

**MISSOURI-MADISON RIVER FUND RECREATION PROJECT
FY2024 GRANT APPLICATION FORM**

Project Name: Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center and Giant Springs State Park interpretive trail and recreation signs

Reservoir or River Segment: Great Falls County(ies) Cascade

Site Name (or project location): Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center and Giant Springs State Park

Applicant Name: Rory Glueckert

Position and Agency: Forest Recreation Program Manager

Telephone: (406) 459-9391

Email: rory.glueckert@usda.gov

Project Sponsor Name: Duane Buchi

Position and Agency: Center Director

Telephone: (406) 727-8733

Email: duane.buchi@usda.gov

Project Cost Breakdown and Financial Request:

Complete the financial section below by providing total project cost (to the nearest dollar), contributions by applicant and cooperators, request for NorthWestern Energy match of agency funds (see detailed instruction), 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.

Total project cost:	<u>\$22,500</u>	
Applicant Contributions – cash	<u>\$</u>	
Applicant Contributions – value of in-kind:	<u>\$3,500</u>	
Montana Conservation Corps (Great American Outdoors Act)	<u>\$2,500 (labor installation)</u>	
Lewis and Clark Foundation	<u>\$500 (cash) \$500 in kind labor</u>	
Giant Springs State Park	<u>\$500 (in kind labor)</u>	
		Percentage of Total Project Cost:
Total Applicant and Other Contributions:	<u>\$7,500</u>	<u>33%</u>
NorthWestern Energy Match Request:	<u>\$6,500</u>	<u>29%</u>
River Fund Grant Request:	<u>\$8,500</u>	<u>38%</u>
Proposed Project Implementation Period:	<u>Spring 2024</u>	

**MISSOURI-MADISON RIVER FUND RECREATION PROJECT
FY2024 GRANT APPLICATION FORM**

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.

2. **Project Description:** Provide a description of the proposed project. Be sure to include specific project elements that are planned, and any associated cost detail.

▶ In the summer of 2023, the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center (LCIC) celebrated its 25th year serving the community of Great Falls and visitors nationally. The Center typically welcomes at least 50,000 visitors per year. In recent years with the assistance of upgrades in the Centers parking lot including lighting and resurfacing the aggregate the LCIC has started to become a popular trailhead for visitors to the Great Falls area. This proposal would be to replace the 30 interpretive, educational and trail signs on the trails around the LCIC property and around the Giant Springs State Park trails system. There are 18 signs on the LCIC trails system and 12 signs at Giant Springs State Park needing replaced. This would also include three larger interpretive panels at the LCIC. These signs are currently 25 years old and weathered to where they are not legible and not serving the public. This proposal would be to create new signs using the original masters and utilizing a local vendor in Great Falls to produce those signs. The reprints when needed in the future would be significantly less and cost effective for future maintenance. The Forest Service will be partnering with Giant Springs State Park working collaboratively to install all the signs. Giant Springs State Park aims to contribute \$500 dollars of in kind labor for the installation of signs. The Forest Service also will partner with the Lewis and Clark Foundation. The Foundation will contribute \$500 in cash for sign and material purchases and an additional \$500 for in-kind labor for installation. The Forest Service also intends to partner with the Montana Conservation Corps for sign installation and labor. Through the Great American Outdoors Act and established partnerships, the Montana Conservation Corps will mobilize to the project location to assist Forest Service staff in the installation of these signs. It is estimated that in-kind labor that a full trail crew would contribute to assist in sign installation would be \$2,500.

3. **Project Phasing:** Briefly discuss whether the project could be phased over more than one year or construction season.

▶ The goal would be to get this project completed in 2024.

4. **Cultural Resource Management:** Cultural Resource Management (CRM) requirements for any activity related to this Project must be completed and documented to NorthWestern Energy as a condition of awarded River Fund grant funds or NorthWestern Energy matching funds. Grant and matching funds may not be used for any land-disturbing activity, or the modification, renovation, or removal of any buildings or structures until the CRM consultation process has been completed. 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. Private parties and non-governmental organizations may also contact the NorthWestern Energy representative for further information or assistance. Applications submitted without this section completed will be held without any action until the information has been submitted.

Summarize how you will complete requirements for Cultural Resource Management.

▶ There will be no CRM requirements for this project.

5. **Scoring Criteria.** Respond to the following Scoring Criteria. Put answers in the cell after ►.

5.1 Does the project occur at a 2188 license site?

► Yes

5.2 Project is for operation and maintenance of an existing recreation site. Describe if the project will meet operation and maintenance needs. Higher points awarded to projects that are higher priority and are not a recurring expense. Lower points awarded to projects that are low priority and/or have been previously funded. It is unlikely that the timeframe of River Fund would address emergency operation and maintenance needs but could support non-emergency operation and maintenance needs.

► This project is within in the footprint of the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center public access as well as Giant Springs State Park. The sign installation is directly correlated with the maintenance of the facility and its recreational infrastructure in and around the grounds. The interpretive, educational and trail signs are currently not legible, falling apart and are not serving the public visiting the area. These proposed maintenance upgrades would directly enhance the continued maintenance of the LCIC and Giant Springs State Park facility and recreation infrastructure on the grounds.

5.3 Project involves collaboration with other agencies or organizations. Identify project partners other than NorthWestern 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 NorthWestern Energy matching funds. If there are no project partners, explain why.

► The Forest Service will be partnering with Giant Springs State Park working collaboratively to install all the signs. Giant Springs State Park aims to contribute \$500 dollars of in kind labor for the installation of signs. The Forest Service intends to partner with the Lewis and Clark Foundation. The Foundation will contribute \$500 in cash for sign and material purchases and an additional \$500 for in-kind labor for installation. The Forest Service also intends to partner with the Montana Conservation Corps for sign installation labor. Through the Great American Outdoors Act and established partnerships, the Montana Conservation Corps will mobilize to the project area to assist Forest Service staff in the installation of these signs. It is estimated that in-kind labor that a full trail crew would contribute to assisting sign installation would be \$2,500.

5.4 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 and describe how the project specifically addresses issues and goals in Chapter 2-1 of the CRP.

► The primary goal related to this project is to “provide safe and well-managed recreation sites and dispersed use areas that provide enjoyable user experiences across a spectrum of opportunities and seasons.” More specific opportunities identified during the CRP planning process and subsequent updates included more developed interpretative and educational opportunities. This project would enhance and increase those interpretive and educational opportunities for the visiting public on the trails system around the LCIC and Giant Springs State Park. New updated signs could be enjoyed by visitors for the foreseeable future.

5.5 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.

- ▶ The current condition of the interpretive, educational and trail signs are in very poor condition. These signs are not serving the public by providing well maintained recreational opportunities for the public to enjoy those opportunities. There has been many of our visitors asking for those materials to be readily available. This project aims to meet the need of the desired condition at the LCIC, Giants Springs State Park and public demand. Maintenance in the future would be minimal and signs are estimated to last at least 10 years. Also, future maintenance of replacing individual signs would be purchased at a significant lower cost than the initial creation of the templates.

5.6 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, demonstrate that the project has been well vetted, and include cost estimates.

- ▶ This project has been vetted among staff internally and externally. Coordination with Giant Springs State Park has occurred and has been effective. The Center intends to utilize original sign masters to aid in creation of the new material. The LCIC has reached out to multiple entities for cost estimates and logistics for bringing these interpretive signs to life. A local vendor has been identified through this process with a detailed cost estimate. Potential material inflation and sign creation has been added in the project costs as well as alternative Forest Service funding sources for cost increases have been identified for potential increased costs.

5.7 Project supports or protects other resources and is consistent with or supports resource plans in the Project Area. Describe how this project will protect resource values (such as public access, water quality, fisheries, wildlife, habitats, and cultural resources) and support other resource and agency plans, including Project 2188 License plans and land use and land management plans in place in the Corridor. Management plans should provide justification for the project.

- ▶ This project supports multiple resources that are interdisciplinary with the interpretation of natural and cultural resources. Public access would be improved with this project and an increase in recreational opportunities for the public. In the 2021 Helena-Lewis National Forest management plan the desired conditions for the center and the historic trails around the center include:

Desired Conditions (FW-LCIC-DC)

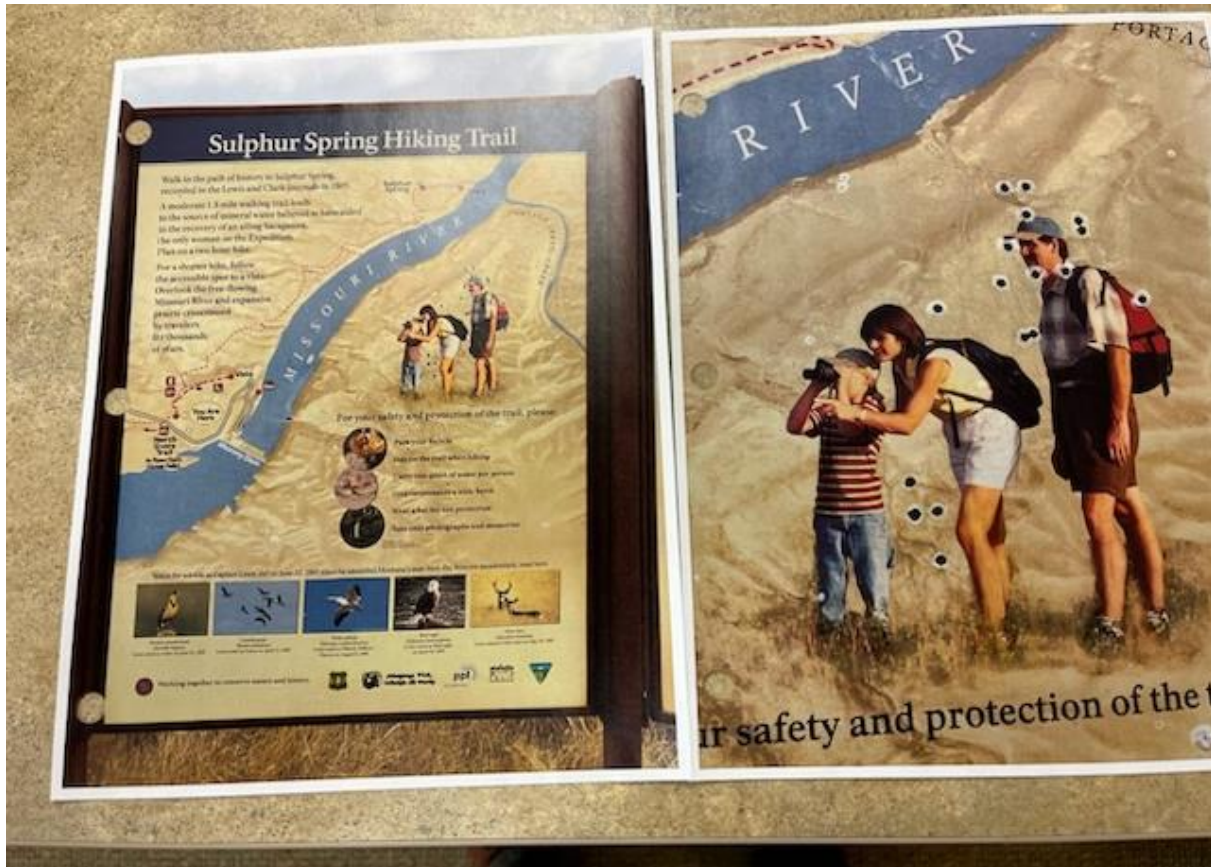
01 Interpretation and education programming at the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail Interpretive Center enhance visitor understanding and appreciation for the history surrounding the journey of Lewis and Clark through central Montana landscapes during the years of 1805-1806.

02 Interpretive and education themes at the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail Interpretive Center focus on early exploration (Lewis and Clark), Native American history, mining, trapping, agricultural settlement, and the natural resources found throughout the area. Interpretation and education themes include natural resources management and history within the surrounding national forest.

This project would meet these desired conditions described in the forest plan.

6. Insert map(s) showing the location of the proposed project, drawings and design work related to the project, and a reasonable number of photos (as available) here.

Current Sign Conditions:



Vicinity of Interpretive Displays: Black Eagle Dam to Morony Dam, Great Falls, MT

