

# **PPL Montana Announces 2012 Funding for Fisheries, Wildlife and Habitat Enhancement Projects on Madison and Missouri Rivers**

PPL Montana

As part of its Project 2188 commitment to river stewardship and conservation, PPL Montana is providing \$1.3 million this year to support 39 fisheries, wildlife and habitat improvement projects within the 525-mile corridor of the Madison-Missouri River from Yellowstone National Park to the headwaters of Fort Peck Reservoir.

“This program is a great example of how cooperation between state, federal and local government, private landowners, and business can enhance river conservation objectives,” said Jon Jourdonnais, PPL Montana’s manager of Hydro Licensing and Compliance.

This year alone, PPL Montana will collaborate with seven different government agencies, 10 private landowners and nine conservation groups on stewardship projects.

The Project 2188 stewardship program was initiated in 2000 in consultation with state and federal resource agencies to offset resource effects from PPL Montana’s nine hydroelectric projects on the Madison and Missouri rivers.

“A big advantage is that PPL Montana’s private funds can secure matching funds from state and federal grant programs,” Jourdonnais said. “So, in many cases, PPL Montana provides the seeds from which much larger beneficial conservation projects grow.”

This year’s funding from PPL Montana will leverage an additional \$2.1 million in outside matching funds and in-kind donations, resulting in a total of \$3.3 million for river resource stewardship. Projects are required to have an agency sponsor and must be consistent with current fisheries and wildlife Project 2188 work plans approved by agencies and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

Habitat protection and enhancement projects are a high priority for the program, and funds are being provided this year for a number of significant habitat improvement projects.

Here’s a look at them:

- The continuation of a major project that has already enhanced and restored 500 acres of prime wetlands and nearly seven miles of spring creek habitat over the past eight years in O’Dell Creek, a tributary to the Madison River near Ennis.
- Valuable streamside fish and wildlife habitat along several miles of the Missouri River below Holter Dam near Craig and Big Prickly Pear Creek near Helena will also be protected and enhanced by installing fencing and watering facilities to control livestock grazing in these sensitive areas.
- Funding for acquisition of a conservation easement that will protect four miles of riverfront and 800 acres of prime river bottom habitat along the Missouri River a few miles upstream from Great Falls.
- Merritt Spring Creek and Big Prickly Pear Creek in the Helena Valley, Little Prickly Pear Creek near the town of Wolf Creek on the lower Madison River, wetlands near Loma, and protection of important shoreline habitat at Hebgen Lake.
- Ongoing annual support for a cooperative project that focuses on recovery of endangered pallid sturgeon in the Missouri River upstream from Fort Peck Reservoir.
- Funding to protect and enhance native westslope cutthroat trout, a species of special concern in Montana.
- Fish and wildlife population monitoring and research on hundreds of miles of river in cooperation with state and federal agencies.
- Funding for University of Montana researchers to continue the first and only long-term monitoring of Montana neotropical migrant songbird numbers in riverside areas along a 450-mile stretch of the Madison

and Missouri Rivers.

- Funding for research and special projects to better understand and manage fish and wildlife resources in the Madison/Missouri drainage areas.

Special projects to be conducted in 2012 include an investigation of mountain whitefish biology in the Madison River; monitoring of aquatic plants and waterfowl in Hebgen and Ennis reservoirs and Lake Helena; evaluation of rainbow trout stocking and walleye harvest in Holter Reservoir; determination of seasonal movements of pallid sturgeon and catfish in the Missouri River below Great Falls; investigation of walleye reproduction below Hauser and Holter dams; and a survey of anglers downstream from Hauser Dam.

PPL Montana provides safe, reliable energy from coal-fired power plants at Colstrip and Billings, as well as 11 hydroelectric plants along West Rosebud Creek and the Missouri, Madison, Clark Fork and Flathead rivers. It has a combined generating capacity of more than 1,200 megawatts and has offices in Billings, Butte and Helena. PPL Montana and its 500 employees are dedicated to Montana and its communities, supporting educational, environmental and economic development programs across the state. PPL EnergyPlus operates a trading floor in Butte that markets and sells power for PPL Montana in wholesale and retail energy markets throughout the western United States. PPL Montana and PPL EnergyPlus are subsidiaries of PPL Corporation (NYSE: PPL). For more information, visit [www.pplmontana.com](http://www.pplmontana.com).

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