



BONNER COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT APPLICATION

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:

FILE # <p style="text-align: center;">CUP0001-26</p>	RECEIVED: <p style="text-align: center;">February 12, 2026</p>
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PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Describe the proposed use: Northern Lights, Inc (NLI) will be building a new substation (Deed #133317) near the existing substation (Deed #86972). This will replace the substation that is currently in use, thereby improving capacity and reliability in the area. The substation will consist of a 25 MVA transformer and five (5) feeder stations along with associated equipment for each feeder. Each piece of equipment will be on cement pads ensuring stability and compliance with safety standards. The transformer pads will include oil containment systems to mitigate environmental risk associated with oil leaks or spills. A dedicated control house will be built to provide centralized monitoring and control of all substation equipment. This infrastructure upgrade reflects Northern Lights, Inc's commitment to maintaining a robust, safe, and efficient power distribution system

The use is conditionally provided for at Bonner County Revised Code, Section(s) **12-335, Table 3-5**

APPLICANT INFORMATION:

Landowner's name: Northern Lights, Inc.

Mailing address: [REDACTED]

City: Sagle	State: ID	Zip code: 83860
Telephone: [REDACTED]	Fax:	

E-mail: [REDACTED]

REPRESENTATIVE'S INFORMATION:

Representative's name: Kristin Burge

Company name: Northern Lights, Inc.

Mailing address: [REDACTED]

City: Sagle	State: ID	Zip code: 83860
Telephone: [REDACTED]	Fax:	

E-mail: [REDACTED]

ADDITIONAL APPLICANT/REPRESENTATIVE INFORMATION:

Name/Relationship to project:

Company name:

Mailing address:

City:	State:	Zip code:
Telephone:	Fax:	
E-mail:		

PARCEL INFORMATION:

Section #: 31	Township: 60 N	Range: 4 W	Parcel acreage: 2.8
Parcel # (s): RP60N04W316145A			
Legal description: 31-60N-4W TAX 7 & 29 TCO-09-02-130-5 TCO-09-02-130-6			
Current zoning: Rural Service Center		Current use: Rural Service Center	
What zoning districts border the project site?			
North: Rural Service Center		East: Rural Service Center	
South: Rural/Rural Service Center		West: Rural/Rural Service Center	
Comprehensive plan designation: Rural Service Center			
Uses of the surrounding land(describe lot sizes, structures, uses):			
North: West Priest Lake Fire District (.38 Acres) and Amistad LLC (1.45 Acres)			
South: United States Government (24.28 Acres) and Rural Service Center (5.99 Acres)			
East: Highway, across the highway is Rural Service Center			
West: United States Government (24.28 Acres)			
Nearest city: Priest River, ID		Distance to the nearest city: 27.1 miles	
Detailed directions to site: From Priest River, ID, travel 27.1 Miles north on Highway 57. The current and new substation is located on the left heading north right before the West Priest Lake Fire District building			

ADDITIONAL PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Please describe in detail all applicable uses/plans for subject property, including:
1) Size of buildings: A new control building measuring 19 feet 6 inches by 13 feet is planned for construction (2026) in the northeast corner of Deed lot #133317.
2) Type of unit: New Control Enclosure for substation control equipment will be a prefabricated metal building on a concrete pad equipped with protection relays, SCADA systems, communications panels, and a battery backup system. Key safety components such as photoelectric smoke detectors will be implemented with a battery backup system to ensure operation during power outages.
3) # of Units: There will be one new control house for the substation.
4) Any machinery to be located on the site: There will be a transformer, regulators, switch gear, bus bars, and reclosers all placed on cement pads. Currently there is an excavator, pull trailer, backhoe, dump trailer, line truck, meter truck, and bucket truck.
5) Any storage area, etc.: The yard adjacent to the existing carport contains pole storage racks, while the service transformers and line equipment are currently stored along the side of the existing shop.
6) Phasing plans, expected start-up and completion dates: Dirt work expected to start late spring/early summer 2026, with construction of the substation following and complete by fall 2026.
7) # of people on site (employees, visitors, etc.): The new substation will experience occasional foot traffic, primarily for routine maintenance or on a as-needed basis. Attached to the substation is the Lamb Creek lineman shop which is staffed by two full-time employees, with additional personnel present during outages or scheduled maintenance events in the area.

8) Hours of operation: The new substation will be operational 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, consistent with the operational schedule of the current substation. There will be no change to the yard staffing schedule: crew members will continue to be present daily on scheduled workdays. Operating hours will fluctuate during outages.

9) Traffic to be generated (vehicles per day or week): No additional vehicle traffic will be generated. Current vehicle traffic to the site consists of two trucks, one for each lineman manned at the substation yard. During outages or emergency situations, additional vehicles may be present on a temporary basis.

10) Associated functions (receptions, outdoor activities, additional processes, etc.): NA

11) Parking, loading areas: The new substation yard will feature entrances for maintenance personnel on the southeast, northwest, and east sides, within the property. While the current entrances from highway 57 will remain in place. The addition of new access points will improve overall accessibility and accommodate the updated layout of the substation. See attached site survey.

12) Advertising sign, size and location: NA

13) Lighting plans: There will be 6 light poles located, one located at the north end, one at the south end, two on the east side, and two on the west side.

14) Solid waste management plan: The crew stationed at the Lamb Creek facility notifies Northern Lights Inc. dispatch that the Waste Management supplied dumpster is full and the Waste Management crew will come dispose of the trash.

15) Complete detail of scope/process: NLI will contract with a contractor to perform grade and drainage work, including water retention area. A specialized contractor will be hired to construct the substation. NLI crews will assist with ancillary construction activities and testing.

16) If required, are landscaping plans attached?

Yes

No

NARRATIVE STATEMENT (ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS, IF NECESSARY):

How will the conditional use be designed to avoid creating hazards or dangers to persons on or adjacent to the property? The site will be secured with a barbed wire fence, including all required warning placards posted along the fence and at locked gates to ensure compliance and safety standards. An environmental containment system will be installed beneath the transformer to capture any potential leaks, protecting surrounding soil and groundwater. Excavation shall comply with OSHA 29 CFR 1926 SUBPART P. Structural fill shall be non-plastic soils classified as GW, GP, GP-GM, SP or SP-SM according to the USCS. Utility-Trench backfill shall be non-Plastic Soils having a 2" maximum particle size with less than 15% passing the NO. 200 sieve. Separation Fabric shall be MIRAFI 140N or approved equal. Riprap shall meet Idaho standards for public works construction 801 drain rock, 3" and ITD standard specifications for highway construction.

Explain the effects of elements such as noise, light glare, odor, fumes and vibrations on adjoining property: The yard lighting will be carefully designed to direct light downward, minimizing ambient light spillage onto the adjoining property to the south. Additionally, the transformer will operate with minimal buzzing, even when under heavy load, ensuring a quiet environment. There will be no odor, fumes, or vibrations emitted from the setup helping contribute to a clean and peaceful atmosphere.

How is the proposed use compatible with the adjoining land uses: To the South is USG land and the rest is Rural Service Center land. Upgrading this substation will allow us to move away from the southern end, while it is Rural Service Center land, does have house on it. It will also provide a needed capacity upgrade to our electrical system in the Priest Lake region.

ACCESS INFORMATION:

Please check the appropriate boxes:

Private Easement Existing Proposed
Describe travel surface (e.g., gravel, dirt, paved, etc.), travel way width, road grade and easement width. Include recorded instrument number for existing easements & name, if existing:

Public Road Existing Proposed
Describe travel surface (e.g., gravel, dirt, paved, etc.), travel way width, road grade right-of-way width and name, if existing: An existing encroachment to the current NLI yard off of Highway 57, will be used to access the new substation facility. See attached survey drawings.

Combination of Public Road/Private Easement Existing Proposed
Describe travel surface (e.g., gravel, dirt, paved, etc.), travel way width, road grade and right-of-way/easement width and road name, if existing:

SITE INFORMATION:

Please provide a detailed description of the following land features:

Topography (lay of the land), including estimated maximum slope, rock outcroppings, benches, etc: The site has been cleared of trees, and all debris will be removed once the dirt work begins. A permanent cut-and-fill embankment will be created with a maximum slope of 2:1, extending down to the east edge of the property. The embankment will be carefully shaped to maintain the proper slope and prevent erosion, with final grading aligned to the property boundaries.

Water courses (lakes, streams, rivers & other bodies of water): NA

Is site within a flood plain? Yes No Firm Panel #: Map designation:

Springs & wells: There is a well located on the southwest side of Deed #86972, next to the current fence.

Existing structures (size & use): There is currently a 62' by 40' warehouse and a 46' by 33' carport located on the north side of Deed #86972. There is also a yard shack on the south end located near the current substation. The warehouse is used as a shop for the lineman to store and load up their equipment into the trucks. It is also used as office space. The yard shack, which is 10' by 8', is used for metering equipment.

Land cover (timber, pastures, etc): The current land cover for Deed #86972 is gravel yard. The new land cover will also be a gravel yard. Switchyard rock surfacing shall be AASHTO M43 crushed #57 stone placed in a 4" uniform lift. It will have an aggregate base course that will be crushed 3/4" "type B" aggregate for untreated base. See the grounding plan and notes attachment.

Are wetlands present on site? Yes No Source of information: *USFWS National*

Other pertinent information (attach additional pages if needed): *Wetlands Inventory*

SERVICES:

Sewage disposal will be provided by:

Existing Community System - List name of sewer district or provider and type of system: Outlet Bay Water & Sewer district

Proposed Community System - List type & proposed ownership: NA

Individual system - List type: There is currently a septic tank on the south facing side of the current shop, it attaches to the main pipe across highway 57.

Explain the type of sewage system, capacity, maintenance plan, location of facilities, if applicable and other details:

Water will be supplied by:

Existing public or community system - List name of provider:

<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Proposed Community System – List type & proposed ownership:</u>
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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>Individual well</u> There is a well located on the southwest side of Deed #86972, next to the current fence. This will not go away with new substation install.
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Please explain the water source, capacity, system maintenance plan, storage and delivery system and other details:

Distance (in miles) to the nearest:

Public/Community Sewer System: 1.1	Solid Waste Collection Facility: 6.2
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Public/Community Water System: 1.1	Fire Station: 0.0
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Elementary School: 0.9	Secondary Schools: 26.3
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County Road: 0.0	County Road Name: Highway 57
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Which fire district will serve the project site? West Priest Lake Fire District

Which power company will serve the project site? Northern Lights Inc.

How is the use/plan in not in conflict with the policies of the Comprehensive Plan?

Property Rights: The current property falls under Rural Service Center. Aside from the property to the west, which is USG, all surrounding property is Rural Service Center. Northern Lights, Inc. does not plan on implementing any new equipment that would not align with the current workload and/or zoning ordinances. NLI is relocating the substation away from both the road and the nearby residence in order to improve safety and mitigate potential risks. This move will help reduce the likelihood of foreign object debris (FOD) incidents and address safety concerns associated with the substation's current location. By moving to a safer area, NLI aims to enhance overall security for both the surrounding community and infrastructure itself.

Population: The proposed project will provide a significant capacity upgrade for the Priest Lake area, enhancing the electrical power infrastructure to support future growth and development. By relocating the substation away from the road and nearby residence, the project will not only improve public safety but also reduce the exposure of high voltage equipment to the public. By strategically relocating the substation, this will minimize potential hazards, such as electrical accidents and damage from road incidents, all while ensuring a more reliable and safer power supply for the community.

School facilities & Transportation: By upgrading to a new substation, NLI will ensure that the electrical capacity required to serve the Priest Lake community is reliably met. This improvement will significantly reduce the likelihood of brownouts caused by substation overloading, thereby enhancing the stability of the power supply. As a result, essential services, such as schools in Priest Lake, will benefit from more consistent and dependable electricity, reinforcing NLI's commitment to supporting the community's infrastructure and quality of life.

Economic Development: As previously mentioned, the new substation is designed to accommodate significant future growth. This increased capacity will support more cost-effective development throughout the greater Priest Lake area. Additionally, the substation enhances regional reliability by enabling us to back feed and supply power to neighboring communities in the event their primary substations experience outages.

Land Use: The substation yard will be constructed in a way that will help mitigate any environmental issue that could arise from transformer malfunctions and/or equipment that is stored in the yard. There is currently a section located to the northeast, along the highway, that is landscaped. Any of the yard along the highway that is not being redesigned for the new substation will continue to be maintained.

Natural Resources: This site does not currently have any natural resources on it and will not be in the future. It will have a retention pond on the east side to catch any potential contaminants from entering the ground water table. We are dedicated to protecting our natural resources and protecting North Idaho.

Hazardous Areas: All existing timber and combustible materials will be removed from the substation yard to eliminate potential wildland fire hazards. The current substation, located adjacent to the highway, poses a safety risk as a vehicle could potentially veer off the road and collide with the substation to mitigate the risk, the substation will be relocated to the rear of the yard, away from the highway. The entire substation yard will be enclosed by a seven-foot-high chain link fence topped with an additional foot of barbed wire for added security. All access gates will be secured with locks that can only be opened by authorized personnel.

Public Services: Northern Lights, Inc. inherently provides a public service through our operations. The implementation of the proposed substation represents a critical investment in upgrading outdated and undersized infrastructure. This enhancement will significantly improve the resilience and reliability of electric service for our members, ensuring their needs are met safely and consistently into the future.

Transportation: NA

Recreation: There are no public trails, waterways, or park access on or near NLI property.

Special Areas or Sites: There are no special areas or sites located on or near NLI property.

Housing: Upgrading the proposed substation would provide the needed load increase as more and more users are tapping into the power system. It would provide a backup to the adjoining distribution networks to ensure that when an adjacent substation is taken offline, it can pickup the load and maintain power to the communities within the Priest Lake area. Ensuring power outages are kept to a minimum.

Community Design: NA, substation.

Agriculture: NA.

Implementation: (Not required to complete this element)

I hereby certify that all the information, statements, attachments and exhibits submitted herewith are true to the best of my knowledge. I further grant permission to Bonner County employees and representatives, elected or appointed officials to enter upon the subject land to make examinations, post the property or review the premises relative to the processing of this application.

Landowner's signature:  Date: 2/12/2026

Landowner's signature: _____ Date: _____