



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Black Hills National Forest
Northern Hills Ranger District

2014 N Main Street
Spearfish SD 57783
605-642-4622

File Code: 1950

Date: June 2, 2021

Greetings,

The Black Hills National Forest, Northern Hills Ranger District (NHRD), is considering three separate proposals from Black Hills Energy for the installation of underground utility lines. Each of these proposals will be evaluated independently; they are included together here in the interest of efficiency.

The first proposal is for an underground utility line of 318 feet to connect private property into an existing overhead line. This site is located approximately three miles east of Lead, SD.

The second proposal is for an underground utility line where three possible route options have been identified. The three route options have lengths of 36 feet, 126 feet, or 228 feet. This site is located approximately five miles southeast of Lead, SD.

The third proposal is for an underground utility line 3,260 feet long within the road prism of National Forest System (NFS) Road 247.1. This site is located approximately 4 miles south-southeast of Lead, SD.

Further details on each of these three proposals are found in the included scoping notice and maps.

I am writing to inform you of this proposal and to solicit your comments on it. My preliminary assessment is that this proposal falls within a category of actions listed in regulations at 36 CFR 220.6 that are excluded from documentation in an environmental assessment (EA) or environmental impact statement (EIS) and that no extraordinary circumstances exist that would preclude use of a categorical exclusion. Specifically, "Approval, modification, or continuation of special uses that require less than five acres of NFS lands" may be categorically excluded from documentation in an EA or EIS under 36 CFR 220.6(e)(3).

Projects of this nature require the issuance of a decision memo but are not subject to objection. While the decision made on the project is final, all comments received on the proposed action will be considered prior to making a decision. To make the best use of any comments, we request that you submit them within 30 days of the date of this letter.

Please submit comments regarding this project to me at 2014 N. Main St., Spearfish, SD 57783. You may also submit comments via e-mail (comments-rocky-mountain-black-hills-northern-hills@fs.fed.us), telephone (605-642-4622), or fax (605-642-4156). I can be reached at the phone number listed above, Monday through Friday, generally between 8:00 AM and 4:30 PM





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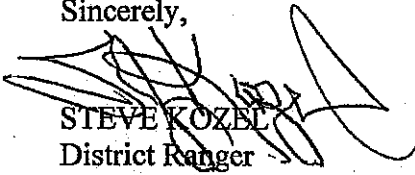
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Mountain time. When submitting comments electronically, please include "BHE Utility Installation" in the subject line.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



STEVE KOZEL
District Ranger

Enclosure: Scoping Notice, Map



Black Hills Electric Utility Installation Special Use Permit Scoping Notice

Black Hills National Forest
Northern Hills Ranger District
Lawrence County, South Dakota

Purpose of and Need for Action

Black Hills Electric (BHE) has proposed the installation of three new underground utility lines to provide service to private property. The lines would be installed on National Forest System (NFS) land in order to access the privately owned land.

Proposed Action

The proposed action is to issue Special Use Permits to allow for the installation of underground utility lines.

TBS S/D #2 Lot 1: Installation of a buried utility line 50 inches deep. Line length is 318 feet. Line is buried in a 3-inch PVC schedule 40 pipe. Buried line will be tied into an existing overhead line which is located 310 feet west of the private property. A transformer will be installed on an existing pole. Trenching of the line will occur via heavy equipment. Length of installation is approximately 2-5 days. Site location is T4N R3E Section 1 NE ¼. Estimated permit area of 1 acre.

M.S. 1904 Non Pareil Fraction & Comet #1 Lodes: Three route options have been proposed. Each option is for the installation of a buried utility line 50 inches deep. The line is buried in a 3-inch PVC Schedule 40 pipe. Length of installation is 3-8 days. Underground installation methods are the same for all options. All options have an estimated permit area of less than 1 acre.

- Option 1: Line length of 126 feet. Straight line heading SE from MS 1904 to Tracts A, B, and C of the Rally Park Addition. This route requires tree removal. Site location is entirely in T4N R3E Section 19 NW ¼.
- Option 2: Line length is 228 feet. Located from the SE corner of M.S. 1904, and follows the stream to Tracts A, B, and C of the Rally Park Addition. Fewer trees would be removed than in Option 1 but the line would go through an Aquatic Management Zone. Site location is T4N R3E Section 19 NW ¼ and T4N R3E Section 24 SW ¼.
- Option 3: Line length is 36 feet. Straight line from the SE corner of M.S. 1904 to Tracts A, B, and C of the Rally Park Addition. This route requires tree removal. Site location is entirely in T4N R3E Section 19 NW ¼.

M.S. 1744 Harvey: Installation of a buried utility line 48 inches deep. Line length is 3260 feet. Approximately 2,218 feet of the installation is on NFS lands, the additional 1,039 feet is on private land. Line installation will be within the road prism of NFSR 247.1. Trenching of the line will be 18 inches wide. The line will be installed in a 3-inch PVC Schedule 40 pipe. Length of installation is 5-10 days. Minimal tree removal is expected. Site location is T4N R3E Section 14 and Section 23. Estimated permit area of NFS land is 3.4 acres.

These permits would apply only to those activities that occur on the Black Hills National Forest. Any activities on other National Forests or on lands administered by other agencies would require the approval of those entities.

National Environmental Policy Act Compliance

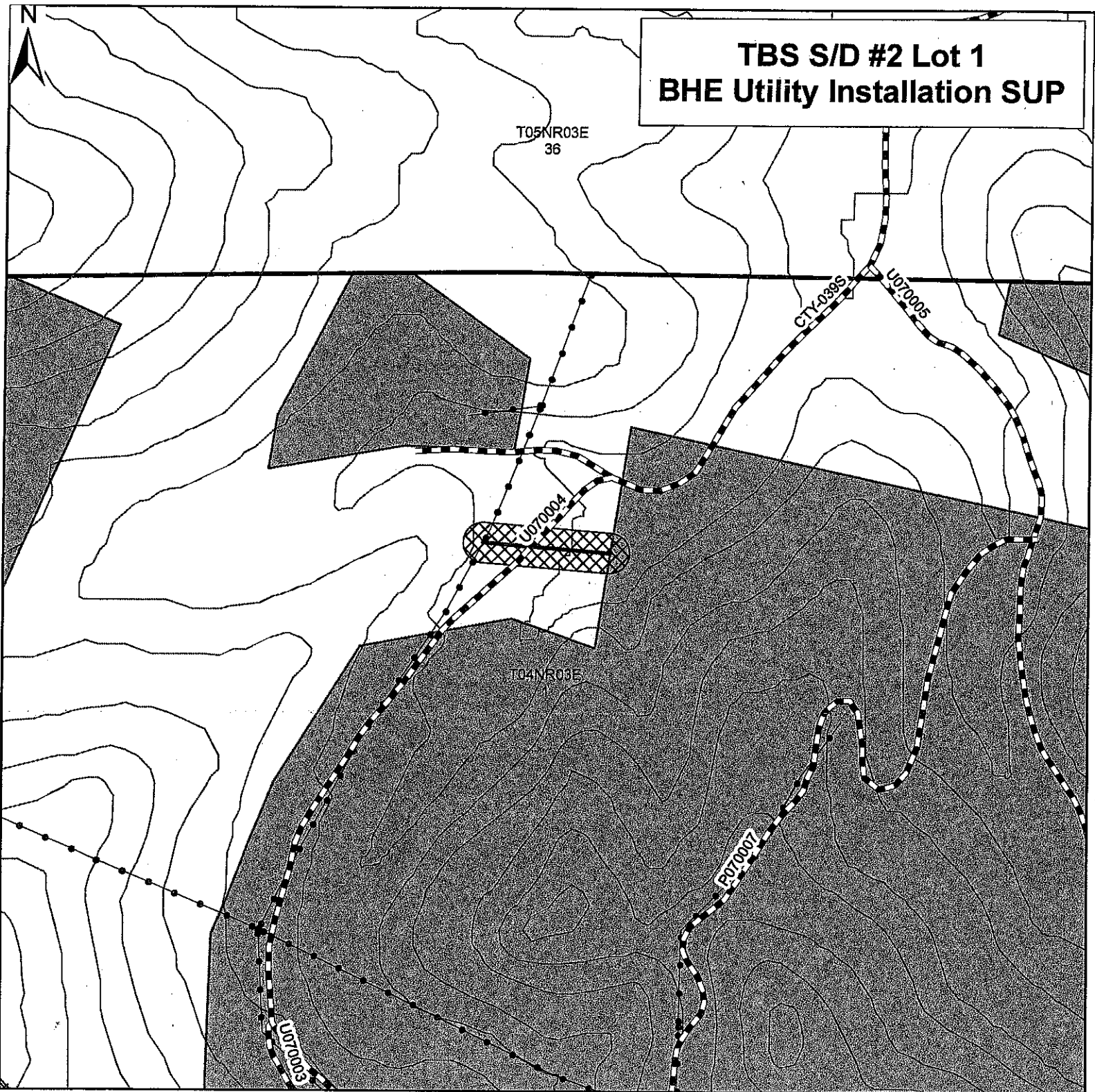
Projects of this nature may be categorically excluded from documentation in an environmental assessment (EA) or environmental impact statement (EIS) per provisions at 36 CFR 220.6 provided no extraordinary circumstances exist. Specifically, "Approval, modification, or continuation of special uses that require less than five acres of NFS lands" may be categorically excluded from documentation in an EA or EIS under 36 CFR 220.6(e)(3). A decision memo is required, but categorically excluded projects are not subject to objection.









Based on the input received during the project scoping period and review by agency resource specialists the responsible official, District Ranger Steve Kozel, will determine whether to authorize this activity.

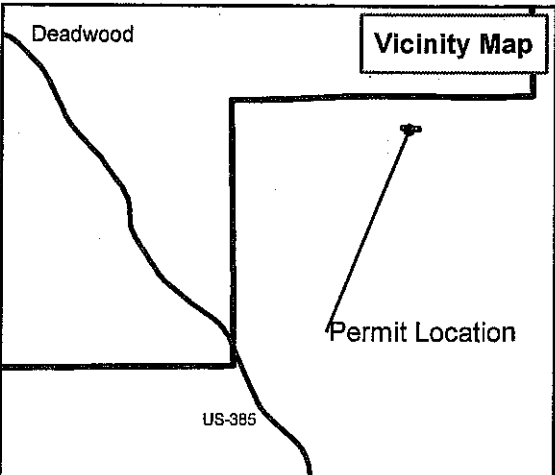
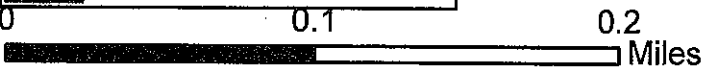
Contact Information

For more information about this project please contact Callie Ackerman-Jasper (Lands Specialist) at (605) 443-3077.

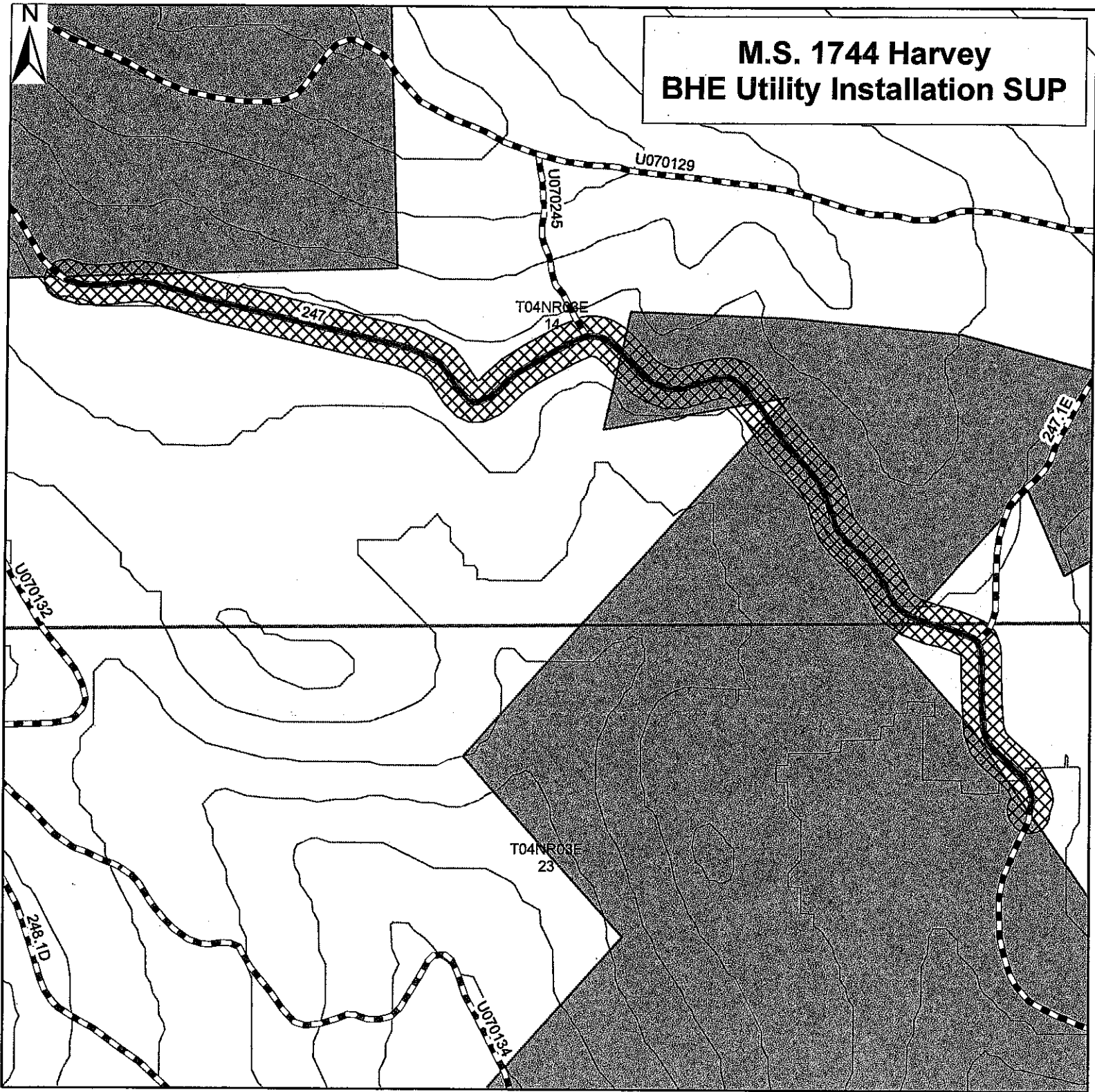
TBS S/D #2 Lot 1 BHE Utility Installation SUP










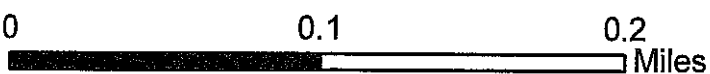
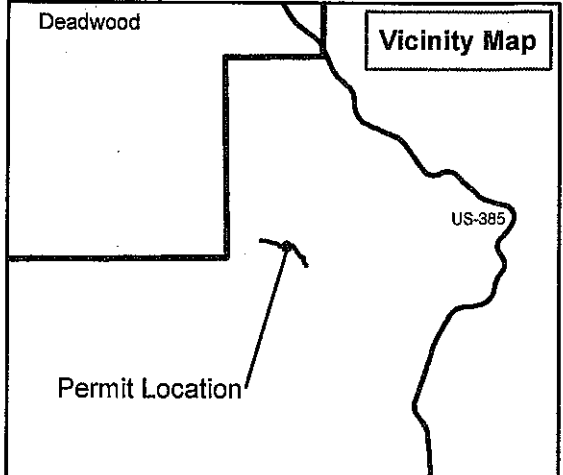
-  Roads
-  BHE - Overhead Primary
-  BHE - Underground Primary
-  Proposed Underground Line
-  Permit Area
-  Forest Boundary
-  Section
-  Non-FS Lands



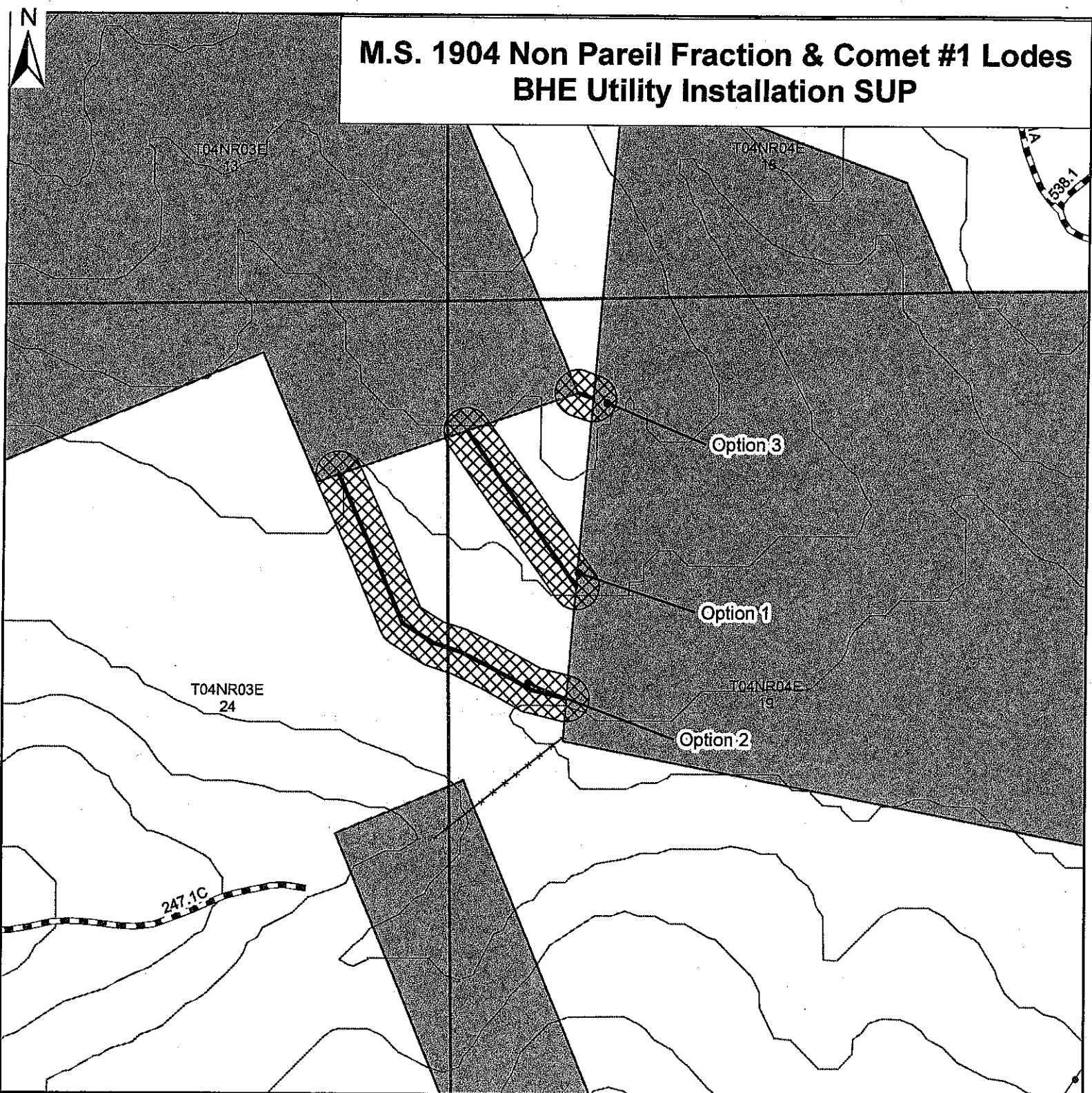
M.S. 1744 Harvey BHE Utility Installation SUP



-  BHE - Overhead Primary
-  Proposed Underground Line
-  Roads
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-  Section
-  Non-FS Lands



M.S. 1904 Non Pareil Fraction & Comet #1 Lodes BHE Utility Installation SUP



- Roads
- BHE - Overhead Primary
- BHE - Underground Primary
- Proposed Underground Line Options
- Permit Area Options
- Forest Boundary
- Section
- Non-FS Lands

