U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
North Central Montana District

NorVal Electric Coop. Inc, MTM-99550

Environmental Assessment DOI-BLM-MT-L020-2020-0001-EA

November 30, 2020

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BLM

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CHAPTER 1: PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION

1.1 Introduction and Background

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has prepared this Environmental Assessment (EA) to respond to a right-of-way (ROW) application submitted by NorVal Electric Cooperative, Inc. (NorVal). The United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and Western Area Power Association (WAPA) are formal cooperating agencies on the Project. This document follows the guidelines promulgated by the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) for implementing the procedural provisions of NEPA (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 1500-1508, BLM's NEPA Handbook [H-1790-1], and the USACE regulation ER 200-2-2 [33 CFR 230]). Additionally, CFR 1506.3(a) allows the cooperating agencies to adopt a NEPA document prepared by the lead federal agency (BLM).

This EA will analyze a proposal from Norval for a 115 kV transmission line, which is one of the various aboveground ancillary facilities associated with the Keystone XL Pipeline Project (TransCanada Keystone Pipeline, L.P. (Keystone) is authorized to construct, connect, operate, maintain and eventually decommission a pipeline system and ancillary facilities from Hardisty, Alberta, Canada to Steele City, Nebraska (referred to as the Keystone XL Project). A total of 48.9 miles of transmission line would be constructed in this project for the support of Pump Station 10 of Keystone XL Pipeline Project. Of the 48.9 miles of transmission line, approximately 4.8 miles are on BLM administered lands. The proposed transmission line would begin at WAPA's existing Fort Peck substation and terminate at Pump Station 10 of the Keystone XL Pipeline Project.

NorVal is headquartered in Glasgow, Montana and has an Rural Utilities Services designation of Montana 26 Valley. The Cooperative's service area lies in portions of Valley, Daniels, McCone, Phillips, and Roosevelt Counties in northeastern Montana. The Cooperative does not serve the towns of Glasgow, Wolf Point, Nashua, or Hinsdale, but serves the rural consumers in these areas. The Cooperative's service area is well defined, bordered by Big Flat Electric Cooperative on its western boundary, Sheridan Electric Cooperative on its eastern boundary, McCone Electric Cooperative on its southern boundary, and the Canadian province of Saskatchewan to the north. The 115kV line will cross approximately $\pm$2.5 miles of USACE lands, and various ownerships, including private, Town of Fort Peck, State of Montana, and BLM. It will terminate at a proposed substation which will provide electrical power to TransCanada's proposed Pump station 10. The estimated total length of the proposed route is 48.9 miles. The construction and operation of the 115kV line will provide 100% of the power required by the electric powered pumps at Pump Station 10. No increase in load on any of the existing local electrical system is anticipated. Additionally, a portion of the 69kV line from the Whatley Substation to the Fauth Substation can be upgraded, substantially improving the stability and reliability of the local system.

1.2 Purpose and Need

The BLM's purpose is to make a determination on whether to approve a ROW across 4.8 miles of BLM lands for an aerial transmission line (115 Kv). The need for the action is to respond to and consider a Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) ROW application as submitted by NorVal. to construct, operate, maintain, and eventually terminate a 115 kV transmission line across public lands administered by the BLM Glasgow Field Office. The BLM

would respond to NorVal's application for a new ROW authorization and consider approval of NorVal's request in a manner that avoids or reduces impacts on sensitive resource values and prevents unnecessary or undue degradation of the public lands. BLM's responsibility to process land use applications is detailed in 43 CFR 2804.25.

WAPA's purpose and need remains as described in Chapter 6.2.2 of the Final SEIS for the Keystone XL Project. WAPA must consider and respond to interconnection requests from the local power cooperatives, and the related construction or upgrading of any WAPA-owned facilities as a result of the requests.

The USACE understands that there is a need for supplying power to electric powered pumps supporting the operation of the Keystone XL pipeline. The alternatives to meet this need are presented in Chapter 2. The purpose of the project is to provide power to these pumps to allow for the operation of the pipeline. If constructed, a small portion (±2.5 miles) of the aerial transmission line would cross federal lands managed by USACE. If approved, a real estate instrument would have to be issued by USACE. More information about USACE purpose and need can be found in the XL SEIS in Section S.2.5.

1.3 Decision to be Made

The BLM must decide whether or not to grant the ROW across 4.8 miles of BLM managed lands, and if so, under what terms and conditions.

WAPA's decision is whether to grant or deny the request to interconnect NorVal at the existing WAPA Fort Peck Substation and, if granted, to expand the substation to accommodate the request. Specifically, WAPA will consider the potential environmental impacts identified in this EA to inform its pending Record of Decision for the SEIS.

USACE must decide whether or not to grant an easement to allow approximately 2.5 miles of the aerial transmission line to cross federal lands managed by USACE

1.4 Conformance with Land Use Plans

The project area is managed according to decisions in the HiLine Resource Management Plan (HiLine RMP) approved in 2015. The HiLine RMP can be accessed at https://eplanning.blm.gov. The RMP states that "Requests for land use authorizations (rights-of-way, leases or permits) will be analyzed and mitigation measures applied on a case-by-case basis through the environmental review process. Terms and conditions for rights-of-way, corridors, and development areas (oil and gas) will incorporate applicable Best Management Practices (BMP), current professional practice, and recent scientific findings" (page 3-22).

Portions of the proposed project fall within Priority Habitat Management Area (PHMA) and General Habitat Management Area (GHMA) for sage grouse, as identified by Montana's Sage Grouse Conservation Strategy (Project No. 2953,3303, and 3308, Governor's Executive Orders 12-2015 and 21-2015), as attached (Appendix 1). The HiLine RMP designates these areas as avoidance areas for infrastructure ROW's (pg. 2-5) but may be available with special stipulations. The proposed project was reviewed by the Montana Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation Program (MSGHCP) and evaluated against the disturbance cap and Habitat Quality Tool (Appendix 1). Using these values, special stipulations were developed to reduce

impacts to sage grouse including timing limitations for disturbing activities within priority and general habitat areas and burial of other overhead powerlines within priority habitat areas following the BMP's in Appendix 1 of the HiLine RMP. Because of this, and the fact that the remainder of the proposed project is within areas identified as Open to ROWs in the RMP, the proposed project is in conformance with the Land Use Plan (LUP).

Additionally, a segment of the transmission line crosses federal lands at the Fort Peck Project. Habitat at the proposed crossing is identified in the Master Plan for the project and further described in the 2019 Keystone XL Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (FSES)). Terms and conditions for occupying federal lands at the Fort Peck Project are subject to Guidelines/BMP/mitigation measures identified in these documents.

1.5 Relationship to other Plans, or other NEPA Documents

This EA tiers to (40 CFR 1508.28, 40 CFR 1502.20) and incorporates by reference (40 CFR 1502.21) the Department of State (DOS) Keystone XL FSEIS (December 2019), the Keystone XL 2014 Final SEIS and the Keystone XL 2011 EIS. More specifically, electrical distribution lines and associated pump stations were analyzed in greater detail and considered as connected actions in Chapter 6 – Electrical Power Infrastructure (pp. 6-1 to 6-136) and Chapter 7 - Cumulative Impacts (pp. 7.1 to 7.22) of the Keystone XL FSEIS (92019) and the 2014 Keystone XL Final SEIS.

The proposed actions analyzed in this EA are project-specific refinements that are tiered to the broader connected actions, in conformance with 40 CFR 1508.28 and 40 CFR 1502.20), as described in Section 2.5 of the Final EIS (2011) and incorporate by reference (pursuant to 40 CFR 1502.21) the associated analysis completed in Keystone XL FEIS (2011), Keystone XL Supplemental FEIS (2014) and Keystone XL Supplemental FEIS (2019).

In fulfillment of the requirements under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act the potential impacts of the Keystone XL pipeline and connected actions on Threatened and Endangered Species were analyzed in the Biological Assessment for the Keystone XL Project. November 26, 2019. 896pp.

The US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) reviewed the Biological Assessment, and the Letter of Concurrence (December 23, 2019) is included in Appendix 2.

The MSGHCP reviewed the proposed project, and their response and recommendations are included in Appendix 1.

Federal Law, Executive Orders, and Secretarial Orders:
Section 501 of FLPMA (Public Law 94-579-October 21, 1976 as amended): The Secretary, with respect to the public lands, are authorized to grant, issue, or renew rights-of-ways over, upon, under and through such lands.

Executive Order 13783 Promoting Energy Independence and Secretarial Order 3349 American Energy Independence directs reexamination of practices across the Department of Interior to balance conservation strategies and job-creation.

Presidential Memorandum Regarding Construction of the Keystone XL Pipeline (January 2017) directs the Secretary to take all steps necessary and appropriate to review and approve as warranted, in an expedited manner, requests for approvals related to the Keystone XL Pipeline.

Secretarial Order 3362: Improving Habitat Quality in Western Big-Game Winter Range and Migration Corridors

Executive Order 13788: Establishing Discipline and Accountability in the Environmental Review and Permitting Process for Infrastructure Projects and Secretarial Order 3355: Streamlining National Environmental Policy Act Reviews

Secretarial Order 3353: Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation and Cooperation with Western States. June 7, 2017.

1.6 Resource Issues Identified for Analysis

1.6.1 Resource Issue 1

Threatened and Endangered Species, BLM Sensitive Species, migratory birds, and other wildlife

- How would the proposed project impact piping plovers, greater sage-grouse and big game winter range?

1.7 Issues/Resources Considered but Eliminated from Further Analysis

Resources were analyzed in an internal scoping document. The following resources were considered but eliminated from further analysis based on the proposed project and design features, as identified in Chapter 2, section 2.4 Alternative B (Proposed Action).

1.7.1 Invasive Species and Noxious Weeds

- The majority of the proposed ROW on BLM would take place along existing roads, which have previously been and continue to be disturbed, and would not be adversely impacted by a new disturbance. Leafy spurge (*Euphorbia esula*) and other noxious weeds are present in and around the immediate construction area. The design features, as stated under the terms and conditions, should mitigate this issue, i.e. all vehicles and equipment used in conjunction with the construction activities would be cleaned of all vegetation, plant parts, and soil, prior to entering BLM lands to lessen the possibility of establishing or spreading noxious weeds. By following the design features, no additional impacts are expected. This area of disturbance is included under regular weed monitoring.

1.7.2 Recreation

- There are no developed recreation sites and recreational use is low and dispersed, mainly consisting of hunting activities. Most of the proposed ROW on BLM would take place along existing roads, which have previously been and continue to be disturbed, and would not be adversely impacted by a new disturbance. The co-location of the proposed transmission line and roads would avoid or minimize impacts to recreation in the area.

1.7.3 Special Designations and Wilderness Characteristics

- This resource is not present within the proposed project area and therefore would not be impacted.

1.7.4 Visual Resources

- The proposed ROW is within VRM Class IV and meets the goals and objectives of this classification. The objective of this class is to provide for management activities which require major modifications of the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape can be high. These management activities may dominate the view and be the major focus of viewer attention. Much of the proposed ROW on BLM would take place along existing roads, which have previously been and continue to be disturbed, and would not be adversely impacted by a new disturbance. The co-location of the proposed transmission line and roads would help keep impacts to visual resources to a minimum.

1.7.5 Grazing and Upland Vegetation

- The majority of the proposed ROW on BLM runs parallel to established roads. Of the 4.8 miles of proposed ROW, approximately .5 miles deviate from the road, but only at a distance of less than a quarter mile. The impact to the range health and the local vegetation would be minimal across the entire project and specifically within the BLM's portion of the proposed project. Standard design features, as stated in the terms and conditions under the proposed action, would mitigate any potential impacts.

1.7.6 Cultural and Paleontological, Native American Concerns

- The entire alignment of the proposed ROW was surveyed (regardless of land ownership) to Class III standards (BLM Cultural Resource Report #13-MT-064-004) and all significant cultural resources were avoided in the project design stage, formal consultation with Native American Tribes, communities and the Montanan State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) was initiated June 4th, 2014.
- Following initial consultation efforts, the potential adverse effects of the proposed ROW were initially reviewed by Montana SHPO in coordination with affected Indian tribes and other interested parties in July of 2014. An initial file/records search was conducted to identify previously recorded cultural resources and previously completed resource investigations within a 2-mile-wide corridor centered on the proposed ROW with 4.8 total miles located on BLM administered lands.
- The results of this effort identified 41 previous investigations and seven archaeological sites within the area that was reviewed (Tinti 2013). Subsequently, a Class III cultural resources field inventory was completed for the proposed ROW route identifying 24 sites in total (Tinti 2013; Baer et al. 2010). Potential project impacts on all sites within the Area of Potential Effect (APE) were assessed, as recommended by the BLM, primarily through avoidance but also through spanning and/or fencing where appropriate.
- Additional measures regarding flagging of restricted areas, vehicle travel limitations, staging locations, and construction procedures have also been established to minimize potential impacts. SHPO provided BLM with concurrence for site eligibility determinations, avoidance and mitigation strategies as well as a "No Adverse Effect Determination" for the original alignment on September 16, 2014.
- An Unanticipated Discovery Plan has also been developed and would be implemented to minimize impacts on unknown cultural resources that may be inadvertently encountered during construction or operation of the proposed transmission line. As such, it is expected that there would be negligible impacts ("No Adverse Effect") on cultural resources from the construction and operation of the transmission line.

1.7.7 Soils

- Impacts to soils from Electrical Distribution Lines were analyzed in the Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) for the Keystone XL Project (USDoS, 2014). The analysis states: "*Since the construction and operation of electrical lines and associated structures would require minor disturbances to the landscape of the area, the impacts to the soils resources are expected to be negligible*." (pg. 4.2-15). Impacts were also described, in greater detail, in the 2019 SEIS (USDoS, 2019). The SEIS concluded that: "*Overall, the impacts on soils resulting from construction of power lines and associated infrastructure would be negligible to minor and the impacts resulting from operations and maintenance would be negligible*." Impact monitoring of similar past actions, within the Hi-Line District, supports the stated analysis and conclusions. There would be up-to 2,500 square feet of soil disturbed for power pole placement throughout the 4.8 miles. There would be no new access roads constructed. Design features would be implemented to reduce impacts.

1.7.8 Surface Water, Groundwater, Wetlands, Riparian Areas

- The ground disturbance that could be expected under a scenario where a ROW was issued for the over ground electrical cable would not yield notable effects to water resources as long as the proponent adhered to all stipulations and design criteria. The proposed infrastructure would be placed above ground and for the most part, along existing and previously disturbed ROWs. Several wetland and riparian areas would be crossed, but the proposed action would not yield notable effects to floodplains, wetlands/riparian zones, soils, water resources or hydrologic conditions.
- No direct or indirect impacts to surface waterways or wetlands on public lands managed by the BLM would be anticipated from the Proposed Action. The proposed right-of-way would not cross perennial waterways on public lands managed by the BLM. Natural and man-made wetland, and intermittent and ephemeral drainages, would be crossed by aerial transmission lines which would not alter their function, condition, or bed and bank configuration. Therefore, there would be no impacts to surface water resources.
- Regional groundwater resources in the project area would be avoided by using aerial construction. Therefore, there would be no impacts to groundwater resources.
- There would be no fill or other permanent or temporary impacts to wetlands or other Waters of the U.S.
- All work within floodplains would include surface contour and roughness restoration to approximate the pre-construction configuration as well as soil protection.

1.7.9 Threatened and Endangered Species, BLM Special Status Species, migratory birds, and other wildlife

- The transmission line project was submitted to the US Fish & Wildlife Service ECOS-IPaC website (https://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/) on October 8, 2019 (Consultation Code: 06E11000-2019-SLI-0102) to identify which species addressed in the BA might

specifically occur within the PS10. Threatened and endangered species that might occur within the proposed project area were identified as piping plover (*Charadreus melodus*), whooping crane (*Grus americana*), Northern Long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*) and Pallid Sturgeon (*Scaphirhynchus albus*), (Appendix 3).

  - Pallid sturgeon were noted on the species list but, as the proposed transmission line would not cross the river, only the Fort Peck dam and have no effect on the species, they were removed from further analysis.
  - The proposed action was also submitted to the US Fish and Wildlife Service ECOS-IPaC website (https://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/) on October 8, 2019 (Consultation Code: 06E11000-2019-TA-0102) would have no effect on the northern long-eared bat as it is covered under the Programmatic Biological Opinion on Final 4(d) Rule for the Northern Long- eared Bat and Activities Excepted from Take Prohibitions (Appendix 4). In addition, there is less an acre of suitable habitat near the proposed project area and the potential for occurrence is extremely low.
  - The Biological Assessment for the KXL project (2019) only identified transmission lines associated with PS 16-23 as being of concern for whooping cranes. The proposed action evaluated here for PS-10 was considered to be of no concern to whooping cranes. The proposed action would have no effect on whooping cranes. The proposed action is outside of the 95% migration corridor and is greater than 5 miles from suitable habitat and historic sightings.

- The proposed project was submitted to the Montana Natural Heritage Program Environmental Summary Report program on October 10, 2019 for review of other BLM Special Status Species (Appendix 5). While other BLM Special Status Species and migratory birds may occur in the project area, the Design Features would reduce impacts and ensure there no residual impact to these species.
- While much of the proposed route falls outside of areas of importance for wildlife resources there are several areas that are within suitable Sprague's pipit habitat, but those areas also fall along major roads. Thompsen et al. (2015) found that Sprague's pipits within the oil fields of North Dakota avoided anthropogenic features by up to 350 meters. This suggests that the proposed action is unlikely to impact Sprague's pipits with the timing limitation for disruptive activities Design Feature in place.
- The creation of new transmission lines can introduce a new perching source for raptors, potentially increasing predation of other wildlife species. Raptors perching on unprotected powerlines may also be susceptible to electrocution. The Hiline RMP (2015) states that powerlines and substations constructed on BLM lands will comply with the most current raptor protection standards. These anti-perching standards, as stated in the Design Features would reduce or eliminate any increased predation and risk of electrocution.

CHAPTER 2. PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

2.1 Introduction

Alternatives were developed based upon National and State BLM direction and policy, existing conditions and resource issues. Resource issues are discussed in Chapter 1. Other factors that influenced alternative development are discussed in Chapter 3.

2.2 Alternatives Considered but Eliminated

Due to the colocation of this project, no additional alternatives were brought forward by the BLM or the applicant in the final application. Several minor realignments were completed due to cultural resources, prior to analyzing resources.

2.3 Alternative A (No Action)

NorVal Electric Coop., Inc.'s application for a 4.8 mile ROW to construct a 115 kV aerial transmission line would be denied. WAPA would deny the request to interconnect and would not expand the Fort Peck Substation to accommodate the interconnection. No right-of-way grant across BLM administered lands would be offered. USACE would deny an easement across USACE administered lands.

2.4 Alternative B (Proposed Action)

NorVal Electric Cooperative, Inc. has submitted an application for a ROW to construct a 115 kV aerial transmission line in Valley County. A total of 48.9 miles of line would be constructed in this project with approximately 4.8 miles on BLM administered lands. Of this, approximately 2.5 miles would cross lands managed by USACE. This construction would take place within a long term 80' ROW (100' construction ROW) and would contain 46.55 acres (long term). Upon completion of construction the ROW will be reduced to the long term 80' width. The proposed ROW is located across public land and further described as:

Valley County, Montana PMM
T. 29 N., R. 38 E.,
  sec. 1, lot 1, SE¼NE¼;
T. 29 N., R. 39 E.,
  sec. 7, lot 1, E½NW¼, SE¼;
  sec. 12, S½SW¼, SW¼SE¼;
  sec. 13, NE¼NE¼;
T. 30 N., R. 38 E.,
  sec. 15, S½NW¼, NE¼SW¼, N½SE¼, SE¼SE¼;
  sec. 17, N½NE;
  sec. 25, SW¼SW¼;
T. 31 N., R. 38 E.,
  sec. 6, lot 7;
  sec. 7, lot 1.

The WAPA Fort Peck Substation
Valley County, Montana PMM
T. 26 N., R. 41 E.,
  sec. 15.

The proposed 48.9 mile transmission line alignment would leave the WAPA Fort Peck Substation and parallel existing powerlines across the downstream face of Fort Peck Dam. After crossing the dam, the line would generally follow roads and trails to Pump Station 10. The transmission line would consist of 60'-80' single and "H" frame treated wood poles with three conductors and one static wire. The span length between poles would generally range from 250 feet to 290 feet except where local topography dictates longer lengths. The long term right-of-way would be 80 feet in order to meet Electronic Magnetic Field (EMF) safety recommendation. All construction and temporary use areas (none on BLM administered lands) would be contained inside the long term right-of-way. Equipment and construction materials staging areas would be in existing yards, on private lands.

Structure locations would be flagged and staked. Poles and associated hardware would be shipped to each structure site by truck. At each structure site, poles and components would be assembled and readied for erection.

For public protection during wire installation, guard structures would be erected over obstacles such as roads, railroads, existing power lines, and existing structures. Guard structures consist of H-frame poles placed on either side of the obstacle. These structures would prevent ground wire, conductors, or other equipment from falling on an obstacle. Equipment for erecting guard structures include augers, line trucks with booms, and pole trailers.

Excavations for poles would be made with power equipment. After the hole is augered, poles would be set, backfilled, and tamped using existing spoils. Remaining spoils material would be banked against the pole to shed water and discourage pooling.

A pilot line would be pulled from structure to structure (or strung) by a vehicle and threaded through the stringing sheaves at each tower. Then a larger diameter, stronger line (the pulling line) would be attached to the pilot line and strung. This process is repeated until the ground wire or conductor is pulled through all sheaves.

The ground wire and conductor would be strung using power pulling equipment at one end and power braking or tensioning equipment at the other end. The tensioner, line truck, and wire trailer that would be needed for stringing and anchoring the ground wire or conductors are located at this site. The tensioner, along with the puller, maintains tension of the ground wire or conductor. Maintaining tension ensures adequate ground clearance and is necessary to avoid damage to the ground wire, conductor, or any objects below them during the stringing operation.

Following construction, temporary structures would be removed, final cleanup would be performed, and any testing procedures completed. The line would then be ready to be put into service.

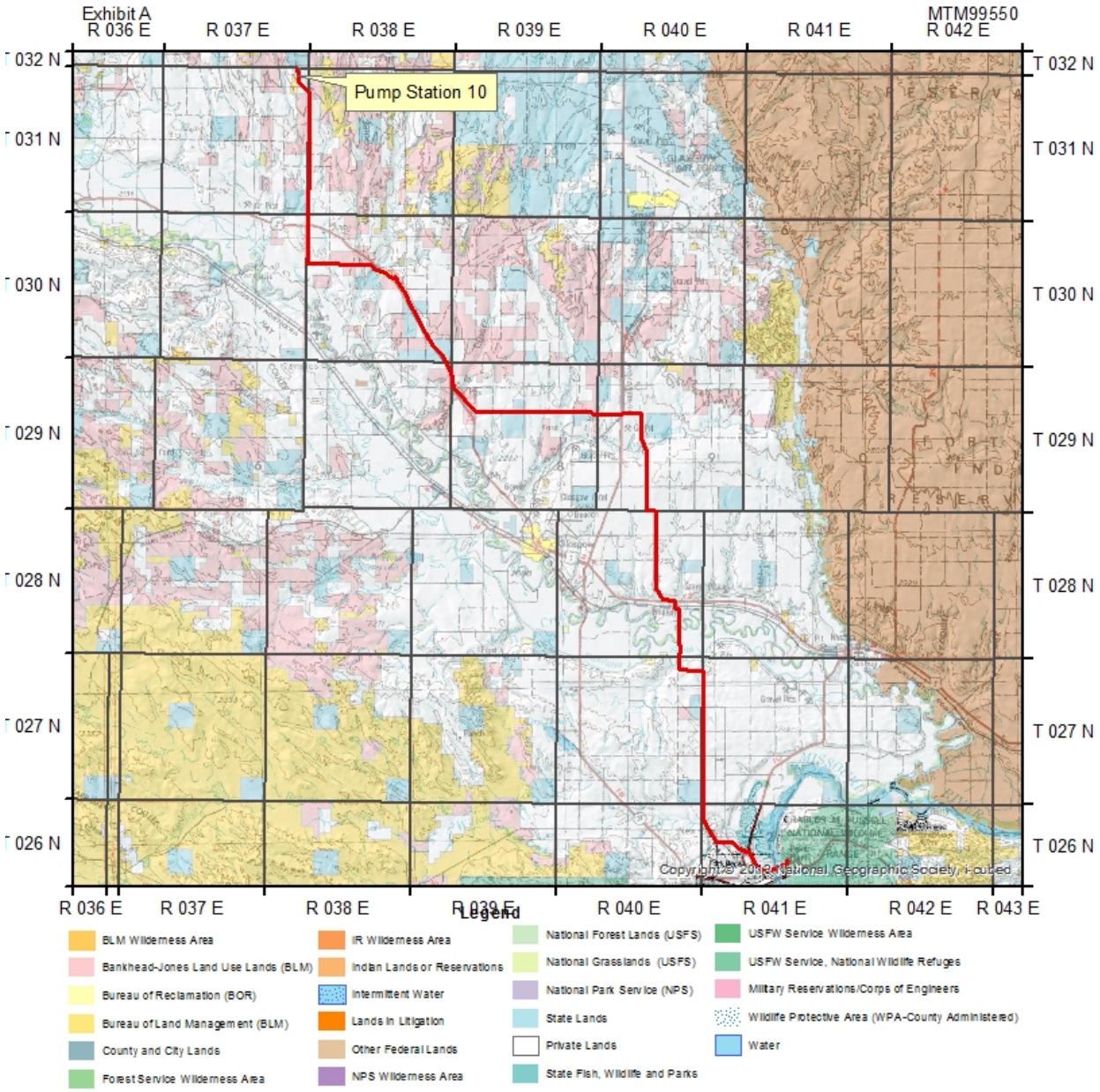
Design Features:

1. Ground disturbance, including off-road travel should be kept to a minimum to avoid the appearance of an established route that will be mistakenly used by the public. The ROW

holder will be responsible for installation and maintenance of BLM-approved signage, if such disturbance is caused.

2. Surface disturbing activities will be prohibited from December 1 to July 15.
3. To limit the impact of raptors perching on the transmission line it should be constructed to comply with current raptor protection standards (HiLine RMP pp. 3-78).
4. Construction, operation and/or maintenance activities shall not be performed during periods when the soil is too wet to adequately support equipment/vehicles. If equipment/vehicles create ruts in excess of 3 inches deep, operations must cease as the soil will be deemed too wet to adequately support equipment.
5. The holder shall remove only the minimum amount of vegetation necessary. Topsoil shall be conserved during excavation and reused as cover on disturbed areas to facilitate re-growth of vegetation. Topsoil shall be stripped and stockpiled separate from subsoil/spoil material. Topsoil shall be stored and protected from erosion for use in reclamation on all areas of surface disturbance. Topsoil that is not re-spread within 30 days shall be covered/protected in such a way that topsoil viability is not compromised. At the time of reclamation, topsoil shall be replaced to pre-existing depths once ripping and discing of compacted subsoil/spoil. The order of soil replacement shall be the reverse of removal, e.g. first off, last on.
6. All construction equipment will be clean of excess soil and vegetation before entering or leaving BLM public land. This will mitigate the potential for spreading invasive species across the landscape.
7. The holder shall be responsible for erosion control and sediment containment. Appropriate erosion control and sediment containment Best Management Practices (BMPs) shall be determined and put in place by the holder and the holder shall be responsible for maintaining those BMPs for their intended function and until the disturbed area is successfully reclaimed/revegetated. Erosion control and sediment containment products/devices shall be certified weed free and installed according to manufacturer's specifications.
8. The holder shall be responsible for reclamation of disturbed areas. Reclamation measures shall be designed by the holder to meet the Reclamation Requirements described in Appendix M: Reclamation of the HiLine RMP (USDI, 2015).
9. Vehicle and equipment servicing and refueling activities would take place 500 feet from the outer edge of riparian areas, wet areas, and drainages.
10. The holder shall be responsible for reclamation monitoring of disturbed areas. Erosion of the disturbance area shall be equal to or less than similar adjacent undisturbed areas. Soil stability will be assessed by looking for indicators of accelerated erosion such as rills, gullies, pedestalling, and/or slumping/sliding. Within one growing seasons of the initial disturbance, vegetative cover shall be at least 30% or more of desirable species. Desirable species are those species specified in the seed mix. Within 3 to 5 years vegetative cover shall be at least 70% of that on similar adjacent undisturbed areas. If these standards are not met, additional reclamation measure such as re-seeding, applying soil amendments and/or additional erosion/sediment control BMPs, etc. shall be implemented.
11. Debris and other waste materials associated with installation, modification, operation, and maintenance activities would be placed in a location that avoids the entry of said material into riparian zones and wetland areas.

12. If safety, disrepair, erosion and/or rutting problems are discovered along the access and maintenance routes, the holder shall be responsible to repair, improve and/or maintain the roadway to assure safety, stability and to minimize soil erosion/rutting.
13. The holder shall be responsible for adhering to the Montana Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation Program Mitigation Plan (December 18, 2018) found in Appendix 1.



Valley County, Montana PMM
T. 29-31 N., R. 38-39 E.,
sec. 6, lot 7;

Proposed 115 kV Transmission Line

NorVal Electric Coop. Inc.
P.O. Box 951
Glasgow, Montana 59230

4.8 miles x 80' permament ROW containing
46.55 acres more or less

United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Montana/Dakotas State Office

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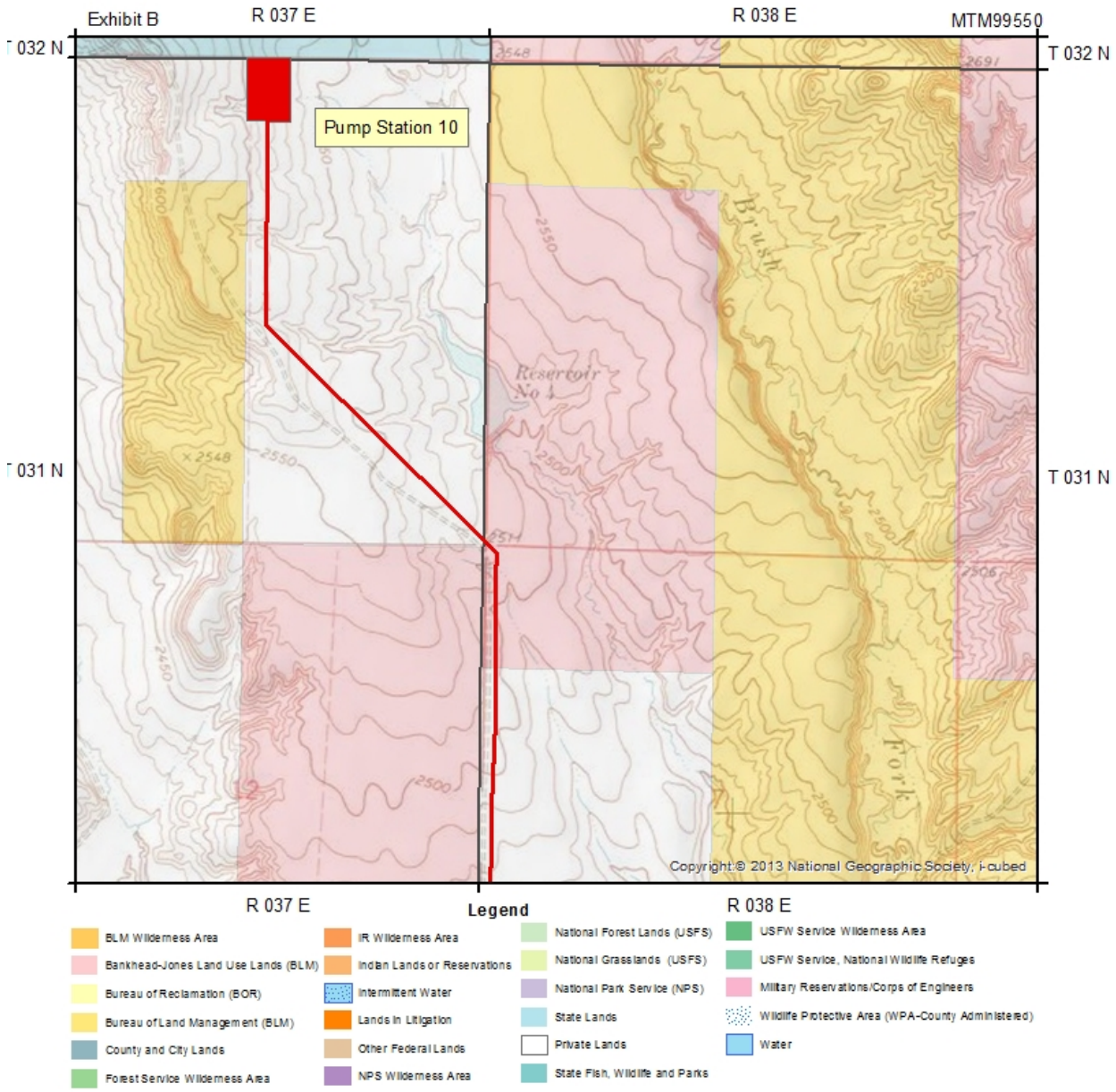
CAUTION:
Land ownership data is derived from less accurate data than the 1:24000 scale base map. Therefore, land ownership may not be shown for parcels smaller than 40 acres, and land ownership lines may have plotting errors due to source data.

No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management for the use of the data for purposes not intended by the BLM.



Valley County, Montana PMM
T. 31 N., R. 38 E.,
sec. 6, lot 7;
sec. 7, lot 1.

Proposed 115 kV Transmission Line

NorVal Electric Coop. Inc.
P.O. Box 951
Glasgow, Montana 59230

4.8 miles x 80' permament ROW containing
46.55 acres more or less

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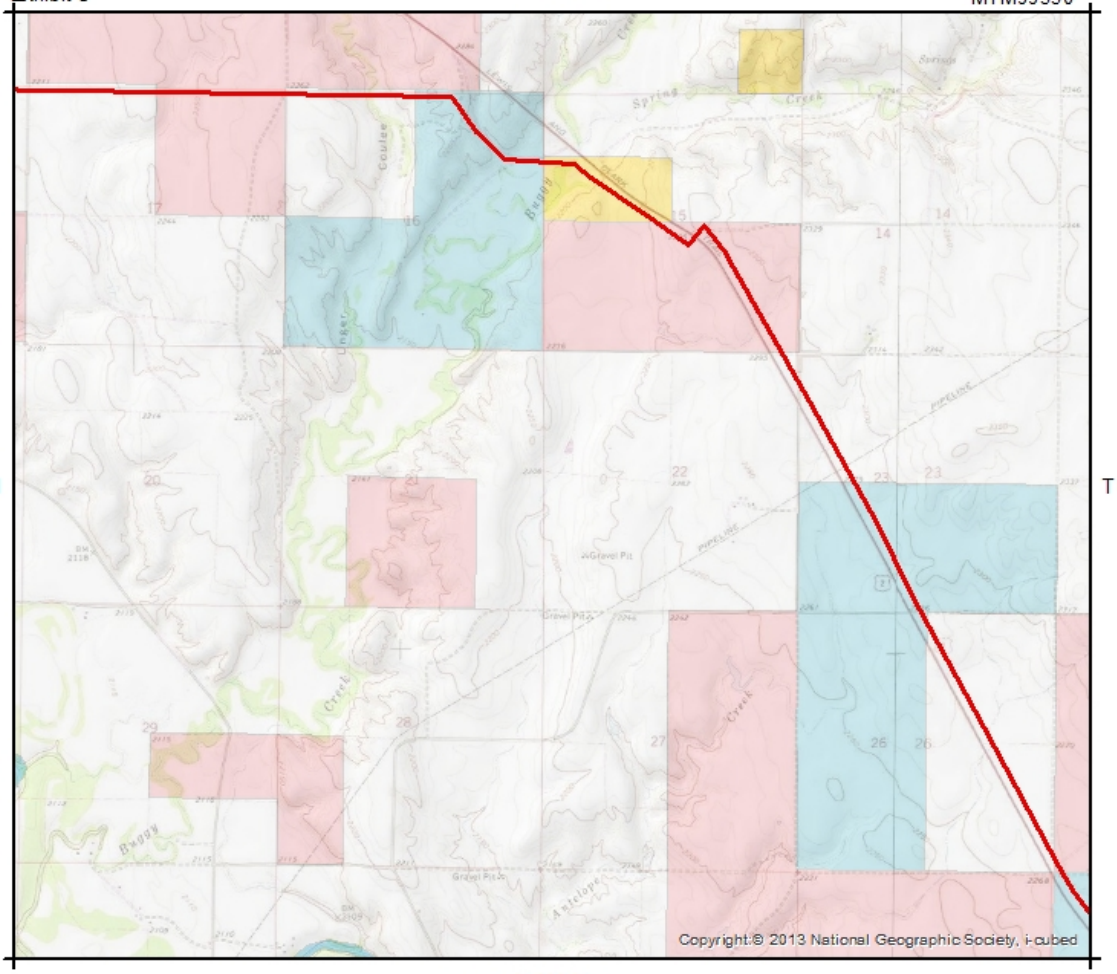
Exhibit C

R 038 E

MTM99550

T 030 N

T 030 N



R 038 E

Legend

- BLM Wilderness Area
- Bankhead-Jones Land Use Lands (BLM)
- Bureau of Reclamation (BOR)
- Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
- County and City Lands
- Forest Service Wilderness Area
- IR Wilderness Area
- Indian Lands or Reservations
- Intermittent Water
- Lands In Litigation
- Other Federal Lands
- NPS Wilderness Area
- National Forest Lands (USFS)
- National Grasslands (USFS)
- National Park Service (NPS)
- State Lands
- Private Lands
- State Fish, Wildlife and Parks
- USFW Service Wilderness Area
- USFW Service, National Wildlife Refuges
- Military Reservations/Corps of Engineers
- Wildlife Protective Area (WPA-County Administered)
- Water

Valley County, Montana PMM
T. 30 N., R. 38 E.,
sec. 15, S½NW¼, NE¼SW¼, N½SE¼, SE¼SE¼;
sec. 17, N½NE;
sec. 25, SW¼SW¼.

Proposed 115 kV Transmission Line

NorVal Electric Coop. Inc.
P.O. Box 951
Glasgow, Montana 59230

4.8 miles x 80' permament ROW containing
46.55 acres more or less

United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Montana/Dakotas State Office

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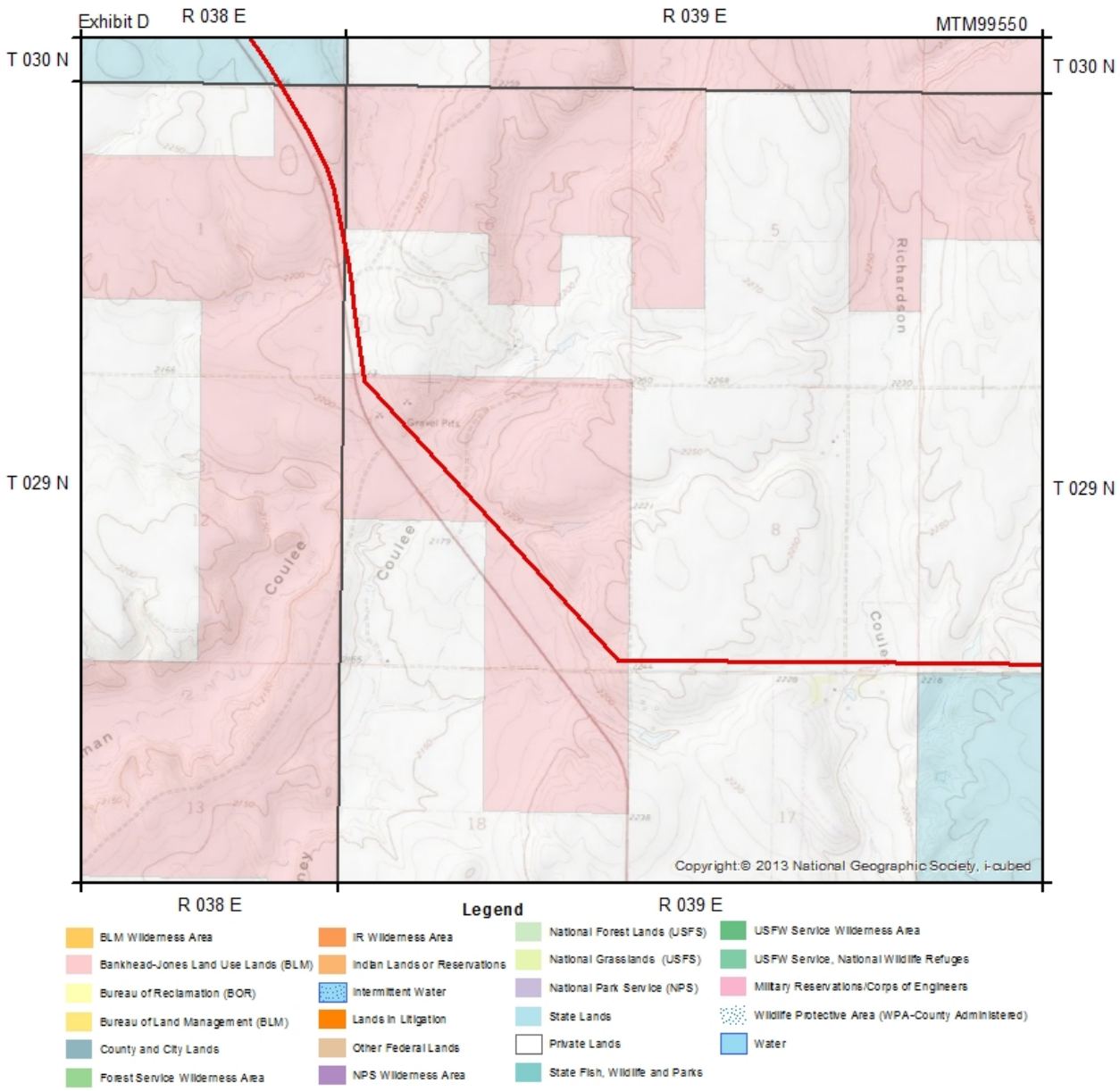
CAUTION:
Land ownership data is derived from less accurate data than the 1:24000 scale base map. Therefore, land ownership may not be shown for parcels smaller than 40 acres, and land ownership lines may have plotting errors due to source data.

No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management for the use of the data for purposes not intended by the BLM.



Valley County, Montana PMM
T. 29 N., R. 39 E.,
sec. 7, lot 1, E½NW¼, SE¼.

NorVal Electric Coop. Inc.
P.O. Box 951
Glasgow, Montana 59230

4.8 miles x 80' permament ROW containing
46.55 acres more or less

Proposed 115 kV Transmission Line

United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Montana/Dakotas State Office

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CAUTION:
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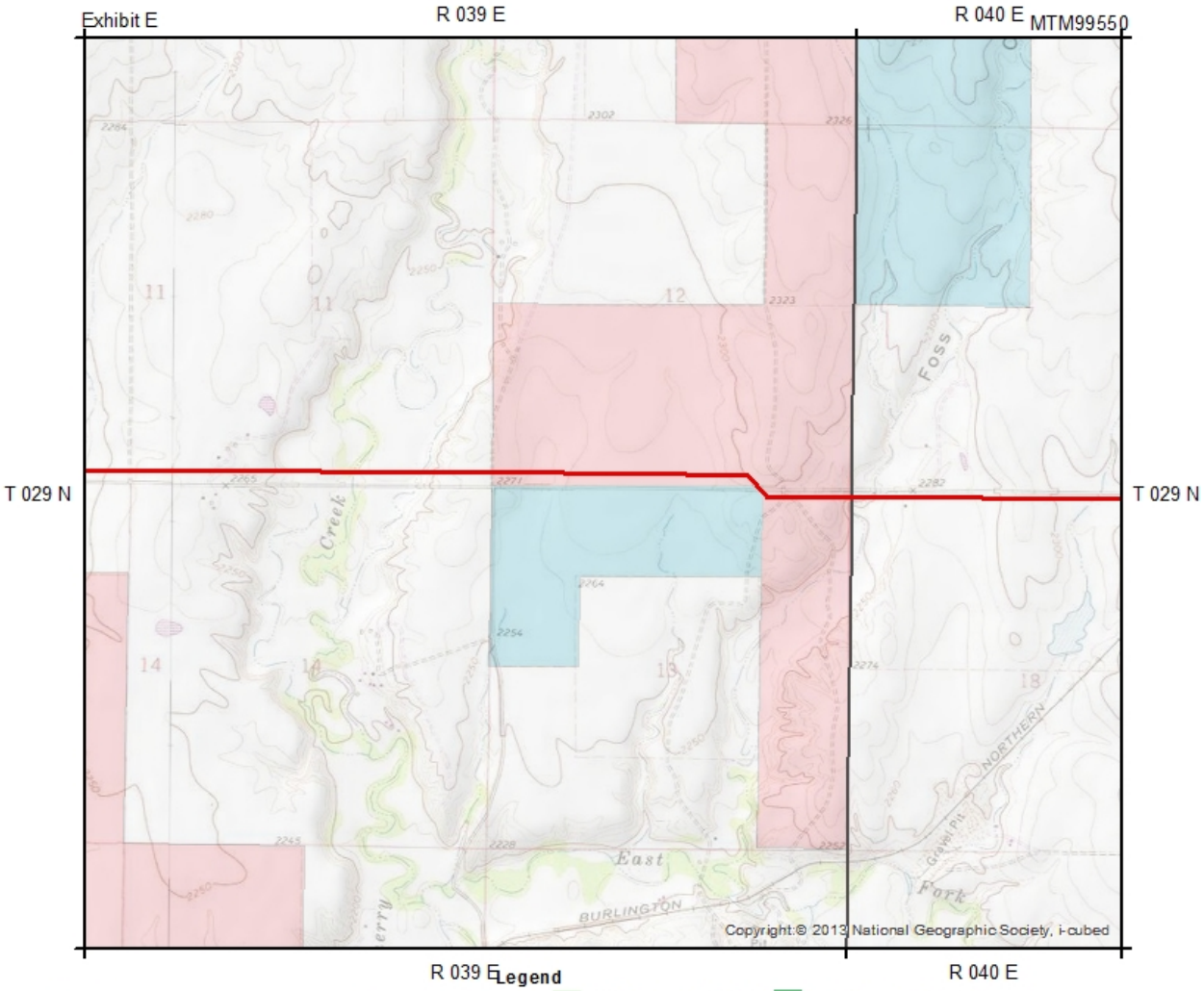

Legend

- BLM Wilderness Area
- Bankhead-Jones Land Use Lands (BLM)
- Bureau of Reclamation (BOR)
- Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
- County and City Lands
- Forest Service Wilderness Area
- IR Wilderness Area
- Indian Lands or Reservations
- Intermittent Water
- Lands in Litigation
- Other Federal Lands
- NPS Wilderness Area
- National Forest Lands (USFS)
- National Grasslands (USFS)
- National Park Service (NPS)
- State Lands
- Private Lands
- State Fish, Wildlife and Parks
- USFW Service Wilderness Area
- USFW Service, National Wildlife Refuges
- Military Reservations/Corps of Engineers
- Wildlife Protective Area (WPA-County Administered)
- Water

Valley County, Montana PMM
T. 29 N., R. 39 E.,
sec. 12, S½SW¼, SW¼SE¼;
sec. 13, NE¼NE¼.

Proposed 115 kV Transmission Line

NorVal Electric Coop. Inc.
P.O. Box 951
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4.8 miles x 80' permament ROW containing
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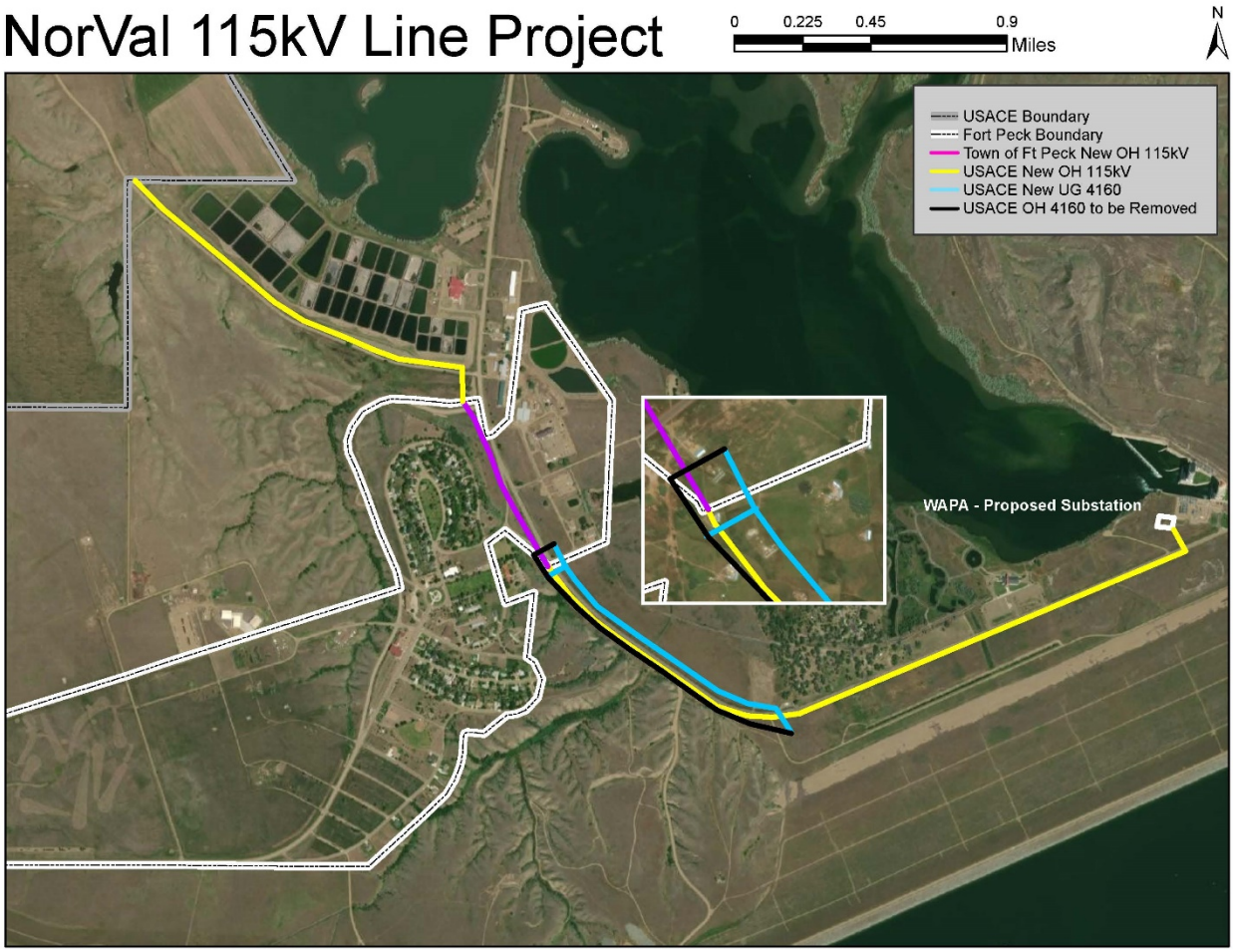
NorVal 115kV Line Project



CHAPTER 3. AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT & ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

3.1 Introduction

The Affected Environment section describes the existing conditions and trends of resource issues and environmental elements that may be affected by implementing an alternative. This discussion is organized by the resource issues that were identified in Chapter 1 and provides the baseline for comparison of potential impacts and consequences described in Chapter 3.

Potential effects include direct, indirect and cumulative effects. Direct effects are those which are caused by the action and occur at the same time and place. Indirect effects are reasonably predictable and caused later in time or farther removed in distance from the action. Cumulative effects to a resource result from the addition of the action's impacts to the accumulated effects from other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions within a geographic and temporal scope specific to the resource or resource use.

3.2 General Setting

The proposed action is located in Valley County, Montana. The county's major economy is agriculture. Non-agricultural economy producers include but are not limited to recreation, oil and gas industry, as well as hydraulic energy (Fort Peck Dam). A total of 1,013,209 surface acres of BLM administered lands (32%) can be found in Valley County.

NorVal Electric's service area is generally semiarid plains, barren prairies, low land valleys, and river bottom that follow the Milk River drainage, which flows into the Missouri River. Trees are mostly scarce in this area; however, they are prevalent along the river and some of the creek drainages. Also, along the southeast service boundary is the Fort Peck Reservoir which is contained by the largest earth filled dam in the United States. The USACE operates and manages the Fort Peck Project. NorVal is requesting approval for the construction of an 115kV transmission line originating at a switch bay at the proposed Fort Peck Substation, to be constructed and maintained by Western Area Power Administration on USACE lands adjacent to Fort Peck Project's Switchyard #1.

3.2.1 Resource Issue 1 – Threatened and Endangered Species, BLM Special Status Species, migratory birds and wildlife:

How would the proposed action impact piping plovers, greater sage-grouse and big-game winter range?

3.2.1.1 Affected Environment

In fulfillment of Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, the BLM consulted with the US Fish and Wildlife Service for the Keystone XL pipeline and connected actions. The proposed action being evaluated in this EA was included in that review. On September 30, 2019, the BLM and federal agencies proposing decisions within their respective jurisdictions, submitted a Biological Assessment (BA) for the Keystone XL Project requesting concurrence from the Service. This BA included an analysis of the proposed project evaluated in this EA. Upon further consultation with the Service and Federal Agencies involved, the BA was updated and amended on November 26, 2019 to provide additional information, best available science and clarity. On December 23, 2019, the Service transmitted a letter of concurrence to federal agencies. This

concluded consultation on the actions outlined in the federal agencies request and for the Keystone XL Project, federal agency consultation requirements were fulfilled and in compliance with Section 7 (a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act.

Piping Plovers: Piping plovers (PIPL) are a Federally Listed Threatened shorebird that nest along the Missouri River and the alkali lakes of northeastern Montana. In the Northern Great Plains, PIPL breed and raise young on sparsely vegetated sandbars and reservoir shorelines on river systems as well as on the shorelines of alkaline lakes. Changes in the quality and quantity of riverine habitat due primarily to damming and water withdrawals are a primary threat to the species.

Piping plovers begin to arrive on the breeding grounds in the first half of April, with courtship, followed by nesting, beginning in mid-to-late April. Arrival is later in the northern areas. First-year adults arrive approximately one month later than older adults. The male creates a shallow depression on the ground which both adults' line with small pebbles. Both adults share incubation duties which last 25 to 28 days. Incubation time is reduced in nests laid later in the season and increased when there are more eggs in a clutch. Hatching begins in late May to early June, generally peaking in June and early July. The young leave the nest within hours of hatch and begin to forage almost immediately. Chicks may be brooded for up to 21 days post-hatch, although the female sometimes deserts the brood after 5 to 10 days. Chicks fledge 25 to 35 days after hatching and are capable of sustained flight soon after fledging. Piping plovers readily renest if earlier nests fail. They generally only raise one brood a season, although they have been documented to raise two broods on rare occasions. Piping plovers begin to leave the breeding grounds as early as mid-July, with adults leaving first and juveniles last (US Fish and Wildlife Service, 2016).

A query of USFWS Information for Planning and Conservation (IPaC; 2019) review of the entire 48.9-mile proposed project identified no designated critical habitat for PIPL. Since 1986 the Montana Natural Heritage Program (MNHP) Map Viewer identified 12 observation records of PIPL using a gravel spit within 2 miles of the proposed transmission line route with the latest recorded observation being in 2001. The closest observation of PIPL is approximately 21 miles from where the proposed transmission line crosses BLM lands. Surveys were completed along the proposed pipeline route path and concluded that suitable wetlands for nesting PIPL were not present along the pipeline route near the Fort Peck Dam.

Greater Sage-Grouse: Sage grouse are a BLM species of special concern. The Hiline RMP addresses habitat designations for sage grouse across the proposed project area within Chapter 2. Sage grouse generally prefer intact sagebrush ecosystems away from roads and other anthropogenic features. The proposed project area mostly falls outside of designated sage grouse habitat with only the last 0.27 miles inside of PHMA and an additional 1.21 miles falls along the edge of GHMA. Appendix B of the Hiline RMP (2015) advises that for all linear features, such as this project, a 2-mile buffer around leks should be avoided. The proposed transmission line is well outside the 2-mile buffer, with the closest lek (SG20-106) over 3.6 miles away. Monitoring of lek SG20-106 started in 2009 and was surveyed 8 of the 10 following years. The highest count of males attending the lek was in 2010 when 8 males were observed. There were no males

observed during surveys in 2014, 2016, 2017 and 2019. The average number of males observed across all survey years is less than 3.

The MSGHCP reviewed the proposed project and their response and recommendations are included in Appendix 1. The MSGHCP uses 2 different methods to determine the impact of a proposed project to sage grouse habitat. The first is the Density and Disturbance Calculation Tool (DDCT) which calculates the anthropogenic disturbance levels within the project area. The HiLine RMP (2015) requires that anthropogenic disturbances be capped at 5%.

Secondly, the MSGHCP uses the Habitat Quantification Tool (HQT) functional acre approach which accounts for differences in habitat quality and functionality. The HQT estimates the functional acres lost in the direct footprint and accounts for indirect effects. More background information on the HQT is included in the MSGHCP response and recommendations in Appendix 1.

Big Game Winter Range: Secretarial Order 3362 (February 9, 2018) Sec. 4 describes implementation strategies for the BLM related to the planning and development of energy, transmission, or other relevant projects to avoid or minimize potential negative impacts on wildlife. These strategies include minimizing development that would fragment winter range and primary migration corridors mand limiting disturbance of big game on winter range.

The proposed transmission line falls entirely within the Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks Western Big-Game Winter Range and Migration Corridor Priority Area D. Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks found that mule deer migrate south from Canada into northern Valley County to winter (unpublished data). In addition, portions of the proposed project area fall within the Hiline RMP (2015) designated mule deer and pronghorn winter ranges. The Hiline RMP (2015) designated 602,825 acres and 683,704 acres of BLM lands in Valley County as pronghorn and mule deer winter ranges (big game winter habitat), respectively.

3.2.1.2 Environmental Impacts – Alternative A (No Action)

Under a No Action alternative there would be no impacts beyond what was analyzed in the Keystone EIS.

3.2.1.3 Mitigation and Residual Effects

There would be no residual effects as there would be no surface disturbance.

3.2.1.4 Cumulative Impacts

There would be no cumulative impacts as there would be no surface disturbance.

3.2.1.5 Environmental Impacts – Alternative B (Proposed Action)

Piping Plovers: Section 3.3.2.2 of the BA (2019) discusses the potential presence and impacts to PIPL along the entire proposed action area. The BA concludes that even though suitable nesting habitat is 'entirely lacking' and it is unlikely that nesting PIPL would be present within 0.25 miles, there are sightings approximately 2 miles south of where the proposed transmission line would cross Fort Peck Dam and long-term increases in PIPL collisions and predation on nesting adults and chicks cannot be ruled out. But the proposed action would likely only have an insignificant effect on PIPL because there is less than a tenth acre of suitable habitat in the area,

there are no recorded observations of PIPL within a mile of the proposed transmission line, and that the transmission line would be strung on existing poles where it crosses Fort Peck Dam (BA 2019).

Greater Sage-Grouse: Using the HQT tools the proposed project would result in a loss of 34,532.89 functional acres of habitat (MSGHCP 2019). For the proposed action, the DDCT analysis area was 83,501.96 acres and found the disturbance level to be 2.79%, well below the 5% cap as directed in the Hiline RMP (2015). Sage grouse have been shown to be negatively impacted by anthropogenic features such as power lines. Kohl et al. (2019) found that power lines negatively affected lek trends up to a distance of 11.7 miles but did not affect lek persistence. One of the author's conclusions was to place transmission lines along other anthropogenic corridors to reduce the impact of the project. The proposed action almost exclusively follows road corridors and is further than 2 miles from nearest lek suggesting that the proposed project would be unlikely to adversely affect sage grouse.

Big Game Winter Range: Jakes (2015) reported that pronghorn responded negatively to road densities and Beckmann et al. (2012) showed that oil and gas production and supporting infrastructure also influence pronghorn distribution and habitat use. The construction of new transmission lines may impact 31 acres (2.5 miles of transmission line x 100' construction ROW) big game winter habitat during construction and 25 acres as part of the long-term 80' ROW. These ROW's represent less than 0.01% of big game winter ranges on BLM lands in Valley County. However, the degree of disturbance level impacts to animals that occupy the winter range is difficult to assess because big game are highly mobile species, especially in regions prone to variable weather events, such as Valley County. While both Sawyer et al (2019) and Beckmann et al. (2012) found an avoidance behavior of pronghorn in oil and gas fields the density of the disturbance on that landscape is much greater than that seen in proposed project area. Jakes (2015) found a negative influence of road density on pronghorn habitat use. What is less clear is the impact of power lines that occur along roads and whether perceived impacts from the power line would be additive or compensatory. The most likely impact to big game would be disruptive construction activities if they coincide with big game migration and occupied winter range.

3.2.1.6 Mitigation and Residual Effects

Mitigation measures would be followed as outlined in the (Section 3.2.3.3) USFWS Concurrence Letter (2019) and the NorVal Electric Cooperative, Inc. Black Coulee Transmission Line Project #2953 Sage Grouse Mitigation Plan associated with the MSGHCP review (Appendix 1).

3.2.1.7 Cumulative Impacts

Piping Plovers: Other past, present and reasonably foreseeable actions that have or could occur within the action area is the construction of KXL pipeline and the current overhead transmission lines along Fort Peck Dam. The BA addresses the cumulative effects of foreseeable future actions in Section 3.3.2.5 and concluded that cumulative effects, if any, are expected to be negligible. The proposed action of placing the transmission line on already existing power poles across Fort Peck Dam suggests that the impact of the current power distribution facilities would be mostly compensatory rather than additive.

Greater Sage-Grouse: Other past, present and reasonably foreseeable actions that have or could occur within the area of action is the construction of KXL pipeline, as well the burying of existing overhead power lines outlined in the NorVal Electric Cooperative, Inc. Black Coulee Transmission Line Project #2953 Sage Grouse Mitigation Plan associated with the MSGHCP review (Appendix 1). The plan outlines the impacts of the entire 48.9 mile project on sage grouse habitat as well as two other projects that would bury approximately 140 miles of existing overhead lines (December 18, 2018). This would reduce the total miles of overhead power lines in Valley County by over 91 miles.

The MSGHCP review (Appendix 1) outlines debit and credit calculations using the HQT functional acre approach. The MSGHCP determined that the three projects resulted in 34,532.89 functional acres of debit and 135,798.96 in functional acre credits for a net balance of 101,266.07 functional acres of outstanding credit. In other words, the proposed action, along with the mitigation plan would result in an overall decrease of anthropogenic disturbances on the landscape, thus improving sage grouse habitat.

Therefore, cumulative effects resulting from these actions, when considered with the effects of the proposed project are expected to result in net benefit to sage grouse due to the increase in habitat quality within the general project area because of the overall reduction in overhead power lines.

Big Game Winter Range: Other past, present and reasonably foreseeable future action that have or could occur within the area of action is the construction of the KXL pipeline, the burying of existing overhead power lines described in the section above for sage grouse, as well as, existing anthropogenic features. Of the remaining 44.1 miles of transmission lines not occurring on BLM lands, 15.7 miles occur in big game winter range. The 100’ construction ROW would impact an additional 189 acres and the long-term 80’ ROW would impact 151 acres. The construction of the KXL pipeline could have some disruptive impacts if activity occurs at the same time as fall and spring migration and during the winter. Once construction of the pipeline is completed, the overall disruption to wintering big game would be limited to vehicle traffic maintaining PS 10. The MSGHCP review (Appendix 1) outlines the burial of 140 miles of overhead powerline which, overall, would reduce the anthropogenic disturbance on the landscape to migrating and wintering big game. This suggests that the cumulative effects on big game would be negligible.

CHAPTER 4. CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

4.1 Introduction

Notice of this project was posted in the NEPA Register on the BLM's ePlanning website on October 1, 2019: https://eplanning.blm.gov/epl-front-office/eplanning/lup/lup_register.do. The completed EA was posted on the ePlanning website on November 30, 2020.

4.2 Persons, Groups, and Agencies Consulted

Public Involvement: Public participation and issues identified in the SEIS were considered in this project. E-planning was initiated on November 30, 2020.

Western Area Power Association (WAPA): On September 26, 2018, WAPA formally requested to be a cooperating agency status on the BLM's NEPA review based on their specialist expertise of transmission line and substation construction and operation, as well as their jurisdiction by law regarding interconnection into the federal grid system.

US Army Corps of Engineers: On October 9, 2018, the USACE formally requested to be a cooperating agency status on the BLM's NEPA review based on their specialist expertise of transmission line and substation construction and operation, as well as their jurisdiction by law regarding interconnection into the Corps system at Fort Peck Dam.

Cultural Resources consultation for USACE lands under the 2004 Programmatic Agreement for the Operation and Management of the Missouri River Main Stem System for Compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (PA) was initiated with a project information letter dated June 15, 2020. Responses to the information letter were received from the Montana SHPO, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, The Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska, and the Northern Cheyenne Tribe. The Northern Cheyenne Tribal Historic Preservation Office requested that ground disturbing activities be monitored by a Tribal representative. On August 20, 2020, the USACE sent a letter to the SHPO, and copies to the PA signatories, requesting concurrence on a determination of No Adverse Effect for the potential impacts to USACE lands.

Montana State Historic Preservation Office: The BLM conducted consultation with the Montana SHPO under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and the Montana Programmatic Agreement (PA) between the State Historic Preservation office and the BLM. Class III surveys were completed in 2014 for the entire alignment (regardless of ownership) and the results of the surveys were sent to the SHPO. NRHP Site eligibility and mitigation/avoidance strategies were reviewed by SHPO and concurred with September 3, 2014.

Tribal Consultation: The BLM initiated Government-to-Government consultation with 9 interested Native American Tribes on June 2, 2014. These Native American Tribes included the Northern Cheyenne, Chippewa Cree, Little Shell Band of Chippewa, Blackfeet, Fort Peck, Fort Belknap, Crow, Salish-Kootenai and the Nez Perce. No concerns were raised through the consultation process.

Montana Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation Program: The Montana Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation received the request for consultation and review of the proposed project and activity on May 30, 2018. The Montana Sage Grouse Oversight Team (MSGOT) approved a

Mitigation Plan for the project in December 2018. The Montana Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation Program (MSGHCP) Review is attached as Appendix 1 of this document.

United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS): USFWS was consulted and provided consultation (06E11000-2019-SLI-0120) on October 8, 2019, to identify species list of threatened, endangered, proposed and candidate species as well as proposed and final designated critical habitat that may occur within the boundary of the proposed project. The review is attached as Appendix 3 of this document. The species list fulfills the requirements of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service under section 7(c) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16. U.S.C 1531 *et seq*.).

4.3 List of Preparers

Name	Title	Resource Area
Josh Sorlie	Soil Scientist	Malta Field Office
Michael Borgreen	Wildlife Biologist	Glasgow Field Office
Jason Snellman	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Malta Field Office
Ryan Allen	Resource Management Specialist	Glasgow Field Office
Josh Chase	Archeologist	Havre Field Office
Thomas Probert	Hydrologist	Glasgow Field Office
Micah R Lee	Realty Specialist	Havre Field Office

4.4 References

Beckmann, J.P., K. Murray, R.G. Seidler, J. Berger. 2012. Human-mediated shifts in animal habitat use: sequential changes in pronghorn use of a natural gas filed in Greater Yellowstone. Biological Conservation, 147:222-233.

Kohl MT, Messmer TA, Crabb BA, Guttery MR, Dahlgren DK, Larsen RT, et al. (2019) The effects of electric power lines on the breeding ecology of greater sage-grouse. PLoS ONE 14(1):e0209968. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0209968

Jakes, A.F. 2015. Factors influencing seasonal migrations of pronghorn across the northern sagebrush steppe. Dissertation. University of Calgary. 259pp.

Montana Natural Heritage Program (MNHP). 2019. Natural Heritage Map Viewer Piping Plover Point Observations. Accessed October 22, 2019. Retrieved from: http://mtnhp.org/mapviewer/.

Sawyer, H., J.P. Beckmann, R.G. Seidler, J. Berger. 2019. Long-term effects of energy development on winter distribution and residency of pronghorn in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. Conservation Science and Practice, 83:1-11.

Thompson, S.J., D.H. Johnson, N.D. Niemuth and C.A. Ribic. 2015. Avoidance of unconventional oil wells and roads exacerbates habitat loss for grassland birds in the North American great plains. Biological Conservation 192 pp. 82-90.

United States Department of State (USDoS) - Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs. 2014. Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for the Keystone XL Project, 4.2-15.

United States Department of State (USDoS) - Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs. 2019. Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for the Keystone XL Project, 4.2-15.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 2016. Recovery Plan for the Northern Great Plains piping plover (*Charadrius melodus*) in two volumes. Volume I: Draft breeding recovery plan for the Northern Great Plains piping plover (*Charadrius melodus*) 132 pp. and Volume II: Draft revised recovery plan for the wintering range of the Northern Great Plains piping plover (*Charadrius melodus*) and Comprehensive conservation strategy for the piping plover (*Charadrius melodus*) in its coastal migration and wintering range in the continental United States. Denver, Colorado. 166 pp.

CHAPTER 5. Appendixes

Appendix 1 - The Montana Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation Program (MSGHCP) Review

Appendix 2 - US Fish & Wildlife Service ESA Section 7 Determinations and Service Concurrence

Appendix 3 – US Fish and Wildlife Service Information for Planning and Conservation (IPaC) Official Species List (https://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/). Generated on October 8, 2019, Consultation Code: 06E11000-2019-SLI-0102.

Appendix 4 - US Fish and Wildlife Service Programmatic Biological Opinion on Final 4(d) Rule for Northern Long-eared bat and Activities Excepted from Take Prohibitions. Montana Ecological Services Field Office. Generated on October 8, 2019, Consultation Code: 06E11000-2019-TA-0102.

Appendix 5 – Montana Natural Heritage Program. Environmental Summary Report for Latitude 48.00558 to 48.47464 and Longitude -106.36514 to -106.90225. Generated on 10/10/2019.