

# **Aurora Wind Project Williams County, North Dakota Historic-Age Non-Archaeological Resource Summary Report**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Aurora Wind Project LLC (Aurora Wind) is proposing to construct a wind project (Project) that would generate up to 300 megawatts in Williams County, North Dakota. The Project would result in the construction of up to 121 wind turbines, depending on the final turbine model selected. Additional Project facilities include access roads, electrical collection and communication systems and cabling, an operation and maintenance building, permanent meteorological towers, and a Project substation. Construction is anticipated to begin in the second quarter of 2019 with commercial operation by the end of the year. No Federal funding is anticipated.

The Project will require a Certificate of Site Compatibility from the North Dakota Public Service Commission (Commission) (Case Nos. PU-18-351 and 352); therefore, the Project is subject to review by the State Historical Society of North Dakota (SHSND). State preservation legislation requires consideration of indirect effects to historic (National Register of Historic Places [NRHP]-listed or eligible) aboveground resources (North Dakota Century Code [55-03-01]). The investigations were conducted to professional standards and guidelines in accordance with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archaeology and Historic Preservation* (48 FR 44716-4472), the *Secretary's Standards for Identification* (48 FR 44720-44723), and the *North Dakota SHPO Guidelines Manual for Cultural Resource Inventory Projects* (SHSND 2018).

The indirect Area of Potential Effects (APE) was determined via coordination with the SHSND. It extends approximately 2 miles from the proposed turbine array and associated aboveground development, with the exception of transmission lines, and includes areas in both Williams and Divide Counties (see map figure). For the purposes of this survey, the term "historic-age" refers to any building, structure, object, district, etc. within the defined APE 45 years of age or older (constructed pre-1973) at the time of the survey. Documentation of these resources was conducted from publicly accessible roads unless permissible access was granted.

The primary objectives of the historic-age non-archaeological resource reconnaissance survey were to (1) identify and record historic-age non-archaeological resources within the established APE according to methods outlined by the SHSND, (2) make a preliminary assessment of their historical significance based on the NRHP criteria, and (3) assess their potential to be adversely impacted by the Project. Proposed Project activities that could result in impacts to historic-age

non-archaeological resources include construction of wind turbines, access roads, and other aboveground components, and associated right-of-way (ROW) clearing activities. All these activities could alter viewsheds that might diminish the integrity of a historic (NRHP-listed or eligible) resource’s location, setting, feeling, or association.

**RESULTS**

A review of SHSND architectural survey files, GIS files, and historic contexts revealed 11 previously recorded historic-age non-archaeological resources within the 2-mile APE; none are in the proposed construction footprint. Three of these resources are no longer extant, one has been identified as NRHP-eligible, and seven have undetermined eligibility status.

A total of 416 historic-age resources on 128 properties located within the indirect APE were recorded during the current investigation. Thirteen of these properties contain at least one resource recommended for NRHP inclusion. With the exception of inaccessible resources noted on 21 properties, none of the remaining resources recorded during the survey, either individually or collectively, appear to meet the criteria for NRHP inclusion due to a lack of significance and/or architectural integrity. Furthermore, though the APE contains numerous agricultural complexes, none possesses sufficient integrity to warrant consideration as NRHP-eligible historic districts (Table 1; Table 2).

Neither the resources recommended for NRHP inclusion nor those inaccessible from the public ROW would be adversely affected by the Project. Specifically, the resources either lack integrity of setting or setting does not represent one of their character-defining features. As no historic (NRHP-eligible or listed) properties would be directly or otherwise adversely affected by the proposed Project, no further consideration of effects to historic properties under the North Dakota Century Code is recommended in connection with the Project as currently proposed.

**Table 1: Historic-Age Resources Recommended for NRHP Inclusion.**

Property 001 (32DV311)	Property 024 (32WI2308)	Property 026 (32WI887)	Property 032 (32WI2309)
Property 035 (32WI2310)	Property 036 (32WI2311)	Property 044 (32WI2185)	Property 059 (32WI2186)
Property 077 (32WI2312)	Property 079 (32WI879)	Property 095 (32WI880)	Property 102 (32WI926)
Property 115 (32WI2313)	-	-	-

**Table 2: Historic-Age Resources Inaccessible from Public ROW.**

Property 002	Property 006	Property 009	Property 017
Property 023	Property 037	Property 039	Property 052

Property 056	Property 058	Property 064	Property 073
Property 081	Property 082	Property 086	Property 091
Property 097	Property 101	Property 116	Property 120
Property 126	-	-	-

If changes to the construction footprint occur, Burns & McDonnell recommends those areas be surveyed for cultural resources and results be submitted to the SHSND in the form of an addendum to the existing report. Concurrence from the SHSND will be obtained prior to construction of the Project. Once the SHSND concurrence letter is received it will be submitted to the Commission.