

**MISSOURI-MADISON RIVER FUND GRANT  
FY2026 APPLICATION SCORING CRITERIA**

Projects will be scored on the following items by the Regional Working Groups. Project scoring is not to be completed by the applicant when the application is submitted.

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Points</b>	<b>Scoring Techniques</b>
5.1: Project occurs at a 2188 site.	0-10	10 points if yes, 0 points if no. For projects that occur at multiple sites that are a mix of 2188 and non-2188 sites, partial points may be awarded.
5.2: Project is for operation and maintenance of an existing recreation site.	0-15	Up to 15 points awarded for projects that meet operation and maintenance needs. Higher points should be awarded to projects that are higher priority and are not a recurring expense. Lower points will be awarded to projects that are low priority and/or have been previously funded. Projects that have been previously funded will only receive high points if they can demonstrate the unique nature of the request and demonstrate efforts to reduce or eliminate recurring requests. Reviewers should bear in mind that this funding cycle does not align well with dire “emergency” funding requests (such as rebuilding a road that was washed out during spring flooding to provide current-year access and allow for opening of a site, for instance) but could support non-emergency operation and maintenance needs (such as replacement of fencing that is nearly rotted through that will suffice for another year or two, for instance).
5.3: Project involves collaboration with other agencies or organizations.	0-20	Higher points awarded for strong partnerships that strengthen the project through funding or in-kind means such as labor, materials, funding, equipment, survey and design, or other in-kind means. Applicants are strongly encouraged to reach out to public and private non-governmental organizations (NGOs) for support.
5.4: Project provides a benefit to public recreation in the Project Area and addresses specific issues/goals of the Missouri-Madison Comprehensive Recreation Plan (CRP).	0-15	Higher points awarded for a clear, direct relationship to identified issues and goals, and the degree of increased or improved benefit to public recreation related to those goals. The CRP can be found at <a href="https://northwesternenergy.com/recreation">https://northwesternenergy.com/recreation</a>
5.5: Project responds to a clearly identified need.	0-20	Higher points awarded for clear documentation of need for the project (“need to do” projects versus “nice to do” projects) and effectiveness of project response to the identified need. Documentation of need can include information from the managers’ and visitor surveys and visitation data conducted by NorthWestern Energy), data from other sources or agencies, and/or input from the recreating public and user groups. Applicants should provide information on other existing resources as relevant, including private sector activities that provide similar services.
5.6: Project design options have been considered, estimated, and a preferred design selected.	0-15	Higher points awarded for detailed designs that demonstrate an applicant’s commitment to the project. High points may also be awarded for projects seeking design funds ahead of construction funds when budgets don’t allow for detailed designs to be generated.
5.7: Project supports or protects other resources and is consistent with or supports other plans in the Project Area.	0-10	Higher points awarded for clear demonstration of support for other resources and other resource plans related to public access, water quality, fisheries, wildlife, habitats, land use, land management, cultural resources, and Project 2188 License plans other than the CRP. Justification for the project should be explicitly tied to priorities in resource plans (i.e. “this project supports the Forest Plan by X, Y, and Z” and not simply “this project supports the priorities of the Forest Plan” for instance).
5.8: Application quality and project clarity	0-5	Application is of high quality, clearly provides project details, and portrays a well-vetted project.
<b>Total possible points</b>	<b>110</b>	