Secretary  
ND Public Service Commission  
State Capitol Building  
Bismarck, ND 58505

Re: Case No. PU-11-680  
Post Construction Inspection

Montana-Dakota Utilities Co. (Montana-Dakota), a Division of MDU Resources Group, Inc., herewith submits the original and two (2) copies of a 2016 Weed Survey and the areas where weed spray was applied in response to the list of actions recommended in the post construction inspection report issued by Wenck Associates, Inc on December 10, 2014 (Wenck Report) and staff questions submitted on September 10, 2015.

Please contact me at 701-222-7856 or at [tamie.aberle@mdu.com](mailto:tamie.aberle@mdu.com) with additional questions or follow up necessary.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in red ink that reads 'Tamie A. Aberle'.

Tamie A. Aberle  
Director of Regulatory Affairs

cc. Daryl Anderson



## 2016 Weed Survey

Prepared for:  
MDU Resources  
Mandan ND

Attn: Matt Klingenstein

The pipeline right-of-way contained some noxious weeds in every segment of the surveyed area. The weeds present were:

Leafy spurge  
Absinthe wormwood  
Canadian thistle  
Houndstounge

Sprayed areas are listed in identifying units of Section Township Range (STR)

STR 34-137-82

Leafy spurge and absinthe wormwood were present on this section of the pipeline. There was one spot of leafy spurge less than 1000 sq. ft. The absinthe wormwood was sporadic through the right-of-way with less than 10 plants present. Picloram 22K and 2,4-D amine were used to control the weeds.

STR 35-137-82 and STR 26-137-82 (SE ¼)

Leafy spurge was the predominant weed along the east side of this section. There were spots of thick growth with populations up to 6 plants per square foot. There were also individual plants throughout the right-of-way, making it necessary to treat almost the entire section's right-of-way. Picloram 22K and 2,4-D amine were used. There were sporadic absinthe wormwood plants and Canadian thistle throughout the right-of-way with the highest concentrations being along section 26 and a low spot toward the center of the section.

STR 26-137-82 (NE ¼)

This was the highest concentration of Canadian thistle and absinthe wormwood in the surveyed area. The entire area was treated with Milestone at 7 oz. per acre and Liberate applied at 32 oz.

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per 100. Both species of plant were present in thick patches with populations up to 4 plants per square foot, as well as lone plants.

## STR 23-137-82

This mile of right-of-way had leafy spurge spread over the one-mile stretch. Seven acres were treated with Picloram and 2,4-D amine. Both the right-of-way and section acreage contained areas with high populations of leafy spurge as well as areas with populations as little as 4 per 100 sq. ft.

## STR 2-137-82-STR 36-138-82-STR 26-138-82

These three segments of the pipeline were similar, leafy spurge being the highest density of noxious weed followed by a mix of Canadian thistle and absinthe wormwood. The curve in the right-of-way along section 36 was the highest population of leafy spurge. There are well established leafy spurge patches on this section of the right-of-way that will supply a lot of seed to the area, making it impossible to control the leafy spurge long-term without spraying the land adjacent to the pipeline. Some patches on the right-of-way were solid, with little or no native species growing within those patches. Absinthe wormwood was also present with low populations and single new-growth plants and plants that went to seed last year. Because of this, there will be a seed base going forward on absinthe wormwood as well.

## STR 23-138-82 (SE ¼)

This portion of the right-of-way contained more absinthe wormwood, especially along the shelterbelt. There are a lot of old-growth plants in this area and seed will be present again next year. The proximity to the shelterbelt will make using Milestone a less attractive option. There was also leafy spurge present in varying populations.

## STR 14-138-82 and STR 23-138-82 (NE ¼)

Along these sections, from the south hillside back across the intersection of the right-of-way and section line, the highest populations of leafy spurge, absinthe wormwood, and Canadian thistle were found. This is another section where there is a lot of weed pressure of the right-of-way, making weed control difficult. Some areas of Canadian thistle and leafy spurge had prohibited other plants from establishing themselves. Once the right-of-way turned to the northwest and cut across section 14, there were far less weed concentrations. Sporadic plants did exist at the end of the survey area.

## STR 2-138-82 and STR 11-138-82 (NE ¼)

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Houndstounge was present along the north side of the hill on this section, down to the draw that runs east and west. Plants were typically single plants with less than 100 plants along the mile. The highest concentrations were on the side hill and along the edge of the right-of-way. These plants were hand treated with MSM 60 at a rate of 1.33 ounces per acre along with 1 pint of Dyne-amic per 100 gallons. The draw located south of the newly planted trees had the highest populations of leafy spurge. The entire area contained some leafy spurge and was treated with Picloram 22K at 1 pint per acre and 2 pints of 2,4-D amine.

## STR 36-139-82

On the north side of this section there was a high concentration of absinthe wormwood with some spots of leafy spurge. Toward the south end of the section, leafy spurge was the weed present at the highest levels. Picloram 22k and 2,4-D amine were used to control the leafy spurge. Along the north side of this section the absinthe wormwood was sprayed with Milestone.

## STR 25-139-82

The south side of this section from the road, past the valve site, to the turn in the right-of-way, and back to the west, there was a higher concentration of leafy spurge and absinthe wormwood. On the north side there were far fewer weeds. In the draw near the gravel pile there were less than 10 plants of houndstounge, which were spot treated with MSM 60.

## STR 13-139-82

The south side of this section contained leafy spurge that was spot treated. Leafy spurge areas were small and mostly down in the draw. Once over the hill and down toward the valve site, there was a lot more absinthe wormwood. It was an established stand of plant stalks containing seed from the previous year. On the north side of the block site, leafy spurge was the dominant weed. It was present in the majority of the right-of-way with populations varying. The highest concentration was on the hillside at the far north of the survey area. All weed areas were treated with Picloram and 2,4-D amine.

## STR 12-139-82

This was by far the cleanest section of the right-of-way. Three absinthe wormwood plants were spot treated.

## STR 8-139-81 and STR 9-139-81

This area contained leafy spurge, absinthe wormwood and Canadian thistle. Populations of leafy spurge were found north of the electrical poles and to the west of the housing

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development. Leafy spurge at low populations was present at the bottom of the hill and on the east side of the housing to the fence line. The low area also contained 2 patches of Canadian thistle, where populations averaged three plants per sq. ft. and were less than 100 sq. ft. each. South of the division fence, near the division of the two sections, there were dense populations of weeds. Up the hillside there were high populations of leafy spurge in patches. There was also absinthe wormwood present, both old and new growth. In this area, Milestone was used on the absinthe wormwood. After the low spot, leafy spurge was present all the way to the southeast side of the section.

STR 16-139-81

Along this portion, weeds were less present. Close to the highway there were occasional leafy spurge plants, less than 1 per 2500 feet on average. On the west side there were additional leafy spurge plants and an occasional absinthe wormwood plant.