

6.23 Wyoming

The proposed Wyoming facility has a capacity of 7.0 MW AC and is located in the city of Wyoming in Chisago County, southeast of the intersection of 250th Street North and Highway 61. Aurora anticipates that the facility will be accessed through a newly constructed drive off of Forest Boulevard North (US Highway 61). Preliminary plans anticipate a development area of approximately 62 acres within the 67x acres of Aurora’s site control. Electricity from the facility would be delivered to Xcel Energy’s Wyoming Substation located approximately 740 feet west 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 preliminary development area (Table 40) is dominated by cultivated crops (90.5 percent) and an additional 8.7 percent in developed cover (6.3 percent in open space, 1.5 percent in low-intensity and 0.8 percent in medium intensity). The proposed location avoids the developed areas of Wyoming and Forest Lake located to the north and south, as well as the scattered surface waters and wetlands that comprise approximately 24 percent of the land cover of the study area surrounding the Wyoming Substation (Figure 96).

Table 40: Wyoming Facility - Land Cover

Land Cover	Control Area		Development Area		Study Area	
	Acres	Percent	Acres	Percent	Acres	Percent
Open Water	--	--	--	--	1,274.0	10.2%
Developed, Open Space	4.2	6.3%%	3.9	6.3%	1,802.5	14.4%
Developed, Low Intensity	0.9	1.4%	0.9	1.5%	903.9	7.2%
Developed, Medium Intensity	0.51	0.8%	05	0.8%	444.9	3.5%
Developed, High Intensity	--	--	--	--	257.4	2.1%
Barren Land	--	--	--	--	--	--
Deciduous Forest	--	--	--	--	2,338.6	18.6%
Evergreen Forest	--	--	--	--	163.9	1.3%
Mixed Forest	--	--	--	--	6.2	0.1%
Shrub/Scrub	--	--	--	--	35.2	0.3%
Grassland Herbaceous	--	--	--	--	529.5	4.2%
Pasture/Hay	0.8	1.2%	0.5	0.9%	1,539.8	12.3%
Cultivated Crops	60.8	90.3%	56.1	90.5%	1,529.9	12.2%
Woody Wetlands	--	--	--	--	193.4	1.5%
Emergent Herbaceous Wetlands	--	--	--	--	1,533.2	12.2%
Totals	67.3	100.0%	62.0	100.0%	12,552.2	100.0%

6.23.1 Effects on Human Settlement

The location is a cultivated parcel in rural area with a mixture of farmland and some rural residences. The nearest home is located approximately 87 feet north of the preliminary development area, across 250th Street North. Construction of the facility will not result in displacement of any homes or businesses. The facility is located in an area zoned by the city of Wyoming as R-2, Rural Residential. Solar farms are not specifically addressed in the Wyoming Zoning Code.

A Snowmobile trail, Banta Park and the Sunrise Trail are all located within one-half mile of the proposed facility. Construction and operation of the facility would not impact the use of nearby recreational resources.

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

6.23.2 Effects on Land Based Economies

Based on the preliminary site design, the Wyoming facility would remove approximately 57 acres from agricultural use. In addition to the Wyoming facility, Aurora's Chisago, Lawrence Creek, and Scandia facilities, as well as the North Star Solar Project, a 100 MW PV project proposed by North Star Solar PV LLC are all proposed in Chisago County. If all of the proposed facilities are developed, the five facilities would result in a cumulative reduction of approximately 970 acres from agricultural use in Chisago County for at least 25 years.

None of the developed area is considered to be either prime farmland or prime farmland if drained (Table 13). Within the comparison area surrounding the Wyoming Substation, approximately 6 percent is considered to be prime farmland and 2 percent is considered to be prime farmland if drained. The prime farmland exclusion in Minnesota Rule 7850.4400, Subpart 4 does not apply to the Wyoming facility as it is within the municipal boundary of Wyoming.

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 Wyoming facility.

6.23.3 Effects on Archaeological and Historic Resources

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

6.23.4 Effects on Natural Environment

There are no rivers, streams or lakes within the area of facility site control. Field delineations performed in the summer of 2014 show approximately 1.1 acres of wetlands within the area of site control; 0.94 acres of Type 1 (seasonally flooded basins or floodplains and 0.19 acres of Type 3 (shallow marsh).¹⁹³

The preliminary design for the facility anticipates grading of approximately 9.5 acres of the site during construction.¹⁹⁴

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

6.23.5 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 or threatened species within the preliminary development area of the Wyoming facility. The NHIS database review did show records for one state listed threatened species (Blanding's Turtle (*Emydoidea blandingii*)) and a Colonial Waterbird Nesting Site within one mile of the area of site control for the facility.¹⁹⁵

No specific mitigation is proposed for the Colonial Waterbird Nesting Site, as impacts from the proposed facility are not anticipated.

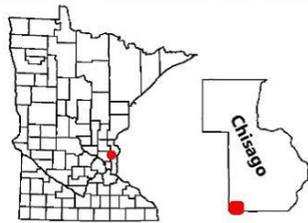
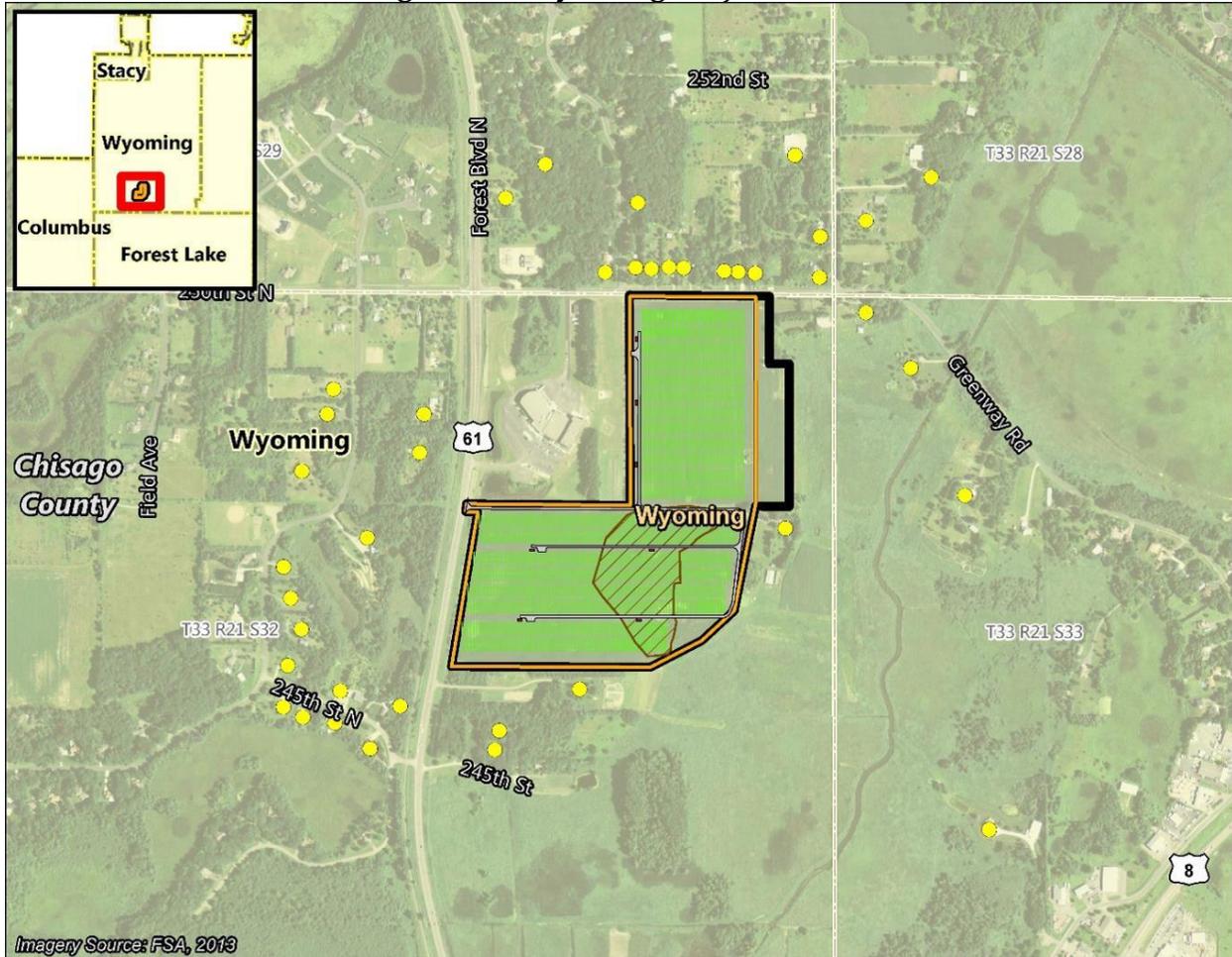
No mitigation measures beyond the field survey and Blanding's Turtle Special Condition described in Section 5.6 are identified for the Wyoming facility.

¹⁹³ Appendix C

¹⁹⁴ Application, at Appendix F

¹⁹⁵ Application, at p. 81, Appendix I

Figure 95: Wyoming Project Detail



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

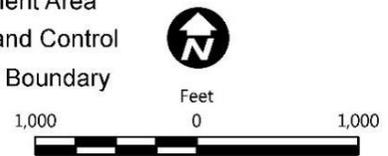


Figure 96: Wyoming Land Cover Overview

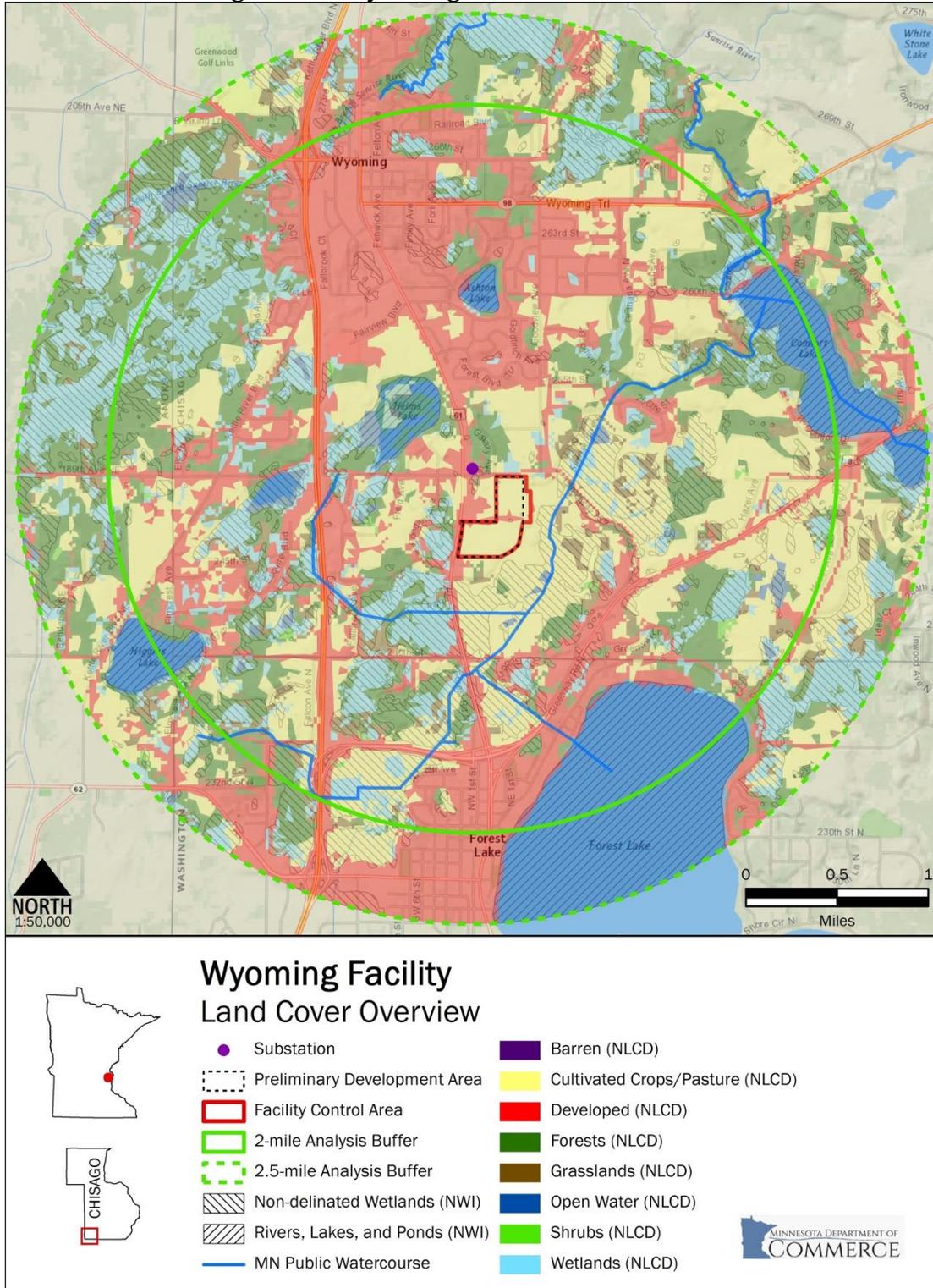
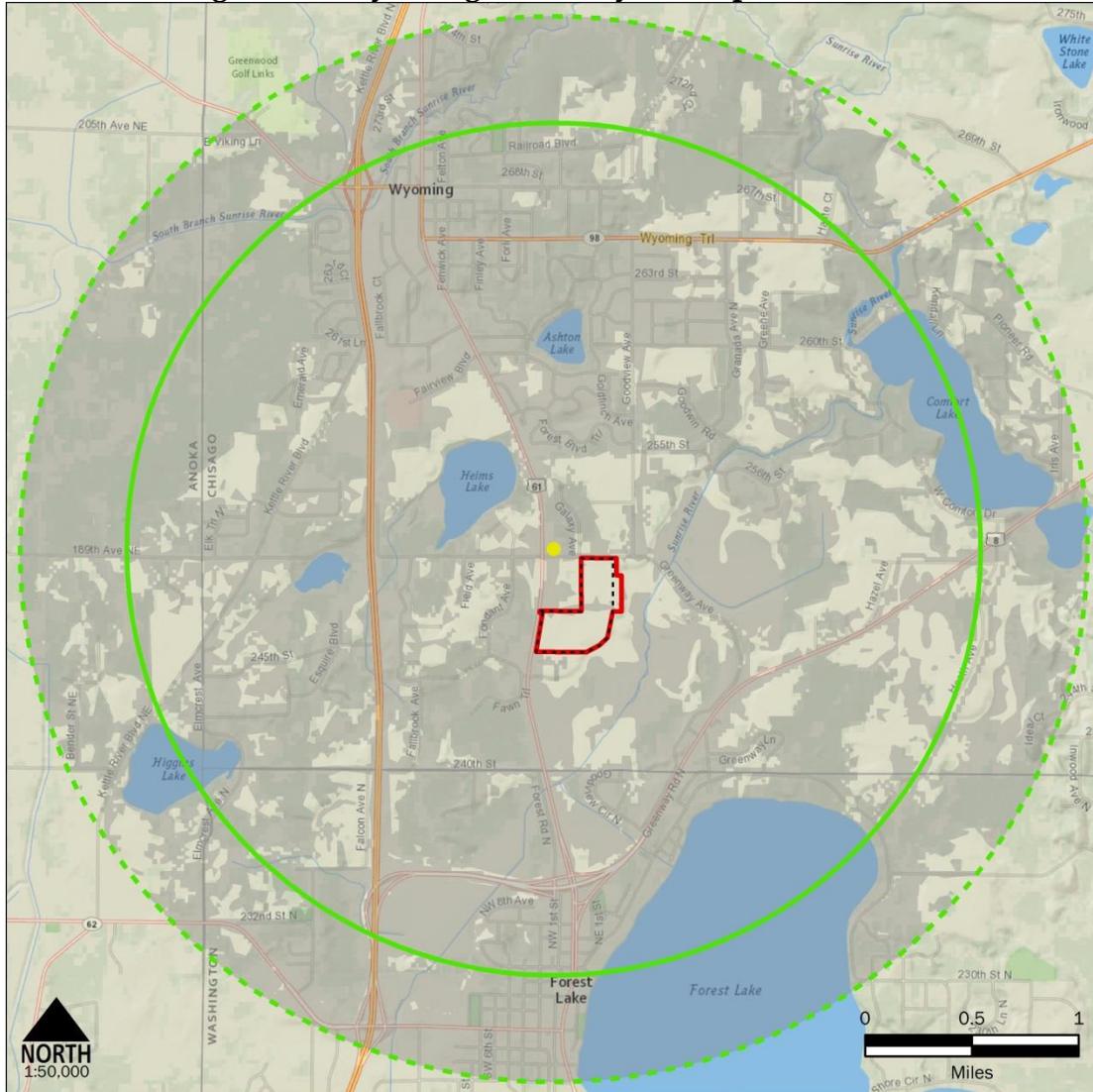


Figure 97: Wyoming Generally Incompatible Areas



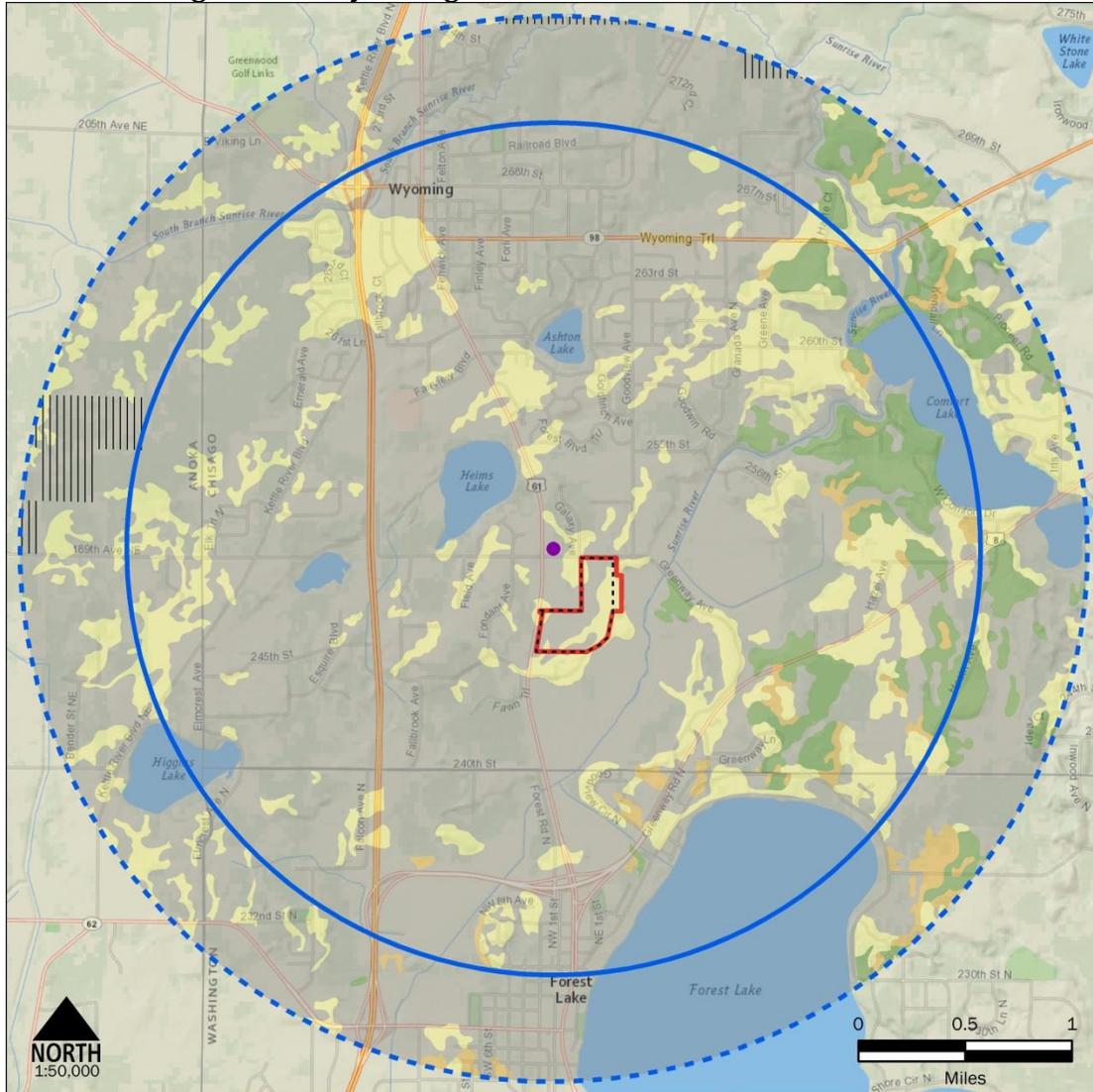
**Wyoming Facility
 Generally Incompatible Areas**

- 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 98: Wyoming Prime Farmland and Other Areas



**Wyoming 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 Areas
- Prime Farmland
- Prime Farmland if Drained
- Farmland of Statewide Importance
- Not Prime Farmland
- Other Farmland

