



## Staff Report for PLSUP-2603-0004

### Application Information:

**Application Type:** Special Use Permit

**Location of Subject:** Minnesota Point

**Legal Description:** 010-2750-00170

**Applicant:** City of Cloquet

**Applicant Contact:** Caleb Peterson

**Agent:** SEH

**Agent Contact:** Matt Henderson

**Staff Contact:** Jason Mozol, [jmozol@duluthmn.gov](mailto:jmozol@duluthmn.gov)

### Deadline for Action:

**Application Date:** March 9, 2026

**Date Extension Letter Mailed:** April 1, 2026

**60 Days:** May 8, 2026

**120 Days:** July 7, 2026

**Site Visit Date:** March 31, 2026

**Sign Notice Date:** March 30, 2026

**Neighbor Letter Date:** March 23, 2026

**Number of Letters Sent:** 2

### Proposal:

Applicant is requesting a Special Use Permit to replace electrical components related to the water pump station on the site.

### Recommended Action:

Staff recommends approval with conditions.

### Zoning and Land Use:

	Current Zoning	Existing Land Use	Future Land Use Map Designation
<b>Subject</b>	R-C	Utility	Transportation & Utilities
<b>North</b>	R-C/ AP	Airport/ Open Space	Open Space
<b>South</b>	R-C	Open Space	Open Space
<b>East</b>	N/A	Water	N/A
<b>West</b>	N/A	Water	N/A

### Summary of Code Requirements:

**Sec. 50-37.10 . Special Use Permits.** Planning Commission shall approve the application or approve it with modifications, if it is determined that the application meets the following criteria:

1. The application is consistent with the Comprehensive Land Use Plan;
2. The application complies with all applicable provisions ... including any use-specific standards ..., and is consistent with any approved district plan for the area.
3. The Commission may deny any application that would result in a random pattern of development with little contiguity to existing or programmed development or would cause anticipated negative fiscal or environmental impacts.

### Comprehensive Plan Governing Principle and/or Policies and Current History (if applicable):

Principle #3 – Support existing economic base – The paper mill in Cloquet is a significant contributor to the regional economy and this project is key to its long term, continued operation.

**Principle #10-** Take actions that enhance the environment- The restoration associated with this project will improve the ecological function of the site and connectivity between the two existing stands of old growth forest.

**Future Land Use: Transportation and Utilities-** Applicable to airports, the port terminals, large highway rights-of-way, and similar uses.

**History:** Water intake systems for both the City of Superior and the City of Cloquet are located on the site. The subject system for the City of Cloquet was developed in approximately 1969.

## Review and Discussion Items:


Staff finds:

1. Applicant is requesting a Special Use Permit for upgrades to an existing pump station. The electrical components associated with the pump station are beyond their expected lifespan and in need of replacement.
2. The pump station has been operating as a legal, non-conforming use. The reconstruction of the electrical components initiates the need for zoning review and compliance. A pump station is allowed as a special use in the R-C zone district.
3. *Airport Overlay (50-18.2):* The site is within Safety Zone C of the Sky Harbor Regional Airport. The project is in conformance with airport related height and interference regulations.
4. *Screening (50-26.1):* The restoration plan, discussed below, will screen the mechanical units and serve as an alternative screening plan per 50-26.5.
5. *Fencing (50-26.4):* This fence serves a bonafide public safety purpose and is exempt from the prohibition on the use of barbed or razor wire. The proposed fencing is within a front yard area where maximum fence heights are 6'. A companion application, PLVAR-2603-0008, has been submitted to allow for a taller fence.
6. *Special Use Permit Criteria (50-37.10):* This project is consistent with the comprehensive plan's future land use designation, will comply with all applicable provisions of Chapter 50 (conditional to approval of PLVAR-2603-0008), and will not result in negative fiscal impacts to the City or community. This project impacts the removal of several old growth trees. To offset these impacts, the applicant will restore an area of degraded habitat on the site, planting significantly more trees that will contribute to the sensitive dune/pine ecosystem adjacent to the site. A final restoration plan is not finalized at this time and will require coordination with adjacent landowners. In addition to the areas depicted in the attached exhibit, staff recommend exploring the potential for restoration in the deforested, northern portion of the parcel. Prior to building permit approval, a restoration plan must be approved by the Land Use Supervisor and escrow in equal value to the restoration work must be deposited with the City of Duluth until the restoration is established. Escrow funds may be utilized by the City of Duluth for any necessary maintenance or rehabilitation.
7. Comments on impacts to natural resources were received from the DNR and the City's Parks Department (see attached). The applicant has completed Natural Heritage Review (see attached) and is in the process of acquiring appropriate permits from the DNR. In response to these comments, the applicant abandoned the proposed landscaping/screening plan in favor of a restoration plan. Both agencies indicated they will provide input and assistance in formulating the final restoration plan.
8. No other public, agency, or City comments were received.
9. Per UDC Section 50-37.1.N, approved special use permits lapse if the project or activity authorized by the permit has not begun within one-year.

## Staff Recommendation:

Based on the above findings, Staff recommends that Planning Commission approve the Planning Review with the following conditions:

1. The project must be constructed and limited to the plans submitted with the application.

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2. An acceptable restoration plan must be approved by the Land Use Supervisor prior to building permit approval.
  3. Escrow equal to the cost of the restoration plan must be deposited with the City of Duluth prior to building permit approval.
  4. Approval of this permit is conditional to approval of PLVAR-2603-0008.
  5. Any alterations to the approved plans that do not alter major elements of the plan may be approved by the Land Use Supervisor without further Planning Commission review; however, no such administration approval shall constitute a variance from the provisions of Chapter 50


# Staff Report Map for PLSUP-2603-0004:



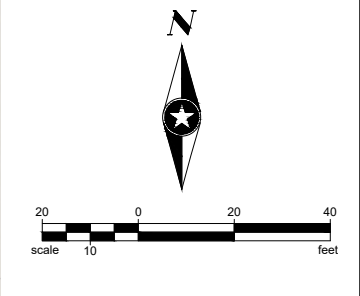
**Figure 1.**

Aerial imagery captured in 2025, showing Parcels #010-2750-00170 outlined on Minnesota Point, a property shown to exist within the General Development Shoreland Overlay Zone.

The City of Duluth has tried to ensure that the information contained in this map or electronic document is accurate. The City of Duluth makes no warranty or guarantee concerning the accuracy or reliability. This drawing/data is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey and is not intended to be used as one. The drawing/data is a compilation of records, information and data located in various City, County and State offices and other sources affecting the area shown and is to be used for reference purposes only. The City of Duluth shall not be liable for errors contained within this data provided or for any damages in connection with the use of this information contained within.



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NOTE:  
SEE STRUCTURAL PLANS FOR CABLE TRAY SUPPORTS

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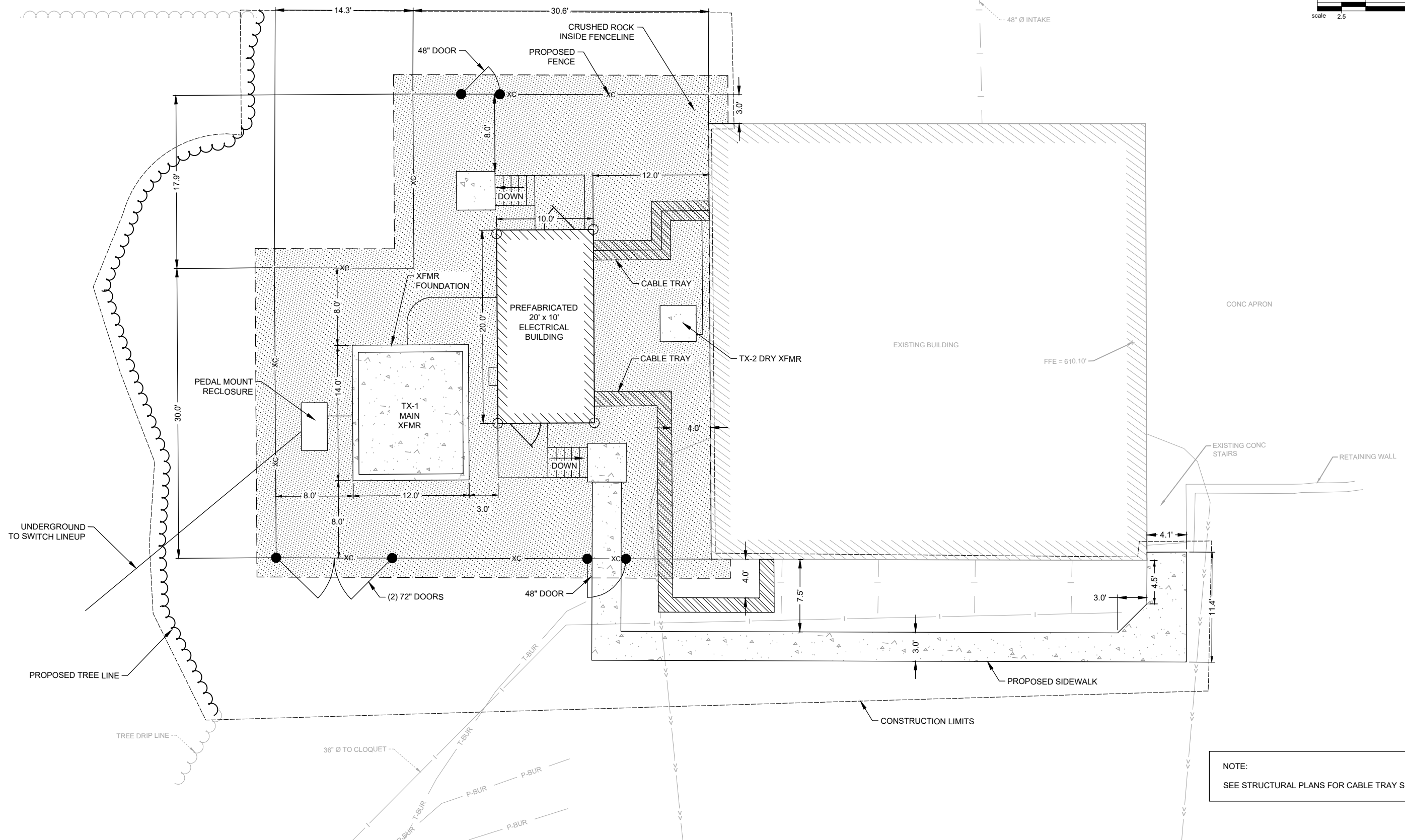
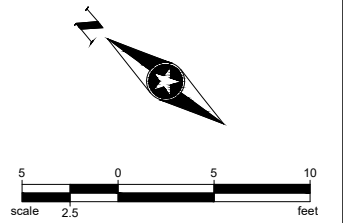
SEH Project	SAGPA 186212	Rev.#	Plan Revision Issue Description	Date	Rev.#	Sheet Revision Issue Description	Date
Drawn By	KLK						
Designed By	MH						
Checked By	##						



I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PLAN WAS PREPARED BY ME OR UNDER MY DIRECT SUPERVISION AND THAT I AM A DULY LICENSED PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER UNDER THE LAWS OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA.  
DATE \_\_\_\_\_ LICENSE NO. \_\_\_\_\_

**WATER PUMP STATION 1  
IMPROVEMENTS**  
DULUTH, MINNESOTA


**GENERAL LAYOUT  
STATION 1**



NOTE:  
SEE STRUCTURAL PLANS FOR CABLE TRAY SUPPORTS

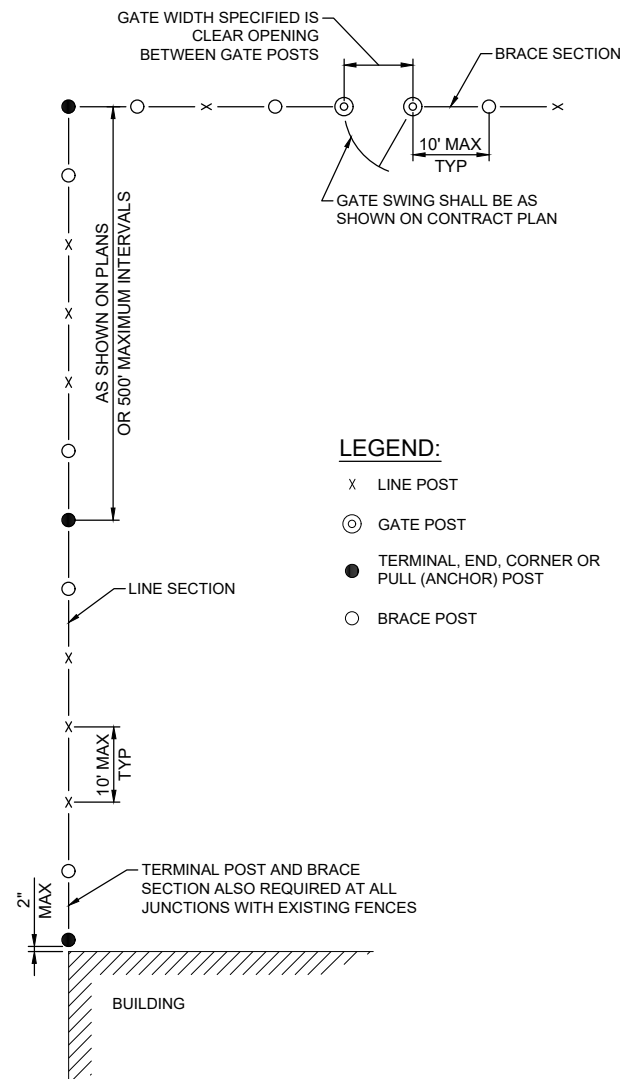
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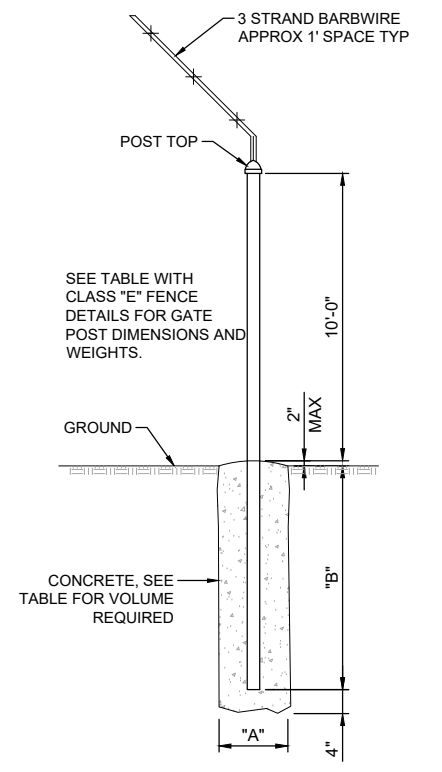
**WATER PUMP STATION 1**  
**IMPROVEMENTS**  
 DULUTH, MINNESOTA

**SITE LAYOUT PLAN**  
**STATION 1**

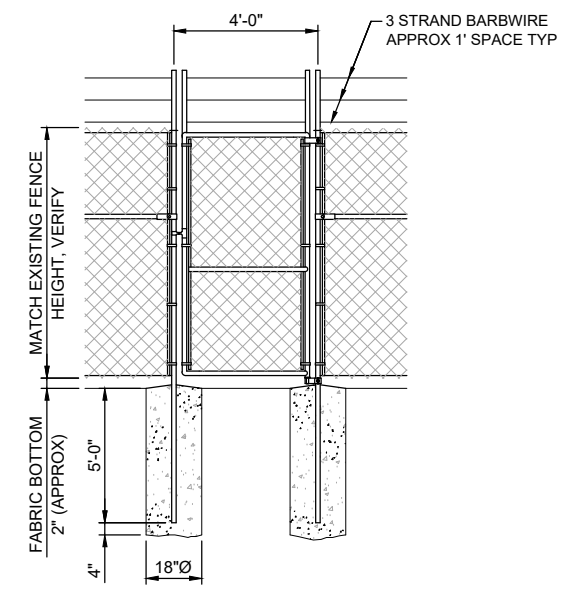


- LEGEND:**
- X LINE POST
  - ⊙ GATE POST
  - TERMINAL, END, CORNER OR PULL (ANCHOR) POST
  - BRACE POST

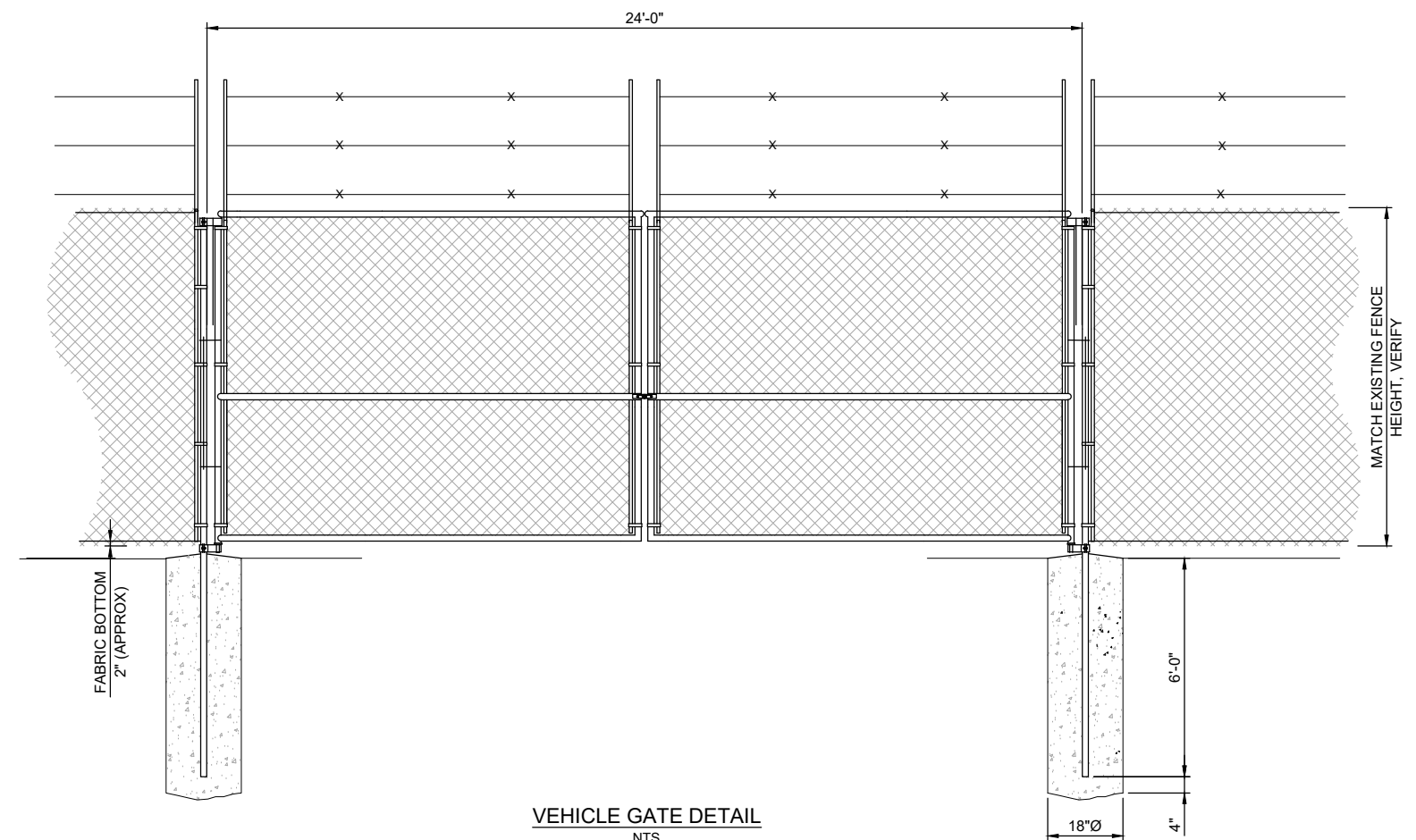
**TYPICAL FENCE LAYOUT**  
NTS



**GATE POST & CONCRETE BASE**  
NTS



**PEDESTRIAN GATE DETAIL**  
NTS



**VEHICLE GATE DETAIL**  
NTS

**GENERAL NOTES:**

1. SELVAGE RAILS & TENSION WIRES: FENCES SHALL HAVE KNUCKLE SELVAGE AND RAILS TOP AND BOTTOM. WHEN RAILS ARE OMITTED NO 7 GAUGE WIRE OF THE SAME MATERIAL AS THE FABRIC SHALL BE PROVIDED.
2. COATINGS: ZINC COATING ON POSTS, RAILS, GATE FRAMES AND STEEL FITTINGS SHALL AVERAGE 2 OZ/SF NO INDIVIDUAL SPECIMEN SHALL HAVE LESS THAN 1.8 OZ/SF.
3. GATE HINGES AND FITTINGS: SHALL BE HEAVY PATTERN AND EASILY OPERATED BY ONE PERSON. BOTTOM HINGE SHALL BE BALL AND SOCKET, OR APPROVED EQUAL, CAPABLE OF SUPPORTING ENTIRE WEIGHT OF GATE. GATES AND FITTINGS SHALL MEET FED. SPEC. RR-F-00(9) AND INSTALLATION SHALL MEET FAA SPEC F-162.
4. WELDS ON STEEL FRAMES SHALL BE GROUND SMOOTH THOROUGHLY CLEANED AND COVERED WITH ALUMINUM OR ZINC BASE PAINT.
5. SPECIFICATIONS OF WELDED GATE FRAMEWORK
 

TOP AND BOTTOM MEMBERS	2" OD PIPE
UPRIGHT MEMBERS	2" OD PIPE
HORIZONTAL AND DIAGONAL BRACES	1 1/2" OD PIPE

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SEH Project	SAGPA 186212	Rev.#	Plan Revision Issue Description	Date	Rev.#	Sheet Revision Issue Description	Date
Drawn By	KLK						
Designed By	MH						
Checked By	##						

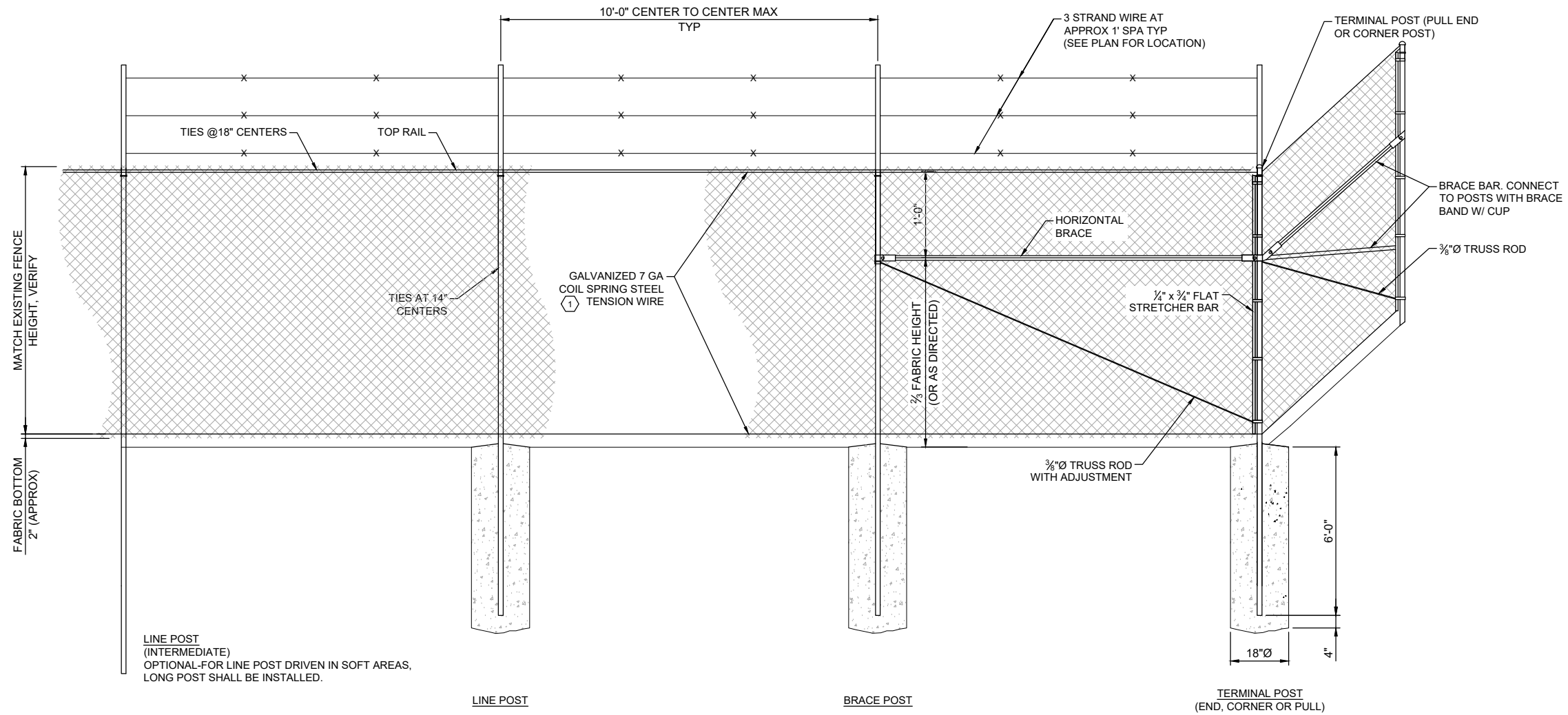
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PLAN WAS PREPARED BY ME OR UNDER MY DIRECT SUPERVISION AND THAT I AM A DULY LICENSED PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER UNDER THE LAWS OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA.

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**WATER PUMP STATION 1 IMPROVEMENTS**  
DULUTH, MINNESOTA

**CONSTRUCTION DETAILS STATION 1**

**C008**  
of 17



**CHAIN LINK FENCE**  
NTS

**GENERAL NOTES:**

1. TERMINAL POSTS SHALL BE:  
14' LONG, 3" OUTSIDE DIA, 5.79 LB/FT
2. LINE POTS SHALL BE:  
14' LONG, 2½" OUTSIDE DIA, 3.65 LBS/FT
3. BRACE BARS SHALL BE:  
1½" OUTSIDE DIA, 2.27 LB/FT
4. ALL POSTS SHALL BE CAPPED AND HAVE AN APPROVED METHOD TO SECURELY HOLD THE TOP TENSION WIRE IN POSITION AND ALLOW FOR REMOVAL AND REPLACEMENT OF A POST WITHOUT DAMAGING THE TOP TENSION WIRE. SEE DETAIL.
5. PULL POST SPACING NOT TO EXCEED 500FT.
6. CHAIN LINK FABRIC SHALL BE:  
9 GA, 2 IN MESH WITH KNUCKLED SALVAGE TOP AND BOTTOM. AND CONFORM TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF AASHTO M 181 TYPE 11. IV. DESIGN 60-9322 SHALL BE FURNISHED IN TYPE II (ALUMINUM COATED STEEL). CONTRACTOR MUST VERIFY FENCE OPENING SIZE BEFORE ORDERING GATES.
7. WIRE TIES MAY BE 9 GA GALVANIZED STEEL OR 0.179 IN MIN ALUMINUM ALLOY CONFORMING TO ASTM B211, ALLOY 1100-H18. USE 12½" GA GALV STEEL HOG RINGS FOR TENSION WIRE TIES.
8. A CONCRETE ANCHORAGE SHALL BE USED FOR ALL TERMINAL POSTS AND FOR LINE POSTS.
9. THE TOP OF THE CONCRETE ANCHORAGE SHALL BE CROWNED 1 IN ABOVE THE NATURAL GROUND.
- ① BOTTOM TENSION WIRE IS REQUIRED.

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SEH Project	SAGPA 186212
Drawn By	KLG
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Checked By	##

Rev.#	Plan Revision Issue Description	Date
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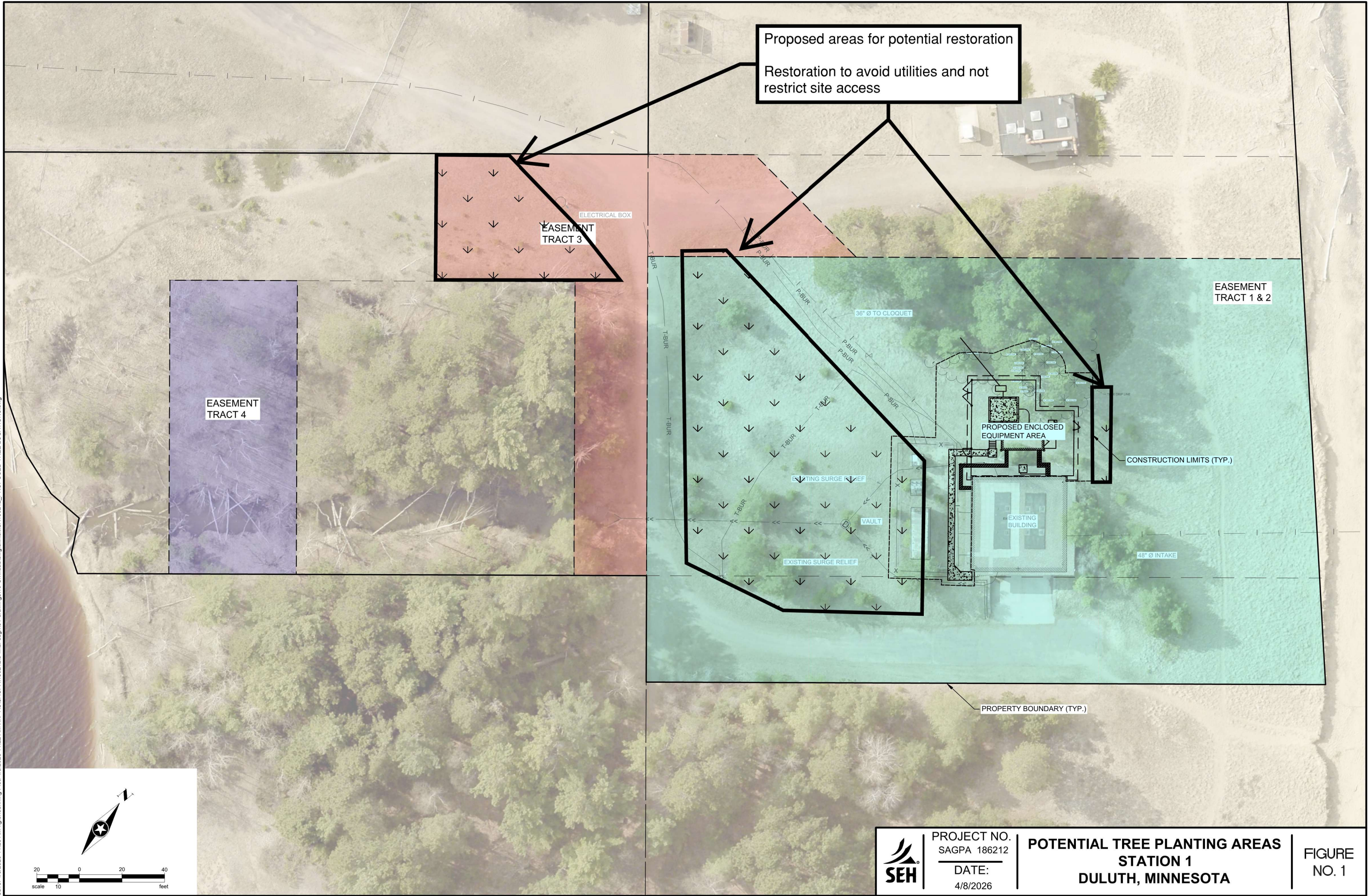
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**WATER PUMP STATION 1**  
**IMPROVEMENTS**  
DULUTH, MINNESOTA

**CONSTRUCTION DETAILS**  
**STATION 1**

**C009**  
of 17

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Proposed areas for potential restoration

Restoration to avoid utilities and not restrict site access

ELECTRICAL BOX

EASEMENT TRACT 3

EASEMENT TRACT 4

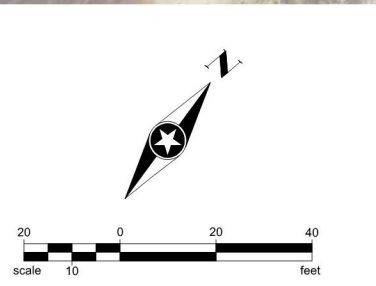
EASEMENT TRACT 1 & 2

PROPOSED ENCLOSED EQUIPMENT AREA

CONSTRUCTION LIMITS (TYP.)

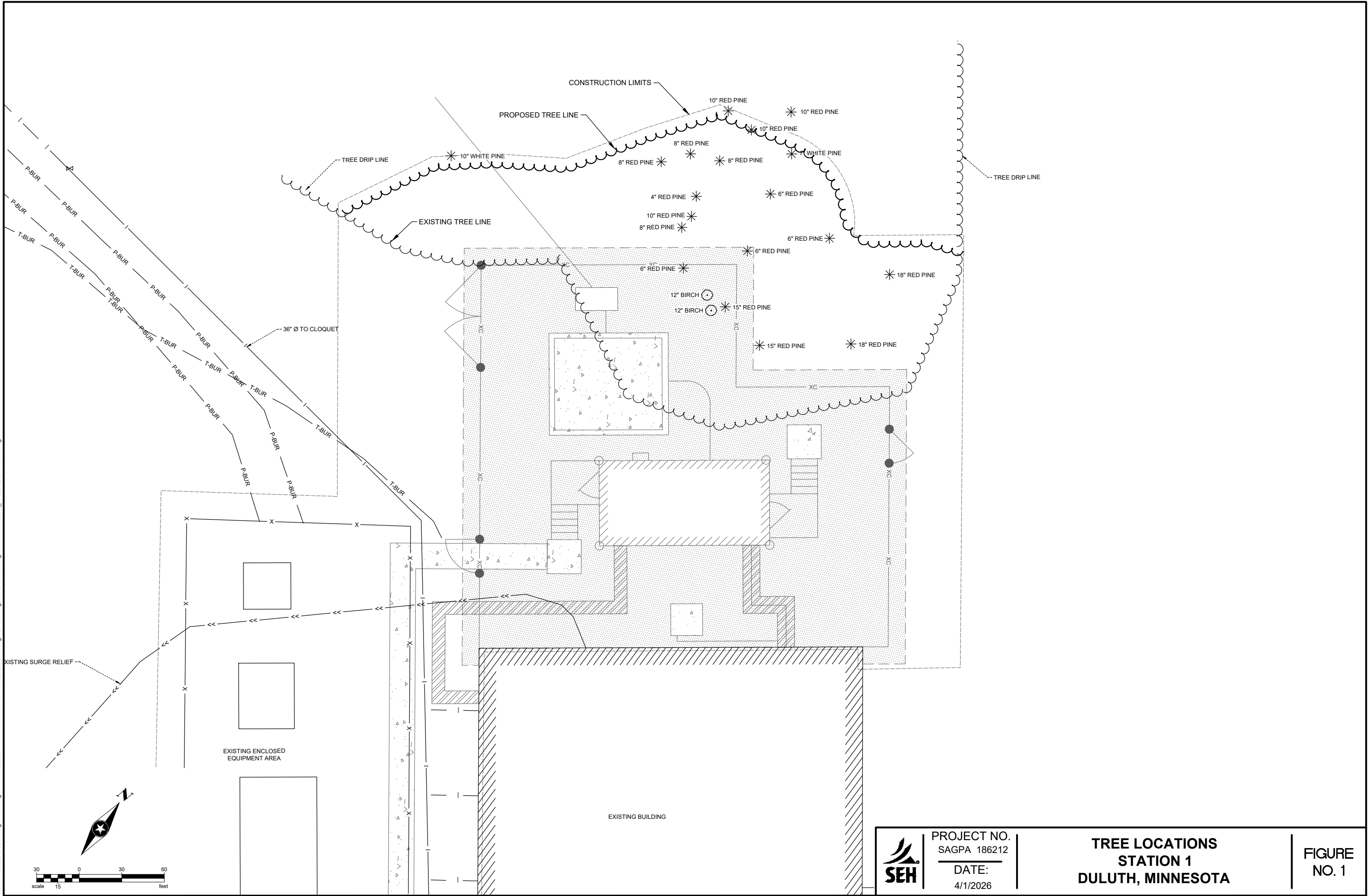
EXISTING BUILDING

PROPERTY BOUNDARY (TYP.)



	PROJECT NO.	<b>POTENTIAL TREE PLANTING AREAS</b> <b>STATION 1</b> <b>DULUTH, MINNESOTA</b>	<b>FIGURE</b> <b>NO. 1</b>
	SAGPA 186212		
	DATE:		
	4/8/2026		

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**SEH** PROJECT NO. SAGPA 186212  
 DATE: 4/1/2026

**TREE LOCATIONS  
 STATION 1  
 DULUTH, MINNESOTA**

**FIGURE  
 NO. 1**



Outlook

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**RE: April Pending Items Notice**

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From Jim Shoberg <jshoberg@DuluthMN.gov>

Date Mon 3/23/2026 9:46 AM

To Jason Mozol <jmozol@DuluthMN.gov>

Thanks Jason,

Looks like they are taking some trees. They also appear to be impacting a dune. I wonder if there is any dune grass on it. That grass is a protected species.

As for the landscape plan the species must be native and consistent with the Native Plant Communities regime FDN32b Red Pine – White Pine Woodland (Minnesota Point). Norway spruce is a non-native and a species we do not want down there. Some acceptable species would be Prickly or smooth wild rose (*Rosa acicularis/blanda* group), pin cherry (*Prunus pensylvanica*), bush honeysuckle to name a few. Here is a link to help.

[https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/natural\\_resources/npc/fire\\_dependent\\_forest/fdn32.pdf](https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/natural_resources/npc/fire_dependent_forest/fdn32.pdf)

Anyway we can ask for a reconfiguration where the TX-1 MAIN XFMR is rotated to not impact the pine and the dune? Let me know how I can help.

Jim

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Senior Landscape Architect  
Property, Parks & Libraries



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**RE: April Pending Items Notice**

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**From** VanNingen, AmberBeth (DNR) <amberbeth.vanningen@state.mn.us>

**Date** Tue 3/31/2026 2:27 PM

**To** Jason Mozol <jmozol@DuluthMN.gov>

**Cc** Speldrich, Bri (DNR) <Brianna.Speldrich@state.mn.us>; McGraw, Arika (DNR) <Arika.McGraw@state.mn.us>; Parson, Jessica (DNR) <jessica.parson@state.mn.us>

Hello,

Jason, it was great to meet you and touch base about this project last week. Scientific and Natural Areas staff have looked over the proposal and offer the following comments:

Comments from the Scientific and Natural Areas Unit – MN DNR

- [Natural Heritage Information System](#) review: Even though the area is quite disturbed, there are several element occurrences in the area and the possibility for a few rare species. An NHIS review may be required.
- Terrestrial invasive plant species: The area has many terrestrial invasive plant species. We recommend strict protocols such as inspecting and cleaning equipment prior to operation and [following recommendations to prevent the spread of invasive species](#). We also recommend treatment of invasives species already known in the area. More information can be found through [EDDMapS](#).
- Plantings: We oppose any plantings of non-native species such as Norway spruce. Instead, we recommend native species such as white spruce (*Picea glauca*) or red or white pine (*Pinus resinosa* or *strobus*). Highbush cranberry, while native, is closely related to its non-native counterpart. They can be hard to tell apart, hybridize, and European highbush cranberry has been inadvertently sold as a native species. We recommend instead to focus on native species already found on the point such as pin or sand cherry (*Prunus pensylvanica* or *pumila*) or Amelanchier species. A plant list of known species found on [Minnesota Point Pine Forest SNA](#) can be found [here](#).
- All efforts should be made to minimize or mitigate for erosion and runoff.
- Note that the area is popular with the public and all efforts need to be made to keep access open and safe.

Please let me know if you have any questions or comments on our comments.

Thank you,  
AmberBeth

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**AmberBeth VanNingen**

Northeast Regional Specialist | Scientific and Natural Areas Program

**Minnesota Department of Natural Resources**

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[mndnr.gov](http://mndnr.gov)