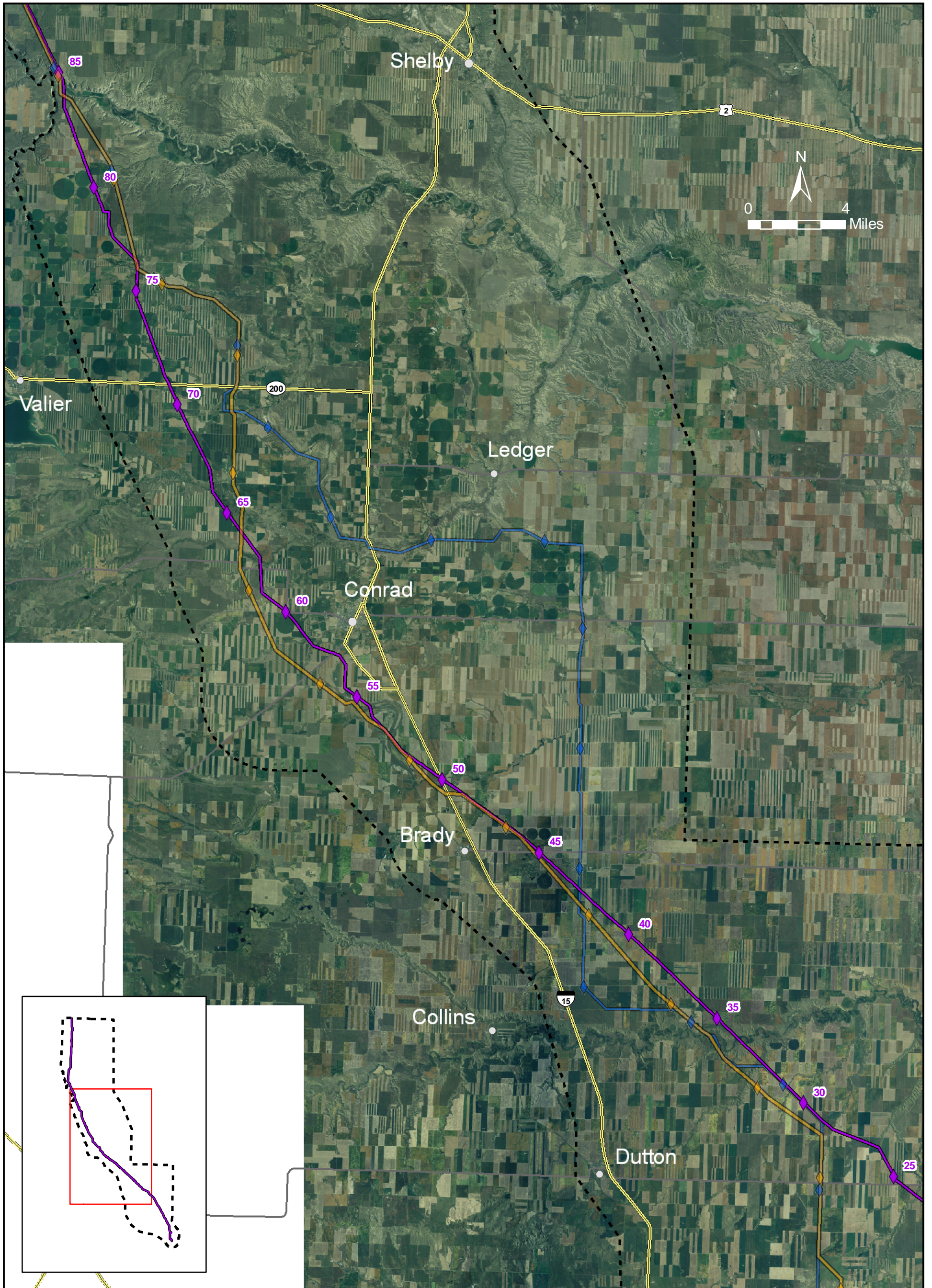


**FIGURE 2.4-2
ALTERNATIVE 3 ALIGNMENT
SOUTH**

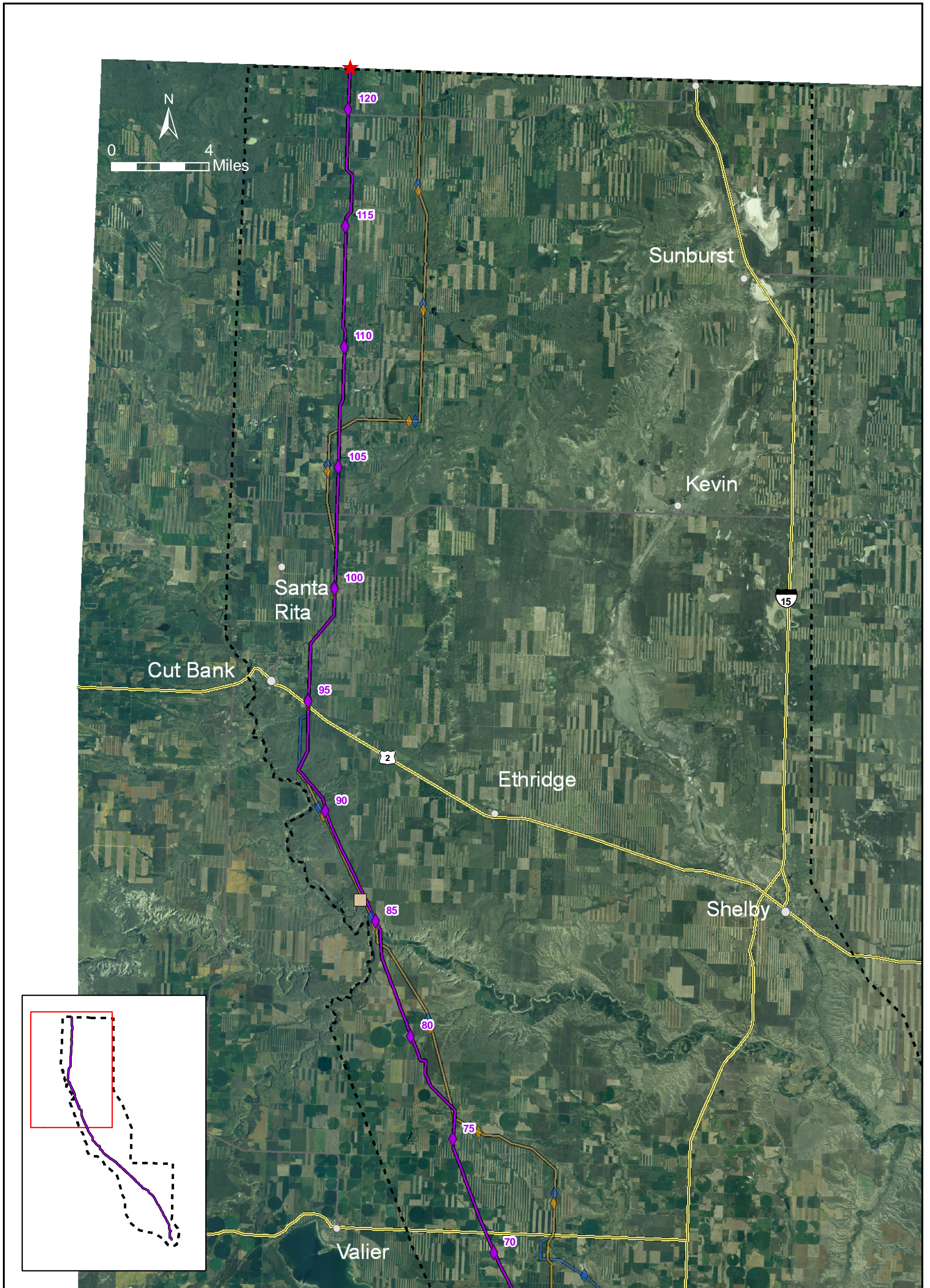
LEGEND

- ◆— ALT 3 - ALIGNMENT
 - ◆ ALT 3 MILE MARKERS
 - ◆— ALT 2 - ALIGNMENT
 - ◆ ALT 2 MILE MARKERS
 - ◆— ALT 4 - ALIGNMENT
 - ◆ ALT 4 MILE MARKERS
 - CITIES AND TOWNS
 - ★ ALIGNMENT END AND EXIT POINTS
 - STUDY AREA BOUNDARY
 - MAJOR HIGHWAYS
 - SECONDARY ROADS
- NOTE:
ALT = ALTERNATIVE



**FIGURE 2.4-3
ALTERNATIVE 3 ALIGNMENT
MIDDLE**

- | | | | | |
|---------------|--|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| LEGEND | | ALT 3 - ALIGNMENT
ALT 3 MILE MARKERS | | STUDY AREA BOUNDARY |
| | | ALT 2 - ALIGNMENT
ALT 2 MILE MARKERS | | MAJOR HIGHWAYS |
| | | ALT 4 - ALIGNMENT
ALT 4 MILE MARKERS | | SECONDARY ROADS |
| | | CITIES AND TOWNS | | |
| | | ALIGNMENT END AND EXIT POINTS | | |
| | | | | NOTE:
ALT = ALTERNATIVE |
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| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |



**FIGURE 2.4-4
ALTERNATIVE 3 ALIGNMENT
NORTH**

- | | | | | |
|---------------|--|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| LEGEND | | ALT 3 - ALIGNMENT
ALT 3 MILE MARKERS | | STUDY AREA BOUNDARY |
| | | ALT 2 - ALIGNMENT
ALT 2 MILE MARKERS | | MAJOR HIGHWAYS |
| | | ALT 4 - ALIGNMENT
ALT 4 MILE MARKERS | | SECONDARY ROADS |
| | | CITIES AND TOWNS | | MARIAS SUBSTATION |
| | | ALIGNMENT END AND EXIT POINTS | | |
| | | | | NOTE:
ALT = ALTERNATIVE |
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Alternative 3 and Alternative 2 would come within about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of each other and parallel each other (but not join) at approximately milepost 32 of Alternative 2 within the Diamond Valley area. Alternative 3 generally would continue paralleling the NWE 115 kV line while Alternative 2 would be located further west from about milepost 32 to approximately milepost 70 north of Conrad.

The Teton River crossing would be approximately 1 mile west of Kerr Bridge (20th lane) in an area east of a mature riparian cottonwood stand. Alternative 3 would cross South Pondera Coulee east of Alternative 2 then generally continue northwest across the tip of the Teton bench while Alternative 2 would head north to its crossing of the Dry Fork of the Marias River. Alternative 3 would cross the Dry Fork of the Marias River west of the Alternative 2 crossing to rejoin Alternative 2 at approximately milepost 76 by Bullhead Creek. Alternative 3 diverges from the NWE 115-kV line about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles south of Bullhead Creek, going north to cross Bullhead Creek at the same location as Alternative 2. Alternative 3 then rejoins the NWE 115-kV line to continue northwest with some minor differences.

In Alternative 3, the crossing of the Marias River would be just to the east of the Alternative 2 crossing. From here to Cut Bank, the alignment for Alternative 3 would either parallel or overlie Alternative 2. Alternative 3 would diverge notably from Alternative 2 north of Santa Rita, at approximately milepost 102. From this location, Alternative 3 would continue in a northerly direction, while Alternative 2 would turn east before heading north. The border crossing for Alternative 3 would be approximately 4 miles west of the border crossing for Alternative 2. **Table 2.3-2** describes additional design characteristics for Alternative 3.

Except as specified in this section, the following aspects of Alternative 3 would be the same as described under Alternative 2: rights of way width, implementation, conductors, markers, substations, access roads, construction, operations, maintenance, and potential environmental protection measures listed in **Table 2.3-4**. Only H-frame structures would be used for Alternative 3.

The agencies would apply environmental specifications to this alternative. DEQ's draft Environmental Specifications (**Appendix F**) identify general environmental protection measures and sensitive areas for site-specific specifications; DOE or BLM might require some additional environmental protection measures.

2.5 Alternative 4 – Agencies' Alternative

Alternative 4 was developed by DEQ in response to public comments and concerns. This alternative is acceptable to the other agencies and will be referred to as the agencies' alternative throughout this document. Alternative 4 was developed to address public concerns regarding line interference with farming activities and close

proximity to residences. It would use portions of Alternative 2 from north of Conrad to the Montana-Alberta border. When developing Alternative 4, the agencies located the alignment to maximize the use of range and pasture land, where available. Where cultivated land would be crossed, the alignment was generally located along north-south and east-west field or strip boundaries, as suggested by public comment. Where the alternative does not run north-south or east-west, it would be mostly located on range and pasture land, where interference with farming would be reduced. Public land would be used when it would be reasonably available, but most land in the study area is privately owned.

The agencies also attempted to maintain a buffer around residences to reduce visual impacts and help alleviate concerns about potential health effects; however, in order to maximize the use of field and strip boundaries, the alternative would be located within ¼ mile of several residences.

Specific line location suggestions by individual landowners were incorporated into Alternative 4 south of Highway 2, south of Highway 44, south of the Teton River in the Diamond Valley area (see Appendix A in the March 2007 document for a description of other potential alignments in the Diamond Valley area), and north of the Great Falls 230-kV switch yard. Alternative 4 would parallel WAPA's 230-kV single pole Great Falls to Conrad line where that line is located mostly on range and pasture land. In response to extensive public comment, this alternative would incorporate a single pole design where cropland and land enrolled in CRP would be crossed.

The agencies identified other possible local realignments to address the specific issues raised during initial scoping. After initial analysis, only five of the local realignments were assembled into this alternative. The initial analysis of the local realignments is in **Appendix A** of the March 2007 document. In response to public comments on the March 2007 document, three local routing options were identified through the Diamond Valley area that could substitute for that portion of Alternative 4 (Section 2.6.1). Although Alternative 4 is analyzed as a whole, the agencies could select some or all of the local realignments or other realignments that have been reviewed for other alternatives but not included in this alternative.

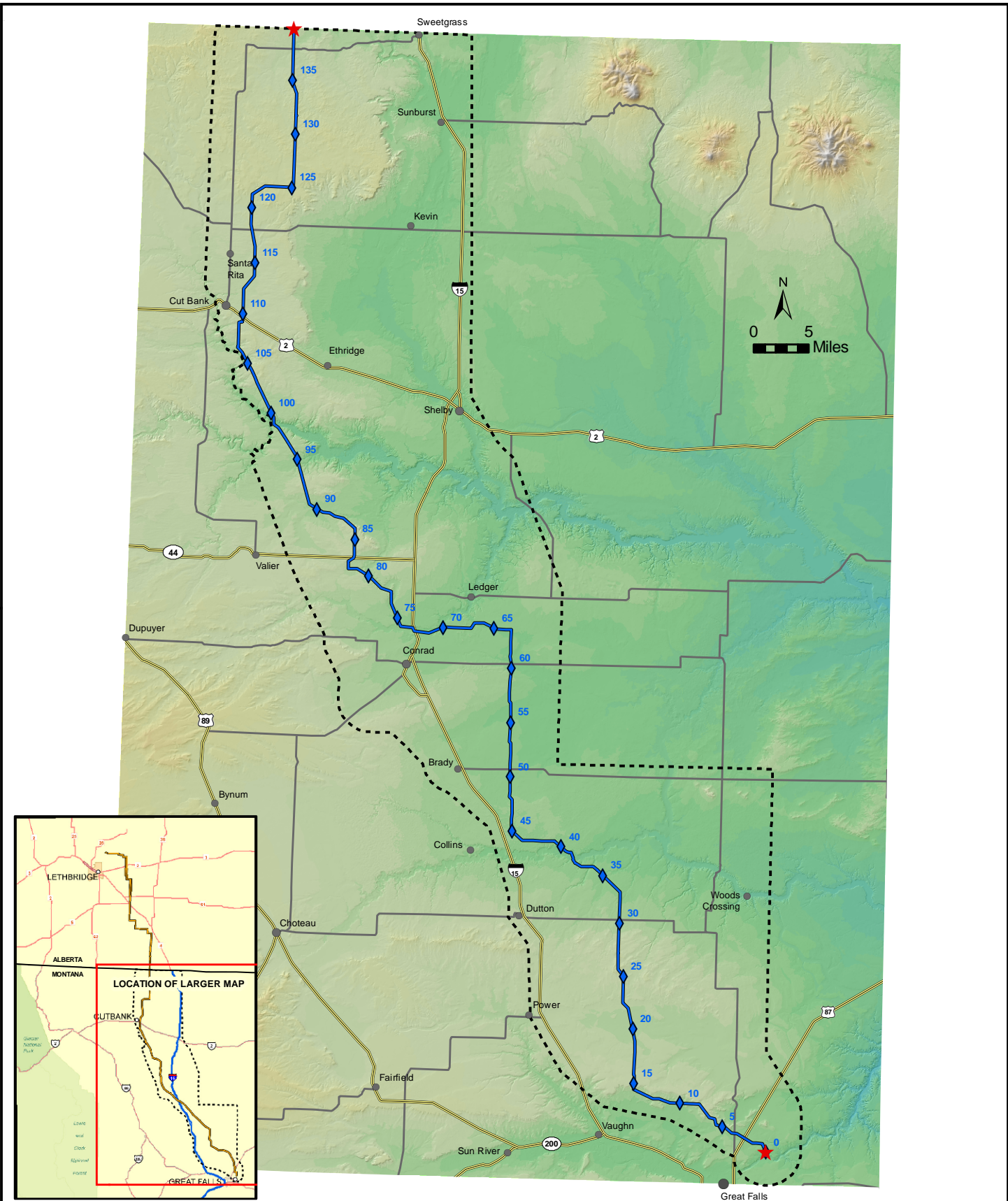
Except as specified in this section, the following aspects of Alternative 4 would be the same as described under Alternative 2: rights of way width, design, implementation, combination of H-frame and monopole structures, conductors, markers, substations, access roads, construction, operations, maintenance, and environmental protection measures listed in **Table 2.3-4**. Alternative 4 would require the use of monopole structures on all cropland and CRP land, not just where cropland and CRP land would be crossed on the diagonal. **Table 2.3-2** describes additional design characteristics for Alternative 4.

Alternative 4 would be 139.6 miles long in Montana and is shown on **Figure 2.5-1**. **Figures 2.5-2, 2.5-3, and 2.5-4** show the alignment in more detail. MATL has indicated that because Alternative 4 is longer than the other alternatives this alternative would be more expensive than alternatives 2 and 3. MATL estimates that Alternative 4 would result in a 12-month delay and a \$7 million increase in direct costs (Tonbridge Power, Inc. 2007).

MATL has stated that if Alternative 4 is selected, the project would be unlikely to be built. MATL has indicated to the agencies that MATL would have difficulties obtaining adequate financing for the project due to additional costs and delays. Comments received from landowners indicate that Alternative 4 would minimize impacts to farmland. Although MATL has indicated a reluctance to implement this alternative, it is possible that MATL could reconsider this position if this alternative were selected by the agencies.

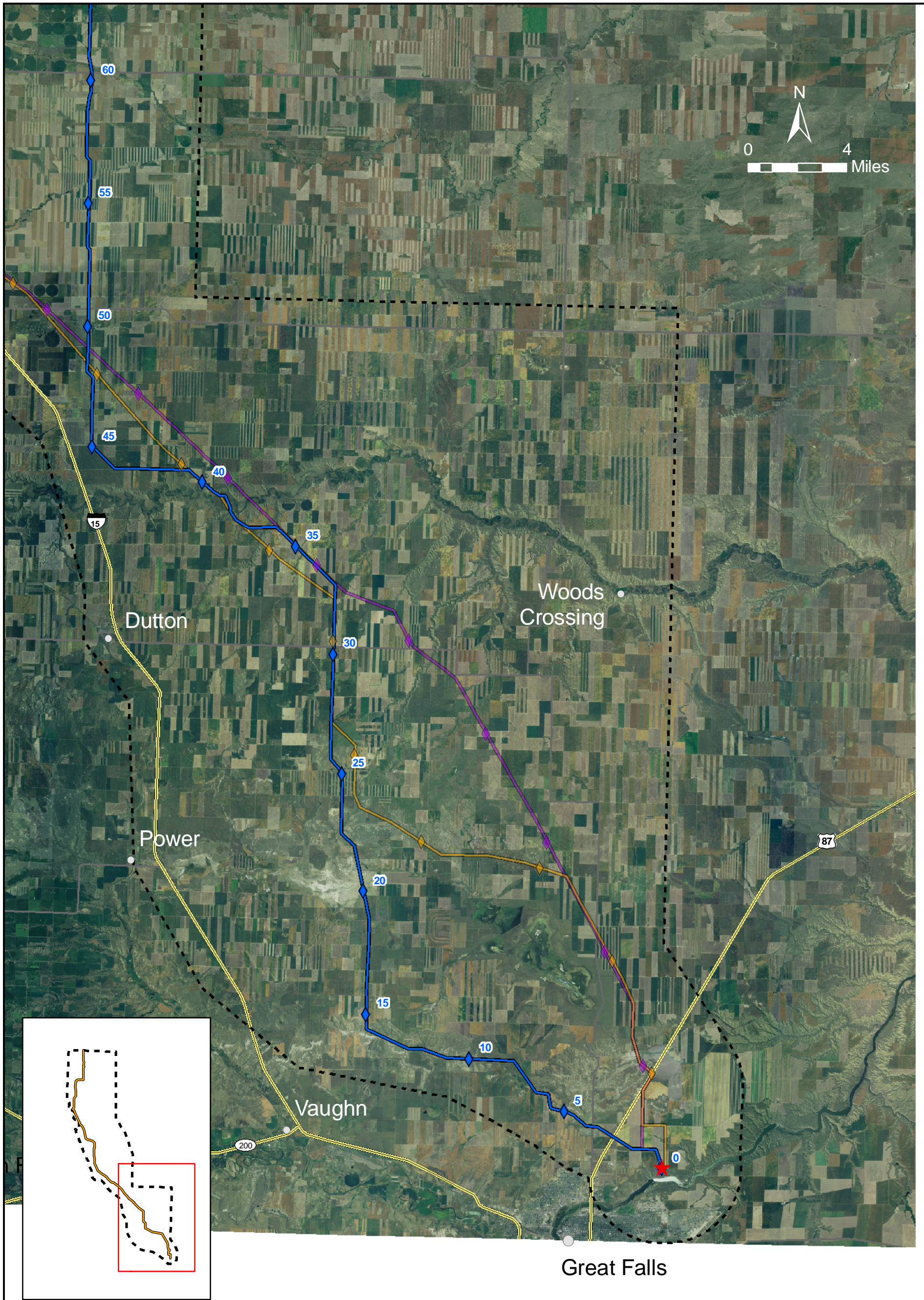
The alignment would diverge from the southern 23 miles of Alternative 2, to avoid diagonal crossing of cultivated land, where possible (**Figure 2.5-2**). Where Alternative 2 would go directly north out of the Great Falls switch yard, Alternative 4 would take a west-northwesterly path out of Great Falls paralleling the WAPA 230-kV Great Falls to Conrad transmission line (on its northside), making use of an existing transportation corridor. This alignment would traverse to the south and west of Benton Lake National Wildlife Refuge and rejoin the Alternative 2 alignment around milepost 27. In the Diamond Valley area, just south of the Teton River, the alignment would run directly north at milepost 32 where Alternative 2 turns northwest. Where the Alternative 4 alignment intersects the NWE 115-kV transmission line, it would parallel the line for approximately 3 miles until it would turn west to join the Alternative 2 alignment at approximately milepost 37 just south of the Teton River. The Alternative 4 alignment would then cross the Teton River just east of the location described in Alternative 2. The alignment would rejoin the Alternative 2 alignment after crossing the Teton River.

After paralleling Alternative 2 for about 2 miles, the Alternative 4 alignment would diverge from the Alternative 2 alignment approximately 8 miles southeast of Brady. After running directly west for approximately 3 miles, Alternative 4 would turn northwest for approximately 1½ miles, then turn directly north for approximately 18 miles, then turn directly west, heading for the Dry Fork of the Marias River. After the alignment crosses the existing WAPA 230-kV transmission line, approximately 2 miles south of Ledger, it would intersect the Dry Fork of the Marias River. The alignment would generally parallel the Dry Fork of the Marias River until it crossed Interstate 15, then head northwest along Big Flat Coulee for approximately 8 miles.



**FIGURE 2.5-1
ALTERNATIVE 4 ALIGNMENT**

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|---------------|--|-------------------------------|--|-----------------|
| LEGEND | | ALT4 - ALIGNMENT | | MAJOR HIGHWAYS |
| | | MILE MARKERS | | SECONDARY ROADS |
| | | CITIES AND TOWNS | | |
| | | ALIGNMENT END AND EXIT POINTS | | |
| | | STUDY AREA BOUNDARY | | |
- NOTE:
ALT = ALTERNATIVE



**FIGURE 2.5-2
ALTERNATIVE 4 ALIGNMENT
SOUTH**

- | | | | | |
|---------------|--|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| LEGEND | | ALT 4 - ALIGNMENT
ALT 4 MILE MARKERS | | STUDY AREA BOUNDARY |
| | | ALT 2 - ALIGNMENT
ALT 2 MILE MARKERS | | MAJOR HIGHWAYS |
| | | ALT 3 - ALIGNMENT
ALT 3 MILE MARKERS | | SECONDARY ROADS |
| | | CITIES AND TOWNS | | |
| | | ALIGNMENT END AND EXIT POINTS | | |
| | | | | NOTE:
ALT = ALTERNATIVE |