Economic coal deposits are those that meet the minimum criteria established by coal companies operating surface mines in North Dakota. These economic criteria include a minimum cumulative coal thickness of ten feet typically occurring in less than two beds, a minimum individual bed thickness of at least 2.5 feet, a ratio of overburden to coal thickness of not more than 10:1, a minimum of 25 feet of overburden, and a maximum depth to coal of approximately 150 feet.

Geologic Symbols

- Extent of Local Lignite Reserves
- Data Points
  - Coal Exploration (MCES) or drill holes, Sub-surface Mineral drill holes, 160 ac. farm drill holes, and 500 ft. drill holes.
- Drill Hole Numbers
- Thickness (in feet) of Mineable Lignite

Coal thicknesses were determined by interpretation of electric log from individual drill holes. Gamma and density logs were typically available for coal exploration holes but, oil wells were often limited to a gamma log run through surface casing.

Other Features

- State Highway
- Unpaved Road