FUTURE FISHERIES IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM GRANT APPLICATION

All sections must be addressed, or the application will be considered invalid

I. APPLICANT INFORMATION

A. Applicant Name: Cody Nagel

Mailing Address: 2165 Hwy 2 East

City: Havre State: MT Zip: 59501

Telephone: 406-808-7272 E-mail: cnagel@mt.gov

B. Contact Person (if different than applicant):

Address:

City: State: Zip:

Telephone: E-mail:

C. Landowner and/or Lessee Name (if different than applicant): Gordon Cattle Co. (Henry Gordon & Trisha Gordon-Gruzzie)

Mailing Address: 1090 Gordon Cattle Lane

City: Chinook State: MT Zip: 59523

Telephone: 406-357-2467 E-mail: gordoncattle@itstriangle.com

II. PROJECT INFORMATION

A. Project Name: North Polly Reservoir Improvement

River, stream, or lake: Reservoir

Location: Township: 34N Range: 22E Section: 19

Latitude: 48.69622 Longitude: -108.90605 *Within project (decimal degrees)*

County: Blaine County

B. Purpose of Project: *(high level, focus on why the project is important)*

North Polly Reservoir has sustained a healthy black crappie population for over 20 years, providing both an angling opportunity and a supplemental source of wild black crappie to other waterbodies with public fishing access. In 2024, high spring runoff filled the reservoir to capacity and the aging 24” corrugated metal trickle tube (overflow pipe installed by the landowner in 1991) was severely damaged and collapsed. Further investigation of the tube identified the need for complete replacement. The damaged tube has jeopardized the integrity of the dam if not repaired soon and resulted in the reservoir loosing approximately five feet of storage elevation. The water storage loss has eliminated the quality habitat (depths) needed to sustain black crappie during critical time periods (summer and winter) and left productive spawning habitat, located within the littoral (nearshore) zone, high and dry.

Prior to the damaged tube, maximum depths observed at the reservoir exceeded 15 feet, with a majority of the reservoir exceeding 10 feet (good depths to sustain wild fish in reservoir/pond environments). Currently, maximum depths observed are less than 10 feet and the reservoir will no longer sustain a fish population without repairs to the trickle tube taking place.

Smaller prairie ponds and reservoirs that can sustain fish are rare in northcentral Montana, small prairie ponds that can sustain a wild population of black crappie are even more rare, and highly valued by anglers targeting this warmwater gamefish.

C. Brief Project Description (attach additional information to end of application). Please include the anticipated construction schedule:

The proposed project would remove the damaged 24” corrugated metal pipe and replace it with a 36” plastic pipe with 90-degree elbow. The plastic pipe will have a longer life span, and the increased pipe capacity would significantly minimize any impacts that future high-water events may have on the new pipe and the integrity of the dam. Additional rock riprap will be placed around the tube’s inlet and outlet, as well as a trash rack to limit ice damage.

Dirt work, involving the excavation of the existing pipe and replacing and packing it would constitute most of the work at this site. Some leveling and re-seeding would also occur.

D. What was the cause of habitat degradation and how will the project correct the cause?

Aging infrastructure (old, corrugated metal pipe for trickle tube) failed during spring runoff in 2024. The failure has resulted in reduced overall water storage capacity of the reservoir, thus eliminating the reservoirs' ability to sustain a fish population. The project would replace the existing trickle tube and repair the collapsed area surrounding the tube, thus re-establishing original water storage capacity, increasing depths, and increasing the overall aquatic habitats that benefit wild black crappie reproduction and survival.

E. Length of stream or size of lake that will be treated (project extent): 0.08 acres

Length/size of impact, if larger than project extent (e.g., stream miles opened): ~10 acres

F. Project Budget Summary:

Grant Request (Dollars):	**$**	**21,040**
Matching Dollars:	**$**	
Matching In-Kind Services:*	**$**	**2,150**
**salaries of government employees are not considered matching contributions*		
Other Contributions (not used as match)	**$**	**5,000**
Total Project Cost:	**$**	**28,190**

G. Attach itemized (line item) budget – *see budget template*

H. Attach project location map(s) that include:

- [X] Extent of the project, including context (relation to major landmark or town)
- [X] Indication of public and private property
- [X] Riparian buffer locations and widths (if applicable) and grazing locations

I. Attach project plans:

- [X] Detailed sketches or plan views with the location and proposed restoration
- [X] Pre-project photographs (GPS location strongly recommended)
- [ ] If water leasing or water salvage is involved, attach a supplemental questionnaire (*https://myfwp.mt.gov/getRepositoryFile?objectID=36110*)

J. Attach support letters or statements of (e.g., landowner consent, community or public support). For FWP statement, attach provided template. List any other project partners:

Support letters attached to application.

III. MAINTENANCE AND MONITORING (attach additional information to end of application):

A. A 20-year maintenance commitment is required*. Please confirm that you will ensure this protection and describe your approach. Attach any relevant maintenance plans.

Yes	No
X	

**If it is a water leasing project, describe the length of the agreement.*

The plastic pipe will have a life expectancy of 50-100 years. However, both the landowner and FWP will continue to monitor the site regularly during frequent work trips at and near the site. Anticipated maintenance would be clearing and removing any accumulated shoreline or floating vegetation (rush, cattails, woody debris) or trash that could block or restrict water flow through the pipe. Additional monitoring of the dam and area surrounding the trickle tube will continue, as well as monitoring the outlet and plunge pool on the downstream side of the dam. Maintenance would remove any woody vegetation (trees) and burrowing animals that could jeopardize the integrity of the earthen dam.

B. Will grazing be part of or adjacent to the project? If so, describe or attach land management plans, including short term and long term grazing regimes. If the landowner is not the applicant, please describe their involvement in the project. *If you want assistance with grazing plan development, note your need.*

Cattle grazing at the site occurs seasonally. The site is located within a larger pasture and several water sources exist within the pasture. North Polly Reservoir is located on a steep drainage, which confines cattle watering to select areas around the pond (see attachment). FWP has not documented aquatic habitat degradation due to grazing strategies implemented at this site and wouldn't suggest any changes to the annual grazing strategy the landowner implements.

C. Will the project be monitored to determine if goals were met? If so, what are the short-term and long-term plans to assess benefits and lessons learned? Were pre-project data collected? Will monitoring information be shared with FWP?

The project will be monitored regularly by both the landowner and FWP. FWP has fish and other aquatic organism sampling data collected from 2011-2023 to compare with post-project response of fish species re-introduced and other aquatic organisms captured during post-treatment sampling efforts. FWP would continue to manage and monitor the North Polly fishery using a variety of sampling gear and methods to assess the projects benefits to the aquatic community.

IV. PROJECT BENEFITS (attach additional information to end of application):

A. What species of fish will benefit from this project?

Black crappie and fathead minnows are the two species benefitting most from the project. Both species have shown an ability to naturally reproduce and sustain high population densities when water conditions and suitable habitats exist within North Polly Reservoir.

B. How will the project protect or enhance wild fish habitat?

Under current conditions, water levels cannot obtain pool elevations high enough to provide critical depths during peak summer and winter timeframes, severely reducing the survival of black crappie and fathead minnow, the two species previously found in North Polly Reservoir. Additionally, peak spring water levels can no longer obtain maximum (or normal) pool elevations, severely impacting the ability of both species to successfully spawn and recruit into the population.

The project would replace critical infrastructure that re-establishes the water storage capacity of North Polly Reservoir, providing key habitat improvements that allows for sustainable spawning success and survival of all age classes during critical time periods (summer and winter) for black crappie and fathead minnows.

C. What is the expected improvement to fish populations, both short term and long term? How might the project translate to angler success?

The short-term improvements will depend on precipitation within the drainage area, i.e. major rain events and/or spring runoff that would start to re-fill the reservoir to normal storage elevations. Short-term fish improvements would start with the re-establishment of forage species, this would be improvements to the aquatic invertebrate population and the fathead minnow population. Long-term fish improvements would re-establish the sustainable water levels that promote spawning and survival of both black crappie and fathead minnow during critical time periods (summer and winter), under various conditions (marginal to semi-severe drought or winter conditions).

Sustainable black crappie population would re-establish a popular recreational fishing opportunity at North Polly Reservoir for a variety of anglers and methods (lure and fly). Historically, black crappie spawning success and recruitment in North Polly Reservoir was so good that FWP used this population as a wild brood source of black crappie that could be transferred to other public waterbodies to increase public angling opportunities, supplement other black crappie populations, or re-establish black crappie populations.

D. Will the project increase public fishing opportunity for wild fish and, if so, how? Is public fishing allowed onsite? Is it allowed by permission? If not, describe how the public would benefit.

The project would re-establish a public fishing opportunity for a wild warmwater fish species (black crappie) provided through the courtesy of the landowners. The landowners have allowed public fishing access to the reservoir for 30+ years. Since 2011 FWP has managed the reservoir as a self-sustaining black crappie fishery, while also stocking rainbow trout. Rainbow trout are unable to naturally spawn in this reservoir environment but do provide an additional angling opportunity for the public. The reservoir is published in our Region 6 Pond Guide and distributed online and at regional offices, no landowner permission has been required.

E. Aside from angling, what local or large-scale public benefits will be realized from this project?

The reservoir has a long history of sustaining a wild black crappie population, a species that often requires a certain level of habitat requirements being met to successfully thrive in reservoir/pond systems. If the project is complete, it would re-establish a highly valued black crappie fishery for anglers. Additionally, once the crappie population is established and reproducing, this population could be utilized as a wild brood source of black crappie that could be transferred to other public waterbodies to increase public angling opportunities, supplement other black crappie populations, or re-establish black crappie populations.

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

No

G. Will the project result in the development of commercial recreational use on the site (including paid access)? Explain:

No, the project would re-establish a fishing opportunity open to the public.

H. 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.

V. 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.

Applicant Signature: Cody Nagel Date: 5/6/2025

Submittal: **Applications must be signed and received on or before November 15 and May 15 to be considered for the subsequent funding period**. Late or incomplete applications will be rejected.

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

BUDGET TEMPLATE SHEET FOR FUTURE FISHERIES PROGRAM APPLICATIONS

Both tables MUST be completed appropriately or the application will be invalid. Please see the example budget sheet for clarification.

PROJECT COSTS					GRANT REQUEST AND FUNDING			
Work Items (Itemize by Category)	**Number of Units**	**Unit Description***	**Cost/Unit**	**Total Cost**	**FUTURE FISHERIES REQUEST**	**Matching Contributions (Cash or In-Kind)*** **	**Other Contributions (Funds not used as match)**	**Total Funding**
**Units = feet, hours, cubic yards, etc. Do not use lump sum unless necessary.*								
Personnel								
Survey				$ -				$ -
Design				$ -				$ -
Engineering				$ -				$ -
Permitting				$ -				$ -
Oversight				$ -				$ -
Maintenance**				$ -				$ -
			Sub-Total	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Travel								
Mileage				$ -				$ -
Per diem				$ -				$ -
			Sub-Total	$ -		$ -	$ -	$ -
Construction Materials								
36" Plastic Culvert with 90 degree elbow	1	ea	$10,040.00	$ 10,040.00	5,040.00		5,000.00	$ 10,040.00
reject rock	40	cu yds	$10.00	$ 400.00		400.00		$ 400.00
Pipe (trash rack) 4.5"	70	feet	$25.00	$ 1,750.00		1,750.00		$ 1,750.00
				$ -				$ -
				$ -				$ -
				$ -				$ -
				$ -				$ -
				$ -				$ -
			Sub-Total	$ 12,190.00	$ 5,040.00	$ 2,150.00	$ 5,000.00	$ 12,190.00
Equipment, Labor, and Mobilization								
Mobilization	0.05	5% of const.		$ 800.00	800.00			$ 800.00
Excavator	25	hours	$200/hr	$ 5,067.00	5,067.00			$ 5,067.00
Scrapper	22.5	hours	$225/hr	$ 5,066.00	5,066.00			$ 5,066.00
Labor	203	hours	$25/hr	$ 5,067.00	5,067.00			$ 5,067.00
				$ -				$ -
				$ -				$ -
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				$ -				$ -
				$ -				$ -

(Revised 5/12/2025)

			Sub-Total	$ 16,000.00	$ 16,000.00	$ -	$ -	$ 16,000.00
			OVERALL TOTALS	$ 28,190.00	$ 21,040.00	$ 2,150.00	$ 5,000.00	$ 28,190.00

OTHER REQUIREMENTS:

**For projects that include a maintenance request, it cannot exceed 10% of the total project cost.

***Match can include in-kind materials or labor. Justification for in-kind labor (e.g. hourly rates used) can be noted below. Do not use government salaries as match.

Additional budget detail:

APPLICATION MATCHING CONTRIBUTIONS

Total should equal match listed above; do not include requested funds

CONTRIBUTOR	IN-KIND	CASH	TOTAL	Secured? (Y/N)
Landowner	$ 2,150.00	$ -	$ 2,150.00	Y
	$ -	$ -	$ -	
	$ -	$ -	$ -	
	$ -	$ -	$ -	
	$ -	$ -	$ -	
	$ -	$ -	$ -	
	$ -	$ -	$ -	
	$ -	$ -	$ -	
TOTALS	$ 2,150.00	$ -	$ 2,150.00	

OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS

Total should equal other contributions listed above; these are funds not specically matched to the Future Fisheries application

CONTRIBUTOR	IN-KIND	CASH	TOTAL	Secured? (Y/N)
Migratory Bird Wetland Program	$ -	$ 5,000.00	$ 5,000.00	N
	$ -	$ -	$ -	
	$ -	$ -	$ -	
	$ -	$ -	$ -	
	$ -	$ -	$ -	
	$ -	$ -	$ -	
	$ -	$ -	$ -	
	$ -	$ -	$ -	
TOTALS	$ -	$ 5,000.00	$ 5,000.00	

GORDON CATTLE COMPANY
Chinook, Montana

GORDON CATTLE COMPANY
1090 Gordon Cattle Lane
Chinook, MT 59523

April 29, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

Last fall, we identified a critical leak in the dam at the North Pauly Reservoir. After a thorough assessment by Moxley Construction, it was determined that the trickle tube pipe requires replacement, as well as the natural spill, and where the trickle tube releases the water, will need some maintenance, possibly in the form of rock placement. The North Pauly and South Pauly reservoirs are vital recreational areas for anglers, and failing to address this issue jeopardizes the North Pauly Reservoir and the access road to the South Pauly Reservoir. It is imperative for both FWP and Gordon Cattle that we take swift action to resolve this matter.

We propose that FWP covers the costs associated with the dirt work and replacing the trickle tube and spillways. Understanding the importance of this project, we are fully committed to contributing by maintaining the road. The access road, approximately three to four miles from the main road to the South Pauly Reservoir, has experienced significant deterioration over the years and urgently needs maintenance. We are dedicated to performing this work and ensuring the road is in optimal condition throughout our contract. We can also furnish the rock for the trickle tube and spillway. In addition, we will seed grass in the areas that have been disturbed. Together, we can safeguard these crucial recreational resources and foster a positive partnership that benefits our community.

Sincerely,

Trisha G. Gruszie
Ranch Manager

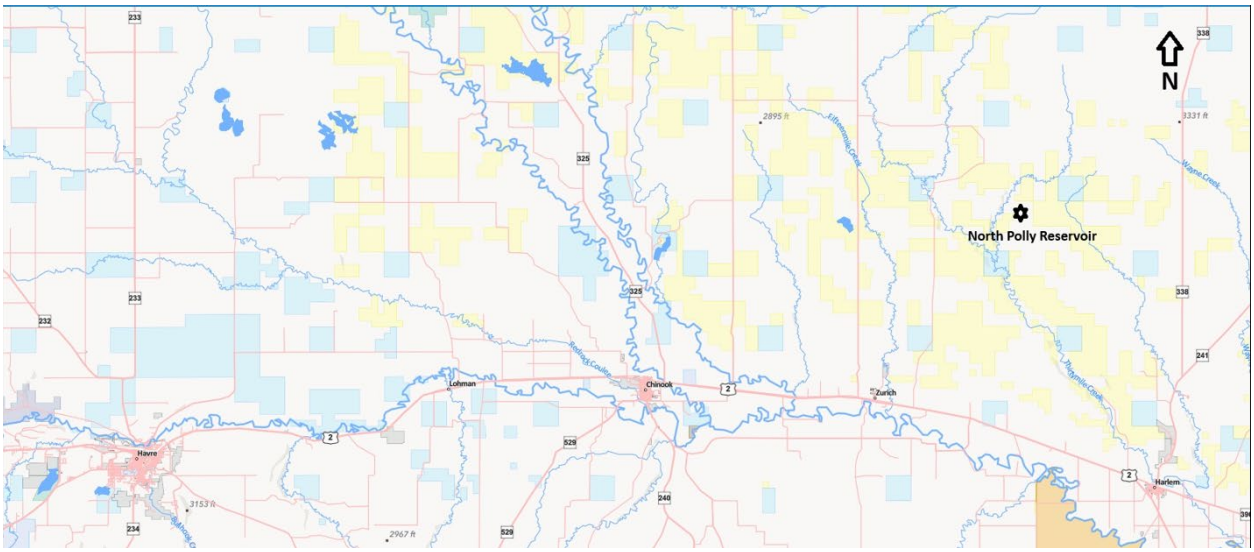

Figure 1. Reservoir location is in Blaine County northeast of Chinook.

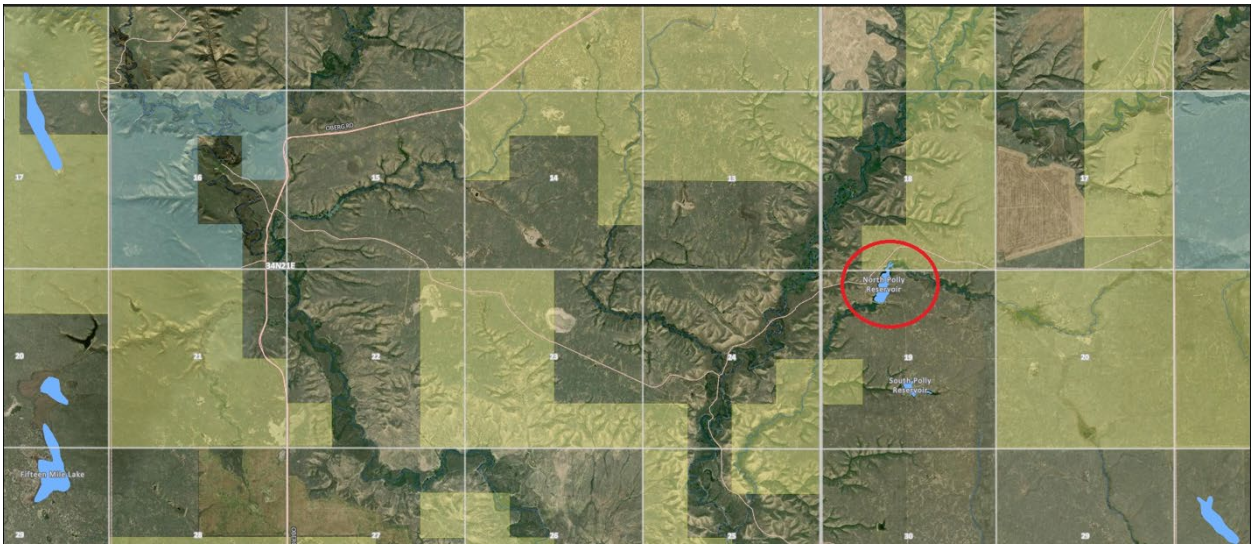

Figure 2. BLM (yellow) and State (blue) ownership near North Polly Reservoir.

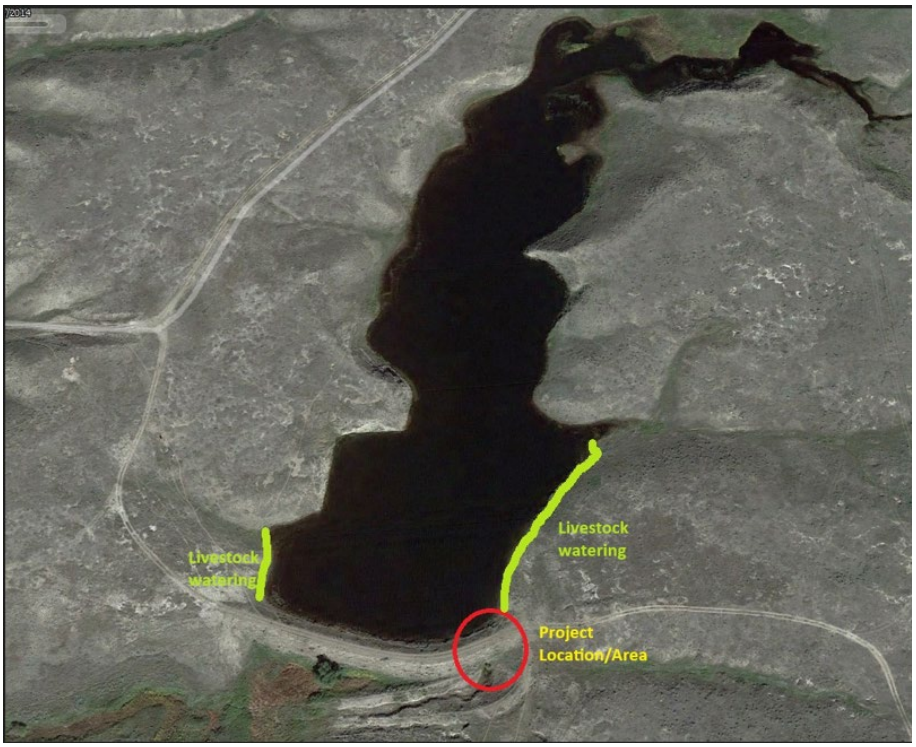

Figure 3. Satellite image of North Polly Reservoir, red circle depicts damaged trickle tube pipe, green lines livestock watering.

Figure 4. Inlet and outlet locations (red circles) of trickle tube and excavation and pipe replacement area (red square).



Pictures showing existing condition of trickle tube pipe and active sloughing around structure.