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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

NorthWestern Energy and The Missouri-Madison River Fund Trust announce funding for 2018 public recreation improvement projects

Butte, Mont. – January 14, 2018 - NorthWestern Energy and the Missouri-Madison River Fund have announced funding awards for 15 public recreation improvement projects on the two rivers where the company operates 9 of its 12 hydroelectric facilities.

A combination of \$107,330 from NorthWestern and \$524,329 from the the Missouri-Madison River Fund will be combined with \$561,105 from agency and private partners to complete 15 projects totaling \$1,192,764. In addition, NorthWestern Energy will contribute more than \$431,000 for operation and maintenance efforts at many existing recreation sites in 2018 as required by the Project 2188 (Madison-Missouri River) FERC License.

“Recreation facilities and opportunities will be enhanced on the Missouri and Madison rivers through completion of fifteen competitively selected projects in 2018,” said Andy Welck, Leader - Hydropower License Compliance. “NorthWestern Energy and its employees are proud to continue to support this collaborative private-public effort to improve recreation facilities and opportunities on these great rivers for all Montanans.”

2018 funded recreation projects include:

- Replacement of the courtesy dock at Lonesomehurst boat launch on Hebgen Lake and Kobayashi Beach on Ennis Lake;
- Improvements to two sections of the River’s Edge Trail and printing of trail maps in Great Falls, as well as addition of an ADA crossing into West Bank Park in Great Falls;
- Creation of the multi-agency Holter Lake management plan;
- Improvements to the Madison Road at Ennis Lake and Widow Coulee Road on the Missouri River;
- Phase 1 development of the California Corner recreation site and replacement of the Trapper Springs pavilion roof on the Madison River;
- Upgrades to parking lot lighting at the Lewis & Clark Interpretive Center in Great Falls;
- Improvements to visitor amenities at the fish hatchery show ponds in Giant Springs State Park in Great Falls;
- Upgrade of information kiosks at four Fishing Access Sites on the Missouri River;

- Feasibility study to relocate the historic Varney Bridge across the Madison River.

The Missouri-Madison River Fund, a \$6.8 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 twelfth year in which earnings from the trust have been awarded to recreation improvement projects through the River Fund program. Since 2007, nearly \$5.4 million has been awarded by the River Fund and the utility in support of 112 projects totaling more than \$8.6 million in recreation enhancements in the Missouri-Madison Corridor.

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.

A list of projects can be found at <http://www.missourimadison.com>, a website dedicated to the Missouri-Madison Recreation. More information about NorthWestern Energy and its hydroelectric facilities can be found at www.northwesternenergy.com.

About NorthWestern Energy (NYSE: NWE)

NorthWestern Energy provides electricity and natural gas in the Upper Midwest and Northwest, serving approximately 678,200 customers in Montana, South Dakota and Nebraska. More information on NorthWestern Energy is available on the company's website at www.northwesternenergy.com.

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