

6.2 Annandale

The proposed Annandale facility has a capacity of 6 MW AC and is located in Section 32 of Corinna Township in Wright County. The site is located just south of the city of Annandale, southwest of the intersection of South Poplar Lane and Klever Avenue Northwest. Aurora anticipates that access to the facility will be through a new access road constructed off of Klever Avenue Northwest. Preliminary plans anticipate developing all the 71 acres of Aurora’s site control. The facility will be connected to Xcel Energy’s Annandale Substation, located approximately 2010 feet north of the facility.

The facility is located within the Minnesota and Northeastern Iowa Morainal Section of the Eastern Broadleaf Forest Province. Land cover within the facility (Table 15) is comprised almost entirely of cultivated crops. The preliminary development area avoids the developed area of Annandale and the lakes to the north and west of the facility as well as the larger wetland areas located to the south and east in the study area around the Annandale Substation (Figure 11).

Table 15: Annandale Facility Land Cover

Land Cover	Control Area		Development Area		Study Area	
	Acres	Percent	Acres	Percent	Acres	Percent
Open Water	-	-	-	-	1,994.1	15.9%
Developed, Open Space	-	-	-	-	969.6	7.7%
Developed, Low Intensity	-	-	-	-	457.5	3.6%
Developed, Medium Intensity	-	-	-	-	246.3	2.0%
Developed, High Intensity	-	-	-	-	97.8	0.8%
Barren Land	-	-	-	-	2.5	0.0%
Deciduous Forest	0.1	0.1%	0.1	0.1%	1,602.0	12.8%
Evergreen Forest	-	-	-	-	59.0	0.5%
Mixed Forest	-	-	-	-	0.3	-
Shrub/Scrub	-	-	-	-	42.3	0.3%
Grassland Herbaceous	-	-	-	-	412.2	3.3%
Pasture/Hay	-	-	-	-	1,,083.6	8.6%
Cultivated Crops	70.6	99.9%	70.6	99.9%	5035.2	40.1%
Woody Wetlands	-	-	-	-	5.8	0.1%
Emergent Herbaceous Wetlands	-	-	-	-	546.4	4.4%
Totals	70.64	100.0%	70.6	100.0%	12554.6	100.0%

6.2.1 Effects on Human Settlement

The facility is located directly south of the city of Annandale in an agricultural area with scattered rural residences. The preliminary development area is currently cultivated and the

nearest home is located approximately 508 feet north of the preliminary development area. Construction of the facility will not result in displacement of any homes or businesses.

Planning is done by Corinna Township and the site is zoned as General Agricultural. The facility is located in an area subject to an orderly annexation agreement between Corinna Township and the city of Annandale. Annandale has invested in utility extensions and oversizing of trunk lines in order to accommodate future growth in this area.⁸⁷ The area of site control is designated as a transition area in the *Wright County Land Use Plan*; the intent of this designation is for annexation to take place before any land use changes.⁸⁸ The area of site control is designated as residential in Annandale's Comprehensive Plan.⁸⁹

Wright County zoning does not have a provision for large solar facilities, such as the Annandale facility. The city of Annandale permits Solar Energy Systems and Solar Structures by Conditional Use Permit in certain districts (R-1 One-Family Residential, R-2 One and Two Family Residential and C-1 Central Business District) provided they would not cast shadows and obstruct solar access. All other zoning districts within the city of Annandale prohibit these facilities.

A snowmobile trail crosses the preliminary development area along the South Poplar Lane. The Annandale Waterfowl Production Area is directly south of the proposed facility. Users of the WPA may experience some noise during construction of the facility. No impact to the snowmobile trail is anticipated. The facility would most likely be visible to users of both the snowmobile trail and the WPA, but the view of the facility is not expected to significantly affect use of nearby recreational areas.

No mitigation measures beyond those described in Section 5.2 are identified for the Annandale facility.

6.2.2 Effects on Land Based Economies

The proposed facility would remove approximately 71 acres from agricultural use for at least 25 years. Two other proposed Aurora facilities, Lake Pulaski and Montrose are also located in Wright County. Together, the three proposed facilities would remove up to 159 acres from agricultural production for at least 25 years.

Within the preliminary development area, approximately 10 acres (14 percent) are considered to be prime farmland and 23 acres (33 percent) are considered to be prime farmland if drained (Table 11). The prime farmland exclusion in Minnesota Rule

⁸⁷ Annandale Comments [20151-106839-01](#)

⁸⁸ Wright County Comments

⁸⁹ Annandale Comments, see also City of Annandale, *Comprehensive Plan – Land Use* (December 5, 2005) [http://www.annandale.mn.us/vertical/sites/%7B8B9EF75D-91A9-44C3-9174-41C4172B85B5%7D/uploads/AnnandaleLandUse2-28-08\(1\).pdf](http://www.annandale.mn.us/vertical/sites/%7B8B9EF75D-91A9-44C3-9174-41C4172B85B5%7D/uploads/AnnandaleLandUse2-28-08(1).pdf)

7850.4400, Subpart 4 does not apply to the Annandale facility as it is within an orderly annexation area.

The proposed project would not impact tourism, mining or mineral extraction activity, or forest resources of economic importance.

No mitigation measures beyond those described in Section 5.3 are identified for the Annandale facility.

6.2.3 Effects on Archaeological and Historic Resources

No archaeological sites were identified in a survey of the Annandale facility. No mitigation measures beyond those identified in Section 5.4 are identified for the Annandale facility.

6.2.4 Effects on Natural Environment

There are no rivers, streams or lakes within the area of facility site control. There are 1.6 acres of NWI mapped wetlands within the preliminary development area. Field delineations performed in the summer of 2014 show approximately 2.9 acres of Type 6 (shrub swamp) wetlands within the area of land control.⁹⁰

The preliminary design for the facility anticipates grading of approximately 49.3 acres of the site during construction.⁹¹

No mitigation measures beyond those described in Section 5.5 are identified for the Annandale facility.

6.2.5 Effects on Rare and Unique Natural Resources

A review of the NHIS database did not identify any documented instances of state or federally listed endangered, threatened or special concern species within one mile of the area of site control for the Annandale facility.⁹²

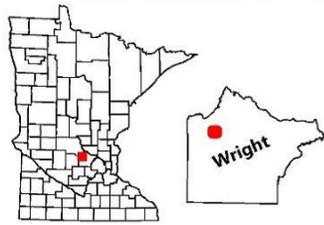
No mitigation measures beyond the field survey described in Section 5.6 are identified for the Annandale facility.

⁹⁰ Appendix C

⁹¹ Application, at Appendix F

⁹² Application, at p. 81

Figure 10: Annandale Project Detail



- Residence Location
- Proposed Inverter
- Proposed Arrays
- Proposed Road
- Proposed Grading Area
- Preliminary Development Area
- Facility Land Control
- Municipal Boundary

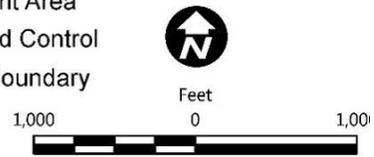


Figure 11: Annandale Land Cover Overview

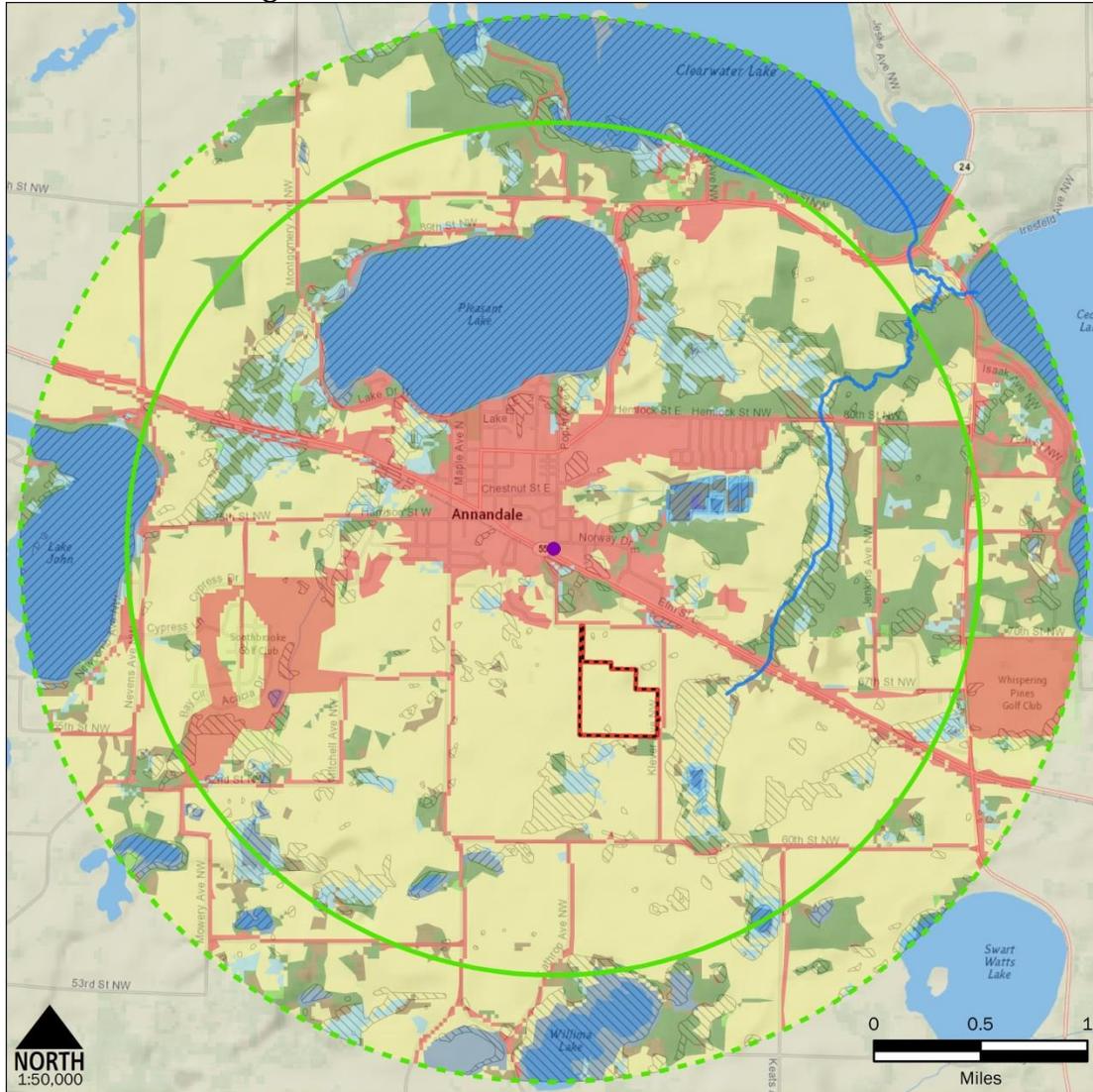
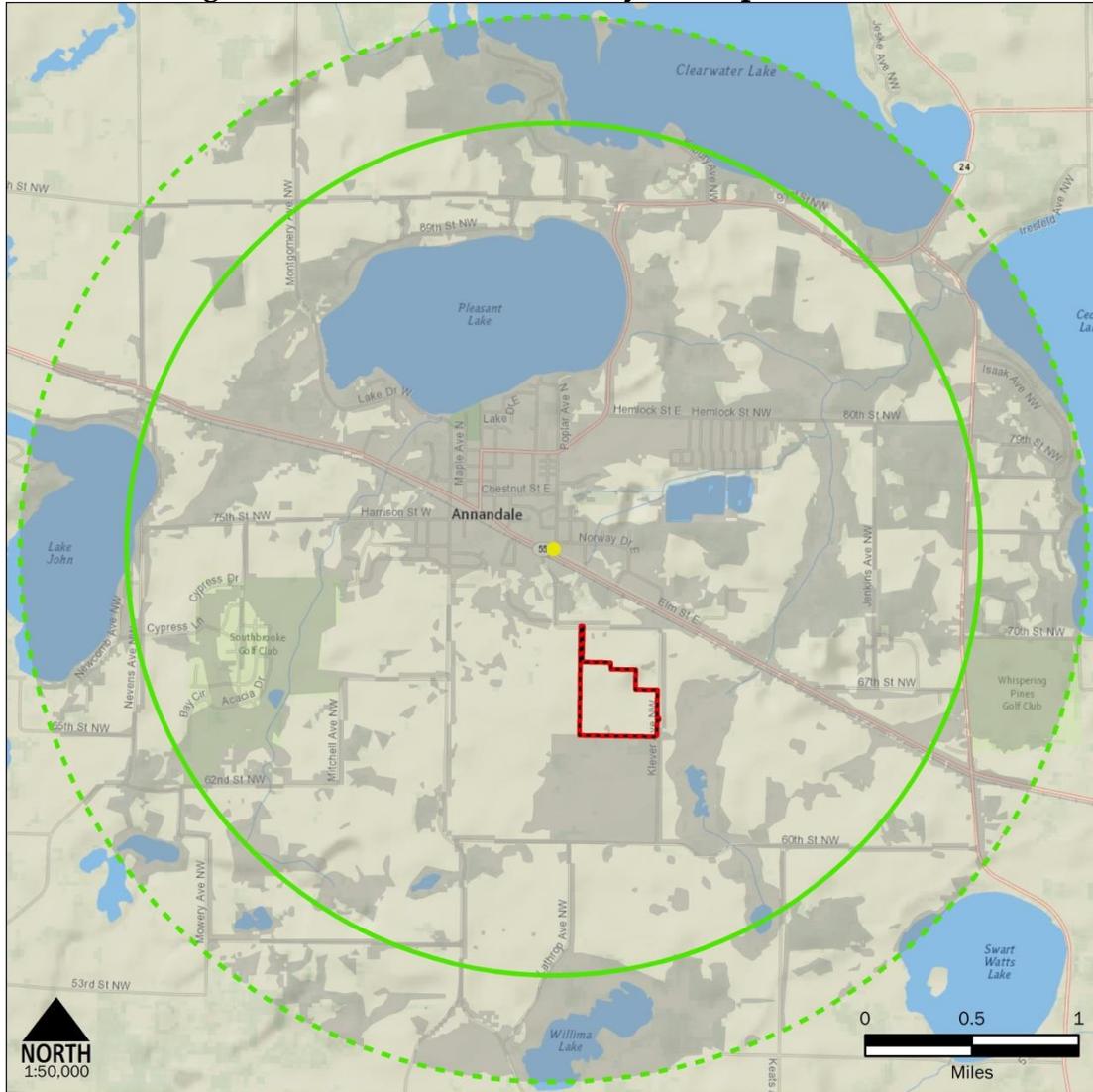


Figure 12: Annandale Generally Incompatible Areas



NORTH
 1:50,000

0 0.5 1
 Miles



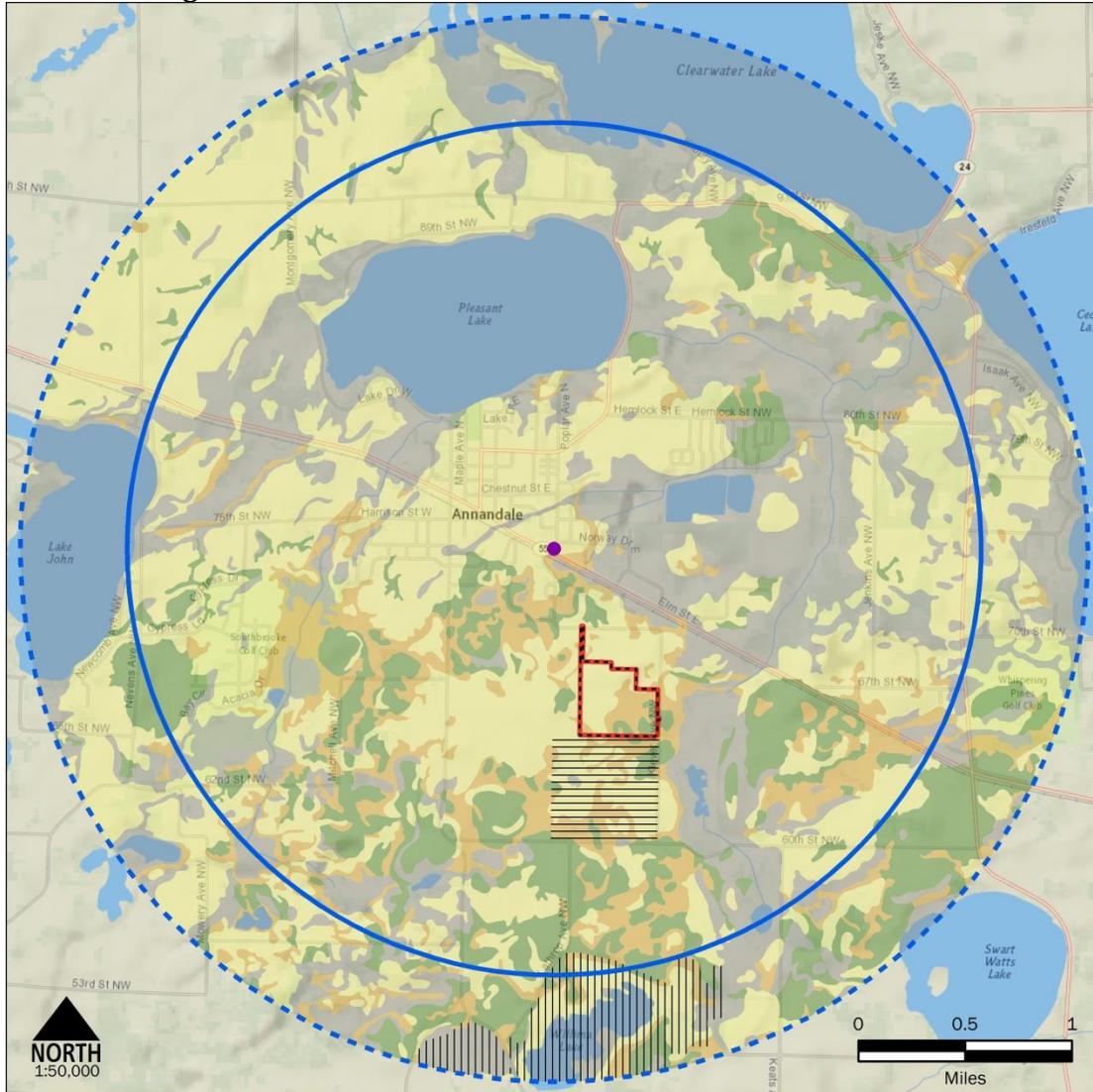
**Annandale Facility
 Generally Incompatible Areas**

- Substation
- Preliminary Development Area
- Facility Control Area
- 2-mile Analysis Buffer
- 2.5-mile Analysis Buffer
- Generally Incompatible Areas

“Generally Incompatible Areas” include: Minnesota Scientific and Natural Areas; Minnesota Wildlife Management Areas; US Fish and Wildlife Service Waterfowl Production Areas; the National Wetland Inventory; and areas classified as open water, developed, forest, and wetland in the National Land Cover Database.



Figure 13: Annandale Prime Farmland and Other Areas



**Annandale Facility
 Prime Farmland and Other Areas**

- Substation
- Preliminary Development Area
- Facility Control Area
- 2-mile Analysis Buffer
- 2.5-mile Analysis Buffer
- MN Wildlife Management Area
- FWS Waterfowl Production Area
- Prime Farmland
- Prime Farmland if Drained
- Farmland of Statewide Importance
- Not Prime Farmland
- Other Farmland

