

**MISSOURI-MADISON RIVER FUND
FY2026 GRANT APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**

Please use the application form to submit a recreation project request for funding to the Missouri-Madison River Fund Board. Applications must be submitted in Microsoft Word (or comparable) format (not PDF) by **3 pm on Wednesday, September 17, 2025**, to:

Kim McMahon
Pinnacle Research
Email: kim.pinnacle.research@gmail.com
Telephone: 406-546-2447

AND

Andy Welch
NorthWestern Energy
Email: andrew.welch@northwestern.com
Telephone: 406-444-8115

Applications will be reviewed and scored by the Regional Working Groups each fall. The River Fund Board will only review applications that have been forwarded by the Regional Working Groups and Corridor Ranking Committee. The River Fund Board will make decisions on project awards at their annual meeting in December of each year.

All projects are required to have a Project Sponsor to be considered for funding by the River Fund. Project sponsors serve as active members of Missouri-Madison Regional Working Groups and include representatives of the U.S. Forest Service; Bureau of Land Management; Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks; local government; Madison, Gallatin, Broadwater, Chouteau, Lewis and Clark, or Cascade Counties; NorthWestern Energy and the Bureau of Reclamation. A list of current Regional Working Group members can be requested from Kim McMahon (contact info above).

Project Sponsors will consult with applicants on projects, and sponsorship denotes that the proposed project meets the basic criteria for consideration (below). A project that does not meet the basic criteria or does not have a project sponsor will not be scored by the Regional Working Group. It is the project sponsor's responsibility to ensure the basic criteria are met.

Basic Project Criteria:

1. The project is consistent with the FERC Project 2188 License.
2. The project occurs in the Missouri-Madison Project Area (within one mile of the nine reservoirs operated by NorthWestern Energy and the river reaches between these reservoirs and below Morony Dam to Fort Benton, excluding the Bureau of Reclamation's Canyon Ferry Project and the State of Montana's Toston Project).
3. The project must be consistent with or support management plans in the Project Area, including but not limited to:
 - a. Missouri-Madison Comprehensive Recreation Plan.
 - b. Management plans developed by the Forest Service, BLM, and Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks.
 - c. Land use plans and growth management policies for counties and communities in the Corridor.
4. The project provides a public recreation benefit.

Awarded River Fund grant funds or NorthWestern Energy matching funds may be used for the purchase of materials, supplies, and equipment, or to pay contractor services or other non-agency project components. Project funds may not be used to pay agency or applicant overhead expenses, such as agency staffing costs for design and engineering, project management, or administrative expenses. Funds may be used to pay costs for contracted design and engineering, as appropriate. Accounting of project expenses must be included in status reports provided for the annual River Fund Board meeting.

Applicants are advised to carefully consider the scoring criteria and guidelines (provided separately) when preparing their project proposals. Applications will be scored and ranked by Regional Working Group members and the Corridor Ranking Committee based on responses to these items, and recommendations to the River Fund Board for project funding will be based on this ranking. The Board, however, reserves the right to fund projects as they determine appropriate.

Actions required by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission for 2188 License compliance related to recreation receive highest priority for funding by the River Fund and are not subject to project scoring. Any such mandatory compliance items, if presented, would be a result of FERC public use inspections or FERC orders, and may reduce the amount of funding available for other projects.

Projects that receive funding from the River Fund Grant Program may be eligible for matching funds from NorthWestern Energy based on the location of the project and the public agency contributions to the project. The following section provides information related to matching funds. No separate application form is required for the NorthWestern Energy match request.

MISSOURI-MADISON LICENSE #2188 RECREATION SITES

Hebgen-Madison Region:

- Fisherman's Point
- Lonesomehurst Boat Launch (only)
- Rainbow Point Boat Launch (only)
- Hebgen Area RV Dump Station
- Hebgen Dam Day Use Site
- Lyon's Bridge Fishing Access Site
- Clute's Landing
- Meadow Lake Fishing Access Site
- Kobayashi Beach
- Upper Bear Trap Canyon/Trail Creek Recreation Area
- Fall Creek Access Site
- Warm Springs Creek Access Site

Hauser-Holter Region:

- Devil's Elbow Campground
- Clark's Bay Day Use Area
- Hauser Area RV Dump Station
- Causeway Fishing Pier
- White Sandy Beach
- Hauser Dam Access Site
- Coulter Campground
- Meriwether Picnic Area
- Beartooth Landing Campground
- Departure Point Recreation Site
- Log Gulch Campground
- Holter Lake Campground
- Holter Dam Campground and Portage
- Holter Area RV Dump Station

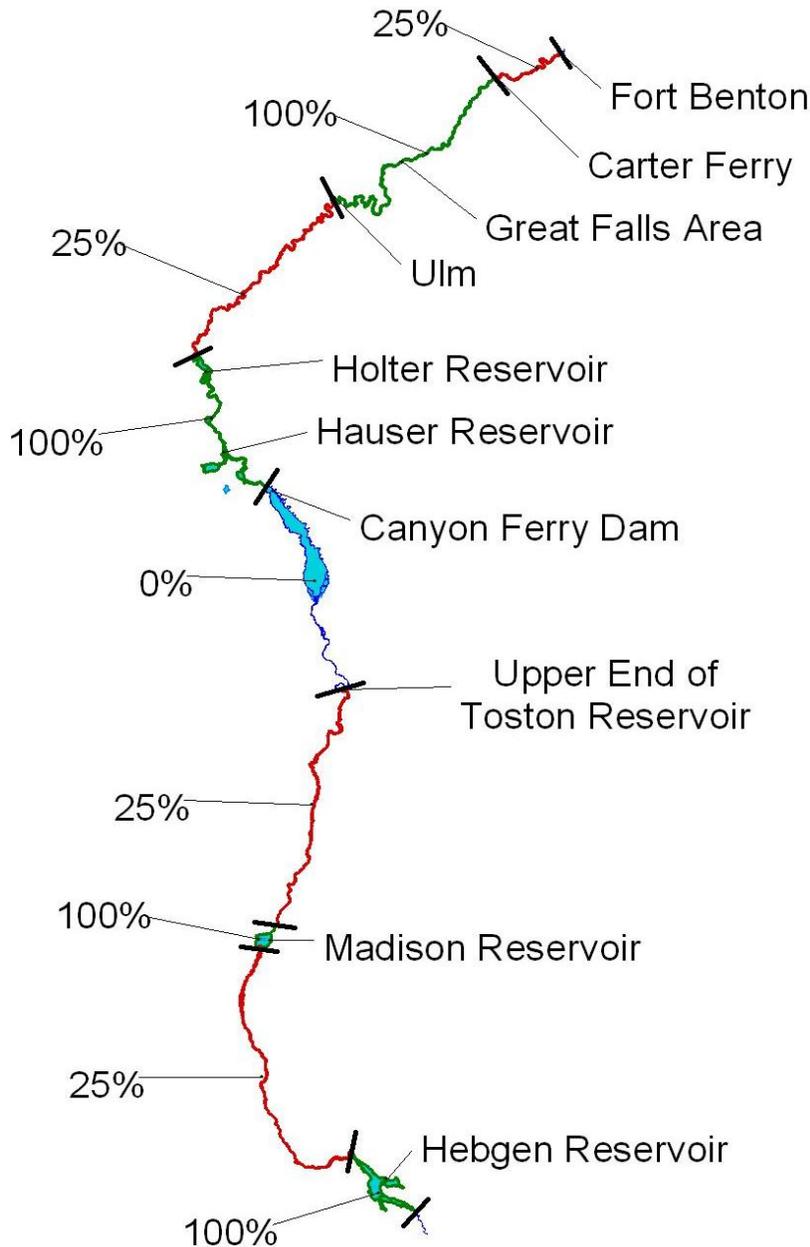
Great Falls Region:

- North Park Access Site
- Cottonwood Grove Fishing Access Site
- Portage sign at Oddfellows Park
- Black Eagle Memorial Island
- Rainbow Reservoir Boat Launch
- River's Edge Trail (initial alignment)
- Lewis & Clark Interpretive Center
- Rainbow Overlook
- Lewis & Clark Overlook
- Crooked Falls Overlook
- North Shore Conservation Easement
- Rainbow-Morony Pedestrian/Bicycle Trail (initial alignment)
- Cochrane Dam Crossing
- Sulphur Spring Trailhead
- Ryan Island Day Use Area
- Carter Ferry Fishing Access Site
- Widow Coulee Fishing Access Site
- Fort Benton Canoe Camp
- Fort Benton Motorboat Launch

NORTHWESTERN ENERGY MATCHING FUNDS

Per provisions of the MOU for the Missouri-Madison Comprehensive Recreation Plan, NorthWestern Energy will provide matching funds for recreation projects approved for funding by the River Fund Board. The amount of the match varies by the location of the project and the amount of public agency contributions¹ to the project, as noted below and on the following map. The total amount of matching funds for all projects is limited to \$200,000 plus an inflation adjustment per year.

Missouri-Madison Reservoirs and River Segments with Matching Fund Contributions by NorthWestern Energy



100% Match* Reservoirs and River Reaches:

Hebgen Reservoir
 Madison Reservoir
 Hauser Reservoir
 Holter Reservoir
 Great Falls Area Reservoirs (Black Eagle, Rainbow, Cochrane, Ryan and Morony)
 River reach from Ulm to Rainbow Dam
 River reach below Morony Dam to Carter Ferry FAS

25% Match* River Reaches:

Below Hebgen Dam to Madison Reservoir
 Below Madison Dam to Toston Reservoir
 Below Holter Dam to Ulm
 Below Carter Ferry FAS to Fort Benton

* Match is a percentage of expenditures and in-kind support from public agencies¹ on proposed projects and applies to projects identified and recommended for funding through the CRP planning process and approved for funding by the River Fund Board.

Examples:

If the USFS proposes a project on Hebgen Lake with USFS funding and in-kind contributions total \$2,400, and FWP is also contributing \$600 to the project, then agency contributions total \$3,000. The USFS can request a NorthWestern Energy match of \$3,000 for this project.

If FWP is proposes a project on the Madison River with FWP funding and in-kind contributions of \$2,000, but a non-profit friends group is also contributing \$800 to the project. Agency contributions total \$2,00 and FWP can request a NorthWestern Energy match of \$500 for this project.

¹ Agency contributions refer to agencies identified in the MOU (USFS, BLM, FWP and BOR) and directly involved in the project. Public monies and support from other sources, such as the Recreational Trails Program, Transportation Initiatives, or in-kind labor from project supporters, while available for use on projects, will not be matched by NorthWestern Energy funds. Only sponsoring and supporting agency funds and contributions will be matched by NorthWestern Energy.