

news release

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NorthWestern Energy and Missouri-Madison recreation trust announce 2015 award recipients

GREAT FALLS, Mont. (Jan. 21) – NorthWestern Energy and the Missouri-Madison River Fund will provide \$635,173 toward eight public recreation projects on the Missouri and Madison rivers in 2015.

A \$51,278 contribution from NorthWestern and \$583,895 from the the Missouri-Madison River Fund will be combined with \$142,110 from agency and private partners to enable completion of the eight projects totaling \$777,283. The projects support public recreation on the Missouri and Madison rivers, where NorthWestern operates nine of its 12 hydroelectric plants.

“These 2015 funds will support eight competitively selected projects that will further enhance recreation opportunities on the Missouri and Madison rivers,” said Jon Jourdonnais, _____. “NorthWestern Energy and its employees statewide are proud to support this collaborative private and public effort to improve and maintain recreation on these great rivers for all Montanans.”

Recreation projects include:

- Restoration of a deteriorated section of River’s Edge Trail in Great Falls.
- Replacing a walkway at Giant Springs State Park to improve safety and accessibility for visitors.
- Replacing a single lane boat ramp with a new double lane ramp at Ruby Creek Boat Launch on the Madison River.
- Upgrading an access road at Widow Coulee FAS on the Missouri River.
- Upgrading a pedestrian trail at the Earthquake Lake Visitor Center on Quake Lake for safety and accessibility.
- Replacing a boat ramp and culvert to improve access at Varney Bridge FAS on the Madison River.
- Installation of a new restroom at West Bank Park in Great Falls to serve park users.
- Supplemental construction funding for replacement of docks at Meriwether and Coulter recreation sites on Upper Holter Lake.

A list of all eight projects can be found under the “River Fund” tab at <http://www.missourimadison.com>, a website dedicated to the Missouri-Madison Comprehensive Recreation Plan.

The Missouri-Madison River Fund, a \$7.2 million trust fund for public recreation, was created through the collaborative efforts of NorthWestern Energy; Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks; U.S. Forest Service; U.S. Bureau of Land Management; Madison, Gallatin, Broadwater, Lewis & Clark, Cascade and Chouteau counties; and numerous other public and private partners.

This year marks the ninth year in which earnings from the trust have been awarded to recreation improvement projects through the River Fund program. With these funds, more than \$3.8 million has been awarded by the River Fund and NorthWestern Energy in support of nearly \$6.2 million in recreation enhancements in the Missouri-Madison Corridor since 2007. In addition, the River Fund and NorthWestern also support and maintain 32 public recreation sites required by the Project 2188 (Madison-Missouri River) FERC License.

Created as a public-private partnership to meet public recreation needs along the Madison and Missouri rivers, the River Fund supports ongoing efforts to protect and enhance recreation from Hebgen Reservoir downstream to Fort Benton, excluding the Toston and Canyon Ferry hydroelectric plants and the river segment between them. River Fund awards for qualifying projects will continue on an annual basis, with grant awards in December.

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