



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: *Lower Moore Creek Channel and Wetland Habitat Restoration*

Date: *October 28, 2021*

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

This project is part of the Missouri-Madison river complex, and is located on a primary tributary (Moore Creek) on lands adjacent to the mainstem of the Madison River. Specifically, License Article 423 will be addressed through the development of a plan to monitor and enhance native plants and wildlife populations associated with the site. As the article notes, it is important that the habitat restoration program is adaptive and highly opportunistic. This particular site required the better part of a decade of landowner engagement and the building of beneficial trust and rapport. Notably, this site is adjacent to significant proposed urban development and will become more difficult to restore as proximal land use converts from working lands to residential subdivision ("Riverside" as reviewed in April 2021 at Madison County Planning Board public meeting).

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

The proposed project seeks to restore degraded and historically channelized conditions on a segment of lower Moore Creek, near the confluence with the Madison River (Ennis Lake/Res.). The work will improve near-stream and instream wildlife habitat by re-connecting with and utilizing historic stream channels and re-establishing floodplain connectivity, sinuosity, a riparian plant community, and reducing sediment inputs by stabilizing eroding banks and preventing further stream incision and erosion. It will also help mediate elevated stream temperatures recognized by the Department of Environmental Quality's Total Maximum Daily Load reports (TMDL). Notably, this site is located in valuable wildlife habitat given its proximity to the confluence with the mainstem, and geographic context within the productive and diverse river valley bottom. Species of interest that we would anticipate benefitting from this project include resident and migratory avian species (Trumpeter Swan, Wilson's Snipe, etc.), amphibians, and reptiles.

Project Sponsor (submitted by):

Madison Conservation District (David Laufenberg)

Partner: Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (Travis Lohrenz)

Location of Proposed Project:

Downstream of the Town of Ennis in an upper portion of Ennis Lake's wetland complex.

Geocode (in decimal degrees ex 46.89743) Lat; 45.36627 Long: -111.72507

Total Project Cost:

\$30,000

TAC Funds (Cost-Share) Requested for Project:

\$30,000

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

This is a unique opportunity to engage with private landowners along a valuable stretch of the Madison River corridor. We have a long-term, existing relationship with the landowners that are interested in improving the riparian, wetland, and stream habitat for the benefit of wildlife and working lands. This section of stream has been actively monitored by the Madison Conservation District for nearly a decade and led to the final publication of the DEQ's TMDL reports (2019 and 2020). Specifically, this creek has more recognized impairments than any other tributary of the Madison River.

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

- 1. Baseline data collection (wetland delineation, water quality and quantity, photo monitoring, drone imagery)*
- 2. Design alternatives analysis (moving stream channel into old channel, natural wetland treatment system to improve water quality/quantity, etc.) that includes the stream/basin/community context (TMDL/cultural/scale-able considerations for nearby sites)*
- 3. Final design and costing analysis (monitoring, permitting, geo, and bio cost estimates to complete the project)*

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

Best management practices associated with riparian, wetland, and stream restoration planning and design within the context of the site and landowner considerations.

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

All tasks completed by Autumn 2022

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

Project leader: Madison Conservation District (David Laufenberg)

VI. Project budget must include amounts for the following:

- 1. Baseline data collection ; \$10,000*
- 2. Design alternatives analysis ; \$10,000*
- 3. Final design and costing analysis) ; \$10,000*

***NorthWestern Energy TAC funds will not be used for agency overhead on projects that do not fund personnel. Applications for materials and equipment should not contain overhead.**

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?

Success will be demonstrated through a project-ready design. This design process will also produce wildlife and habitat baseline and monitoring reports specific to this site during the spring/summer/fall of 2022.

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.

Summarize here how you will complete requirements for Cultural Resource Management:

This early phase of the project will not disturb land or modify/renovate/remove any buildings/structure, but will evaluate and note considerations explored and/or discovered during the design alternatives process.

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.

Summarize here how you will comply with Montana water rights laws, policies and guidelines:

MFWP and MCD hosted a stakeholder meeting in Sept2021 with site and downstream landowners (2 directly impacted site landowners and 3 downstream private landowner parties). All parties were in support of the project.

In Sept2021, DNRC provided existing water rights of downstream users and indicated there would not be an issue with this project.

All TAC Project proposals should be 7 pages or less and emailed (as a WORD file) to each of:

- Andrew.Welch@NorthWestern.com
- Jon.Hanson@Northwestern.com
- Grant.Grisak@Northwestern.com

Further questions about TAC proposals or Project 2188 license requirements or related issues may be addressed to:

Andy Welch

Manager, Hydro License Compliance

Andrew.Welch@NorthWestern.com

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