019-2021



II.

**FUTURE FISHERIES IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM GRANT APPLICATION** All sections must be addressed, or the application will be considered invalid

#### **APPLICANT INFORMATION** I.

| Α. | Applicant Name:                           | Placid Lake Association    | Contact     | : Alan Davis - | PLA Board Member                 |
|----|---|----------------------------|-------------|----------------|----------------------------------|
|    | Mailing Address:                          | P.O. Box 1522              |             |                |                                  |
|    | City: Seeley Lak                          | ke                         | State:      | MT             | Zip: <u>59868</u>                |
|    | Telephone: 406-                           | 439-2754                   | E-mail:     | Balan.davis    | s@outlook.com                    |
| В. | Contact Person (if                        | different than applicant): |             |                |                                  |
|    | Address:                                  |                            |             |                |                                  |
|    | City:                                     |                            | State:      |                | Zip:                             |
|    | Telephone:                                |                            | E-mail:     |                |                                  |
| C. | Landowner and/or<br>(if different than ap |                            |             |                |                                  |
|    | Mailing Address:                          |                            |             |                |                                  |
|    | City:                                     |                            | State:      |                | Zip:                             |
|    | Telephone:                                |                            | E-mail:     |                |                                  |
| PR |   |                            |             |                |                                  |
| A. | Project Name: Er                          | hancement of Fish Pass     | age Barrier | at Placid Lak  | e Dam                            |
|    | River, stream, or la                      | ke: Placid Lake / Owl (    | Creek       |                |                                  |
|    | Location: Townsl                          | hip: <u>16N</u>            | Range:      | 15W            | Section: 28, SE1/4               |
|    | Latitud                                   | e: 47.1098                 | Longitude   | : -113.4976    | vithin project (decimal degrees, |
|    | County: Missoula                          | L                          |             |                |                                  |
| В. | Purpose of Project:                       | :                          |             |                |                                  |



and trib system

The proposed project would retro-fit the existing outlet dam on Placid Lake to enhance its ability to exclude Northern Pike and other invasive fish species present below the site, while maintaining its function as a water management and flood control structure for lakeshore owners. Placid Lake and its outlet stream (Owl Creek) represent a peripheral tributary drainage that flows into the main stem Clearwater Lake and River system. The main stem system has several illegally introduced fish species that have not become established in Placid Lake – the most impactful being Northern Pike. Northern Pike have been documented several times at the base of the Placid Lake outlet dam and one adult was captured by FWP in Placid Lake last summer. No other northern pike have been observed in ongoing, subsequent surveys and monitoring since that time.

Placid Lake is an extremely productive natural glacial lake that supports westslope cutthroat trout, bull trout, kokanee, and other wild salmonid populations, as well as introduced brown trout and largemouth bass. However, the most unique aspect of the fish community is the massive biomass of native prey species including peamouth chub, mountain whitefish, largescale and longnose sucker, and northern pikeminnow. Northern pike would undoubtedly explode in numbers and biomass, and decimate this fish species assemblage if the population became established.

Although the Placid Lake outlet dam was not designed or intended to act as an upstream fish passage barrier, it has successfully excluded northern pike and other introduced species for the past 25+ years. However, a recent high flow event (~1 in 25 yr) exposed the vulnerability of the lake to northern pike immigration from downstream – particularly during high flow events.

The current proposal would enhance fish passage barrier attributes of the dam structure by (A) increasing the vertical height that upstream migrating fish would have to ascend, (B) creating a vertical drop within the overflow spillway, and (C) enhancing scour protection and stability of the dam. This would be accomplished by lowering the base elevation of the pool below the dam (by removing grade control riffle) and by creating a vertical drop and outflow pad in the overflow spillway area (only active during flood events). Proposed improvements would not directly influence dam, other than placement of additional oversized rip rap at base to enhance long term stability.

C. Brief Project Description (attach additional information to end of application):

|    | See Section II B above and attachments                                     |        |                                    |  |
|----|--|--------|------------------------------------|--|
|    |  |        |                                    |  |
|    |  |        |                                    |  |
|    |  |        |                                    |  |
|    |  |        |                                    |  |
|    |  |        |                                    |  |
| D. | Length of stream or size of lake that will be treated (project extent):    |        | x 70 m area<br>iately below outlet |  |
|    | Length/size of impact, if larger than project extent (e.g. stream miles op | ened): | 1300 acre lake                     |  |

## 019-2021

#### E. Project Budget:

| Grant Request (Dollars):                   | \$  | 10,020                                |
|--|-----|---------------------------------------|
| Matching Dollars:                          | \$  | 5,000                                 |
| Matching In-Kind Services:*                | \$  | 6,800                                 |
| *salaries of government employees          | are | not considered matching contributions |
| Other Contributions (not part of this app) | \$  |                                       |
| Total Project Cost:                        | \$  | 21,820                                |
|  |     |                                       |

- F. Attach itemized (line item) budget see budget template
- G. **Insert** or **attach** a project location map showing the project area in relation to a major landmark or town. Please indicate if the project location is on public or private property.

The project is located in Missoula County, near the city of Seeley Lake, Montana. The dam is located at the outlet of Placid Lake (see attached satellite view map). Outflow (Owl Creek) from Placid Lake enters the Clearwater River main stem ~ 3 miles downstream of the lake.

Dam and surrounding property are owned by the Placid Lake Assoc. The dam was originally built by the Placid Lake Cabin Owners Association, which officially incorporated as the Placid Lake Association last year in order to be able to secure liability insurance on the dam.

**Attach** specific project plans (e.g. detailed sketches, plan views [showing location and type of channel modifications], example photographs), current condition photographs, and maps. \**If* 

- H. channel modifications], example photographs), current condition photographs, and maps. \**If* project involves water leasing or water salvage complete and attach a supplemental questionnaire (*fwp.mt.gov/habitat/futurefisheries/supplement2.doc*).
- I. **Attach** letters or statements of support. This includes landowner consent, community or public support, and fish biologist support.
- The project agreement includes a 20-year maintenance commitment. Please indicate (yes or no) J that you will ensure project protection for 20 years. Discuss your ability to meet this commitment

that you will ensure project protection for 20 years. Discuss your ability to meet this commitment. Yes x No

The Placid Lake Assoc. owns dam and surrounding property, and regularly maintains structure.

K. **Describe** or **attach** land management & maintenance plans, including changing to grazing regimes, that will ensure protection of the restored area.

Dam and surrounding site are owned and maintained by the Placid Lake Assoc. Structure and adjacent reaches have been successfully managed and maintained for decades. Designated maintenance personnel are in place and dam has recently been inspected by DNRC engineer.

- III. PROJECT BENEFITS (attach additional information to end of application):
  - A. What species of fish will benefit from this project?

Adfluvial bull trout, westslope cutthroat trout and mountain whitefish Kokanee salmon (wild population supplemented with low level stocking) Native nongame prey species including peamouth chub, largescale sucker, longnose sucker, northern pikeminnow, etc. Brown trout and largemouth bass also present but benefits are unknown.

- Brown trout and largemouth bass also present but benefits are unknown
- B. How will the project protect or enhance wild fish habitat?

Project will help protect major recent investments in tributary fish passage and habitat enhancement for native trout (e.g. Boles Creek diversion upgrades and fish screen funded by FFIP) and protect major investments in watershed level habitat acquisitions by FWP, US Forest Service and Nature Conservancy in Placid Cr drainage (> 5,000 acres).

Improving barrier will directly improve security of fish community in Placid Lake.

C. Will the project improve fish populations and/or fishing? To what extent?

Project will protect the quality and integrity of existing fish populations and fisheries. This includes conservation populations of migratory bull trout and Westslope cutthroat trout, Kokanee and Westslope cutthroat trout sport fisheries, as well as nongame populations that are important components of the food web.

D. Will the project increase public fishing opportunity for wild fish and, if so, how?

Project will protect existing, viable trout, salmon, and other sport fisheries and fishing opportunity.

Although invasion by species like northern pike would provide alternative fishing opportunity, it would likely be at the expense of existing fisheries and native fish populations as evidenced by northern pike impacts at neighboring Salmon and Seeley Lakes. These changes would likely be permanent in a lake this size.

E. What was the cause of habitat degradation in the area of this project and how will the project correct the cause?

#### Largely N/A.

Proposed project addresses biological threat of nonnative fish invasion by enhancing existing barrier that mitigates these impacts. Barrier has been effective for more than 2 decades but vulnerability evident during high flow events.

F. What public benefits will be realized from this project?

Protection of Placid Lake fisheries resources from northern pike and other new fish invasions that would likely be permanent once new species are established in lake and watershed.

G. Will the project interfere with water or property rights of adjacent landowners? (explain):

No. Dam and surrounding property is owned by the Placid Lake Assoc. Footprint of project is relatively small with no anticipated downstream or upstream physical impacts.

H. Will the project result in the development of commercial recreational use on the site? (explain):

No.

I. Is this project associated with the reclamation of past mining activity?

| No. |  |  |  |
|-----|--|--|--|
|     |  |  |  |

Each approved project applicant must enter into a written agreement with Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks specifying terms and duration of the project. The applicant must obtain all applicable permits prior to project construction. A competitive bid process must be followed when using State funds.

## **IV. AUTHORIZING STATEMENT**

I (we) hereby declare that the information and all statements to this application are true, complete, and accurate to the best of my (our) knowledge and that the project or activity complies with rules of the Future Fisheries Improvement Program.

alon i a Applicant Signature: PLA Board Date: 5/28/2021

Sponsor (if applicable): Placid Lake Association

Submittal: Applications must be *signed and received before* December 1 and June 1 of each year to be considered for the subsequent funding period. Late or incomplete applications will be rejected.

| Mail to: | FWP Future Fisheries  | Email: | Future Fisheries Coordinator                            |
|----------|-----------------------|--------|---|
|          | Fish Habitat Bureau   |        | FWPFFIP@mt.gov  |
|          | PO Box 200701         |        | (electronic submissions must be signed)                 |
|          | Helena, MT 59620-0701 |        | For files over 10MB, use <u>https://transfer.mt.gov</u> |
|          |                       |        |   |

Applications may be rejected if this form is modified.

Attachments: Budget Template Map, site plan and project photos Letters of Support

# BUDGET TEMPLATE SHEET FOR FUTURE FISHERIES PROGRAM APPLICATIONS

Both tables must be completed or the application will be returned

| PROJECT COSTS                       |                    |                      |                 |          |            |    | CONTRIBUTIONS   |     |                           |  |          |           |  |  |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-----------------|----------|------------|----|-----------------|-----|---------------------------|--|----------|-----------|--|--|
| WORK ITEMS (Itemize<br>by Category) | NUMBER OF<br>UNITS | UNIT<br>DESCRIPTION* | COST/UNIT       |          | TOTAL COST |    | FISHERIES       |     | .TCH (Cash<br>Services)** | OTHER<br>(Not part of this<br>application) |          | TOTAL     |  |  |
| Personnel***                        |                    | •                    |                 |          |            |    |                 |     |                           | •  |          |           |  |  |
| Survey                              | 8                  | hrs.                 | \$110 / hr.     | \$       | 880.00     |    |                 |     | 880.00                    |  | \$       | 880.00    |  |  |
| Design                              | 12                 | hrs.                 | \$110 / hr.     | \$       | 1,320.00   |    |                 | \$  | 1,320.00                  |  | \$       | 1,320.00  |  |  |
| Engineering                         | 8                  | hrs.                 | \$110 / hr.     | \$       | 880.00     |    |                 | \$  | 880.00                    |  | \$       | 880.00    |  |  |
| Permitting                          | 8                  | hrs.                 | \$50 / hr.      | \$       | 400.00     |    |                 | \$  | 400.00                    |  | \$       | 400.00    |  |  |
| Oversight                           | 32                 | hrs.                 | \$110 / hr.     | \$       | 3,520.00   |    |                 | \$  | 3,520.00                  |  | \$       | 3,520.00  |  |  |
|                                     |                    |                      |                 | \$       | -          |    |                 |     |                           |  | \$       | -         |  |  |
|                                     |                    |                      | Sub-Total       | \$       | 7,000.00   | \$ | -               | \$  | 7,000.00                  | \$-  | \$       | 7,000.00  |  |  |
| <u>Travel</u>                       |                    | T                    | r1              |          |            |    |                 | 1   |                           | T  |          |           |  |  |
| Mileage                             |                    |                      |                 | \$       | -          |    |                 |     |                           |  | \$       | -         |  |  |
| Per diem                            |                    |                      |                 | \$       | -          |    |                 |     |                           |  | \$       | -         |  |  |
|                                     |                    |                      | Sub-Total       | \$       | -          | \$ | -               | \$  | -                         | \$-  | \$       | -         |  |  |
| Construction Materials              |                    | T                    | r1              |          |            |    |                 | 1   |                           | T  |          |           |  |  |
| Lg Rock Rip Rap                     | 30                 | су                   | \$35 / cy       | \$       | 1,050.00   |    |                 |     | 1,050.00                  |  | \$       | 1,050.00  |  |  |
| Forms & Concrete                    |                    |                      | <b>*</b> •••••• | •        |            |    | <b>*</b> •••••• |     |                           |  |          |           |  |  |
| (overflow barrier)                  | 1                  | lump                 | \$9,300.00      |          | 9,300.00   |    | \$9,300         |     |                           |  | \$       | 9,300.00  |  |  |
|                                     |                    |                      |                 | \$       | -          |    |                 |     |                           |  | \$       | -         |  |  |
|                                     |                    |                      |                 | \$       | -          |    |                 |     |                           |  | \$       | -         |  |  |
|                                     |                    |                      |                 | \$       | -          |    |                 |     |                           |  | \$       | -         |  |  |
|                                     |                    |                      |                 | \$<br>\$ | -          |    |                 |     |                           |  | \$       | -         |  |  |
|                                     |                    |                      |                 | Դ<br>\$  | -          |    |                 |     |                           |  | \$<br>\$ | -         |  |  |
|                                     |                    |                      |                 | Դ<br>\$  | -          |    |                 |     |                           |  | \$       | -         |  |  |
|                                     |                    |                      | Sub-Total       | Գ<br>\$  | 10,350.00  | ¢  | 9,300.00        | ¢   | 1,050.00                  | \$-  | \$       | 10,350.00 |  |  |
| Equipment, Labor, and               | Mobilization       |                      | Sub-Total       | φ        | 10,350.00  | φ  | 9,300.00        | φ   | 1,030.00                  | φ -  | ψ        | 10,350.00 |  |  |
| Tracked Excavator                   |                    | Hours                | \$125 / hr.     | \$       | 2,250.00   |    |                 | \$  | 2,250.00                  | 1  | \$       | 2,250.00  |  |  |
| Dump Truck (10 yd)                  |                    |                      | \$90 / hr.      | \$       | 1,140.00   |    |                 | \$  | 1,140.00                  |  | \$       | 1,140.00  |  |  |
| Equip Mob / Demob                   |                    | Hours                | \$90 / hr.      | \$       | 360.00     |    |                 | \$  | 360.00                    |  | \$       | 360.00    |  |  |
| Prep - Concrete Pour                |                    | Hours                | \$90 / hr.      | \$       | 720.00     | \$ | 720.00          | · • |                           |  | \$       | 720.00    |  |  |
| · ·                                 |                    |                      |                 | \$       | -          |    |                 |     |                           |  | \$       | -         |  |  |
|                                     |                    |                      |                 | \$       | -          |    |                 |     |                           |  | \$       | -         |  |  |
|                                     |                    |                      |                 | \$       | -          |    |                 |     |                           |  | \$       | -         |  |  |
|                                     |                    |                      |                 | \$       | -          |    |                 |     |                           |  | \$       | -         |  |  |
|                                     |                    |                      |                 | \$       | -          |    |                 |     |                           |  | \$       | -         |  |  |
|                                     |                    |                      |                 | \$       | -          |    |                 |     |                           |  | \$       | -         |  |  |
|                                     |                    |                      |                 | \$       | -          |    |                 |     |                           |  | \$       | -         |  |  |
|                                     |                    |                      | Sub-Total       | \$       | 4,470.00   | \$ | 720.00          |     | 3,750.00                  | \$-  | \$       | 4,470.00  |  |  |
|                                     |                    |                      | TOTALS          | \$       | 21,820.00  | \$ | 10,020.00       |     | 11,800.00                 | \$ -                                       | \$       | 21,820.00 |  |  |

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#### **OTHER REQUIREMENTS:**

All of the columns in the budget table and the matching contribution table MUST be completed appropriately or the application will be invalid. Please see the example budget sheet for additional clarification.

\*Units = feet, hours, inches, etc. Do not use lump sum unless there is no other way to describe the costs.

\*\*Can include in-kind materials. Justification for in-kind labor (e.g. hourly rates used). Do not use government salaries as match. Describe here or in text.

\*\*\*The Review Panel suggests that design and oversight costs associated with a proposed project not exceed 15% of the total project budget. If design and oversight costs are in excess of 15%, applications must include a justification or minimum of two competitive bids for the cost of undertaking the project.

\*\*\*\*The Review Panel recommends a maximum fencing cost of \$1.50 per foot. Additional costs may be the responsibility of the applicant and/or partners.

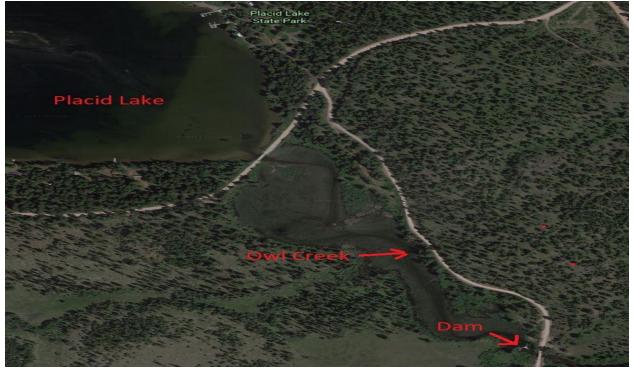
Additional details: FWP provided all cost estimates for this grant application. James Talcott Construction, Inc., a construction company in Great Falls, will provide the in-kind construction oversight. The Placid Lake Association will work with FWP to secure, from various sources, in-kind survey, design engineering and permitting services. The Placid Lake Association presently has the matching funds for this project.

| APPLICATION MATCHING CONTRIBUTIONS  |    |          |    |          |    |           |  |  |  |  |  |
|---|----|----------|----|----------|----|-----------|--|--|--|--|--|
| (do not include requested funds or contributions not associated with the application) |    |          |    |          |    |           |  |  |  |  |  |
| CONTRIBUTOR IN-KIND CASH TOTAL Secured? (Y/N)   |    |          |    |          |    |           |  |  |  |  |  |
| Placid Lake Association   | \$ | 3,280.00 | \$ | 5,000.00 | \$ | 8,280.00  |  |  |  |  |  |
| James Talcott Construction, Inc   | \$ | 3,520.00 | \$ | -        | \$ | 3,520.00  |  |  |  |  |  |
|   | \$ | -        | \$ | -        | \$ | -         |  |  |  |  |  |
|   | \$ | -        | \$ | -        | \$ | -         |  |  |  |  |  |
|   | \$ | -        | \$ | -        | \$ | -         |  |  |  |  |  |
|   | \$ | -        | \$ | -        | \$ | -         |  |  |  |  |  |
|   | \$ | -        | \$ | -        | \$ | -         |  |  |  |  |  |
|   | \$ | -        | \$ | -        | \$ | -         |  |  |  |  |  |
| TOTALS  | \$ | 6,800.00 | \$ | 5,000.00 | \$ | 11,800.00 |  |  |  |  |  |

| OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS<br>(contributions not associated with the application) |    |   |    |   |    |   |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|----|---|----|---|----|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| CONTRIBUTOR IN-KIND CASH TOTAL Secured? (Y/N)                              |    |   |    |   |    |   |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | \$ | - | \$ | - | \$ | - |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | \$ | - | \$ | - | \$ | - |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | \$ | - | \$ | - | \$ | - |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | \$ | - | \$ | - | \$ | - |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | \$ | - | \$ | - | \$ | - |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | \$ | - | \$ | - | \$ | - |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | \$ | - | \$ | - | \$ | - |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | \$ | - | \$ | - | \$ | - |  |  |  |  |  |
| TOTALS   | \$ | - | \$ | - | \$ | - |  |  |  |  |  |

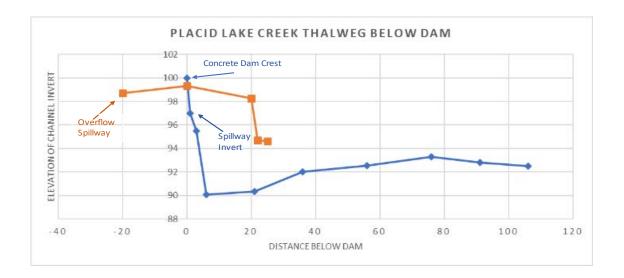
#### Placid Lake Association 2021 Application for Futures Fisheries Grant Attachment Map, Site Plan, and photos

#### Placid Lake Dam Barrier Enhancement Project Location

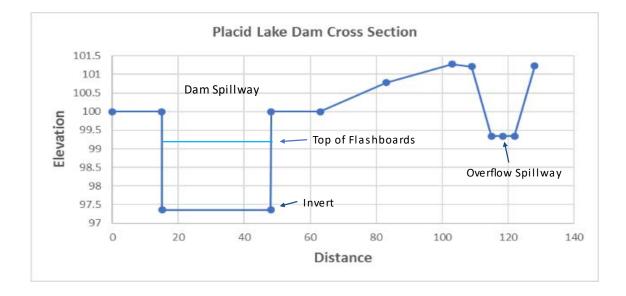


Placid Lake Dam Barrier Enhancement Project Site Plan

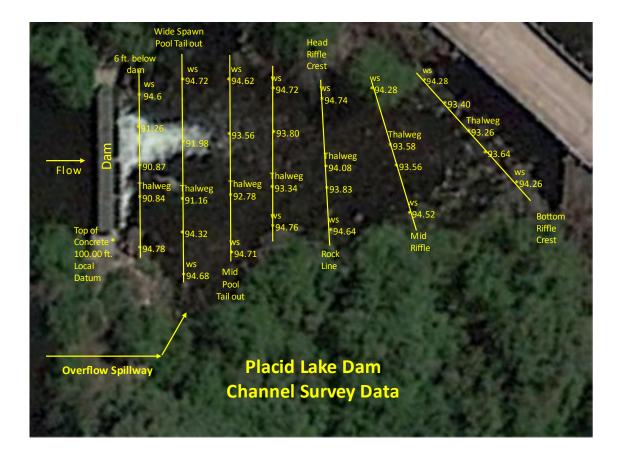




\*Top of Concrete Dam Crest, Elevation 100.00 ft., Local Datum. Drawing Not To Scale.

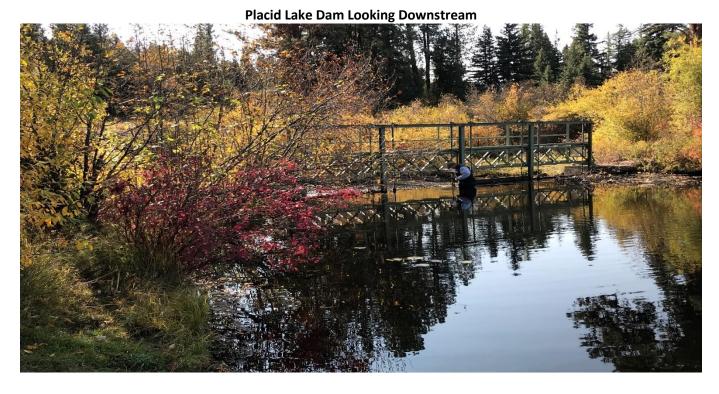


\*Top of Concrete Dam Crest, Elevation 100.00 ft., Local Datum. Drawing Not To Scale. +This view is looking downstream at the dam.



## Placid Lake Dam Looking Upstream









Placid Lake Dam Overflow Spillway from Below

Placid Lake Dam Overflow Spillway from Above



#### ATTACHMENT PLA FF APPLICATION LETTERS OF SUPPORT

Future Fisheries Program Manager Montana Fish Wildlife & Parks **Fisheries Division** 1420 E Sixth Ave Helena, MT 59620-0701

May 24, 2021

RE: Letter of support and access restrictions from the Placid Lake Association for a 2021 Future Fisheries Grant

#### Greetings,

The Placid Lake Association (PLA) Board met via Zoom on April 29, 2021 and approved submitting a grant proposal to the Future Fisheries Program to fund enhancing the fish passage barrier at the Placid Lake dam. The PLA owns the dam and has been working with FWP for the last few years to craft a solution to keep the Northern Pike out of Placid Lake. The grant proposal is to fund this solution. It includes a significant PLA funding commitment, which we are willing to provide as part of the proposal.

The very small footprint of the project site and surrounding areas, including Owl Creek, are open to public access. However, for liability reasons, the public is not allowed on the dam itself.

The PLA would like to thank Ladd Knotek for his ongoing efforts in working collaboratively with the Association to develop a solution to keep northern pike out of Placid Lake.

Thank you for considering the PLA request for Future Fisheries Funding. The PLA looks forward to a favorable response to our proposal and stands ready to work with FWP to implement it.

Sincerely,

Gary Dalton, PLA President

019-2021



FWP.MT.GOV

THE OUTSIDE IS IN US ALL.

Region 2 Headquarters 3201 Spurgin Road Missoula, MT 59804 Phone 406-542-5506 May 27, 2021

Future Fisheries Improvement Program C/O Michelle McGree Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks P.O. Box 200701 1420 E. 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue Helena, MT 59620

## RE: Placid Lake HOA FFIP Proposal - Outlet Dam Fish Barrier Enhancement

Dear Future Fisheries Committee Members:

This letter in written in support of the Placid Lake Homeowners Association's (HOA) application to modify the lake's outlet structure and enhance its viability as a fish migration barrier. Placid lake is a very productive water body that supports important native trout populations, unusually high prey species biomass, and provides a valuable sport fishery (details in application). The proposed project aims to protect those values from the threat of invasion by Northern Pike and other introduced fish species present in the lake and river system just below Placid Lake.

Although it was never intended to serve as a fish passage barrier, the Placid Lake outlet structure has adequately served that function (along with water and lake level management) for more than two decades. The most prominent threat to the lake ecosystem and its fish populations are Northern Pike that were illegally introduced into the main stem lake chain in the 1990s. They now dominate the fish community in those waters and have been detected several times in Owl Creek just downstream of Placid Lake. A single Northern Pike was also detected in Placid Lake for the first time last year. Numerous follow-up surveys and required reporting by anglers since that time have produced no additional Northern Pike.

The proposed, collaborative project will retrofit the existing outlet structure and enhance its ability to exclude Northern Pike and other unwanted fish species present downstream. Because of physical site constraints and limitations on water level management at the lake, construction of a new structure is not feasible or practical. Therefore, the option of modifying the current structure to enhance features that further inhibit fish passage was selected as the most feasible option. Project plans focus on increasing the vertical fall below the primary spillway, creating a vertical obstruction in the overflow spillway, and reinforcing the dam itself. Although the structure successfully prevented fish (N Pike) from entering the lake for decades, recent flood events and detection of a single pike in the lake exposed its vulnerability in the long term.

This project represents a somewhat unconventional FFIP funding application, but is a critical component in protecting the Placid Lake sport fishery and associated native fish populations. Montana FWP is a committed partner on this project, along with local homeowners and conservation groups. Please join us in supporting the project and feel free to contact me if you would like additional information regarding the lake, project history/status, or aquatic populations.

Sincerely,

W. Ladd Knotek Fisheries Management Biologist



The Nature Conservancy in Montana 32 South Ewing Street Helena, MT 59601

Tel (406) 443-0303 nature.org/montana Fax (406) 443-8311

May 24, 2021

Future Fisheries Grant Program Fish Habitat Bureau Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks PO Box 200701 Helena, MT 59620-0701

RE: Support for the Enhancement of Fish Passage Barrier at Placid Lake Dam

Dear FWP Future Fisheries Coordinator,

The Placid Lake Association (PLA) is applying for a Future Fisheries Program grant to help fund the enhancement of a fish passage barrier at Placid Lake Dam. This is a critical project, necessary to ensure the health and sustainability of the native fish assemblage of Placid Lake and its watershed.

TNC fully supports this project and PLA and Montana Fish, Wildlife and Park's efforts to secure native fish populations of this area. TNC owns/manages all of the lands around the Placid Lake Dam itself, as well as ~100,000-acres of adjoining lands. Our lands in the Placid Lake watershed are part of a 24+ year, 530,000-acre effort towards watershed restoration and protection that TNC has initiated in western Montana, under its Montana Forests program. The primary objective of our Montana Forest program is to restore and permanently protect lands for their significant forest, wildlife, fisheries and community values. This project perfectly aligns with this long-standing goal.

Please fully-fund this grant proposal. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jover K. Kholdel

Steven Kloetzel Western Montana Land Steward The Nature Conservancy in Montana 406-214-2036 <u>skloetzel@tnc.org</u>

Cons

Chris Bryant Western Montana Land Protection Director The Nature Conservancy in Montana 406-214-6437 <u>cbryant@tnc.org</u>



May 26, 2021

Dear Future Fisheries Committee:

Over the past year, CRC has worked with Ladd Knotek, Fish, Wildlife and Parks Fisheries Biologist and the Placid Lake Association to discuss how improvements could be made to the Placid Lake dam in order to project bull trout during high flows. These discussions have culminated in the grant now being proposed by the Placid Lake Association.

In the Clearwater Valley, and elsewhere in northwest Montana, bull trout habitat has been steadily degraded due in large part to the introduction of non-native predaceous fish, including but not limited to Northern pike. While the Placid Lake dam was originally constructed for flood control purposes, the dam has served as a barrier to invasive fish species, safeguarding one of the last bull trout strongholds in the Clearwater Valley. However, concerns have been raised that during high water events, invasive fish may be able to breach the existing dam thereby threatening the future sustainability of bull trout habitat in Placid Lake.

This proposal would protect threatened bull trout by making infrastructure improvements that will prevent the introduction of invasive fish into Placid Lake. Moreover, the proposal represents a highly cost effective and efficient way to protect native bull trout. If funded, the proposed dam improvements will result in a high return on investment.

CRC strongly supports the Future Fisheries grant proposal submitted by the Placid Lake Association. It is our hope that you will fund the project in full.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Caryn Miske Executive Director

cc: J. Haufler T. Beers