



# Public Service Commission State of North Dakota

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## COMMISSIONERS

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June 21, 2021

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**Re: Project: 24-Inch Crude Oil Pipeline – Sandpiper Project  
Case No.: PU-13-848**

The Commission's June 25, 2014 Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law and Order issued Certificate of Site Compatibility No. 153 and Route Permit No. 165 to North Dakota Pipeline Company LLC (fka Enbridge Pipelines (North Dakota) LLC) for 300 miles of 24-inch diameter crude oil pipeline in Williams, Mountrail, Ward, McHenry, Pierce, Towner, Ramsey, Nelson, and Grand Forks Counties in North Dakota. Partial construction of three terminals is the Project's current status.

The Tree and Shrub Mitigation Specifications (Specifications) attached to and made part of the Commission's Order required that two trees be planted for every one tree removed, and that two shrubs be planted for one shrub removed. The Specifications required that tree and shrub replacements be inspected annually, in September, for three years, with the first annual inspection at least one year from the anniversary date of the original plantings. The Specifications further required that a report of each annual report be submitted to the Commission by October 1 of each year, documenting the condition of plantings and any woodlands work completed as of September of each year.

On August 14, 2014, the Commission approved North Dakota Pipeline Company's Tree and Shrub Inventory Plan. On April 11, 2019, the Commission approved North Dakota Pipeline Company's Tree and Shrub Mitigation Plan and Addendum. On August 7, 2019, North Dakota Pipeline Company filed its first Planting Report.

Since North Dakota Pipeline Company's tree and shrub mitigation plan is only in year one, North Dakota Pipeline Company may wish to consider complying instead with the March 13, 2019, simplified version of the Tree and Shrub Mitigation Specifications. I have enclosed with this letter a copy of the March 13 version and a copy of the version the company is currently under. Should North Dakota Pipeline Company choose that option, please notify the Commission in writing so that the June 25, 2014 Order can be

amended to incorporate the March 13 version of the Commission's Tree and Shrub Mitigation Specifications.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Patrick Fahn".

Patrick Fahn  
Director, Public Utilities Division

**STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA**  
**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

**Enbridge Pipelines (North Dakota) LLC**  
**24-Inch Crude Oil Pipeline – Sandpiper Project**  
**Siting Application**

**Case No. PU-13-848**

**Tree and Shrub Mitigation Specifications**

**Inventory**

1. Trees and shrubs anticipated to be cleared, including those that are considered invasive species or noxious weeds (e.g., *Caragana arborescens*, *Elaeagnus angustifolia*, *Rhamnus cathartica*, *Tamarix chinensis*, *T. parviflora*, *T. ramosissima*, *Ulmus pumila*), must be inventoried before cutting. The inventory must record the location, number, and species of trees and shrubs.
2. In windbreaks, shelterbelts and other planted areas, trees or shrubs anticipated to be cleared, regardless of size, must be inventoried for replacement.
3. In native growth areas, trees anticipated to be cleared that are 1 inch diameter at breast height (dbh) or greater must be inventoried for replacement.
4. In native growth areas, shrubs anticipated to be cleared in the permanent right-of-way must be inventoried for replacement.
5. In native growth areas outside the permanent right-of-way, shrubs must be cut flush with the surface of the ground, taking care to leave the naturally occurring seed bank and root stock intact. If soil disturbance is necessary, the native topsoil must be preserved and replaced after construction. Shrubs must be allowed to regenerate naturally where native topsoil is preserved and replaced. Where native topsoil is not preserved and replaced, shrubs anticipated to be cleared must be inventoried for replacement.
6. In native growth areas, trees and shrubs may be inventoried by actual count or by a sampling method that will properly represent the woody vegetation

population. A sampling plan developed by the company, filed with the North Dakota Public Service Commission (Commission) and approved prior to the start of construction must define the sampling method to be used for trees, for tall shrubs and for low shrubs. The data from the sample plots must be extrapolated to the total acreage of the wooded area to be cleared to determine the species and quantity of trees and shrubs to be replaced.

#### **Clearing for Construction**

7. Trees and shrubs must be selectively cleared, leaving mature trees and shrubs intact where practical.
8. The maximum width of clear cuts through windbreaks, shelterbelts and all other wooded areas is 50 feet, unless otherwise approved by the Commission.
9. If the area of trees or shrubs actually cleared differs from the area inventoried, the difference in number of trees and shrubs to be replaced must be noted on the inventory.

#### **Replacement**

10. Prior to tree and shrub replacement, documentation identifying the number and variety of trees and shrubs removed, as well as the mitigation plan for the proposed number, variety, type, location and date of replacement plantings, must be filed with the Commission for approval.
11. Two 2-year-old saplings must be planted for every one tree removed. Two shrubs (stem cuttings) must be planted for every one shrub removed.
12. Except in the case of invasive or noxious species, trees and shrubs must be replaced by the same species or similar species, suitable for North Dakota growing conditions as recommended by the North Dakota Forest Service. Invasive or noxious species must be replaced by similar non-invasive or non-

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noxious species suitable for North Dakota growing conditions as recommended by the North Dakota Forest Service.

13. Tree and shrub replacement must not be conducted within a 20 to 30 foot wide path over the pipeline to facilitate visual inspections of the right-of-way in accordance with U.S. Department of Transportation safety regulations.
14. Landowners must be given the option of having replacement trees and shrubs planted on the landowner's property, either on or off the right-of-way. The landowner must also be given the opportunity to waive those options in writing in order to have replacement trees and shrubs planted off the landowner's property.
15. At the conclusion of the project, documentation identifying the actual number, variety, type, location and date of the replacement plantings must be filed with the Commission.
16. Tree and shrub replacements must be inspected annually, in September, for three years. The first annual inspection must be at least one year from the anniversary date of the original plantings. A report of each annual inspection must be submitted to the Commission by October 1 of each year, documenting the condition of plantings and any woodlands work completed as of September of each year. If after the third annual report the survival rate is less than 75%, the Commission may order additional planting(s).

STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA  
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

Company  
Description  
Siting Application

Case No. PU-??-???

**Tree and Shrub Mitigation Specifications**

**Inventory**

Prior to cutting or clearing trees or shrubs for construction:

- All trees one-inch or greater in diameter at breast height must be inventoried to record the location, number, and species.
- All shrubs and all coniferous trees of any diameter must be inventoried to record the location, number, and species.

**Clearing**

The maximum width of tree and shrub removal is 50 feet, unless otherwise approved by the Commission.

**Replacement**

1. Landowners must be given the option to have trees and shrubs that are removed from their property replaced on their property. The landowner may waive this option in writing. If the landowner waives this option, the company shall plant replacement trees and shrubs in an alternate location in the same region, if practical.
2. Trees and shrubs must be replaced on a minimum two-to-one basis. The company shall develop a Tree and Shrub Mitigation Plan (Plan) in consultation with landowners who are seeking replacement trees and shrubs and in accordance with USDA-NRCS-North Dakota Field Office Technical Guide: Windbreak and Woodland Tree Care and Management. The guidelines outlined in the Technical Guide shall be followed until filing of the Plan summary outlined in number 5 below.
3. The purpose of the company's Tree and Shrub Mitigation Plan is to create sustainable plantings, appropriate for the local soil and growing conditions that will provide long-term benefit to landowners, farmers and ranchers, the community, wildlife and the environment.
4. The Plan, including the proposed number, variety, type, location, and approximate date for plantings, shall be filed with and approved by the Commission.
5. Two years after completion of the plan, the company must file a summary documenting how the plan achieved the purpose outlined in number 3 above. The summary must also report the number of surviving replacement trees and shrubs.
6. The Commission will consider, on a limited basis as conditions warrant, mitigation plans that provide long-term wildlife habitat and conservation benefits but do not involve the replanting of trees and shrubs.