

*Alex Sholes*

**MISSOURI-MADISON RIVER FUND RECREATION PROJECT  
GRANT APPLICATION FORM – FY2022**

Project Name: GSSP- Rainbow Trailhead Parking Area Spring Mitigation

Reservoir or River Segment: Rainbow Reservoir County(ies) Cascade

Site Name (or project location): Rainbow Trailhead

Applicant Name: Alex Sholes

Position and Agency: Park Manager Giant Springs and Ackley Lake State Park

Telephone: 406-788-6873

Email: alex.sholes@mt.gov

Project Sponsor Name: Montana State Parks

Position and Agency: Park Manager, Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks

Telephone: 406-788-6873

Email: alex.sholes@mt.gov

**Project Cost Breakdown and Financial Request:**

Complete the financial section below by providing total project cost (to the nearest dollar), contributions by applicant and cooperators, request for NorthWestern Energy match of agency funds (see detailed instruction), and River Fund Grant request. Document in-kind contributions by public agencies for determination of NorthWestern Energy match request. A description of funding sources and in-kind contributions should be included in the Project Description.

Total project cost: \$43,036.00

Applicant Contributions – cash \$8,936.00

Applicant Contributions – value of in-kind: 0

Other Contributions – Please list by source:

River's Edge Trail Foundation \$4,425.00

\$

\$

\$

Percentage of  
Total Project Cost:

Total Applicant and Other Contributions: \$13,361.00 31%

NorthWestern Energy Match Request: \$8,936.00 21%

River Fund Grant Request: \$20,739.00 48%

Proposed Project Implementation Period: Summer/Fall 2022

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1. Has this project been previously submitted for funding consideration by the River Fund Board, either as a separate project or part of another project?     Yes     No

*If yes, please identify which years the application was submitted and, if the project was previously funded, list the amount funded by year.*

2. Is the proposed project at one of the Project 2188 license sites identified in the Missouri-Madison MOU and listed on page A2-2 of the Comprehensive Recreation Plan?     Yes     No

3. **Project Description:** Provide a description of the proposed project. Be sure to include specific project elements that are planned, and any associated cost detail.

- ▶ Giant Springs is the most visited State Park in Montana, receiving between 300,000 and 400,000 visitors annually. The Park's lands vary from well-manicured areas to open prairie. The park is also home to roughly half of the River's Edge Trail system, which consists of 60 miles of trail in and around Great Falls.

This project will focus on the Rainbow Trailhead, which is significant for both Giant Springs State Park and the River's Edge Trail system. Rainbow Trailhead provides access to an 8 mile section of dirt single track trail as well as a NorthWestern Energy service road, that is popular for its ease of use. Rainbow Trailhead is only a 7-mile drive from downtown Great Falls making it easy to access. Each year during the months of April, May and June the parking area becomes inundated with water from seasonal springs. The goal of this project is to re-direct the water, so the parking area stays dry, improving user accessibility.

The attached conceptual plan provides more detail on the overall design but the strategy to capture the water consists of three tactics. First, a swale would be built up on the western and southwestern sides of the parking area to prevent surface water from running into the lot. The second step will consist of removing approximately 4" of the existing material from the middle of the parking area, laying down geotextile fabric, gravel, a mix of 4"-8" ADS slotted drain pipe, and coving the area with the fabric and a mix of the old material and new gravel. The pipes will carry the water to the northeast where the current drainage area will be improved, allowing for better water flow and keeping the pedestrian access to the trail/service road dry. In the final step, an additional 12" corrugated HDPE pipe will be installed at the entrance to trailhead to allow water in the road ditch to the southwest to pass under the entrance. See the attached engineer's estimates for more detail but mobilization, materials and excavation are estimated at \$32,315.50. A 10% contingency, \$1,500 in advertising and printing costs and a \$5,000 in kind cost for project oversight, brings the construction total to \$37,100.

Funding Sources: The applicant cash contributions include \$3,000 that will be paid toward the contractor costs for this work and an estimated \$5,936 in time from our Design & Construction (D&C) staff. Our D&C staff estimate their time costs based on the estimated construction cost of this project (\$37,100) at 13% for design work and 3% for contract administration.

4. **Cultural Resource Management:** Cultural Resource Management (CRM) requirements for any activity related to this Project must be completed and documented to NorthWestern Energy as a condition of awarded River Fund grant funds or NorthWestern Energy matching funds. Grant and matching funds may not be used for any land-disturbing activity, or the modification, renovation, or removal of any buildings or structures until the CRM consultation process has been completed. Agency applicants must

submit a copy of the proposed project to a designated Cultural Resource Specialist for their agency. Private parties or non-governmental organizations are encouraged to submit a copy of their proposed project to a CRM consultant they may have employed. Private parties and non-governmental organizations may also contact the NorthWestern Energy representative for further information or assistance. Applications submitted without this section completed will be held without any action until the information has been submitted.

Summarize how you will complete requirements for Cultural Resource Management.

- ▶ Montana State Parks Heritage Resources Manager will review the project and the site. Once the project has been reviewed, the Heritage Resources Manager will work with the State Historic Preservation Office for approval.

5. **Scoring Criteria.** Respond to the following Scoring Criteria in no more than two (2) additional written pages. Put answers in the cell after ▶.

5.1 Project is for operation and maintenance of an existing recreation site or an existing Project 2188 license site. Describe how the project would support O&M needs at an existing recreation site that are over and above day-to-day site maintenance.

- ▶ The drainage problems that affect the parking lot at Rainbow Trailhead are above and beyond the day-to-day site maintenance that our staff can perform. An experienced contractor with the appropriate equipment and tools will need to be hired to ensure that work is done correctly. Additionally, the cost of this project is above the level that the State can fund out of existing budgets.

5.2 Project involves collaboration with other agencies or organizations. Identify project partners other than NorthWestern Energy or River Fund, if any, and describe their participation. Document all funding sources and all in-kind support and services to a project, because all are sources of partnerships and in-kind contributions from public agencies qualify for calculation of NorthWestern Energy matching funds. If there are no project partners, explain why.

- ▶ The Rainbow Trailhead Parking Area Spring Mitigation project involves collaboration with multiple organizations including Montana State Parks, NorthWestern Energy, and Rivers Edge Trail Foundation. Support was shown for this project from the Great Falls Bike Club and Race MT. No financial contributions to the project were made from these organizations. Montana State Parks will be contributing \$5,000 of in-kind services to the project in terms of contract administration from the Design and Construction Bureau.

5.3 Project provides a benefit to public recreation in the Project Area and addresses specific issues and goals of the Missouri-Madison Comprehensive Recreation Plan (CRP). Identify how the project provides a benefit to public recreation. Describe how specific issues and goals in Chapter 2-1 of the CRP would be supported.

- ▶ *Goal: To provide safe and well-managed recreation sites and dispersed use areas that provide enjoyable user experiences across a spectrum of opportunities and seasons.*  
Rainbow Trailhead is not always a safe and well-maintained recreation site. As mentioned before, the parking area is inundated with water from April through June. The site is still usable, but the experience is greatly reduced as visitors must pick their way through mud and standing water to leave and again enter the parking area. Some of the holes can become deep and pose a hazard. After the surface water dries up, the parking lot is left with potholes and ruts, these also detract from the visitor experience. Developing a drainage structure and removing the water from the area will

increase visitor satisfaction, especially because the sites busiest months are when the area is typically flooded.

*Goal: Continue to improve and expand recreation opportunities that offer universal accessibility*

Rainbow Trailhead was not designed as an accessible trailhead. The dirt single track trails it provides access to, are not ADA compliant. Individuals with mobility challenges do utilize this trailhead to access the adjacent service road, where the grade is such that wheelchairs and adaptive bikes can be used. The water filled and pothole riddled trailhead parking lot makes accessing the service road that much more difficult, especially for those mobility challenges.

5.4 *Project responds to a clearly identified need.* Describe and document the need for this project and how the project would address that need. Cite specific sources, as possible, to establish need and support the project. Discuss consequences if the funding request is unsuccessful. For a new construction or acquisition project, identify how post-project, long-term costs (such as site maintenance and management) will be provided.

- ▶ Rainbow Trailhead stands as the closest access point from Great Falls for the River's Edge Trail system's single-track North Shore trails. Use numbers, as demonstrated by the Missouri-Madison 2020 Recreation Visitor Use Counts, show that use of the Rainbow Trailhead has increased significantly. In 2016 the site was used by just 3,500 individuals, in comparison to the 11,000 individuals that used the site in 2020, the site has seen a 214% increase. Furthermore, trail use as a whole in the Great Falls area has seen a 10% increase between 2019 and 2020. The data shows that Rainbow Trailhead is an important site for trail users and Giant Springs State Park. Peak use for this site often occurs during the spring months (April, May and June), before the weather gets too hot and limits trail use during the heat of the day. During these spring months, the parking area becomes inundated with water and appears to be more of a marsh than a parking lot. The site is still usable, and is frequented by trail users, but the water greatly detracts from enjoyment as visitors must navigate the water and mud to enter and leave the parking area. The flooding results in potholes that users must contend with once the area dries out again. If the project is not funded, things will remain status quo and people will continue to use the site, with decreased levels of satisfaction. An additional side effect of not funding the project is the annual cost of repairing the potholes. Every year, 2 maintenance employees spend 1-2 days reworking the parking area with a skid steer, spreading 10-15 cubic yards of road mix, costing roughly \$2,000. The money spent repairing potholes could be better spent on new projects to enhance and maintain the larger trail system managed by Giant Springs State Park.

5.5 *Project design options have been considered, estimated, and a preferred design selected.* Well-designed projects reduce occurrences of budgetary overages, design changes, and additional complications. Discuss the current design phase for this project and include cost estimates.

- ▶ Engineers in the Fish, Wildlife and Park's Design and Construction Bureau began developing a design for the project in February of 2021. Since that time, the engineers have worked with park staff to refine the design to encapsulate and resolve all the issues. The finalized design was shared with NorthWestern Energy, since the project could impact access to the service road, and their engineers gave the design their approval.

5.6 *Project supports or protects other resources and is consistent with or supports resource plans in the Project Area.* In addition to project-related benefits under #3 above, describe how this project will protect resource values (such as public access, water quality, fisheries, wildlife, habitats, and cultural resources) and support other resource plans, including Project 2188 License plans and land use and land management plans in place in the Corridor.

- ▶ This project will primarily benefit recreational users as they access the North Shore Trails from the Rainbow Trailhead, but it will have limited benefits to other resource values. The project does, however, align with multiple plans.  
The proposed project is in keeping with the Giant Springs State Park Management Plan which establishes the goal of utilizing roads and parking areas as a tool to maintain adequate site control, while meeting park and community access needs.  
The project also supports the Montana Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan through 1) promoting outdoor recreation opportunities for all Montanans and 2) enhancing public access to outdoor recreation resources and facilities. These goals will be supported through this project by providing a well-maintained recreation site that is more accessible for all users.

6. Insert map(s) showing the location of the proposed project, drawings and design work related to the project, and a reasonable number of photos (as available) here.

**Giant Springs State Park Rainbow Trailhead Spring Mitigation**

Prepared by Montana FWP

DATE: 02-09-2021

BASE BID				Engineers est.	
ITEM	Bid Item	Unit	Quantity	Unit Price	Bid Price
1	Mobilization	LS	1	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,000.00
2	F&I 3/4" Crushed Base Course (4" Depth)	CY	76	\$ 60.00	\$ 4,560.00
3	Salvage crushed base course (4" Depth)	CY	76	\$ 45.00	\$ 3,420.00
4	Non-Woven Geotextile	SY	928	\$ 4.50	\$ 4,176.00
5	12" HDPE Corrugated Pipe	LF	45	\$ 40.00	\$ 1,800.00
6	4" HDPE Perf. Drain Pipe	LF	113	\$ 7.50	\$ 847.50
7	8" HDPE Perf. Drain Pipe	LF	46	\$ 9.50	\$ 437.00
8	Unclassified Excavation	CY	83	\$ 25.00	\$ 2,075.00
9	Granular Bedding Material	CY	36	\$ 150.00	\$ 5,400.00
10	3" - 6" Washed Rock	CY	24	\$ 150.00	\$ 3,600.00
	Total				\$ 32,315.50
	10% Contingency				\$ 3,231.55
	Advertising + Printing Costs				\$ 1,500.00
	Project Total Anticipated Budget				\$ 37,047.05

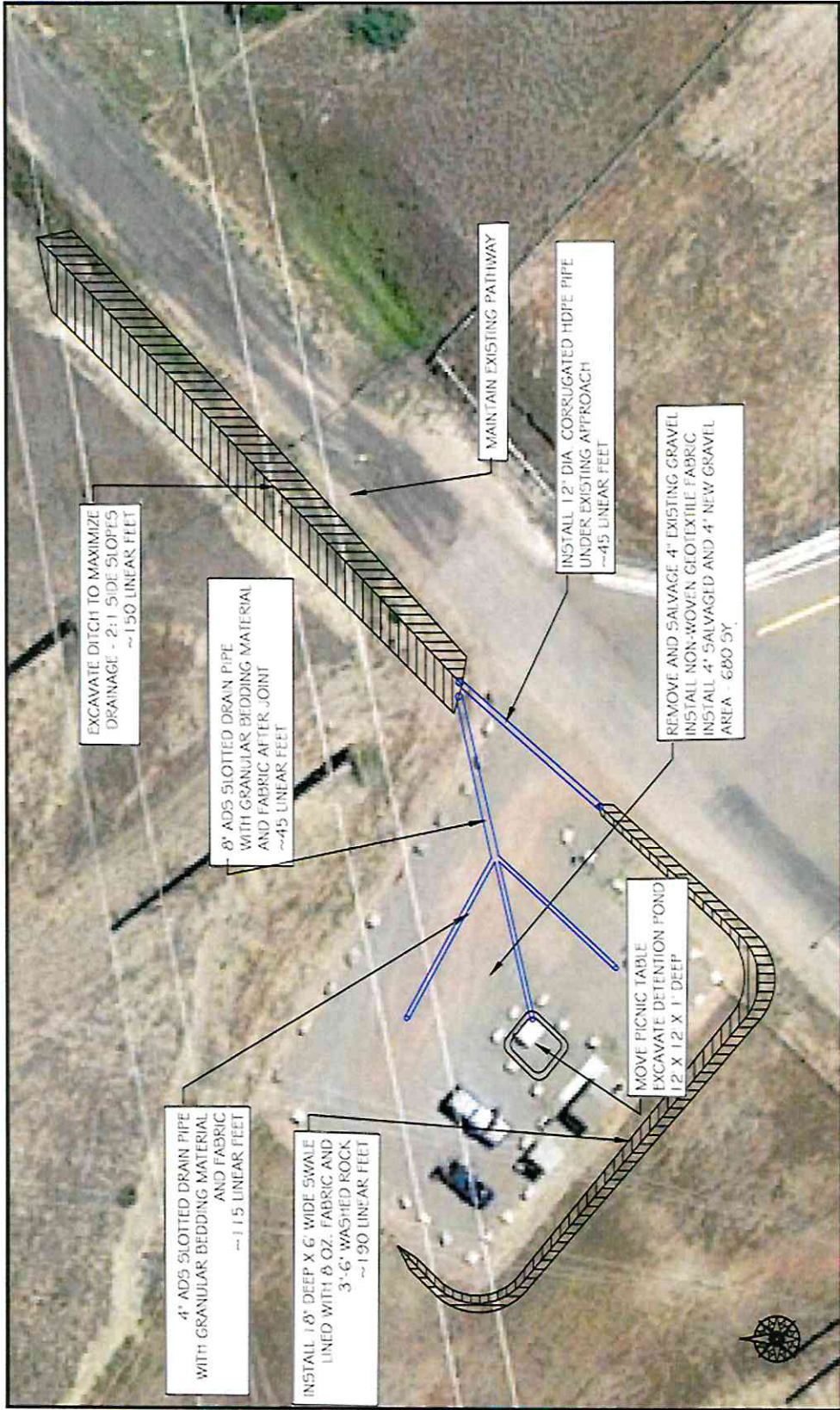


Rainbow Trailhead Project Area



Map Produced: 9/12/2021  
Giant Springs State Park

Background Imagery from ESRI



1 of 1  
EHS

**SITE PLAN - CONCEPT PLAN**  
GIANT SPRINGS STATE PARK RAINBOW TRAILHEAD SPRING MITIGATION

<b>REVISION</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>APPROVED</b>	<b>DATE</b>
<b>REVISION</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>APPROVED</b>	<b>DATE</b>

**MONTANA FISH & WILDLIFE & PARKS**





Rainbow Trailhead



Potholes in Rainbow Trailhead



Drainage are that will be improved to the northeast

7. Permitting and Planning Acknowledgement:

By submitting this application, and with an award of grant funds, applicant agrees that all permitting and planning requirements, such as NEPA and MEPA and cultural resource compliance, will be completed *prior to expenditure of awarded funds*. Furthermore, all design, layout, and contractual requirements will be completed in a timely manner.

Please refer to information and logos provided for acknowledgements and signage related to River Fund grants and NorthWestern Energy matching funds, which can be requested from Kim Bergstrom.