

2023 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: Middle Missouri River Fisheries Trammel Nets Purchase - 2023

Date: November 2, 2022

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

Article 417: 2) Protect and provide for the recovery of Threatened and Endangered species and other species of special concern in the Missouri River downstream of Morony Dam. This is a priority one (Missouri) and two (Marias).

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

Trammel nets also are the primary sampling gear for targeted recapture of Endangered Pallid Sturgeon for reproductive assessments and capturing pallid sturgeon for radio transmitter implantation.

Project Sponsor (submitted by): Luke Holmquist

Location of Proposed Project: Missouri River between Morony Dam and Fort Peck Reservoir and the lower Marias River.

These trammel nets will be used on the Missouri River from Carter Ferry to Fort Peck Reservoir (Priority 1) and in the lower Marias River (Priority 2).

Geocode (in decimal degrees ex 46.89743)

Site: Morony Dam

Lat:47.58159

Lon: -111.05972

Site: Tiber Dam

Lat:47.58159

Lon: -111.09705

Site: Fort Peck Headwaters

Lat:47.55384

Lon: -107.92449

Total Project Cost: **\$4,050**

TAC Funds Requested for Project: **\$4,050**

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

Large inner diameter trammel nets are necessary for capturing large pallid sturgeon for implanting radio transmitters and performing reproductive assessments. River conditions are not always conducive to sampling (submerged logs, boulders, and other debris), and nets can be severely torn and even destroyed during standard sampling process thus some nets must be replaced each year. More nets have been used in recent years to maximize river field work time and as additional hatchery-origin pallid sturgeon reach sexual maturity. The ask for 10 new 5-inch nets are to be used for recapture of reproductively active pallid sturgeon from the 1997 year-class and during broodstock collection efforts. These nets are slightly larger with heavier inner twine than the previously used 4-inch inner mesh nets, which will improve durability. Reproductive assessment efforts have expanded in recent years as the number of reproductive fish has increased. We expect to have in excess of ten high priority females to recapture during the 2023 sturgeon

spawning season and 4-inch and 5-inch mesh nets are the most efficient gear to recapture pallid sturgeon over 4 kg while minimizing bycatch.

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

These nets will be used to capture and recapture pallid sturgeon as part of the radio telemetry program monitoring spawning activity and other habitat use.

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

IV. Schedule; when the Project work will begin and end. Purchase 10 nets for use during 2023 field season.

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

VI. Project budget must include amounts for the following:

Materials Only: 10 – 150 x 6 x 10 x 5” @ \$380/net.....\$3,800.00

Shipping: \$250
Total: \$4,050

Direct Labor NA
Travel and Living NA
Other Direct Expenses NA
Direct Overhead NA – Purchase by NWE
All contribution sources and amounts

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? NA

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: No ground disturbance associated with this project.

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 9March2016.

Summarize here how you will comply with Montana water rights laws, policies and guidelines: No water rights associated 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, Leader Hydro License Compliance, NorthWestern Energy, 1315 N Last Chance Gulch, Helena, MT 59601; 406-444-8115 (office); 406-565-7549 (cell); Andrew.Welch@northwestern.com.