



Cost-Share Proposal Form for NorthWestern Energy (NWE) Project 2188 TAC Funds

Project 2188 (Madison-Missouri River) License Protection, Mitigation and Enhancement (PM&E) projects are required to offset impacts to river resources from the continued operation of one or more of NWE's nine hydro developments (Hebgen, Madison, Hauser, Holter, Black Eagle, Rainbow, Cochrane, Ryan and Morony Dams). PM&E projects need to be prioritized toward in-river or on-the-ground measures that directly benefit fisheries and/or wildlife populations and their habitats:

Priority 1: 2188 License projects which meet License Article requirements and PM&E for fisheries or wildlife populations or their habitats within the main stem Madison River (Hebgen Reservoir to Three Forks) or Missouri River (Hauser Reservoir to Fort Peck Reservoir)

Priority 2: 2188 License projects which meet License Article requirements and PM&E for fisheries or wildlife populations or their habitats in primary tributaries or on adjacent lands and, in doing so, provide PM&E for Madison River (Hebgen Reservoir to Three Forks) or Missouri River (Hauser Reservoir to Fort Peck Reservoir) resources.

Priority 3: 2188 License PM&E projects which meet License Article requirements by providing scientific or other tangible PM&E benefits to Madison-Missouri River fisheries or wildlife populations or their habitats. These projects must be located in the greater Missouri River drainage upstream from Fort Peck Reservoir, but not necessarily located on the main stem Madison River or Missouri River or their adjacent lands or primary tributaries.

All TAC project proposals must include the following information:

Project Title: *Lone Tree Conservation Easement Rest-Rotation Grazing System*

Date: *11/1/21*

Explain how this Project addresses a specific Project 2188 License Article(s):

The project would help address license article 423 by helping enhance native plants and wildlife populations on lands adjacent to the Missouri River Breaks.

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) and other cooperators completed an 11,285 acre perpetual conservation easement in October 2020. As part of the management plan for this conservation easement, FWP is working with the landowner to implement a rest-rotation grazing system to help improve wildlife habitat and rangeland condition on the property. In order to implement a rotational grazing system on this property cross-fencing and water infrastructure development are needed to create pastures of comparable stocking capacity with water available throughout the grazing season.

Provide justification for Priority 1, 2 or 3 (above) that you selected:

This project is located in upland habitat adjacent to the Upper Missouri River corridor. A rotational grazing system on this property would benefit both game and nongame wildlife species through the improvement of rangeland conditions. The rotational grazing treatments will provide increased vegetation heterogeneity and increased security cover and forage in rested pastures. This project is located on a perpetual conservation easement, which would ensure these fields remain in permanent vegetative cover in perpetuity. Based on Natural Heritage Program data there are 20 Species of concern (Table 1) that have been observed on or near this property including Greater sage-grouse and Pallid Sturgeon. This area also provides habitat and recreational opportunities for a variety of other native species including mule deer, elk, bighorn sheep, pronghorn antelope, Greater sage-grouse, sharp-tailed grouse, bobcat, mountain lion, grassland

songbirds, small mammals and many other nongame species. Managed grazing would also help prevent potential erosion from overgrazing which could reduce sediment levels and turbidity and improve water quality.

Table 1. Species of Concern Observed in vicinity of the Lone Tree Conservation Easement

<i>Hoary Bat</i>	<i>Pinyon Jay</i>
<i>Little Brown Myotis</i>	<i>Golden eagle</i>
<i>Spotted Bat</i>	<i>Greater Short-horned Lizard</i>
<i>Townsend's Big-eared Bat</i>	<i>Spiny Softshell</i>
<i>Bald Eagle</i>	<i>Blue Sucker</i>
<i>Brewer's Sparrow</i>	<i>Paddlefish</i>
<i>Burrowing Owl</i>	<i>Pallid Sturgeon-(Endangered)</i>
<i>Great Blue Heron</i>	<i>Sauger</i>
<i>Greater Sage-Grouse</i>	<i>Burbot</i>
<i>Loggerhead Shrike</i>	<i>Sturgeon Chub</i>
<i>Long-billed Curlew</i>	<i>Sturgeon Chub</i>
<i>Veery</i>	<i>Sicklefin Chub</i>
<i>Peregrine Falcon</i>	

Project Sponsor (submitted by): *Scott Hemmer, MT FWP Wildlife Biologist*

Location of Proposed Project:

This project is located adjacent to the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument in Blaine County approximately 56 miles south of Chinook, MT and 14 miles north of Winifred. The southern edge of the property is within 1.5 miles of the Missouri River near the Stafford/McClelland Ferry (Figure 1). The pastures where the water and fencing infrastructure improvements will occur are approximately 4.5 miles from the Missouri River.

Geocode (in decimal degrees ex 46.89743) Lat; _____ 47.864_____ Long: _____ -109.351_____

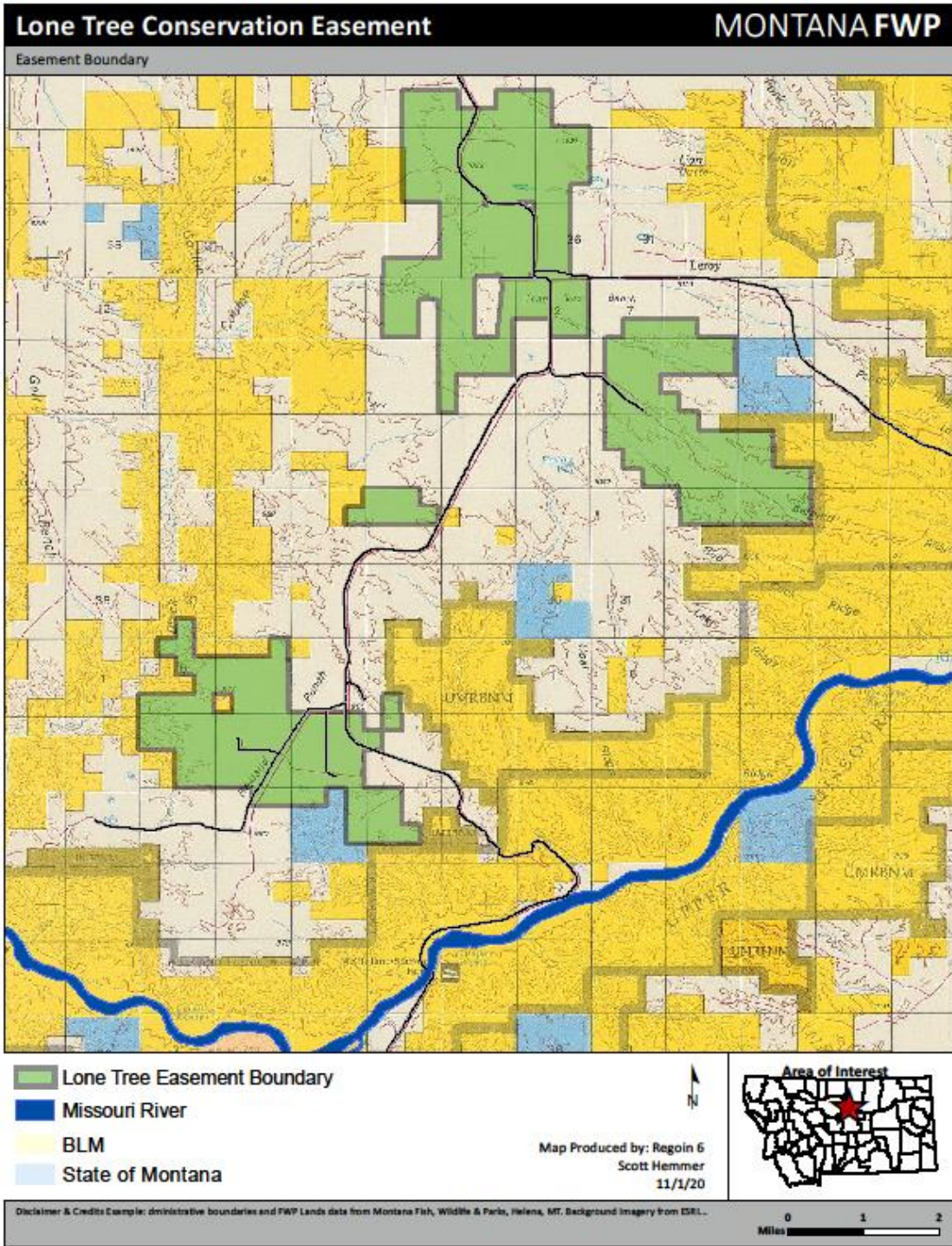


Figure 1. Lone Tree Conservation Easement Location

Total Project Cost: \$63,066
 \$ 20,823 Fencing
 \$ 22,731 Pipeline Installation
 \$ 19,512 Water Tanks

TAC Funds (Cost-Share) Requested for Project: \$21,122

I. Introduction; brief statement of project to be completed with pertinent background information.

Montana Fish, Wildlife, & Parks worked with the Lone Tree Cattle Company to complete a perpetual conservation easement on 11,285 acres of private land adjacent to the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument. The easement phase of this project was completed in October of 2020. This property contains a mixture of grassland, shrubland, riparian, and badlands habitats. The CE protects these native habitats from disturbance and prohibits draining of natural wetlands and riparian areas. The management plan for this easement involves the implementation of a rest-rotation grazing system on the property that will provide alternating seasons of use and year-long periods of rest. Improvement to the fencing and water developments are planned in order to implement the grazing system. This easement also requires free regulated public access for hunting, hiking, wildlife viewing, and other recreational uses. The TAC funding requested in this application would be used to help complete the water pipeline and tank developments (Figure 2).

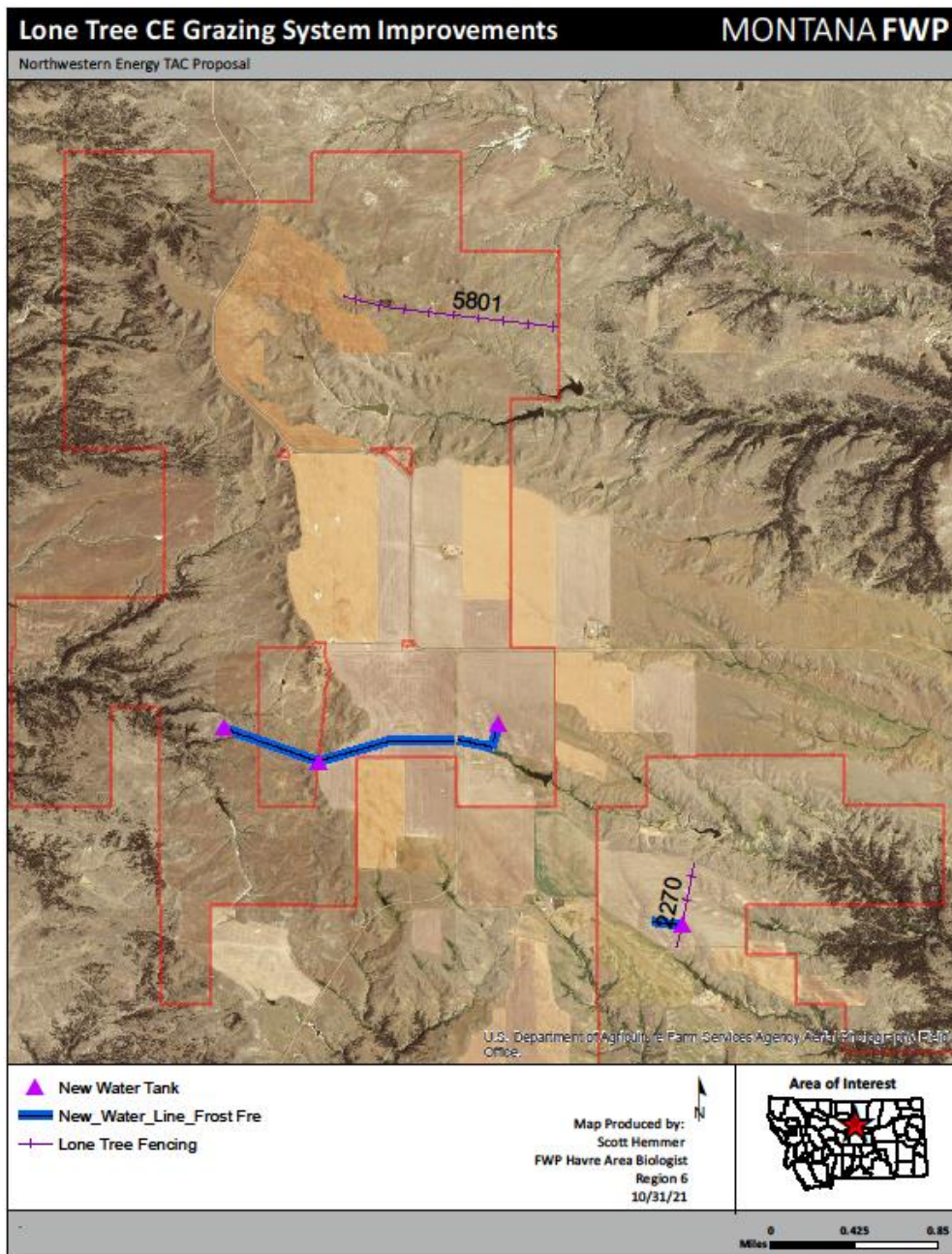


Figure 2. Lone Tree Conservation Easement Grazing System Infrastructure Improvements.

II. Objectives; explicit statement(s) of what is intended to be accomplished.

The objective is to complete water infrastructure developments necessary to implement a rest-rotation grazing system on this conservation easement.

III. Methods; description of how Project objectives will be accomplished.

The work for this project would be completed by a contractor. It will involve burying 8643 feet of HDPE pipe to a frost free depth (>5ft) and installing 4 ~1800-gallon stock tanks. Installation of the stock tanks would include providing the tank, earthwork, sub-grade prep, hydrant, overflow, base installation and apron, all valving and other hardware.

IV. Schedule; when the Project work will begin and end.

The project would begin in the summer of 2022 and be completed by November of 2022

V. Personnel; who will do the work? Identify Project leader or principal investigator.

The work would be completed by a contractor selected through a bid process. The contractor would be responsible for all construction related activities. The landowner (Lone Tree Cattle Co) would be responsible for any needed weed control following installation of the tanks and subsequent maintenance of the tanks and water system. FWP biologist Scott Hemmer will be responsible for monitoring of the grazing system and verification that improvements have been completed.

VI. Project budget must include amounts for the following:

- *Direct Labor and Materials: \$63,066 (Contracted Services, Includes materials and labor)*
- *Travel and Living \$0*
- *Other Direct Expenses \$0*
- *Direct Overhead* \$0*

Table 1. Lone Tree Grazing System Infrastructure Budget

Improvement	Quantity	Unit Cost	Total Amount	FWP Share	Landowner	Northwestern Energy TAC	RMEF	Rancher Stewardship Alliance
4 wire fence-smooth bottom	8071	\$2.58	\$ 20,823	\$2,912	\$ 2,912		\$15,000	
1800 gallon stock tank and installation	4-1800 gallon tanks	\$2.71	\$ 19,512	\$4,878	\$4,878	\$9,756		
Pipeline Installation >5 ft Frost Free	8643	\$2.63	\$ 22,731	\$2,015	\$ 2,015	\$11,366		\$7,335
			\$63,066	\$9,805	\$9,805	\$21,122	\$15,000	\$7,335

VII. Deliverables; describe work product (reports, habitat restoration, etc.) which will result from this Project. How will “success” for this project be monitored or demonstrated?

The success of the project will be through the completed installation of water infrastructure and the implementation of the rest-rotation grazing system on the property by 2027. Elements of the grazing system will be implemented earlier, but some fields are in the process of reseeded to permanent vegetative grass cover followed by a rest period and may not be included in the grazing system until 2027.

VIII. Cultural Resources. Cultural Resource Management (CRM) requirements for any activity related to this Project must be completed and documented to NWE as a condition of any TAC grant. TAC 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 NWE representative for further information or assistance. Applications submitted without this section completed, will be held by the TAC, without any action, until the information has been submitted.

A cultural resources survey is scheduled in December by a USFWS archaeologist to survey the portions of the pipeline that are not located in fields that were previously/currently cultivated.

IX. Water Rights. For projects that involve development, restoration or enhancement of wetlands, please describe how the project will comply with the Montana DNRC's "Guidance for Landowners and Practitioners Engaged in Stream and Wetland Restoration Activities", issued by the Water Resources Division on 9 March 2016.

This project does not involve the development, restoration or enhancement of wetlands or riparian areas.

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