



November 21, 2016

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

Dear Future Fisheries Improvement Program Review Panel,

On behalf of Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) and the Fresno Chapter of Walleyes Unlimited Montana, I would like to request your consideration for a grant of \$3000 to go toward the implementation of a fish habitat improvement project to be conducted at Fresno Reservoir, Hill County, MT.

In an effort to increase available yellow perch spawning and rearing habitat, FWP proposes to collect salvaged Christmas trees from local communities and sink them in specific areas of Fresno Reservoir. The trees would be bundled together and submerged in suitable areas where yellow perch spawning habitat is currently limited. If successful, the improved habitat will lead to greater yellow perch reproduction and recruitment in this popular north central Montana fishery.

Yellow perch are a valuable sport fish in Fresno Reservoir as well as the primary forage species for predator fish such as walleye and northern pike. In spite of a decrease in predator fish abundance since walleye stocking was ceased in 2011, yellow perch densities in Fresno remain low. FWP data collected annually at Fresno Reservoir indicates that a successful effort to improve the relative abundance of yellow perch would be beneficial to the entire fish community in Fresno, as well as the anglers who recreate there.

The funding requested through the Future Fisheries Improvement Program for this project along with funding already secured from Walleyes Unlimited will allow the project to be implemented annually through 2021. Annual monitoring of the fish community and habitat structures will occur in order to determine the success of the project.

Please review the enclosed application and contact me if you have any additional questions or if you would like to further discuss this project. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lance Breen". The signature is stylized with long, sweeping horizontal strokes.

Lance Breen
Havre Area Fisheries Technician
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks
2165 Hwy 2 East
Havre, MT 59501
(406) 265-6177 ext.230
lbreen@mt.gov

FUTURE FISHERIES IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM GRANT APPLICATION

(Please fill in the highlighted areas)

all sections (IA, IB, IC, etc.) must be addressed or the application will be considered invalid

I. APPLICANT INFORMATION

A. Applicant Name: Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks

B. Mailing Address: 2165 Hwy 2 East

C. City: Havre State: MT Zip: 59501

Telephone: 406-265-6177 ext. 230 E-mail: lbreen@mt.gov

D. Contact Person: Lance Breen

Address if different from Applicant: 2165 Hwy 2 East

City: Havre State: MT Zip: 59501

Telephone: 406-265-6177 ext. 230 E-mail: lbreen@mt.gov

E. Landowner and/or Lessee Name (if other than Applicant): Bureau of Reclamation

Mailing Address: PO Box 30137

City: Billings State: MT Zip: 59107-0137

Telephone: 406-247-7300 E-mail: _____

II. PROJECT INFORMATION*

A. Project Name: Fresno Reservoir Habitat Enhancement

River, stream, or lake: Fresno Reservoir

Location: Township: 33 N Range: 14 E Section: 19

Latitude: 48.6000 Longitude: -109.9517 *within project (decimal degrees)*

County: Hill

B. Purpose of Project:

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, in partnership with the Fresno Chapter of Walleyes Unlimited Montana, plans to enhance spawning and rearing habitat for fish species in Fresno Reservoir. The project will primarily be directed toward increasing yellow perch production and recruitment, although other species in the reservoir may also benefit from the added structure and complexity.

Yellow perch are the preferred prey of walleye and northern pike in Fresno Reservoir as evidenced through analysis of stomach contents of these species during annual sampling. Yellow Perch also provide angling opportunities within Fresno Reservoir. In spite of annually transferring pre spawn adult yellow perch to Fresno and a decrease in walleye densities since walleye stocking ceased in 2011, adult yellow perch abundance remains low. By enhancing yellow perch spawning and rearing habitat, we anticipate increased recruitment of this species into the Fresno Reservoir fish community.

The intent is to conduct this habitat enhancement project each spring for a period of 5 consecutive years or as long as funding and materials are available. While monitoring will occur each year to determine relative success of the project, after 5 years, a more thorough evaluation will be conducted to assess the effectiveness of the project.

C. Brief Project Description:

Salvaged Christmas trees donated by local residents will be collected annually and stockpiled beginning in late December. We anticipate collecting 200-500 trees each year for use in this project. In the spring just after ice off (generally March or April), the trees will be bundled together with cable, anchored to concrete blocks and then sunk in specific locations throughout the reservoir (see map). Typical structures will consist of 7-10 trees bundled together with cable, and anchored to concrete blocks to assure that the structures will not drift from their location. Structures will be moved from bundling area near Kremlin Bay to deployment sites by boat. The Christmas tree structures will be placed at depths and locations that will maximize potential fish use while minimizing conflict with recreational boaters and anglers fishing from the shore.

The Fresno Chapter of Walleyes Unlimited Montana has committed to providing partial funding for this project. Additionally, members are willing to donate their time and labor toward all phases of the project. On days when we are bundling and sinking the Christmas tree structures, we anticipate having 15-20 volunteers assisting on site. Upon completion of project, any unused materials at stockpile and bundling sites will be picked up and disposed of in an appropriate manner.

Similar projects have been conducted at other reservoirs in Montana such as Canyon Ferry and Tiber. It has been shown that yellow perch will readily use submerged trees and brush as spawning habitat. Annual sampling and monitoring will be conducted to gauge fish use of the tree structures and measure the success of the project.

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

By improving the spawning and rearing habitat available to yellow perch, we hope to increase the relative abundance of adult and juvenile life stages of this species in Fresno Reservoir. An increase in yellow perch abundance would benefit walleye and northern pike by providing additional forage for these species at various life stages.

Angling for yellow perch would likely improve with an increase in their relative abundance. Walleye and northern pike, the two species most sought after by Fresno anglers, would likely see improved growth with an increase in yellow perch abundance. This may lead to greater angler satisfaction as larger, healthier, fish become available.

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

By enhancing spawning and rearing habitat for yellow perch, we anticipate seeing an increase in relative abundance for this species. This would provide more opportunity for anglers to catch yellow perch. An increase in yellow perch abundance will also mean additional forage available for walleye and northern pike and we would expect to see these species respond favorably.

- E. The project agreement includes a 20-year maintenance commitment. Please discuss your ability to meet this commitment.

Once sunk in the reservoir, the Christmas tree structures will require very little maintenance. It is anticipated that the tree portion of the structure will be either silted in or degraded in 3-5 years. In certain areas of the reservoir, it may be feasible to collect the anchors during low water periods and reuse them in the future, although it is possible that they may silt in and become irretrievable. The structures will be placed in pre-determined areas of the reservoir where it is highly unlikely that they would interfere with any aspect of the day to day operations of Fresno Dam.

A great deal of focus will be placed on monitoring the response of the fish community. The structures themselves will be monitored in the spring to gauge fish use. Summer seining to identify young of the year production and fall gill netting to monitor the adult population will continue on an annual basis.

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

Naturally occurring siltation, water level fluctuations, slow vegetation establishment, overlying geology, and agricultural use all play a role in limiting the amount of available spawning habitat for yellow perch in Fresno Reservoir. Under full pool water levels, certain areas of the reservoir do have some quality submerged vegetation and woody debris adequate for yellow perch spawning habitat. However, the majority of the reservoir is lacking this type of available habitat.

This project will increase the amount of available yellow perch spawning habitat under various water levels. The submerged trees will also provide some much needed structure for use as rearing habitat.

G. What public benefits will be realized from this project?:

Fresno Reservoir was the 2nd most fished water body in FWP Region 6 according to 2015 angler creel data. Improving this fishery would benefit recreational anglers as well as the local businesses that these anglers support. This project will be a community effort with many local volunteers having the opportunity to assist with improving this important fishery.

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

NA

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

NA

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

NA

Each approved project sponsor must enter into a written agreement with the Department specifying terms and duration of the project.

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.

Applicant Signature:  Date: 11/21/16

Sponsor (if applicable): 

***Highlighted boxes will automatically expand.**

**Mail To: Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Habitat Protection Bureau
PO Box 200701
Helena, MT 59620-0701**

**E-mail To: Michelle McGree
mmcgree@mt.gov
(electronic submissions **MUST** be signed)**

**Incomplete or late applications will be rejected and returned to applicant.
Applications may be rejected if this form is modified.**

*****Applications may be submitted at anytime, but must be signed and received by the Future Fisheries Program Officer in Helena before December 1 and June 1 of each year to be considered for the subsequent funding period.*****

BUDGET TEMPLATE SHEET FOR FUTURE FISHERIES PROGRAM APPLICATIONS

Both tables must be completed or the application will be returned

WORK ITEMS (ITEMIZE BY CATEGORY)	NUMBER OF UNITS	UNIT DESCRIPTION*	COST/UNIT	TOTAL COST	CONTRIBUTIONS			
					FUTURE FISHERIES REQUEST	IN-KIND SERVICES**	IN-KIND CASH	TOTAL
Personnel***								
Survey				\$ -				\$ -
Design				\$ -				\$ -
Engineering				\$ -				\$ -
Permitting				\$ -				\$ -
Oversight				\$ -				\$ -
				\$ -				\$ -
			Sub-Total	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Travel								
Mileage	600	miles	\$0.54	\$ 324.00		324.00		\$ 324.00
Per diem				\$ -				\$ -
			Sub-Total	\$ 324.00	\$ -	\$ 324.00	\$ -	\$ 324.00
Construction Materials****								
Concrete Blocks	1200	blocks	\$2.25	\$ 2,700.00	1,700.00		1,000.00	\$ 2,700.00
Cable 3/16"	2400	feet	\$0.50	\$ 1,200.00	1,100.00		100.00	\$ 1,200.00
Tools (cutters,pliers, bits, etc.)			\$200.00	\$ 200.00			200.00	\$ 200.00
Cable clips	1000	clips	\$0.20	\$ 200.00	200.00			\$ 200.00
Advertising time and materials			\$200.00	\$ 200.00			200.00	\$ 200.00
				\$ -				\$ -
				\$ -				\$ -
				\$ -				\$ -
			Sub-Total	\$ 4,500.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ -	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 4,500.00
Equipment and Labor								
Labor (Collecting)	30	hours	\$10.00	\$ 300.00		300.00		\$ 300.00
Labor (Hauling)	30	hours	\$10.00	\$ 300.00		300.00		\$ 300.00
Labor (Building Structures)	60	hours	\$10.00	\$ 600.00		600.00		\$ 600.00
Boat fuel (deploying structures)	200	gallons	\$2.79	\$ 558.00			558.00	\$ 558.00
				\$ -				\$ -

BUDGET TEMPLATE SHEET FOR FUTURE FISHERIES PROGRAM APPLICATIONS

			\$	-				\$	-				
		Sub-Total	\$	1,758.00	\$	-	\$	1,200.00	\$	558.00	\$	1,758.00	
Mobilization													
			\$	-					\$	-			
			\$	-					\$	-			
			\$	-					\$	-			
			\$	-					\$	-			
		Sub-Total	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-			
TOTALS				\$	6,582.00	\$	3,000.00	\$	1,524.00	\$	2,058.00	\$	6,582.00

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 for calculations). Describe here or in text.

Reminder: Government salaries cannot be used as in-kind match

***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 minimum of two competitive bids for the cost of undertaking the project.

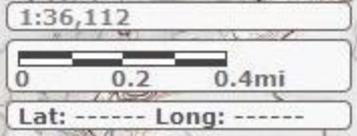
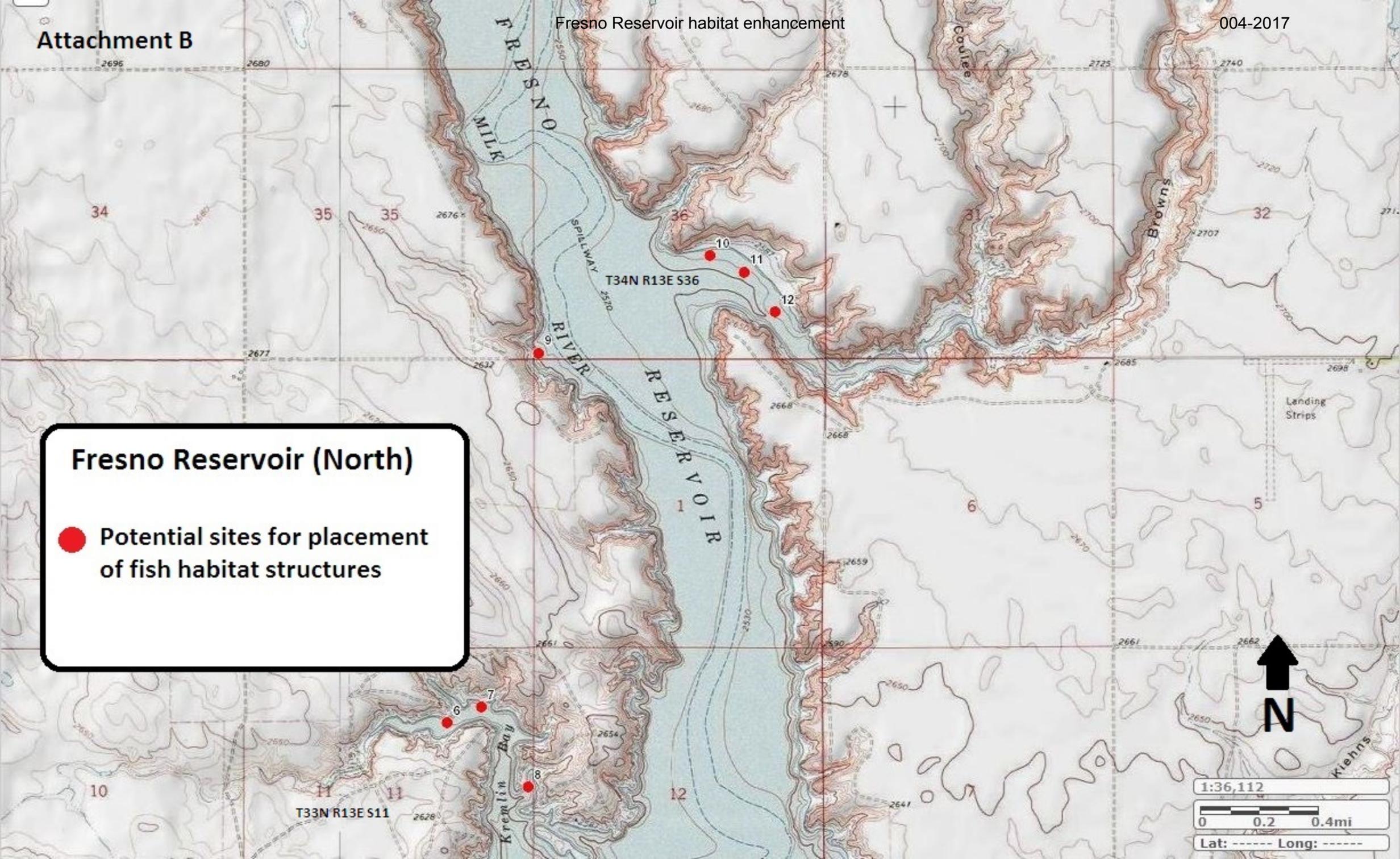
****The Review Panel recommends a maximum fencing cost of \$1.50 per foot. Additional costs may be the responsibility of the applicant and/or partners.

MATCHING CONTRIBUTIONS (do not include requested funds)

CONTRIBUTOR	IN-KIND SERVICE	IN-KIND CASH	TOTAL	Secured? (Y/N)
Fresno Chapter Walleyes Unlimited	\$ 1,524.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 3,024.00	Y
Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks (Project #3630)	\$ -	\$ 558.00	\$ 558.00	Y
	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
TOTALS	\$ 1,524.00	\$ 2,058.00	\$ 3,582.00	

Fresno Reservoir (North)

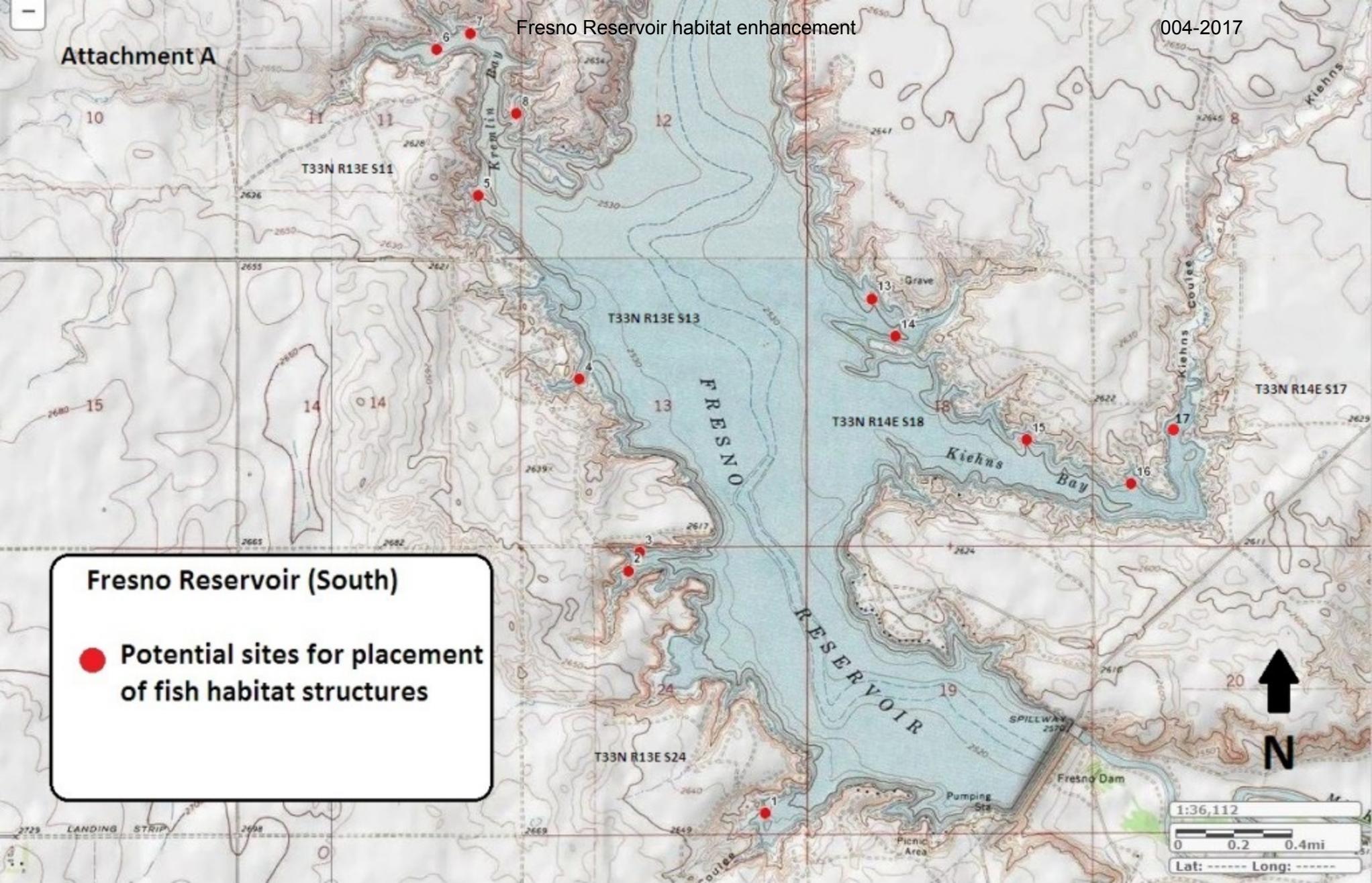
● Potential sites for placement of fish habitat structures



Attachment A

Fresno Reservoir (South)

- Potential sites for placement of fish habitat structures



FRESNO CHAPTER
WALLEYES
UNLIMITEDPO BOX 1501
HAVRE, MT 59501www.fresnowalleys.comMONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS
HABITAT PROTECTION BUREAU
PO BOX 200701
HELENA, MT 59620

RE: Christmas Tree Habitat Project – Fresno Reservoir

To Whom It May Concern,

Thank you in advance for your consideration on this project. The Fresno Chapter of Walleyes Unlimited would like to extend its support for this important spawning and rearing habitat enhancement to Fresno Reservoir. The mission statement of our organization is: *THE CHAPTER OF FRESNO WALLEYES UNLIMITED IS DEDICATED TO CONSERVATION, IMPROVEMENT, AND EDUCATION CONCERNING LOCAL WARM WATER FISHERIES.* We believe this project falls within those standards. Fresno Reservoir has become a top destination for fisherman in the state of Montana. Our organization recognizes the importance of habitat projects such as this to the continued and future success of the Fresno fishery as a top fishing destination.

To express our support, The Fresno Chapter of Walleyes Unlimited would like to donate \$1,500 towards the funding of this project. In addition, the Fresno Chapter will provide further assistance which includes but is not limited to:

- Volunteers to collect Christmas Trees
- Tools and equipment
- Volunteers to bundle the Christmas Trees
- Boats to assist in the placement of Christmas Trees
- Volunteers to place the Christmas Trees

We look forward to partnering with Montana FWP on this exciting project. Thanks again for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Nate Molstad". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Nate Molstad
President
Fresno Chapter of Walleyes Unlimited