

Northland Reliability Project



Field surveys

Minnesota Power and Great River Energy will conduct a variety of field surveys as development continues for the Northland Reliability Project.

These field surveys allow the project team to verify or collect new information about the proposed route to help minimize impacts for structure locations and construction of the transmission line.

Field surveys will occur fall 2023 through fall 2026. Field surveys will be conducted at different times of the year and during different phases of the project development. Permission will be requested to allow survey teams access to private property to conduct required field surveys. More detailed information will be provided to property owners in advance of teams conducting surveys on private property.

Types of surveys



Biological

These surveys will identify the presence and location of sensitive species within the proposed route. Surveys will mostly occur within the proposed right-of-way but may expand beyond the right-of-way to identify the extent of the resource for design considerations.

The survey typically involves field staff walking through areas of potentially suitable habitat to visually locate occurrences of listed species or temporarily placing small acoustic recording equipment on trees. Occurrences of target species will be mapped using a GPS unit.



Cultural resources (archaeological)

These surveys will assess the likelihood that a cultural resource or historic property may be present. Depending on the landscape, this may include a walk-over survey, subsurface shovel testing, or both. Recovered artifacts are property of the landowner, and landowners will be contacted if cultural materials are identified on their property.



Wetlands

These surveys will identify the presence and location of wetlands by walking the wetland boundary with a GPS unit, documenting plants, collecting photographs, and in some areas observing soils using a hand auger; all holes will be backfilled upon completion. Pin flags may be placed to show the wetland boundary and will be reviewed after verification.



Weeds

These surveys will identify locations of noxious weeds. Noxious weeds occurrences will be mapped using a GPS unit.



Land

These surveys will identify section corners, road and utilities crossings, and stake and/or flag locations for soil borings and structures for engineering review.



Soil borings

These surveys will identify hydrogeologic and geotechnical soil data used to design and construct the foundations for the transmission line structures. The survey consists of drilling borings to collect soil and bedrock samples. A temporary work area will be required at each boring location. Once completed, the crews will backfill the hole to existing grade.



Connect with us

Questions? We want to hear from you.



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