

February 20, 2026

Randy Christmann, Chair  
 Public Service Commission  
 600 East Boulevard Avenue  
 Bismarck, ND 58505

Re: Project Code: PU-25-283 & PU-25-284, Basin Electric 230kV Transmission Line in Divide and Williams Counties

Dear Mr. Christmann:

The North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality (Department) has reviewed the information concerning the above-referenced project received at the Department on January 29, 2026, with respect to possible environmental impacts.

1. Necessary measures should be taken to minimize fugitive dust emissions created during construction activities. Any complaints that may arise should be dealt with in an efficient and effective manner.
2. Care is to be taken during construction activity near any water of the state to minimize adverse effects on a water body. This includes minimal disturbance of stream beds and banks to prevent excess siltation, and the replacement and revegetation of any disturbed area as soon as possible after work has been completed. Caution must also be taken to prevent spills of oil and grease that may reach the receiving water from equipment maintenance and/or the handling of fuels on the site. Guidelines for minimizing degradation to waterways during construction are attached.
3. Projects disturbing one or more acres are required to have a permit to discharge stormwater runoff until the site is stabilized by the re-establishment of vegetation or other permanent cover. Further information on the stormwater permit may be obtained from the Department's website or by calling the Division of Water Quality at 701-328-5210. Also, cities may impose additional requirements and/or specific best management practices for construction affecting their storm drainage system. Check with the local officials to be sure any local stormwater management considerations are addressed.
4. The construction project overlies the Ray, Wildrose, West Wildrose, Yellowstone Buried Channel, White Earth, Estevan, Crosby, Bicker, and two unnamed aquifers. The proposed project is within a mile of multiple sensitive groundwater areas, a community source water protection area, 3 non-community source water protection areas, 25 domestic wells, 13 observation wells, 5 industrial wells, 1 municipal well, and 6 stock wells. Care should be taken to avoid spills of any materials that may have an adverse effect on groundwater

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 Karl Rockeman, P.E., Deputy Director

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quality. All spills must be immediately reported to this Department and appropriate remedial actions should be performed.

5. All solid waste materials must be managed and transported in accordance with the state's solid and hazardous waste rules. Appropriate efforts to reduce, reuse and/or recycle waste materials are strongly encouraged. As appropriate, segregation of inert waste from non-inert waste can generally reduce the cost of waste management. Further information on waste management and recycling is available from the Department's Division of Waste Management at 701-328-5166.
6. Activities that include, but are not limited to, the construction or operation of facilities,, which *may* result in *any* discharge into waters of the United States must request § 401 Clean Water Certification from the Department concurrently with a federally licensed or permitted project to ensure that the project will support the state's Standards of Quality for Waters of the State as per North Dakota Administrative Code 33.1-16-02.1. A project owner, proponent, or contractor must request a pre-filing meeting with the Department at least 30 days prior to submitting the § 401 Clean Water Certification to the Water Quality Standards Program (701-328-5150). The Department will provide our determination within 60 days of receiving a complete request and federal public notice.

The Department owns no land in or adjacent to the proposed improvements, nor does it have any projects scheduled in the area. In addition, we believe the proposed activities are consistent with the State Implementation Plan for the Control of Air Pollution for the State of North Dakota.

If you have any questions regarding our comments, please feel free to contact this office.

Sincerely,



Karl Rockeman, P.E., Deputy Director  
North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality

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Attach.

## **Construction and Environmental Disturbance Requirements**

The following are the minimum requirements of the North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality (Department) for projects that involve construction and environmental disturbance in or near waters of the State of North Dakota. They ensure that minimal environmental degradation occurs as a result of construction or related work which has the potential to affect waters of the state. All projects must be constructed to minimize the loss of soil, vegetative cover, and pollutants (chemical or biological) from a site.

### **Soils**

Prevent the erosion and sediment loss using erosion and sediment controls. Fragile and sensitive areas such as wetlands, riparian zones, delicate flora, and land resources must be prohibited against compaction, vegetation loss and unnecessary damage.

### **Surface Waters**

All construction must be managed to minimize impacts to aquatic systems. Follow safe storage and handling procedures to prevent the contamination of water from fuel spills, lubricants, and chemicals. Stream bank and stream bed disturbances must be contained to minimize silt movement, nutrient upsurges, plant dislocations, and any physical chemicals, or biological disruption. The use of pesticides or herbicides in or near surface waters is allowed under the Department's pesticide application permit with notification to the Department.

### **Fill Material**

Any fill material placed below the ordinary high-water mark must be free of topsoil, decomposable materials, and persistent synthetic organic compounds, including, but not limited to, asphalt, tires, treated lumber, and construction debris. The Department may require testing of fill material. All temporary fills must be removed. Debris and solid waste must be properly disposed or recycled. Impacted areas must be restored to near original condition.