

Memorandum

Date: 1/6/2026

To: Megan Moore, Minnkota Power Cooperative, Inc.

From: Derek Bendickson, KLJ

RE: Frontier - Wahpeton 230kV Structure Replacements
Migratory Bird and Raptor Nest Pre-Construction Survey
Richland & Cass Counties, North Dakota



The purpose of this memo is to present the findings of the migratory bird and raptor nest survey conducted by KLJ for Minnkota Power Cooperative's (MPC) Frontier - Wahpeton 230kV Structure Replacements Project. The project is located in Township 137 North, Range 49 West in Cass County. The project is also located in Townships 134, 135, & 136 North, Range 49W, and Townships 133 & 134 North, Range 48W, in Richland County. Please refer to the attached map set. The project involves replacing 38 structures to accommodate higher operating temperatures along the 230kV Frontier to Wahpeton transmission line. The current structures are directly embedded and are intended to be replaced near their existing location at a deeper depth. The majority of the new structures will be placed approximately 10 feet from the existing structures along the centerline. The new structures will be an average of 10 feet taller than the existing structures with a new maximum height of 115 feet.

MPC has committed to conducting pre-construction surveys for migratory bird and raptor nests prior to initiating construction activities to ensure compliance with ND Public Service Commission requirements and adherence to the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act. According to the North Dakota U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) North Dakota Field Office, the migratory bird nesting season occurs from May 1 to July 15, the golden eagle nesting season extends from January 15 through August 31, and the bald eagle nesting season occurs from February 1 to July 15.

KLJ identified suitable raptor nesting habitat within 660 feet of 21 of the 38 structures planned for replacement. As a result, survey efforts were limited to those 21 locations. A pre-construction survey for migratory bird and raptor nests was completed on November 21, 2025, by Jess Kuchera of KLJ. The survey occurred after leaf-off and outside the USFWS-designated nesting season, in good faith, to document any existing nests within the study areas.

For migratory birds, observations were centered on the project footprint, while raptor nest surveys extended to a 660-foot radius consistent with USFWS guidance and line-of-sight



visibility. KLJ applied survey methods appropriate to the site's vegetative cover and field conditions to ensure accurate and comprehensive observations.

One pair of bald eagles was observed near Structure 335; however, no nests were observed in 660-foot buffer or immediate area surrounding it. Several squirrel nests (dreys) were observed in the study areas. These structures are typical of tree-dwelling rodents and lacked any features suggesting they were used or modified by raptors. Additionally, KLJ consulted with the North Dakota Game and Fish Department (NDGF) on October 7, 2025 to determine whether any historic raptor nests were recorded within the 660-foot buffers for the project. NDGF confirmed that no historic raptor nests were identified within the buffers. ***No active or inactive migratory bird or raptor nests were observed within the study areas during the field survey.***

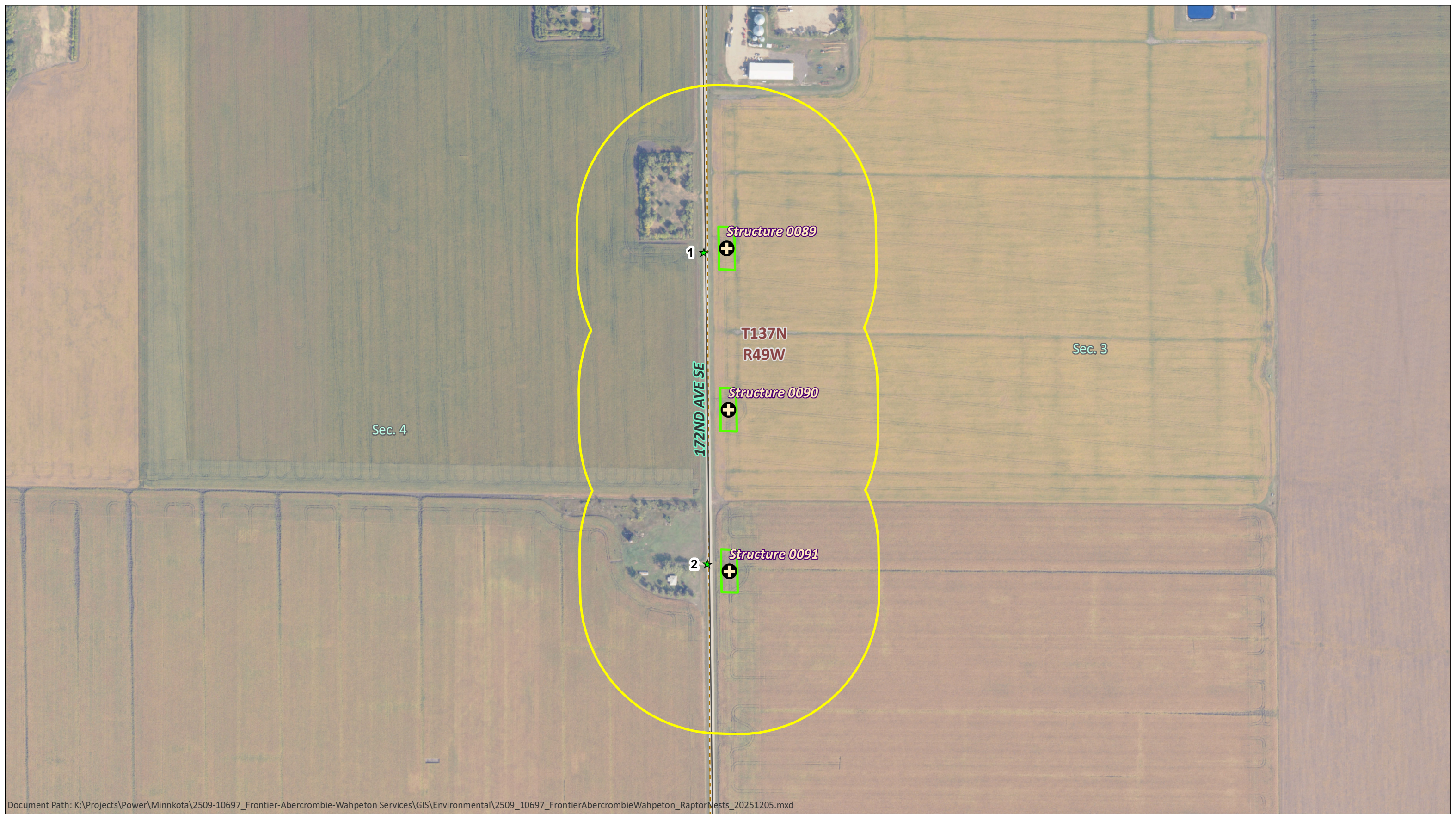
This memo shall fulfill MPC's commitment of a pre-construction migratory bird and raptor nest survey. If you have any questions regarding the survey, please feel free to call Derek Bendickson at 701-989-4452 or email at derek.bendickson@kljeng.com.

Regards,

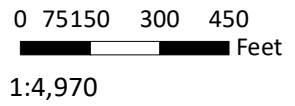
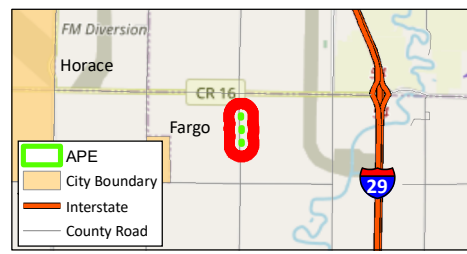
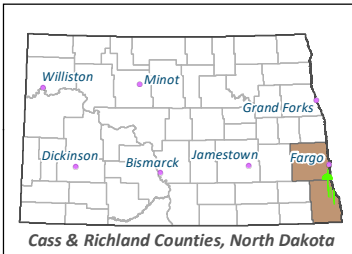
Derek Bendickson
KLJ

Attachments:

Migratory Bird & Raptor Nest Survey Map Set
Photo Log
NDGF Coordination Email



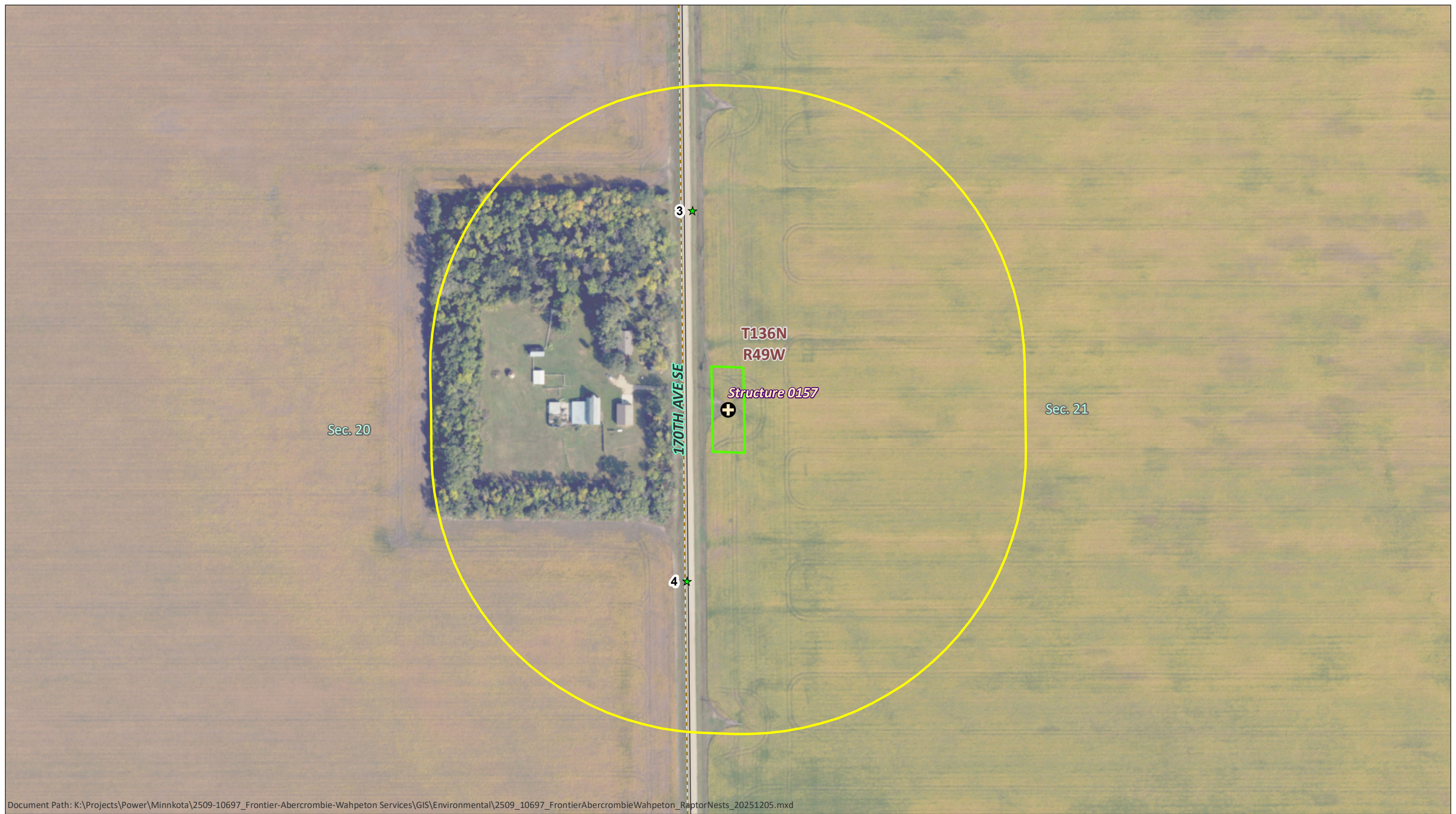
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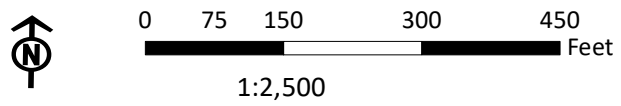
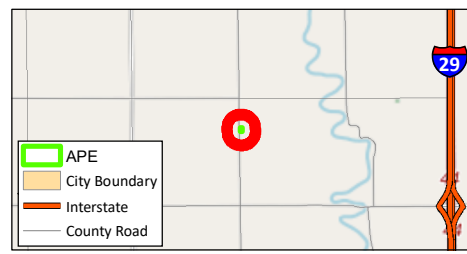
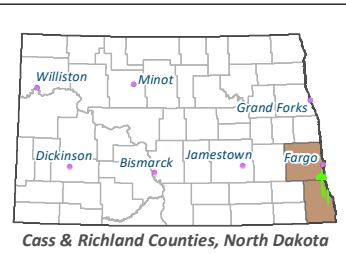
Map created by KLJ
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 Data Source: KLJ, NDGIS, NDDOT, & USGS

- ★ Photo Point
- ⊕ Structure
- APE
- 660-foot Buffer
- USFWS Wetland
- Section Line
- County Road

Migratory Bird & Raptor Nest Survey		
Frontier-Wahpeton 230kV Structure Replacements		
Cass & Richland Counties, North Dakota		
Map Author: D. Bendickson	Surveyor: J. Kuchera, KLJ	
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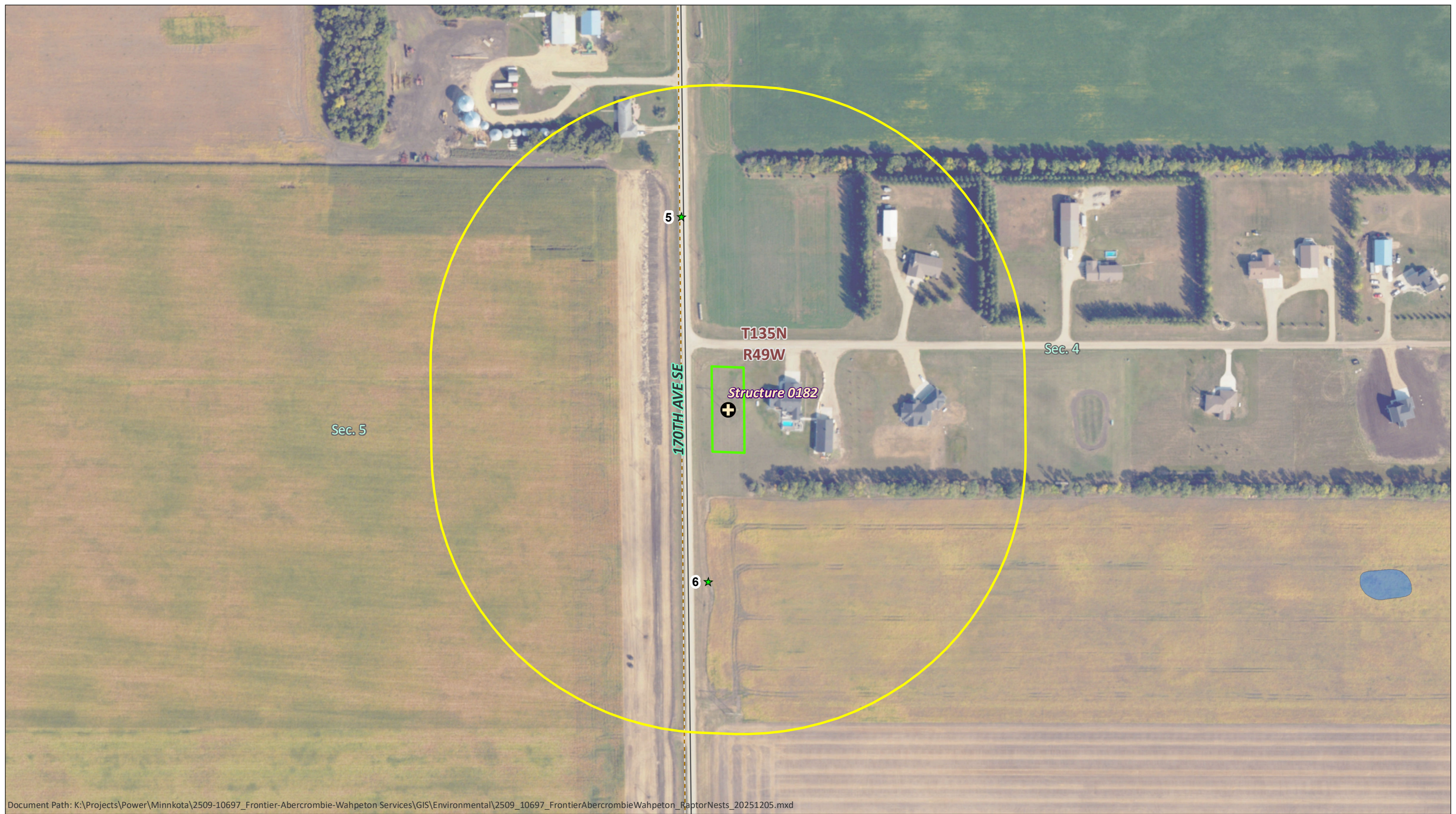
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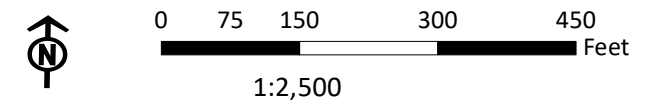
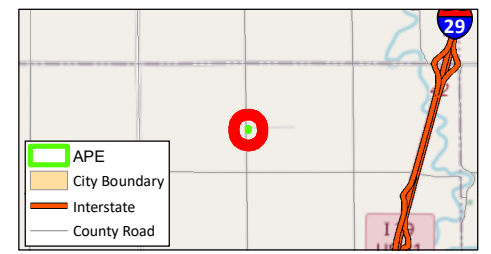
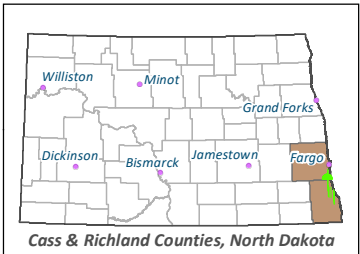
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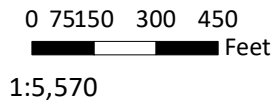
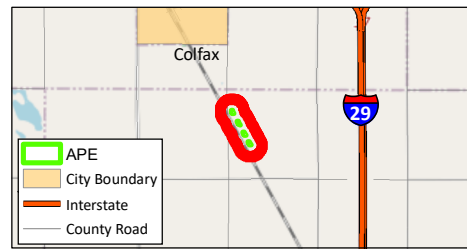
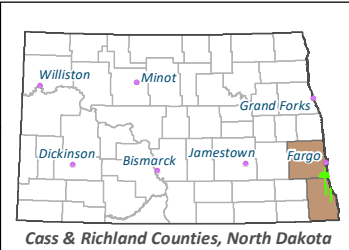
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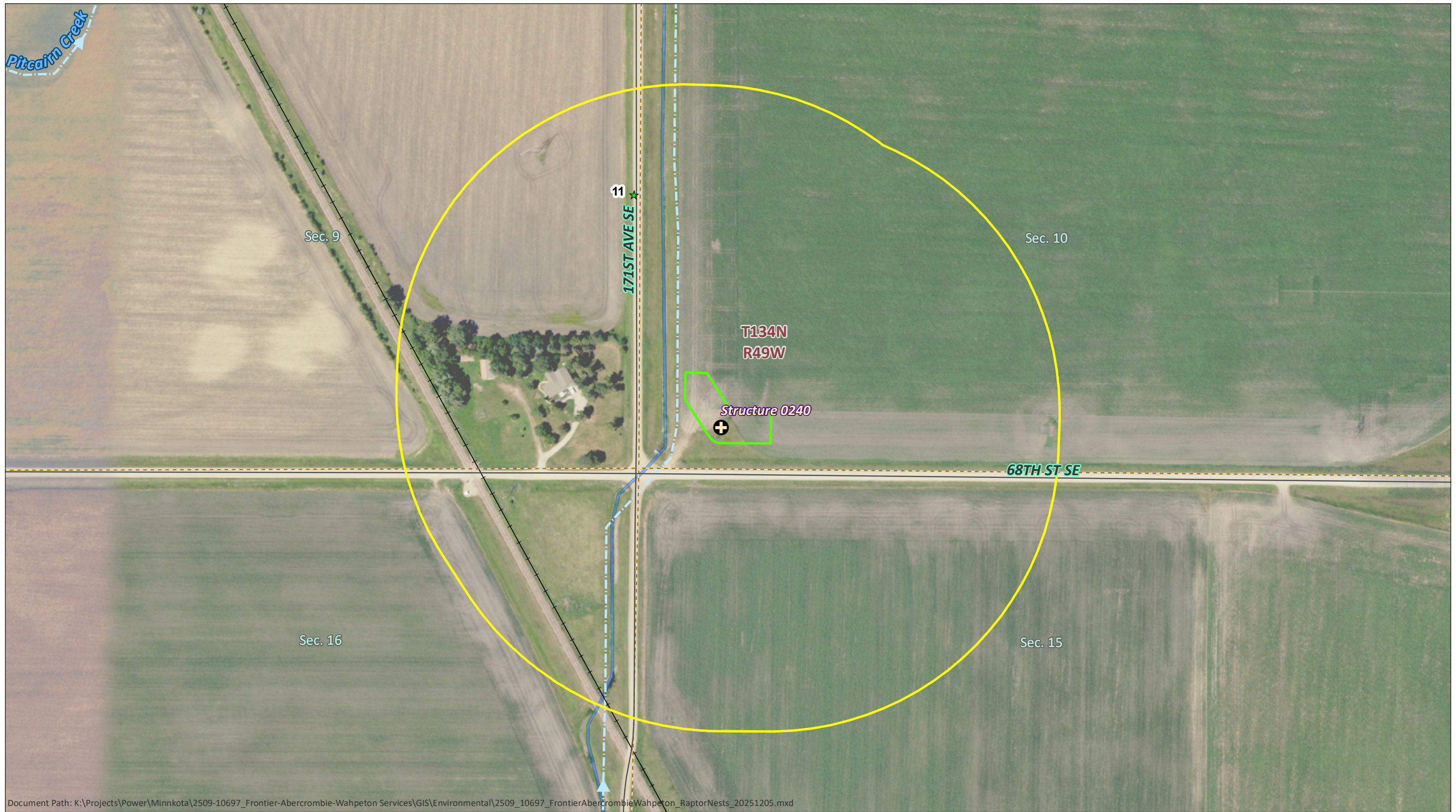
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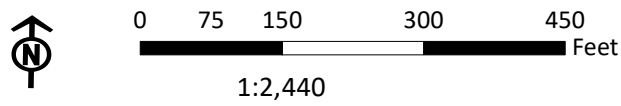
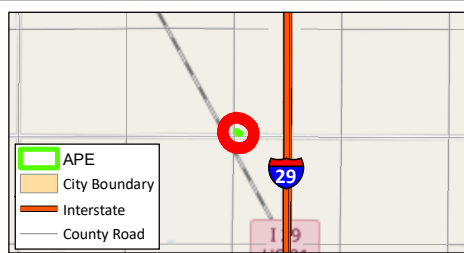
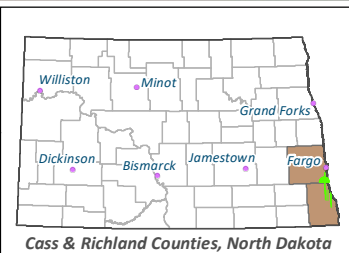
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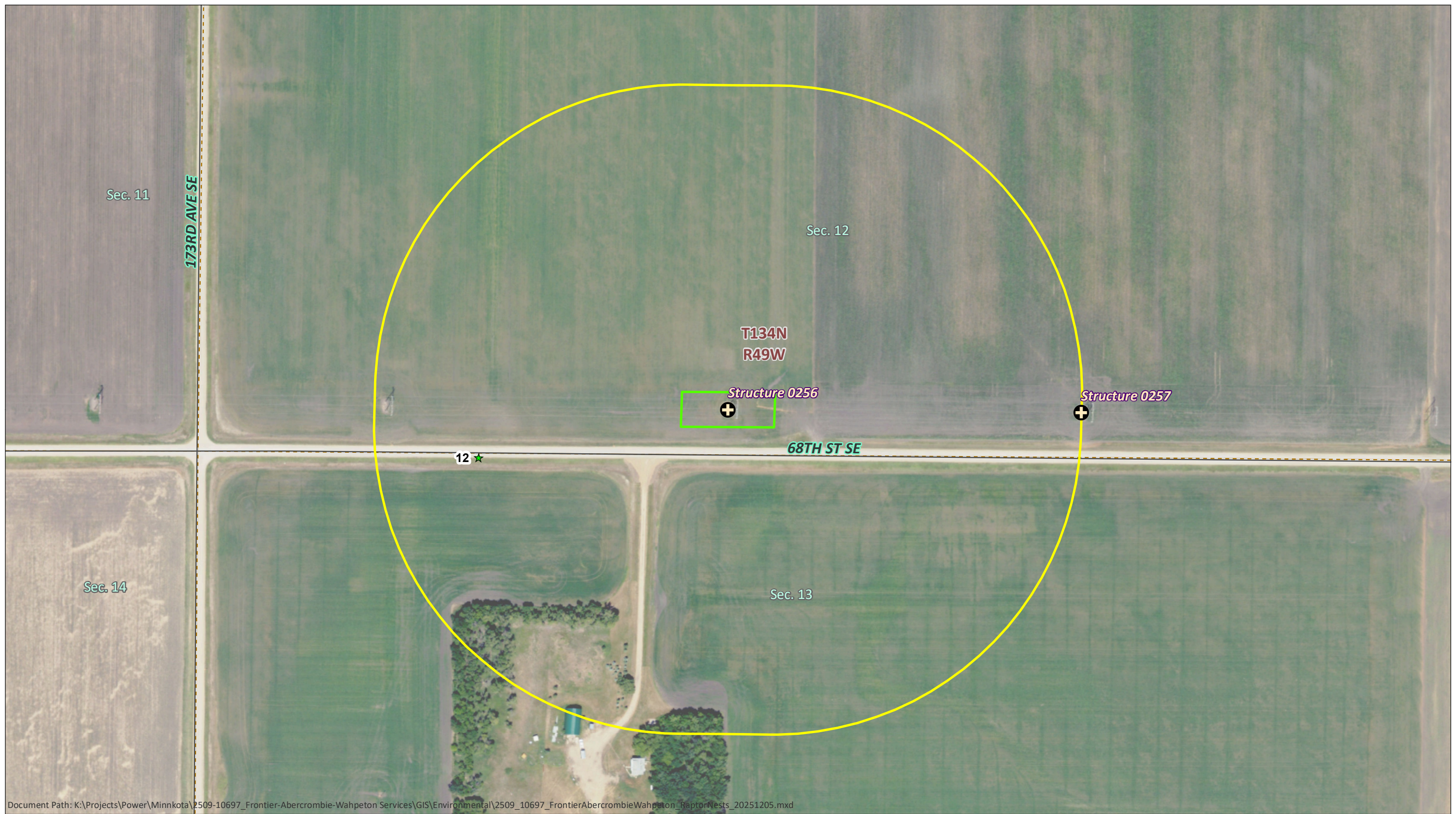
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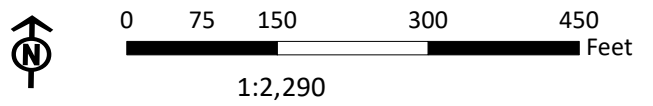
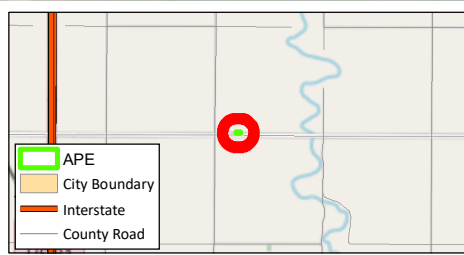
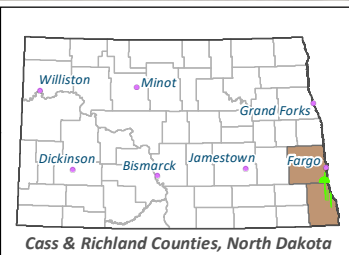
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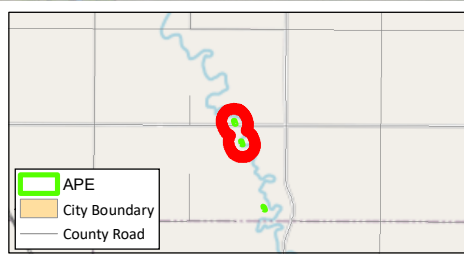
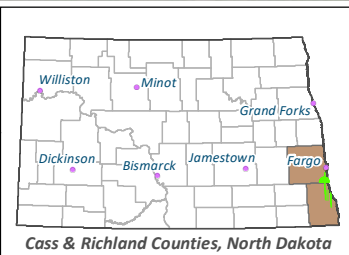
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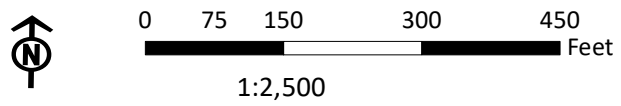
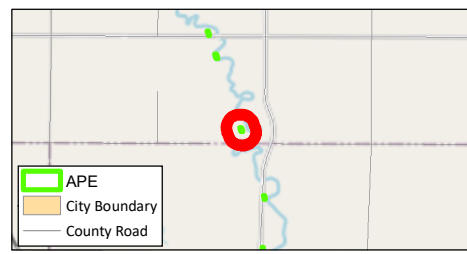
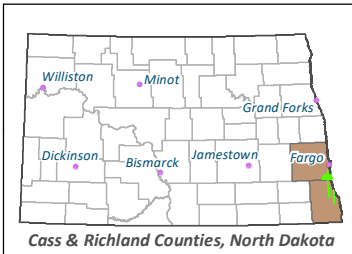
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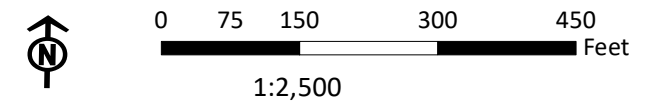
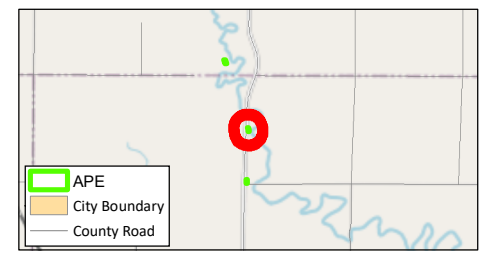
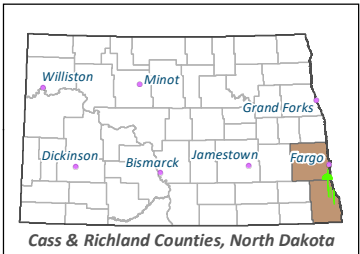
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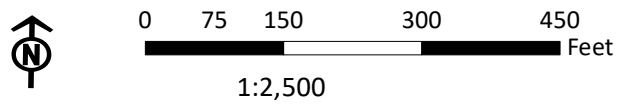
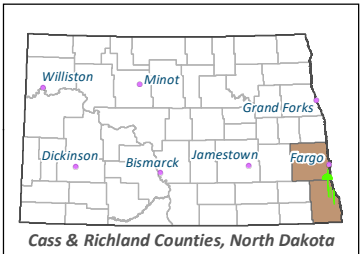
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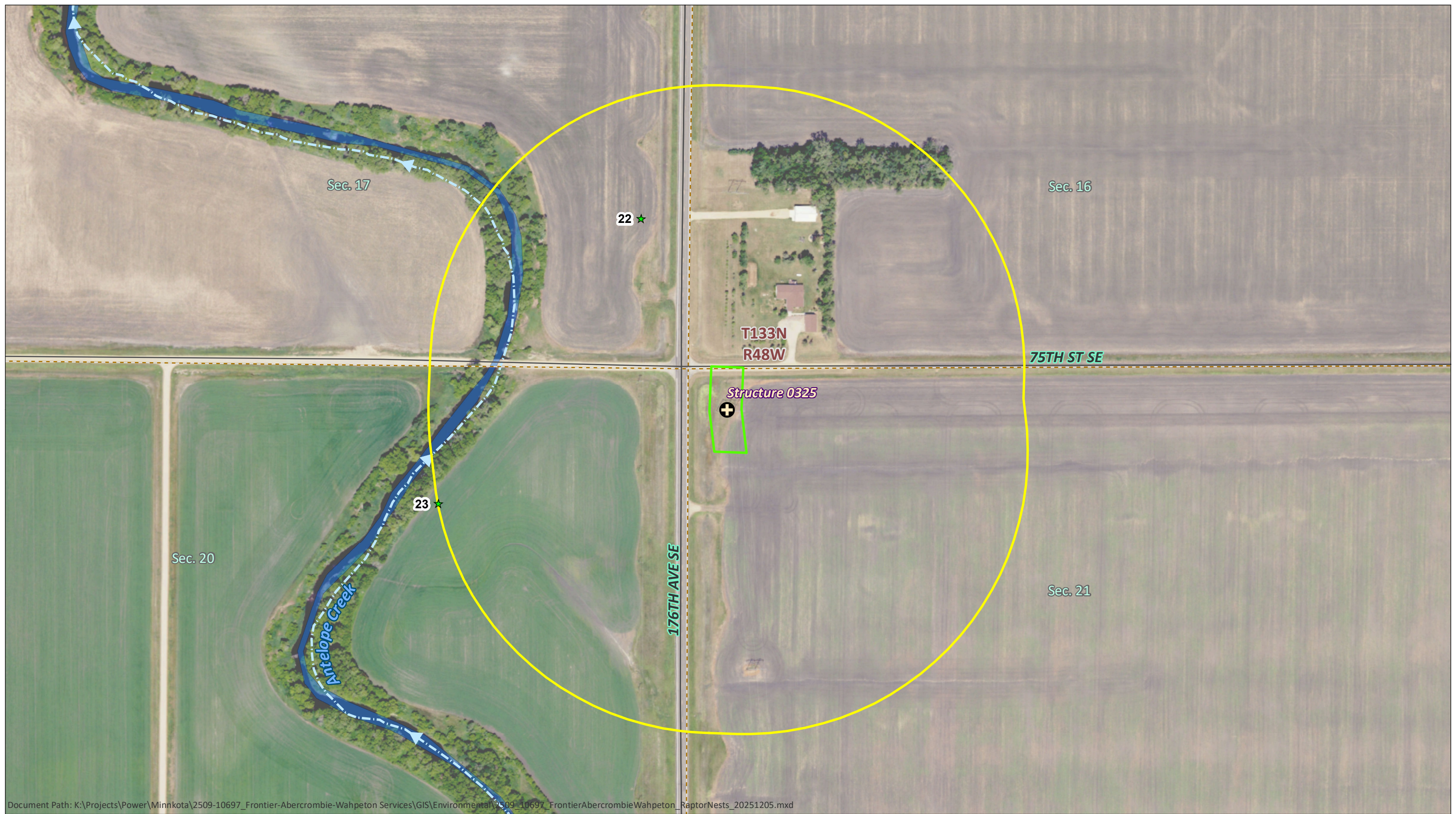
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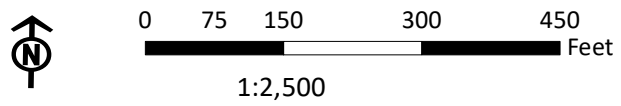
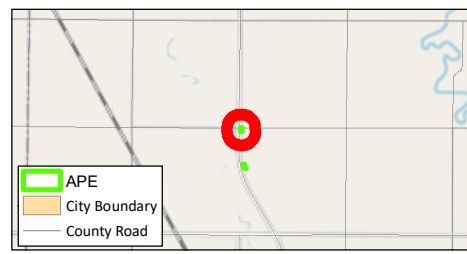
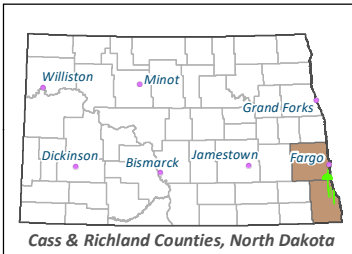
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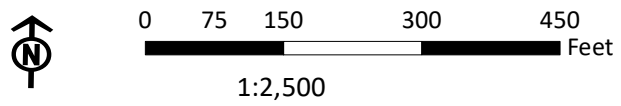
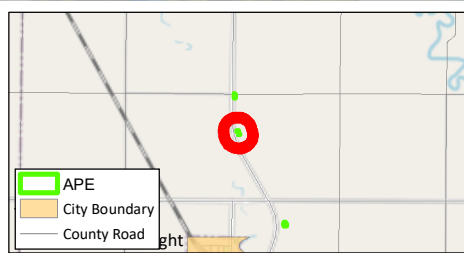
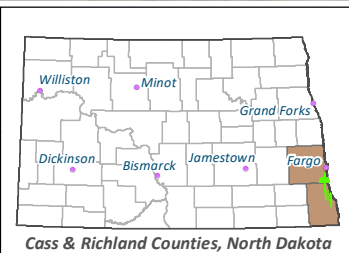
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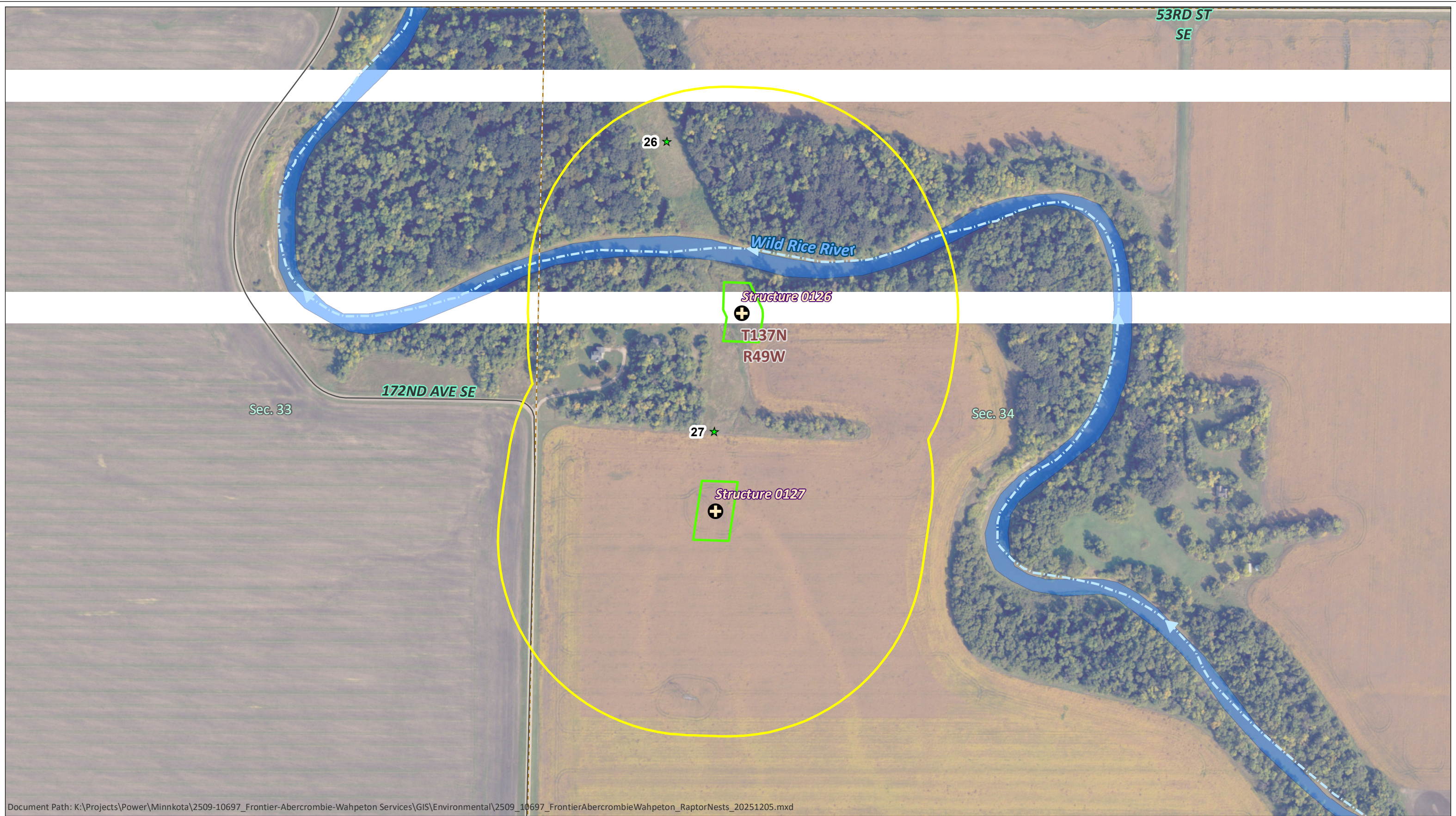
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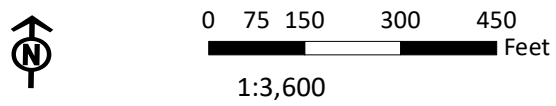
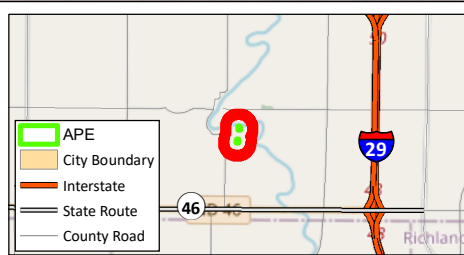
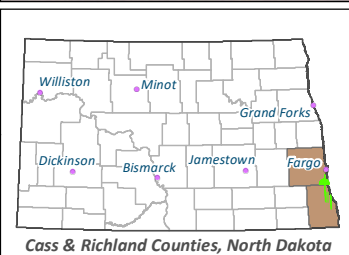
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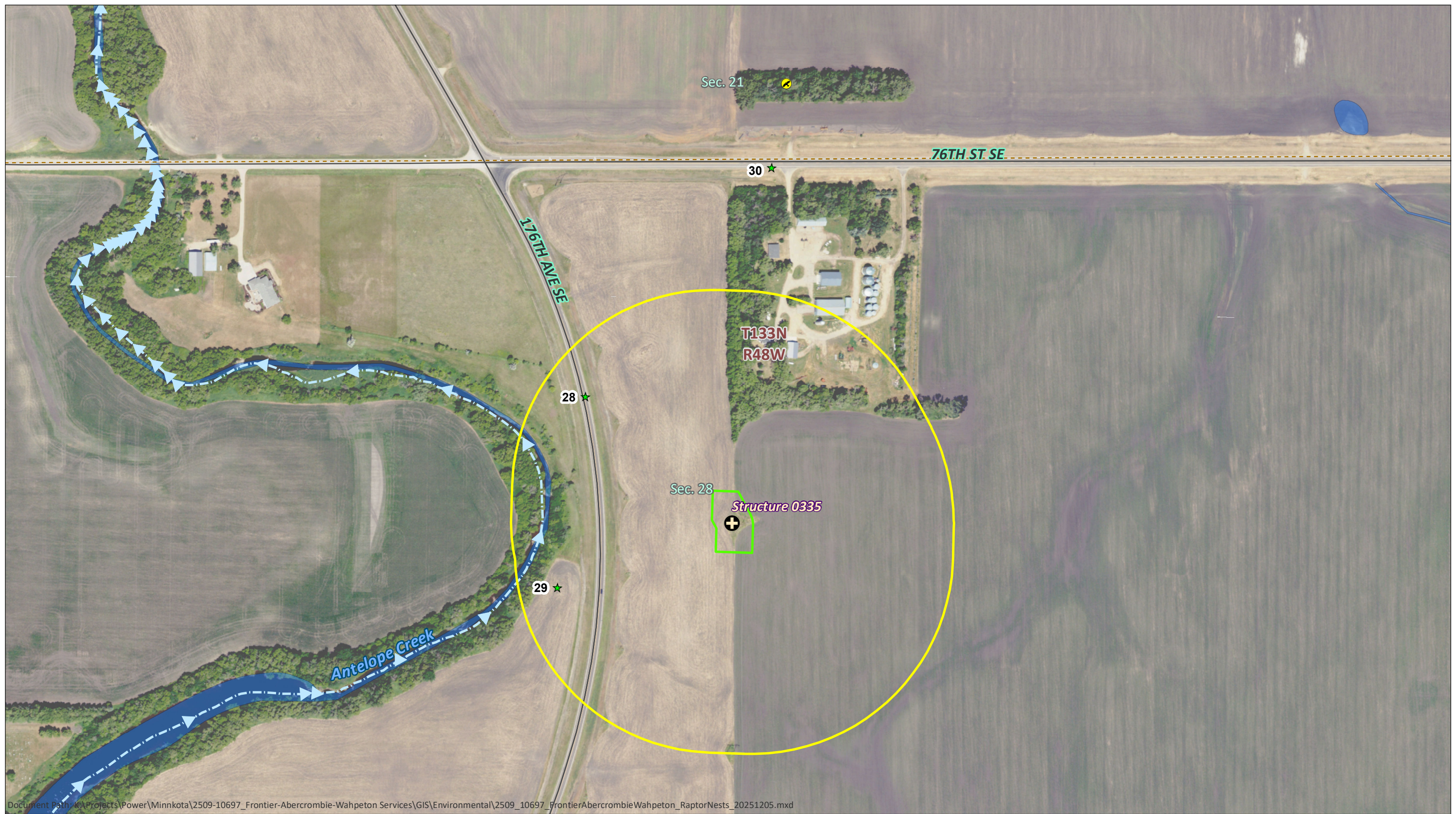
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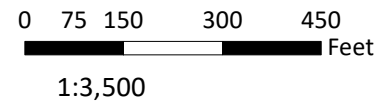
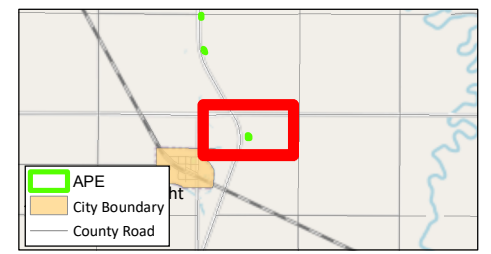
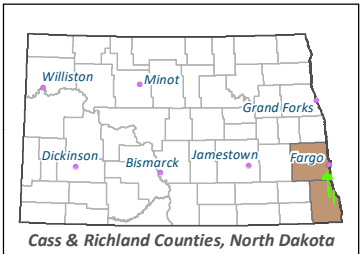
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Migratory Bird & Raptor Nest Survey Frontier-Wahpeton 230kV Structure Replacements Cass & Richland Counties, North Dakota		
Map Author: D. Bendickson		Surveyor: J. Kuchera, KLJ
Date: 1/6/2026		
		Page 13 of 14



Document Path: K:\Projects\Power\Minnkota\2509-10697_Frontier-Abercrombie-Wahpeton Services\GIS\Environmental\2509_10697_FrontierAbercrombieWahpeton_RaptorNests_20251205.mxd



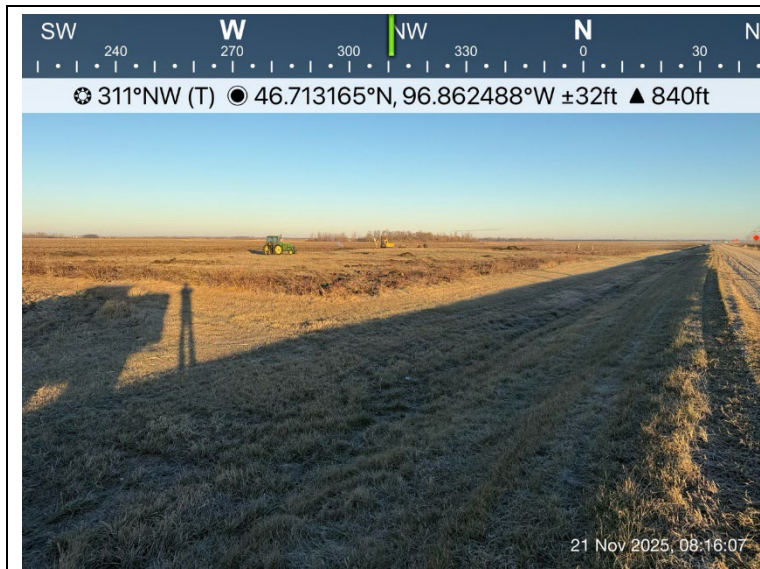
Map created by KLJ
 Orthophoto Source: USGS, USDA, The National
 Map: Orthoimagery, January 09, 2025.
 Data Source: KLJ, NDGIS, NDDOT, & USGS

- Bald Eagle Observation
- Photo Point
- Structure
- APE
- 660-foot Buffer
- USFWS Wetland
- Section Line
- County Road

Migratory Bird & Raptor Nest Survey		
Frontier-Wahpeton 230kV Structure Replacements		
Cass & Richland Counties, North Dakota		
Map Author: D. Bendickson	Surveyor: J. Kuchera, KLJ	
Date: 1/6/2026		Page of

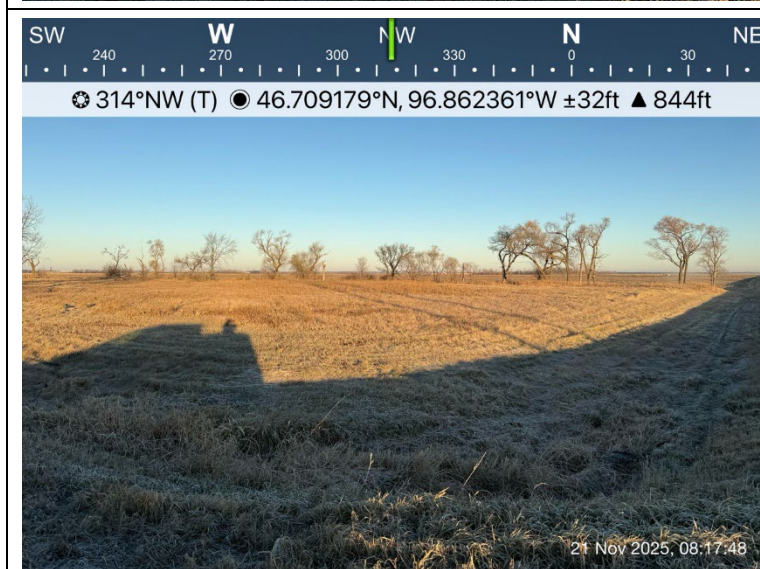
Site Photographs

Frontier – Wahpeton 230kV Structure Replacements



Structure Number: 0089
 Photo #: 1
 Observer: Jess Kuchera

View northwest of trees that have been removed.
 No nests observed.



Structure Number: 0091
 Photo #: 2
 Observer: Jess Kuchera

View northwest of trees near a farmstead. No nests observed.

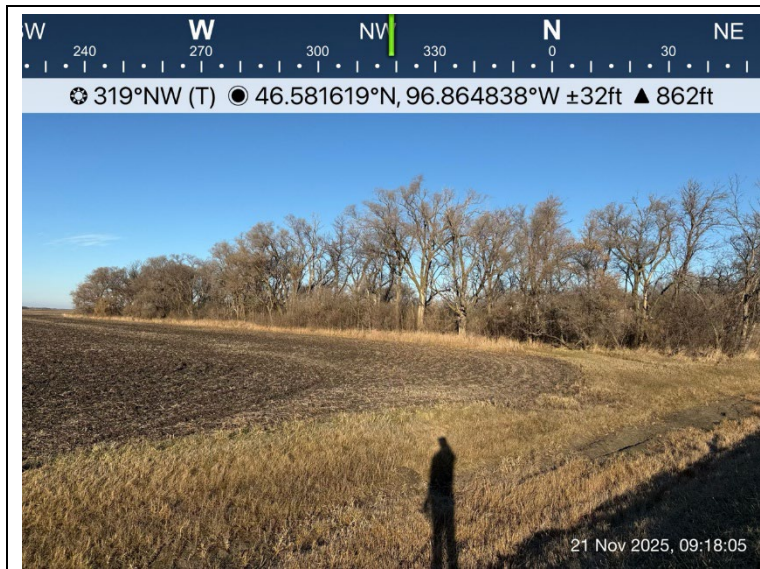


Structure Number: 0157
 Photo #: 3
 Observer: Jess Kuchera

View southwest of trees near a farmstead. No nests observed.

Site Photographs

Frontier – Wahpeton 230kV Structure Replacements



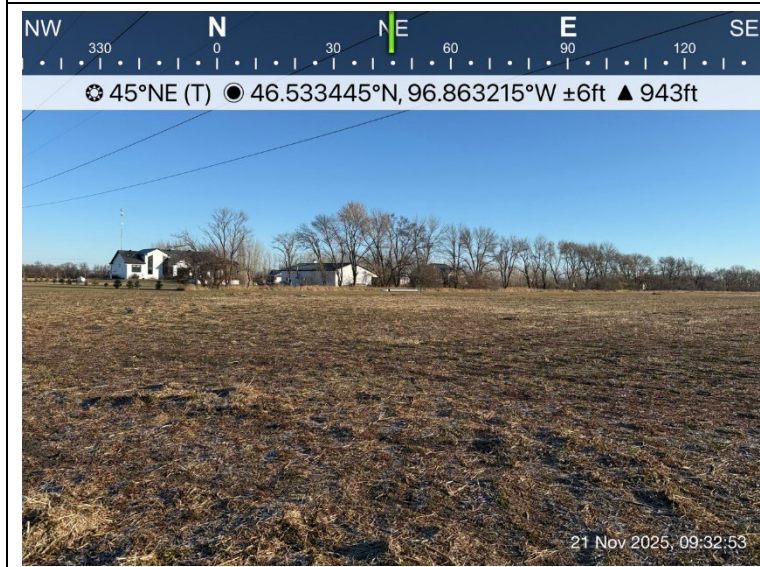
Structure Number: 0157
 Photo #: 4
 Observer: Jess Kuchera

View northwest of trees near a farmstead. No nests observed.



Structure Number: 0182
 Photo #: 5
 Observer: Jess Kuchera

View southeast of trees near residential housing. No nests observed.






Structure Number: 0182
 Photo #: 6
 Observer: Jess Kuchera

View northeast of trees near residential housing. No nests observed.

Site Photographs

Frontier – Wahpeton 230kV Structure Replacements

	<p>Structure Number: 0224 Photo #: 7 Observer: Jess Kuchera</p> <p>View northeast of trees within rangeland. No nests observed.</p>
	<p>Structure Number: 0225 Photo #: 8 Observer: Jess Kuchera</p> <p>View east of trees along the railroad. No nests observed.</p>
	<p>Structure Number: 0226 Photo #: 9 Observer: Jess Kuchera</p> <p>View east of trees within rangeland. No nests observed.</p>


Site Photographs

Frontier – Wahpeton 230kV Structure Replacements

	<p>Structure Number: 0227 Photo #: 10 Observer: Jess Kuchera</p> <p>View east of trees within a shelter belt. No nests observed.</p>
	<p>Structure Number: 0240 Photo #: 11 Observer: Jess Kuchera</p> <p>View southwest of trees near a farmstead. No nests observed.</p>
	<p>Structure Number: 0256 Photo #: 12 Observer: Jess Kuchera</p> <p>View south of trees near a farmstead. No nests observed.</p>

Site Photographs

Frontier – Wahpeton 230kV Structure Replacements

	<p>Structure Number: 0293 Photo #: 13 Observer: Jess Kuchera</p> <p>View north of trees along the Wild Rice River. No nests observed.</p>
	<p>Structure Number: 0293/0295 Photo #: 14 Observer: Jess Kuchera</p> <p>View southeast of trees along the Wild Rice River. No nests observed.</p>
	<p>Structure Number: 0293/0295 Photo #: 15 Observer: Jess Kuchera</p> <p>View southwest of trees along the Wild Rice River. No nests observed.</p>

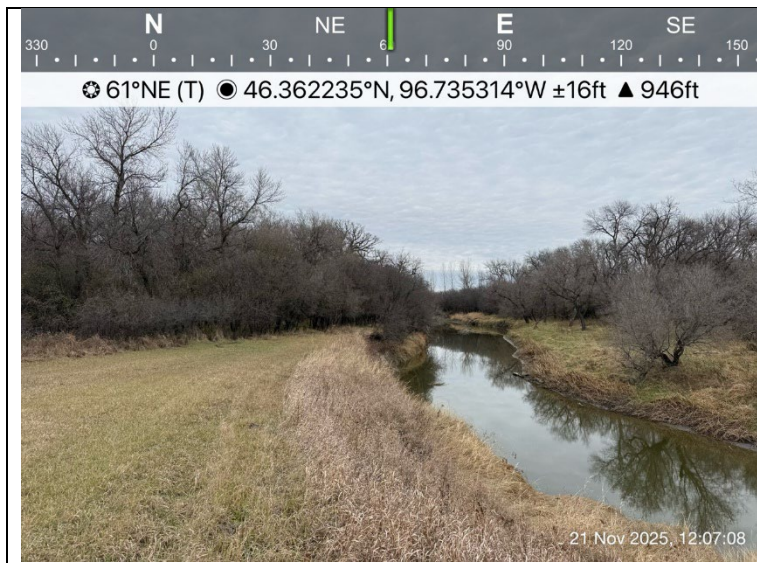
Site Photographs

Frontier – Wahpeton 230kV Structure Replacements

 <p>59°NE (T) ● 46.380188°N, 96.745094°W ±32ft ▲ 883ft</p> <p>21 Nov 2025, 11:21:26</p>	<p>Structure Number: 0295 Photo #: 16 Observer: Jess Kuchera</p> <p>View northeast of trees along the Wild Rice River. No nests observed.</p>
 <p>36°NE (T) ● 46.370136°N, 96.740463°W ±32ft ▲ 882ft</p> <p>21 Nov 2025, 11:45:25</p>	<p>Structure Number: 0301 Photo #: 17 Observer: Jess Kuchera</p> <p>View northeast of trees along the Wild Rice River. No nests observed.</p>
 <p>133°SE (T) ● 46.363567°N, 96.736420°W ±32ft ▲ 880ft</p> <p>21 Nov 2025, 12:01:29</p>	<p>Structure Number: 0306 Photo #: 18 Observer: Jess Kuchera</p> <p>View southeast of trees along the Wild Rice River. No nests observed.</p>

Site Photographs

Frontier – Wahpeton 230kV Structure Replacements



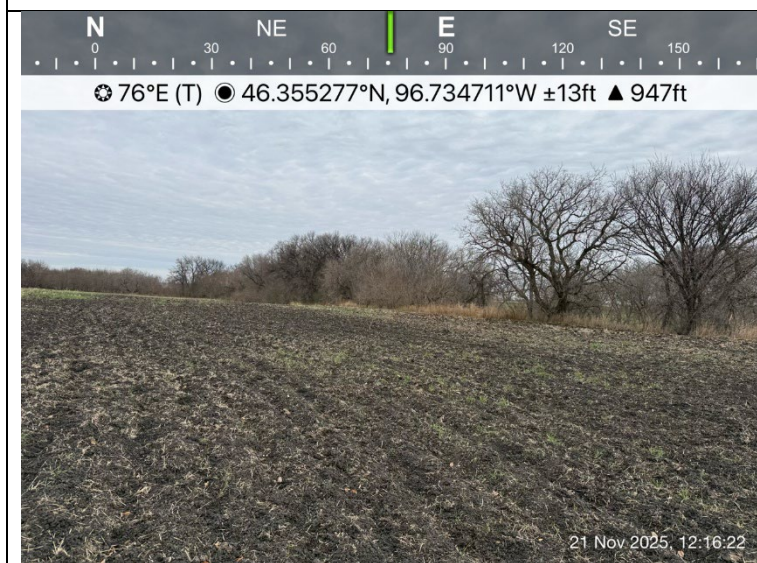
Structure Number: 0306
Photo #: 19
Observer: Jess Kuchera

View northeast of trees along the Wild Rice River.
No nests observed.



Structure Number: 0310
Photo #: 20
Observer: Jess Kuchera

View southeast of trees along the Wild Rice River.
No nests observed.

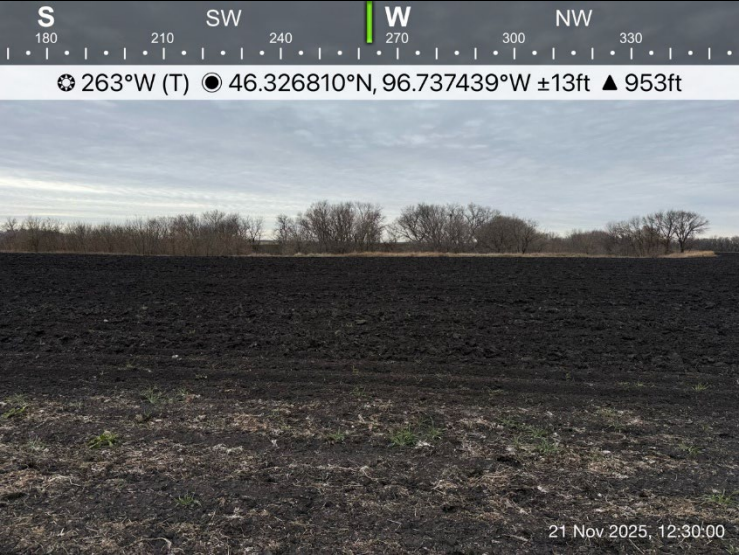


Structure Number: 0310
Photo #: 21
Observer: Jess Kuchera

View east of trees along the Wild Rice River. No
nests observed.




Site Photographs

Frontier – Wahpeton 230kV Structure Replacements

	<p>Structure Number: 0325 Photo #: 22 Observer: Jess Kuchera</p> <p>View west of trees along Antelope Creek. No nests observed.</p>
	<p>Structure Number: 0325 Photo #: 23 Observer: Jess Kuchera</p> <p>View north of trees along Antelope Creek. No nests observed.</p>
	<p>Structure Number: 0328 Photo #: 24 Observer: Jess Kuchera</p> <p>View southwest of trees along Antelope Creek. No nests observed.</p>

Site Photographs

Frontier – Wahpeton 230kV Structure Replacements

 <p>SW W NW N 210 240 270 300 330 0 30 301°NW (T) 46.320756°N, 96.737203°W ±6ft ▲ 950ft 21 Nov 2025, 12:46:32</p>	<p>Structure Number: 0328 Photo #: 25 Observer: Jess Kuchera</p> <p>View northwest of trees along Antelope Creek. No nests observed.</p>
 <p>SE S SW W 120 150 180 210 240 270 203°SW (T) 46.643396°N, 96.861172°W ±13ft ▲ 926ft 21 Nov 2025, 08:37:29</p>	<p>Structure Number: 0126 Photo #: 26 Observer: Jess Kuchera</p> <p>View southwest of trees along the Wild Rice River. No nests observed.</p>
 <p>NW N NE E 300 330 0 30 60 90 9°N (T) 46.640831°N, 96.860317°W ±6ft ▲ 912ft 21 Nov 2025, 08:58:04</p>	<p>Structure Number: 0126/0127 Photo #: 27 Observer: Jess Kuchera</p> <p>View north of trees along the Wild Rice River. No nests observed.</p>

Site Photographs

Frontier – Wahpeton 230kV Structure Replacements

	<p>Structure Number: 0335 Photo #: 28 Observer: Jess Kuchera</p> <p>View southeast of trees near a farmstead. No nests observed.</p>
	<p>Structure Number: 0335 Photo #: 29 Observer: Jess Kuchera</p> <p>View northwest of trees along Antelope Creek. No nests observed.</p>
	<p>Structure Number: 0335 Photo #: 30 Observer: Jess Kuchera</p> <p>View of one of the two bald eagles spotted near Structure 335 during the field survey.</p>

From: [Johnson, Sandra K.](#)
To: [Derek Bendickson](#)
Subject: RE: Raptor Nest Inquiry
Date: Wednesday, October 8, 2025 1:24:29 PM
Attachments: [image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)
[image006.png](#)
[image007.png](#)
[image008.png](#)
[image009.png](#)

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi Derek,
The ND state email system deletes zip files. Shapefiles can either be sent not zipped, or change the extension to .piz. However, a KMZ package works in most instances (including the sites below) for me to query the database. There are no known Bald Eagle nests within 1 mile of any of the project locations/buffers.
Thanks,
Sandy

Sandra Johnson
Conservation Biologist

(701) 328-6382 • sajohnson@nd.gov • gf.nd.gov



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Dakota | Game and Fish
Be Legendary.
[Facebook icon] [Instagram icon] [YouTube icon] [ND logo icon] [Mobile app icon]

From: Derek Bendickson <derek.bendickson@kljeng.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 7, 2025 11:07 AM
To: Johnson, Sandra K. <sajohnson@nd.gov>
Subject: RE: Raptor Nest Inquiry

***** **CAUTION:** This email originated from an outside source. Do not click links or open attachments unless you know they are safe. *****

Hi Sandra,

I got a kickback message from the email I sent below saying nd.gov doesn't accept the file types that were attached, which were zipped shapefiles. Trying again with a kmz package.

Thanks,
Derek Bendickson

Environmental Specialist



400 East Broadway
Suite 600
Bismarck, ND 58501
Direct 701 355 8728
Cell 701 989 4452

From: Derek Bendickson
Sent: Tuesday, October 7, 2025 10:49 AM
To: Johnson, Sandra K. <sajohnson@nd.gov>
Subject: Raptor Nest Inquiry

Good morning Sandra,

I am working with Minnkota Power Cooperative on three projects that will undergo construction next year. They consist of line rebuilds, substation upgrades, etc. Can you please check your database to see if there are any historic nests falling within the attached buffers and provide a shapefile of the nest(s) if so?

If you think this will take some time, Crystal Substation would be priority, followed by Berea, and then Frontier-Wahpeton.

Thank you!

Derek Bendickson
Environmental Specialist



400 East Broadway
Suite 600
Bismarck, ND 58501
Direct 701 355 8728
Cell 701 989 4452