



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: Missouri Paddlefish telemetry station parts and radio transmitters.

Date: 11.7.2024

Explain how this Project addresses a specific Project 2188 License Article(s): Article 417 of the 2024-2028 5-year plan specifically lists paddlefish as native fish that received project attention in past years. Paddlefish are susceptible to population impacts when they enter the Missouri River to spawn. MFWP has instituted angling restrictions to help reduce those impacts. In 2024 MoTAC funded the investigation of injury to paddlefish in the Missouri River to refine and enhance the sustainable management of a species of special concern (paddlefish) in the Missouri River (2024-6). The 2024-6 budget for 2025 includes funding for project materials and radio transmitters.

This proposal is for an additional 10 radio transmitters (\$2,100) and about \$4,900 to purchase miscellaneous equipment for three remote telemetry stations recently repurposed from the Thompson Falls area to the Middle Missouri River study area. This equipment includes batteries, stationary boxes, solar controllers, RG58 cable and miscellaneous electronics connectors. We anticipate these materials to not exceed \$4,900. The balance of this budget shall return to the MoTAC budget.

Provide justification for Priority 1, 2 or 3 (above) that you selected: This is a priority 1 project because it deals with the investigation of native paddlefish populations in the mainstem Missouri River, Montana.

Project Sponsor (submitted by): Grant Grisak – NorthWestern Energy. Proposal is being submitted by NWE to make direct purchases of materials.

Location of Proposed Project: Middle Missouri River
Narrative

Geocode (in decimal degrees ex 46.89743) Lat: _____ Long: _____

Site: Woodhawk bottom Lat: 47.74204 Lon: -108.94793
Site: Fred Robinson Bridge Lat: 47.63075 Lon: -108.68495
Site: Fort Peck Headwaters Lat: 47.57624 Lon: -108.36343

Total Project Cost: \$7,000 – NorthWestern has already funded the main aspect of this study through project 2024-6. See attached Sales Order from Lotek Wireless detailing the cost of individual radio transmitters. This proposal includes funding for 10 of those radio transmitters. The remaining \$4,900 of this budget is dedicated to telemetry station materials.

TAC Funds (Cost-Share) Requested for Project: NTE \$7,000

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

This proposal is for an additional 10 radio transmitters (\$2,100) and about \$4,900 to purchase miscellaneous equipment for three remote telemetry stations recently repurposed from the Thompson Falls area to the Middle Missouri River study area. This equipment includes batteries, stationary boxes, solar controllers, RG58 cable and miscellaneous electronics connectors. We anticipate these materials to not exceed \$4,900. The balance of this budget shall return to the MoTAC budget.

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

1. Determine short-term (30-days) and extended-term (3-months) paddlefish snag and release mortality rates for the upper Missouri River paddlefish population (Fort Peck stock).
2. Estimate the effects of snag and release on paddlefish reproduction.
3. Determine mortality rates of paddlefish that are injured from boat propeller strikes.
 - a. Document boat use on the upper Missouri River during the paddlefish season and when paddlefish may be vulnerable to propeller strikes.
 - b. Document percentage of jet and propeller motor use of the river.
 - c. Work with postseason phone creel questionnaire to address propeller boat use.
4. Update survival and abundance models from Glassic et al. (2020) including results on mortality from snag-and-release and prop strikes from this study.

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

See application 2024-6

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

Begin calendar year 2025 and continue through the end of 2026.

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

Northwestern Energy will make direct purchases of the materials
Kelson Hickman will assemble and deploy the remote telemetry stations
Cody Nagel and Kelson Hickman will surgically implant the transmitters in paddlefish.

VI. Project budget must include amounts for the following:

- Direct Labor
- Travel and Living
- Materials NTE \$7,000 – Proposal is being submitted by NWE to make direct purchases of materials.
- Other Direct Expenses
- Direct Overhead*
- All cost-share sources and amounts, including estimation of “in-kind” contributions

***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?
See application 2024-6. This application is for a minor increase in materials necessary to improve that project already in operation.

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 breaking activity is associated with this proposal.

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:

No water rights are involved with this proposal.

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

📞 406-444-8115

📠 406-565-7549

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