

**MISSOURI-MADISON RIVER FUND
RECREATION PROJECT
APPLICATION FORM FY2018**

Project Name: Widow Coulee Fishing Access Road Drainage Project

Reservoir or River Segment: Great Falls Area, river reach below Morany Dam to Carter Ferry,
County(ies): Chouteau

Site Name (or legal location if no site name): Widow Coulee Fishing Access Site

Applicant Name and Agency: Allan Kuser, Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Position (if applicable): Statewide Fishing Access Program Coordinator
Address: 1420 E. Sixth Avenue, PO Box 200701, Helena, MT 59620-0701
Telephone #: 406-444-7885 E-mail: akuser@mt.gov

Project Sponsor:

A Project Sponsor is required in order to submit an application to 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. Visit www.missourimadison.com for a list of current Regional Working Group members.

Project Sponsor Name: Allan Kuser
Agency and Position: Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, Statewide Fishing Access Program Coordinator
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Complete the financial section below by providing total project cost, contributions by applicant and cooperators, request for NorthWestern Energy match of agency funds (see detail on page 2 of this application), and River Fund Grant request. Document in-kind contributions by public agencies for determination of NorthWestern Energy match request. A description of funding sources and in-kind contributions should be included in the Project Description.

Financial Support

Total Project Cost:	\$ <u>43,000</u>
Applicant Contributions:	\$
Other Contributions - Please list by source:	
<u>FWP – In-kind</u>	\$ 5,000
<u>NorthWestern Energy – In-kind</u>	\$ 3,000
_____	\$
_____	\$
_____	\$
NorthWestern Energy Match Request:	\$ 0
River Fund Grant Request:	\$ 35,000
Proposed Project Implementation Period:	Spring/Summer 2018

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1. Has this project been previously submitted for funding consideration by the River Fund Board, either as a separate project or part of another project? Yes No

If yes, please identify which years the application was submitted and, if the project was previously funded, list the amount funded by year. The project was previously funded in 2015 for \$198,750 (\$148,750 from River Fund and \$25,000 in NorthWestern Energy matching funds).

2. Is the proposed project at one of the Project 2188 license sites identified in the Missouri-Madison MOU and listed on page A2-2 of the Comprehensive Recreation Plan? Yes No

3. **Project Description:** Provide a brief (½ page) description of the proposed project.

A road rehabilitation project at Widow Coulee FAS was funded by the River Fund and NorthWestern Energy in FY2015 and the project was implemented in spring/summer 2017.

Under the previous grant, improvements were made to the access road, including reduction of the slope on the steepest section of the access road and elimination of most of the dangerous drop-offs. This effort involved cutting approximately 24,000 cubic yards of material from the road and side slopes. The vast majority of the cut material was pushed into an adjacent ravine and revegetated. The remaining material was pushed out over various steep side slopes along both sides of the road way and revegetated. Ditches were cut into both sides of the new road and rock water bars were installed approximately every 20 yards in the ditch along both sides of the road utilizing 4” minus material to reduce washing-out of the roadway and ditches.

In July 2017, a rain event that produced more than 2 inches of rain over just a few hours identified a need for additional water diversion; a large trench was worn in the newly constructed road as a result of the event. Therefore, additional funding is being requested to improve drainage by constructing more water bars, installing at least two culverts and constructing additional ditches that will divert excess water into the steep side coulees instead of along the roadway itself. The intent is to quickly remove excess water from the road during extreme runoff events before it can cause damage to the road.

4. **Cultural Resource Management:** Cultural Resource Management (CRM) requirements for any activity related to this Project must be completed and documented to NorthWestern Energy (pursuant to Article 425 of the FERC Project 2188 License) prior to expenditure of River Fund grants and NorthWestern Energy matching funds for any land-disturbing activity or the modification, renovation, or removal of any buildings or structures. 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. River Fund grant and NorthWestern Energy matching fund payments, for those projects approved by the Board, will be withheld until this CRM information has been submitted. Summarize how you will comply with CRM requirements and provide evidence of completion to NorthWestern Energy.

A copy of the proposed project will be submitted to the Departments designated cultural resource specialist for review. A copy will then be submitted to SHPO if deemed necessary. Because this is a maintenance project of an existing road, no new land outside of the previously disturbed footprint will be impacted.

5. Respond to the following Scoring Criteria in no more than two (2) additional written pages on 8.5 x 11 inch paper, with 1-inch margins on all sides, in a font not smaller than 11 point. Be sure page numbers are included in a footer within the margin of each page.

Scoring Criteria

- 5.1 Project is for operation and maintenance of an existing recreation site or an existing Project 2188 license site. Describe how the project would support O&M needs at an existing recreation site that are over and above day-to-day site maintenance. Needs may include measures to open a site for public use as well as minor repair; facility upgrade, reconstruction, and replacement; and major site rehabilitation.

Widow Coulee FAS is a 2188 FERC license site. The access road is extremely steep through the middle reach of the road. The additional work being proposed needs to be done to finish the original road improvement project that was initially funded in 2015 and constructed in 2017. This type of work does not fall under light maintenance that could be done by agency staff. It will take the use of heavy equipment and a skilled operator. The additional drainage work is critical to protecting the investment already made in the road. Without it, if a similar rain event occurred in the near future that did in 2017, before vegetation is well established, it would likely cause substantial damage to the road.

- 5.2 Project involves collaboration with other agencies or organizations. Identify project partners other than North Western Energy or River Fund, if any, and describe their participation. Document all funding sources and all in-kind support and services to a project, because all are sources of partnerships and in-kind contributions from public agencies qualify for calculation of North Western Energy matching funds. If there are no project partners, explain why.

There is significant collaboration for this project between FWP and NorthWestern Energy. FWP's Design and Construction Bureau will continue to provide design and engineering services as well as construction oversight, and NorthWestern Energy's manager of Vegetation Management will participate by assisting with project oversight and input for additional improvements.

In addition, because the access road exists on DNRC land under easement to North Western Energy, a road easement modification is required to complete the project. Due to the extensive nature of the land disturbance associated with the project, this easement modification requires a survey of the entire disturbed area instead of just a centerline survey (which is more typical) and comes at a considerable higher expense than anticipated during project design (\$7,500 - \$10,000). Since funds to cover this survey were not built into the original project budget, the expense will be absorbed by North Western Energy. Therefore, no additional matching funds are being requested from North Western Energy for this project extension.

- 5.3 Project provides a benefit to public recreation in the Project Area and addresses specific issues and goals of the Missouri-Madison Comprehensive Recreation Plan (CRP). Identify how the project provides a benefit to public recreation. Describe how specific issues and goals in Chapter 2-1 of the CRP would be supported.

The Missouri River has very limited public access below the dams. Widow Coulee provides a unique opportunity for anglers and other recreationists wanting to access this lower reach of the river from the south shoreline. The fisheries in this area is transitioning from a cold-water upstream trout fishery to a warm water fishery. The more common fish species are Northern Pike, Channel Catfish, Brown Trout, Sauger and Rainbow Trout. The next public access is Carter Ferry FAS, 12 miles downstream and on the north shoreline. Because this site is situated within a block of DNRC Trust Land it also provides an opportunity for hiking, birdwatching, hunting and other forms of general outdoor recreation activities.

5.4 Project responds to a clearly identified need. Describe and document the need for this project and how the project would address that need. Cite specific sources, as possible, to establish need and support the project. Discuss consequences if the funding request is unsuccessful. For a new construction or acquisition project, identify how post-project, long-term costs (such as site maintenance and management) will be provided.

Safety is the biggest concern with this road. Funding from the previous grant was used to repair the worst section of the road. While it has been greatly improved, additional work is needed to assure that the road drains properly to minimize erosion from seasonal precipitation events. The primary work would involve installing water bars, culverts and additional cuts as a contingency measure in case spring or fall washouts were to occur. Not doing the additional work described here could lead to erosion problems that would, at a minimum, require additional annual maintenance to repair, or could cause washouts that make the road impassable, the site inaccessible, and negate the efforts and expense that have gone into the road improvements that were recently completed.

5.5 Project design options have been considered, estimated, and a preferred design selected. Well-designed projects reduce occurrences of budgetary overages, design changes, and additional complications. Discuss the current design phase for this project and include cost estimates.

This will be phase 2 of this project. This phase is intended to improve drainage on the improved road. The project will consist of installing culverts and drainage swales to divert the storm water off the road and away from the ditches. The approximate cost of this project is \$35,000.

5.6 Project supports or protects other resources and is consistent with or supports resource plans in the Project Area. In addition to project-related benefits under #3 above, describe how this project will protect resource values (such as public access, water quality, fisheries, wildlife, habitats, and cultural resources) and support other resource plans, including Project 2188 License plans and land use and land management plans in place in the Corridor.

The purpose of this project is to enhance and improve the access road to the FAS for the safety of the public. Due to the steepness of the terrain and the erosive nature of the soil, if this road is not maintained properly, access to the FAS will be jeopardized. Conceivably the site could be limited to walk-in access only, but the primary focus of the site is to provide boating access to the river and walk-in access is not conducive to boat launching. Additionally, the demand for public access and outdoor recreation opportunities is increasing exponentially. A recent news report stated that new RV's are selling at a rate of 400,000 a year and that people wanting to go camping has been increasing at a rate of 20% annually for the last six years. As the demand and use of our sites grow it is incumbent on land managers to provide safe and well-maintained areas for the public to recreate.

6. Attach map(s) showing the location of the proposed project, drawings and design work related to the project, and photos (as available) at the end of the application.

7. Permitting and Planning Acknowledgement:

By submitting this application, and with an award of grant funds, applicant agrees that all permitting and planning requirements, such as NEPA and MEPA and cultural resource compliance, will be completed *prior to expenditures of awarded funds*. Furthermore, all design, layout, and contractual requirements will be completed in a timely manner.

8. Submit the application as a single file in Microsoft Word (or comparable) format.

