



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 Post-Implementation Weed Control

Date: October 17, 2024

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

NorthWestern Energy (NWE) is successfully enhancing Project 2188 wildlife habitats through funding aimed to protect, restore, and enhance riparian, wetland, and upland habitats on private lands. This proposal is ensuring the successful implementation of on-the-ground restoration projects to help offset impacts to river resources associated with Project 2188 (Madison-Missouri River). The project meets the purpose and intent of License Article 423, which requires development of a vegetation and wildlife monitoring and enhancement plan intended to enhance native plants and wildlife populations on Project 2188 wildlife habitats adjacent to the Madison River. Specifically, NWE is successfully enhancing Project 2188 wildlife habitats through funding aimed to protect, restore, and enhance riparian, wetland, and upland habitats on private lands.

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

This project meets Priority 2 2188 License requirements as listed above. Moore Creek is a primary tributary to Ennis Lake that is an instream reservoir of the mainstem Madison River.

Project Sponsor (submitted by):

Madison Conservation District

Location of Proposed Project:

The location of the proposed project is located within the property boundaries of 2 private property owners along Moore Creek. These property owners consist of the Goggins family, a multi-generational family-owned and operated ranch, and Eric Shekleton, owner of Starry Night RV Park, north of Ennis, MT. The project scope involves a 0.6 mile corridor of Moore Creek on the northern boundary of the Goggins property that includes 1 mile of sinuous stream through an

emergent and scrub-shrub wetland on, both, the Goggins and Sheckleton properties. The specific location point listed below is the center point of the project's 0.6 mile extent.

Geocode (in decimal degrees ex 46.89743) Lat; 45.36708 Long: -111.72300

Total Project Cost: \$6,000

TAC Funds (Cost-Share) Requested for Project:

- I. Introduction; brief statement of project to be completed with pertinent background information.
This proposal will provide necessary funding for post-construction weed control through the restoration corridor of a project previously funded by NorthWestern Energy and the Department of Environmental Quality. This project successfully restored 1 mile of stream channel and riparian areas, 12 acres of wetland, and floodplain connectivity along a highly impaired section of Moore Creek. Moore Creek is a valuable ecological resource and major tributary to the Madison River and Ennis Lake. This project restored 12 acres of altered wetland and 1 mile of impaired streamside riparian habitat that is crucial habitat for migratory bird and ungulate species. This proposal will ensure the successful restoration of this important habitat by encouraging reestablishment of native vegetative riparian, wetland, floodplain, and upland species increasing biodiversity, habitat, and forage availability for native wildlife. The funding for this project is necessary because, previously unnoticed, abundant populations including several species of invasive weeds were observed in the fall just prior to implementation at the restoration site.
- II. Objectives; explicit statement(s) of what is intended to be accomplished.
The objective is to get the invasive weed species under control at the restoration site. This will reduce the invasive weed populations to abundances that are manageable on a small-scale, as-needed basis, by the project landowners in the future.
- III. Methods; description of how Project objectives will be accomplished.
 - Area to be treated includes 12 acres of wetland and 0.6 miles of riparian corridor.
 - Primary target species include: (1) Canada & musk thistle, (2) spotted & diffuse knapweed, (3) yellow tansy, and (4) black henbane
 - A licensed commercial applicator will be contracted to advise and perform the work.
 - This is for post-construction treatment of a stream restoration and wetland improvement project. Individual plants will be "spot-sprayed" versus a general broadcast treatment. Treatment will be up to the highwater mark of the restored stream channel in wetland and riparian areas that have been reseeded and revegetated with native vegetation. So, appropriate chemical mixes will be used.
 - The treatment will include 2 chemical applications. One treatment after construction in Spring 2025 and one treatment in Fall 2025.
- IV. Schedule; when the Project work will begin and end.
 - January-March 2025: Procure contract services with licensed commercial weed applicator.
 - May-June 2025: Spring treatment of invasive weeds with appropriate chemical application.
 - August-September 2025: Fall treatment of invasive weeds with appropriate chemical application.
 - September 2025: Project Completion.
- V. Personnel; who will do the work? Identify Project leader or principal investigator.
 - Madison Conservation District-Project management, monitoring, and coordination.
 - West River Land Management, LLC-Commercial chemical application for invasive weed management.
- VI. Project budget must include amounts for the following:
 - Direct Labor: \$6,000
 - Travel and Living

- Materials
- Other Direct Expenses
- Direct Overhead*
- All cost-share sources and amounts, including estimation of “in-kind” contributions
 - Madison Conservation District-Project management, monitoring, & coordination: \$1,000

***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?

As part of the active restoration project 2024-8, a project effectiveness monitoring plan was developed that includes vegetation plot monitoring and photo point monitoring to measure the success of native wetland and riparian vegetation establishment. This data can be provided in a report to quantify the success of this project.

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 project does not require any construction or land-disturbance activities. However, in fall 2023, a Cultural Resource Specialist was contracted by the TAC to complete a cultural resource survey and report to the TAC for project 2024-8 that involved this reach of Moore Creek. The Montana State Historic Preservation Office concluded that no historic properties would be affected by the Moore Creek Restoration and Wetland Improvement 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 9 March 2016.

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

This project will not involve the construction of any berms, dams, or dikes; will not involve any diversion of water; will partially offset the loss of riverine wetland habitat; and will not increase water consumption.

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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