



**PU-26-022**  
**Minnkota Power Cooperative**  
**Agassiz Transmission Line &**  
**Substation**  
**Construction Inspection Report**

File No. 227709053

August 6, 2026

Prepared for:

**North Dakota Public Service Commission**  
600 E. Boulevard Avenue  
Bismarck, ND 58505-0480

Prepared by:

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## **1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The North Dakota Public Service Commission (PSC) retained Stantec Consulting Services Inc (Stantec) to complete construction inspection(s) during construction of the Minnkota Power Cooperative's (i.e. Minnkota) Agassiz Transmission Line, PU-26-022 (i.e., the Project) in Harwood, North Dakota. The purpose of the inspections is to ensure the Project is constructed in compliance with the siting laws and rules and the applicable PSC Orders for the Project.

Stantec was present when construction involving soil disturbance for the Project began on May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2026. Minnkota had previously been approved for a temporary construction variance to start work at the substation prior to May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2026. Stantec visually inspected the Project area again on June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026, for an additional topsoil inspection, observing topsoil and subsoil removal and segregation. Stockpile and storage of topsoil and subsoil was appropriate during the May 18<sup>th</sup> and June 1<sup>st</sup> inspections. At the time of the two previously stated inspections, Stantec had also observed completed foundation construction of several foundations and site grading for the substation performed by Minnkota's contractors.

Stantec completed a construction inspection on July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2026, and visually observed ongoing construction activities. Burns & MacDonnell (i.e., BMcD) is currently overseeing project contractors responsible for above ground construction activities. At the time of the July 23<sup>rd</sup> inspection, completed activities related to topsoil disturbances were the following: Best Management Practices (BMP) installation, all foundation drilling activities, grading of the Project site, and substation foundation drilling. Ongoing construction activities consisted of active trenching observed on the north side of the substation, and above-ground construction of the substation. BMcD has a project superintendent present on-site to oversee the other subcontractors. Aldridge was on-site and involved with the ongoing foundation work.

This Construction Inspection Report includes documentation of construction activities during the July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2026, on-site inspection of the Project. By and large, soil removal, storage, and best management practices are satisfactory.



## 2.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

Minnkota is constructing the Agassiz Transmission Line & Substation, a proposed 1.74 mile-long facility corridor in Cass County, North Dakota. The plan includes a 1.25 mile-long 345-kV transmission line and substation. The Project is located mostly within cultivated fields, and contained within private parcels, with two main entrances: the first is located off 52<sup>nd</sup> Ave. N. accessing the project area west of I-29 and the other access is located off US HWY 81 for the portion of the project east of I-29.

### 2.2 PURPOSE & SCOPE

The North Dakota Energy Conversion and Transmission Facility Act (North Dakota Century Code Chapter 49-22) authorizes the Public Service Commission to determine that the location, construction, and operation of jurisdictional energy conversion and transmission facilities will produce minimal adverse effects on the environment and the welfare of citizens of North Dakota. Construction inspections aim to ensure that such projects are constructed in compliance with the siting laws (North Dakota Century Code Chapter 49-22) and rules (North Dakota Administrative Code Article 69-06) and the applicable PSC Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law, and Order (Order). The PSC issued its Findings of Fact (FoF), Conclusions of Law, and Order in Case No. PU-26-022 on April 29, 2026, granting Certificate of Corridor Compatibility No. 248.

The PSC retained Stantec to complete construction inspections of the Project. The inspection process included a review of the Application, the Project's Order, and other applicable documents.

The primary intent of the initial topsoil inspections is to document compliance with PSC's Certificate Relating to FoF Project Order Provision #11, which states: *"Company understands and agrees that topsoil, up to 12 inches, or topsoil to the depth of cultivation, whichever is greater, over and along trench areas, must be carefully stripped and segregated from the subsoil. Any area on which excavated subsoil will be placed must first be stripped of topsoil. The stripped topsoil must not be stockpiled in natural drainages, and must be protected from water erosion. Care must be taken to protect topsoil from unnecessary compaction by heavy machinery. Unless otherwise approved by the Commission, topsoil must be removed before topsoil freezes in the late fall/early winter to the point that frost inhibits proper soil segregation. After backfilling with subsoil is completed, any excess subsoil must be placed over the excavation area, blending the grade into existing topography. Topsoil must be replaced over areas from which it was stripped only after the subsoil is replaced."*

The project entails permanent development on cropland for the facility and topsoil replacement is not expected to occur over the entire project area.

The July 23<sup>rd</sup> inspection's intent is to document compliance with the previous Order Provision #11 and the following PSC's Certificate Relating to FOFs Project Order Provisions:



Order Provision #13, which states: *“Company understands and agrees that if any cultural resource, paleontological site, archeological site, historical site, or grave site is discovered during construction, it must be marked, preserved and protected from further disturbances until a professional examination can be made and a report of such examination is filed with the Commission and the State Historical Society.”*

Order Provision #14, which states: *“Company understands and agrees that construction must be suspended when weather conditions are such that construction activities will cause irreparable damage to roads or land, unless adequate protection measures are taken by Company.”*

## **2.3 INSPECTION METHODOLOGY**

Stantec visually inspected the Project by walking or driving within the Project site. During the inspection, work done by contractors/equipment operators was observed to verify that the topsoil has been properly removed, piled, and kept segregated from subsoil, and protected from erosion. Additionally, general site conditions and operations were inspected. An iPhone was used to collect photographs during the inspection with the utilization of Arc GIS’s Field Maps application for GPS locating and documentation purposes. Location-referenced photographs are provided in Appendix A and Geographical Information System (GIS) generated map(s) of observation locations are provided in Figures 1. Visual inspections were made by Stantec at various locations to confirm construction was conducted in compliance with siting laws with minimal adverse effects.



### **3.0 INSPECTION RESULTS**

Jarrett Lardy, a Soil Scientist with Stantec, was present on July 23<sup>rd</sup> to inspect ongoing work and to ensure PSC order provisions were understood and followed. Grading of the substation was complete by the July 23<sup>rd</sup> visit, and imported sand was placed and leveled. BMcD previously explained that topsoil has been stripped and placed in stockpiles outside of the Project Area, in conjunction with dirt work being done on adjacent properties associated with other project(s), including construction of a data-center.

Several erosion control BMPs were observed at the site on the July 23<sup>rd</sup> inspection. The first BMP observed was timber matting and was placed as early as the May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2026, inspection to access locations for transmission posts to minimize topsoil compaction. Matting was laid along a north/south corridor that was along the north side of 52<sup>nd</sup> Ave. N., within a laydown area, laid further north from 52<sup>nd</sup> Ave. N. to access foundations that were completed by the July 23<sup>rd</sup> inspection.

Silt fence was installed surrounding the substation with some areas of the project south of the substation had recently been hydroseeded. No soil erosion issues were observed.

On the July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2026, inspection, topsoil was respread at all foundation locations west of I-29. Stripped topsoil spoil piles remained only in one observed location west of I-29. At the substation, placement of sand and grading had ceased, and many foundations had also been constructed. Subsoil stockpiles were observed near the edges of the project area, and were assumed to be spoil piles, as the site had been graded with approximately 4 feet of sand and gravel over the last several weeks.

No culturally significant findings were observed and roadways and entry locations were properly maintained, with no instances of irreparable damage observed. Photos are enclosed in the attached photo log.

In conclusion, contractors and project construction appear to be in compliance with the Order Provisions.



## 4.0 SIGNATURE

Stantec's Field Inspector, Jarrett Lardy prepared this report. The report was reviewed by Stantec's Project Manager and North Dakota Professional Soil Classifier, Matt Retka.

The conclusions in this Report are Stantec's professional opinion, as of the time of the Report, and concerning the scope described in the Report. The opinions in the document are based on conditions and information existing at the time the document was published and may not take into account any subsequent changes. The Report relates solely to the specific project for which Stantec was retained and the stated purpose for which the Report was prepared. The Report is not to be used or relied on for any variation or extension of the project, or for any other project or purpose, and any unauthorized use or reliance is at the recipient's own risk.

Stantec has assumed all information received from the ND PSC and third parties in the preparation of the Report to be correct. While Stantec has exercised a customary level of judgment or due diligence in the use of such information, Stantec assumes no responsibility for the consequences of any error or omission contained therein.

This Report is intended solely for use by the ND PSC in accordance with Stantec's contract with the ND PSC. While the Report may be provided to applicable authorities having jurisdiction and others for whom the ND PSC is responsible, Stantec does not warrant the services to any third party. The report may not be relied upon by any other party without the express written consent of Stantec, which may be withheld at Stantec's discretion.



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Jarrett Lardy  
Field Inspector  
Soil Scientist



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Matt Retka  
Project Manager  
Senior Soil Scientist

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August 5, 2026

Date

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August 6, 2026

Date



# **FIGURES**

**Figure 1: Construction Observation Locations Map**

U:\2277\227709053\03\_data\gis\_cad\gisArcPro\PU\_26\_22\_227709053.aprx Revised: 2026-08-03 By: bschafermeyer

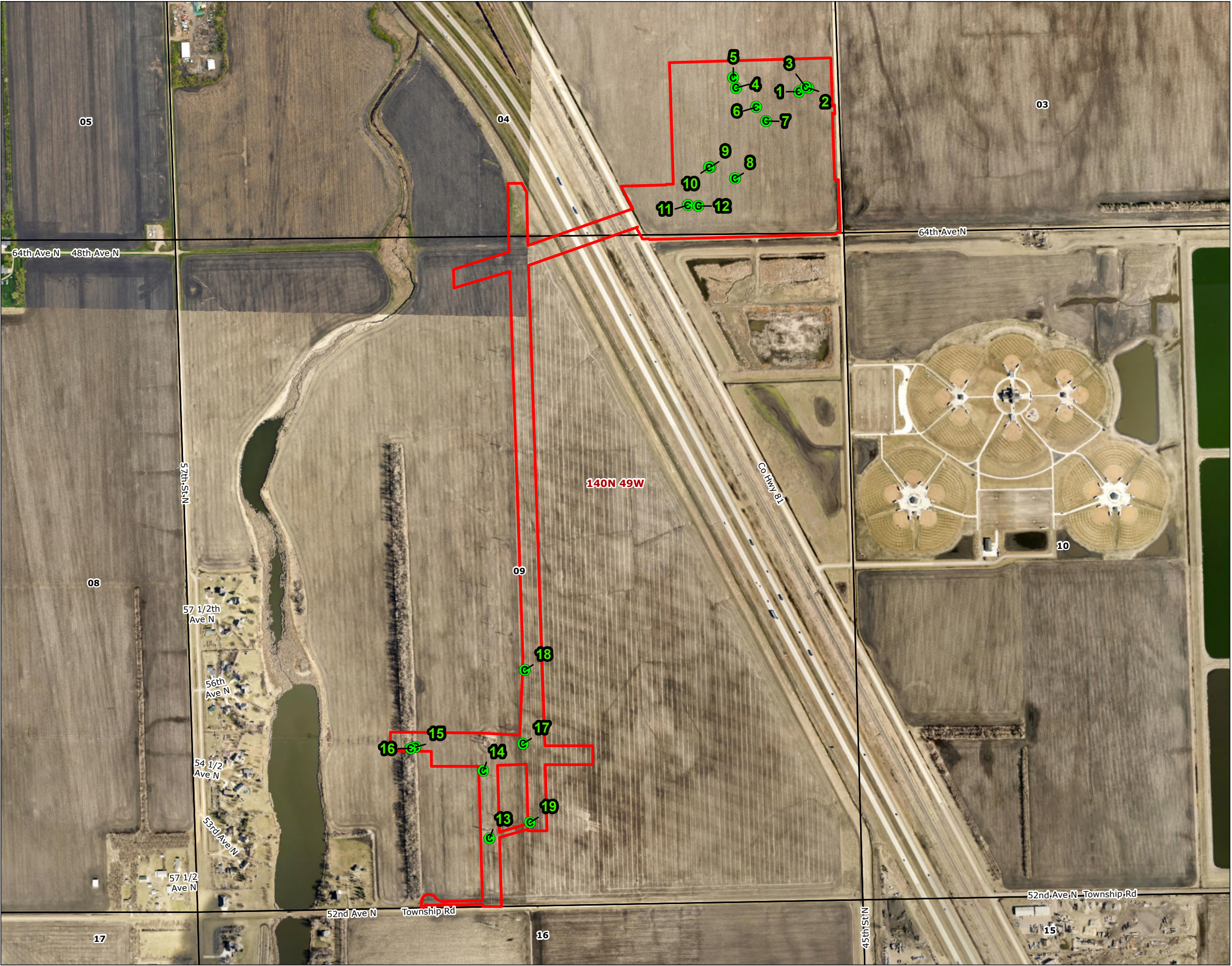


Figure No.  
**1**

Title  
**Minnkota Agassiz Transmission Line**

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Client/Project  
North Dakota Public Service Commission  
PU-26-22

227709053

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Project Location  
T149N, R49W, S09, S04  
Cass Co., ND

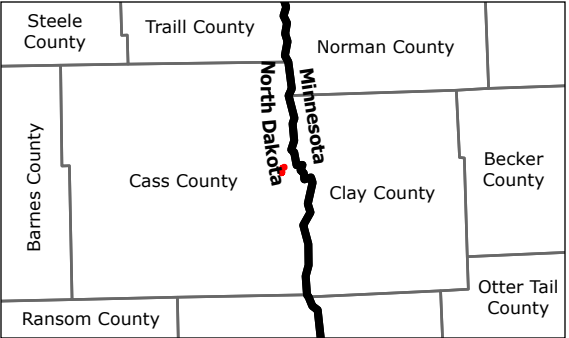
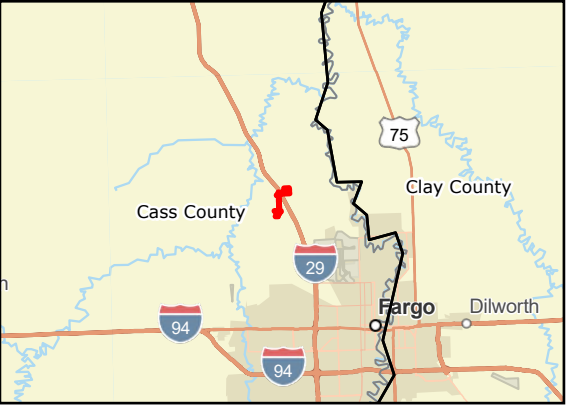
Prepared by BS on 2026-08-03

N

0 400 800 Feet  
(At original document size of 11x17)  
1:9,600

Legend

- Agassiz Project Corridor
- Construction Observation Point Location



Notes

1. Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 14N
2. Data Sources: ESRI
3. Background: ESRI World Imagery



# **APPENDIX A**

## **Observation Point Photolog**

## PU-26-22 (Minnkota Agassiz): Observation Point Photolog

|                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|    | <p><b>Observation Point: 1</b><br/>Date Taken: July 23, 2026 8:51 AM<br/>Direction Photo is Taken: North</p> <p>Photo Description: Appropriate subsoil stockpile associated with a trench, minor topsoil inclusions</p> <p>Latitude: 46.96630294421889<br/>Longitude: -96.86266536825696</p> |
|   | <p><b>Observation Point: 2</b><br/>Date Taken: July 23, 2026 8:53 AM<br/>Direction Photo is Taken: East</p> <p>Photo Description: Appropriate subsoil stockpile associated with a trench, minor topsoil inclusions</p> <p>Latitude: 46.96637610118573<br/>Longitude: -96.8623656793281</p>   |
|  | <p><b>Observation Point: 3</b><br/>Date Taken: July 23, 2026 8:54 AM<br/>Direction Photo is Taken: North</p> <p>Photo Description: Approximately 48 inches of sand and gravel on top to grade site near trench</p> <p>Latitude: 46.96639735118978<br/>Longitude: -96.86245097930075</p>      |

**PU-26-22 (Minnkota Agassiz): Observation Point Photolog**

|                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|    | <p><b>Observation Point: 4</b><br/>Date Taken: July 23, 2026 8:57 AM<br/>Direction Photo is Taken: Northwest</p> <p>Photo Description: Large subsoil stockpile, some construction materials like concrete and fabric observed</p> <p>Latitude: 46.96642040136255<br/>Longitude: -96.8646715626779</p> |
|   | <p><b>Observation Point: 5</b><br/>Date Taken: July 23, 2026 9:01 AM<br/>Direction Photo is Taken: Northwest</p> <p>Photo Description: Rock and sand stockpile</p> <p>Latitude: 46.9666463843395<br/>Longitude: -96.86474754561858</p>                                                                |
|  | <p><b>Observation Point: 6</b><br/>Date Taken: July 23, 2026 9:03 AM<br/>Direction Photo is Taken: Southeast</p> <p>Photo Description: Adequate subsoil and sand excess from active construction</p> <p>Latitude: 46.96599056836811<br/>Longitude: -96.86404289592572</p>                             |

## PU-26-22 (Minnkota Agassiz): Observation Point Photolog

|                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|    | <p><b>Observation Point: 7</b><br/>Date Taken: July 23, 2026 9:05 AM<br/>Direction Photo is Taken: South</p> <p>Photo Description: Subsoil spoil, no topsoil observed</p> <p>Latitude: 46.96568113438411<br/>Longitude: -96.8637418290619</p> |
|   | <p><b>Observation Point: 8</b><br/>Date Taken: July 23, 2026 9:18 AM<br/>Direction Photo is Taken: Southeast</p> <p>Photo Description: Seeded area beyond fence</p> <p>Latitude: 46.96445040162428<br/>Longitude: -96.86477589598155</p>      |
|  | <p><b>Observation Point: 9</b><br/>Date Taken: July 23, 2026 9:20 AM<br/>Direction Photo is Taken: Northwest</p> <p>Photo Description: Parking and laydown area</p> <p>Latitude: 46.96471515165147<br/>Longitude: -96.86555011172103</p>      |

**PU-26-22 (Minnkota Agassiz): Observation Point Photolog**

|                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|    | <p><b>Observation Point: 10</b><br/>Date Taken: July 23, 2026 9:21 AM<br/>Direction Photo is Taken: Southwest</p> <p>Photo Description: Parking area and trailers</p> <p>Latitude: 46.9647049346561<br/>Longitude: -96.8655920287111</p>                                               |
|   | <p><b>Observation Point: 11</b><br/>Date Taken: July 23, 2026 9:25 AM<br/>Direction Photo is Taken: West</p> <p>Photo Description: Silt fence observed, 2 completed foundations, no stockpiles of soil remain</p> <p>Latitude: 46.96389978481579<br/>Longitude: -96.86630037864965</p> |
|  | <p><b>Observation Point: 12</b><br/>Date Taken: July 23, 2026 9:26 AM<br/>Direction Photo is Taken: Southeast</p> <p>Photo Description: 1 completed foundation, no soil stockpiles remain</p> <p>Latitude: 46.96387638479221<br/>Longitude: -96.86596482874714</p>                     |

## PU-26-22 (Minnkota Agassiz): Observation Point Photolog

|                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|    | <p><b>Observation Point: 13</b><br/>Date Taken: July 23, 2026 9:44 AM<br/>Direction Photo is Taken: North</p> <p>Photo Description: All foundations finished on west side of interstate, soil replaced</p> <p>Latitude: 46.95023307111696<br/>Longitude: -96.87315731204588</p> |
|   | <p><b>Observation Point: 14</b><br/>Date Taken: July 23, 2026 9:48 AM<br/>Direction Photo is Taken: North</p> <p>Photo Description: Several foundations completed, no soil stockpiles remain</p> <p>Latitude: 46.95170490393878<br/>Longitude: -96.87329887875809</p>           |
|  | <p><b>Observation Point: 15</b><br/>Date Taken: July 23, 2026 9:52 AM<br/>Direction Photo is Taken: Northwest</p> <p>Photo Description: 2 foundations finished</p> <p>Latitude: 46.95226392103581<br/>Longitude: -96.87543412806875</p>                                         |

**PU-26-22 (Minnkota Agassiz): Observation Point Photolog**

|                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|    | <p><b>Observation Point: 16</b><br/>Date Taken: July 23, 2026 9:53 AM<br/>Direction Photo is Taken: Southwest</p> <p>Photo Description: Small stockpile of topsoil, subsoil mixed in</p> <p>Latitude: 46.95223715405104<br/>Longitude: -96.87558316103176</p>  |
|   | <p><b>Observation Point: 17</b><br/>Date Taken: July 23, 2026 9:58 AM<br/>Direction Photo is Taken: Southeast</p> <p>Photo Description: 2 foundations finished</p> <p>Latitude: 46.95227174476391<br/>Longitude: -96.8720111720212</p>                         |
|  | <p><b>Observation Point: 18</b><br/>Date Taken: July 23, 2026 10:01 AM<br/>Direction Photo is Taken: North</p> <p>Photo Description: 1 foundation finished, several more to the north</p> <p>Latitude: 46.95387515254809<br/>Longitude: -96.87189136778397</p> |

**PU-26-22 (Minnkota Agassiz): Observation Point Photolog**

|                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | <p><b>Observation Point: 19</b><br/>Date Taken: July 23, 2026 10:06 AM<br/>Direction Photo is Taken: North</p> <p>Photo Description: Laydown area, staging timber mats</p> <p>Latitude: 46.95055489897246<br/>Longitude: -96.87185417835467</p> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|