

# **PPL Montana Announces 2013 Funding for Fisheries, Wildlife and Habitat Enhancement Projects on the Madison and Missouri Rivers**

PPL Montana

As part of its commitment to environmental stewardship and conservation, PPL Montana is providing \$1.2 million this year to support 40 fisheries, wildlife and habitat improvement projects within the 550-mile corridor of the Madison-Missouri River from Yellowstone National Park to the headwaters of Fort Peck Reservoir in 2013.

"This stewardship program was initiated in 2000, in cooperation with state and federal resource agencies, to monitor and offset any potential effects from the nine hydroelectric projects we operate on the Madison and Missouri rivers," said Jon Jourdonnais, PPL Montana's manager of Hydro Licensing and Compliance.

"The program has been extremely effective and is a great example of cooperation between state, federal and local government; private landowners; and non-governmental organizations to meet river conservation objectives," he said. "This year we will be collaborating with 12 different government agencies, five private landowners and three different non-governmental conservation groups on these projects. A big advantage is that we provide private funds, which often serve as seed money to secure matching funds from state and federal grant programs."

This year's funding from PPL Montana will leverage an additional \$1.9 million in outside matching funds and in-kind donations, resulting in a total of \$3.2 million for river resource stewardship in 2013.

Habitat improvement is a high priority for the program. Projects are planned this year to improve willow habitat near Hebgen Lake and to enhance habitat on Spokane and Tenmile creeks in the Helena Valley, Cottonwood and Little Prickly Pear creeks, and the Missouri River below Holter Dam.

Work will continue on a highly successful project that has already enhanced and restored 662 acres of prime wetlands and nine miles of high-quality spring creek habitat over the past nine years on O'Dell Creek, a tributary to the Madison River near Ennis.

Another significant part of PPL's program is to protect and enhance endangered species and species of special concern. Three projects will be initiated to protect and establish genetically pure populations of native westslope cutthroat trout in Cabin Creek (Madison drainage) and Sixteenmile and Dry Fork Belt creeks in the Missouri drainage. Funding will be provided for the release of more juvenile trumpeter swans with a goal of establishing five breeding pairs in the upper Madison River Valley.

Fish and wildlife population monitoring and research are also important parts of this program.

"Monitoring is a huge challenge in such a large and diverse system, including nine reservoirs and more than 500 miles of river," Jourdonnais said. "We provide substantial funding and work very closely with the state and federal agencies, particularly the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, to maintain excellent long-term fish and wildlife databases that provide useful management information and gauge the overall health of the system."

The PPL program also funds research and special projects to better understand and manage fish and wildlife resources in the Madison/Missouri drainage. Special projects to be conducted in 2013 include investigating moose populations and nesting bald eagles near Hebgen Reservoir; evaluating spawning of endangered pallid sturgeon and other species in the Missouri River below Great Falls; investigating walleye reproduction below Canyon Ferry and Holter dams; and surveying 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). More information about PPL Montana is available at [www.pplmontana.com](http://www.pplmontana.com).

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