

Pondera Swift Dam Rehabilitation Project

Swift Dam's location, at the furthest upstream point of the Pondera County Canal and Reservoir Company (PCCRC) irrigation system, as well as the point source for the majority of the system's water makes it one of the most important pieces of infrastructure within the entire PCCRC irrigation system. Swift Dam provides irrigation water to approximately 72,000 acres of irrigated lands within the PCCRC system, 5,000 Blackfeet Tribal acres, and multiple individual irrigators. Additionally, the PCCRC system supplies water to multiple north-central Montana municipalities including the communities of Conrad and Brady, MT. The current configuration of Swift Dam's outlet structure requires on-site monitoring and adjustment. The remote location of Swift Dam, approximately 40 miles southwest of Valier, causes significant operational inefficiencies in water adjustment delays and operation and maintenance efforts from the frequent trips required by PCCRC staff between Valier and the dam site. Automating the Swift Dam outlet works will **vastly improve irrigation system efficiencies, conserve an estimated 1,735 acre-feet of water within Swift Dam for use later in the irrigation season, preserve aquatic habitat within Birch Creek and Swift Dam, and preserve the PCCRC's ability to serve as a municipal water source for Conrad and Brady, MT.** In addition, revenue generated from crop production could increase by approximately \$1,040,300, annually. The project provides the following benefits:

Renewable Resource Benefits:

Conservation: Automating the Swift Dam outlet structure will **conserve a minimum of 565 million gallons of water within Birch Creek Reservoir each year** as a direct result of inefficient (or inaccessible) gate control at the dam.

Management: The proposed project would **save approximately 214 man-hours per year** as well as provide the critical ability to remotely monitor and control water levels and outflows at Swift Dam

Development: Rehabilitating the proposed Project Area will continue to develop the existing agricultural lands within the PCCRC by providing a steady, reliable water supply. The proposed project will **increase crop production by approximately 4.3% on the PCCRC's existing 72,000 irrigated acres and the Blackfeet Tribe's 5,000 irrigated acres.** Increased crop production will result in **annual revenue increases of approximately \$1,040,300 for the PCCRC and its users.**

Preservation: The proposed rehabilitation project will **preserve the base flows within Birch Creek as well as water levels within Birch Creek Reservoir which will enhance fish populations, recreational opportunities, and wildlife habitat.** The project will also preserve the functionality of the PCCRC water delivery system infrastructure to ensure continued water deliveries to the municipalities of Valier, Conrad, and Brady, MT.

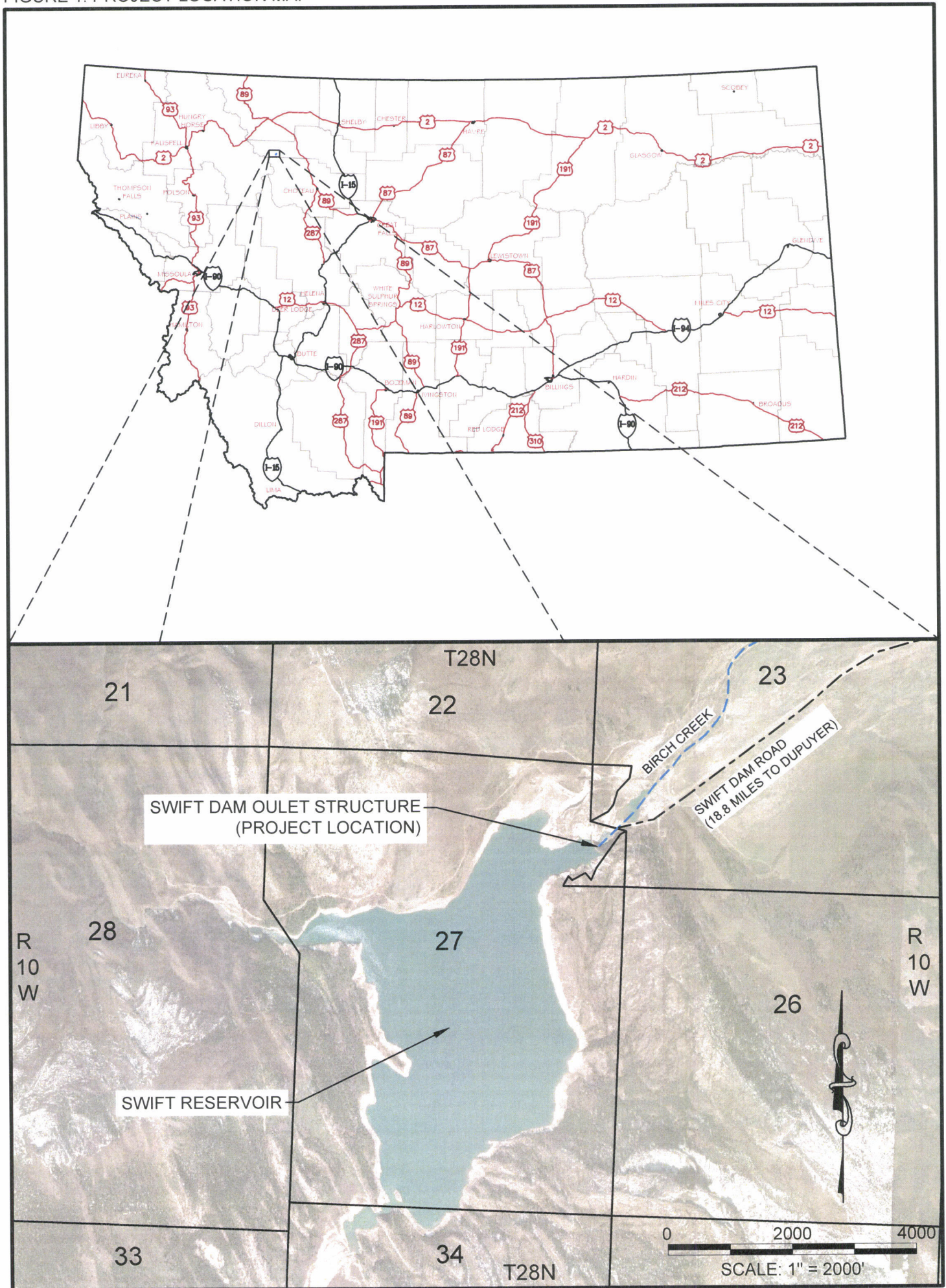
Public & Citizen Benefits:

Crop Production: The proposed project will lead to a **4.3% increase in production of alfalfa, barley, wheat, canola, and peas.** This increased production will result in increase agricultural revenue in the amount of \$1,040,300.

Recreational Opportunities: The PCCRC project will improve recreational opportunities provided by Swift Dam, Birch Creek Reservoir, and Birch Creek by conserving water that will create fish and wildlife habitat or increase reservoir water levels.

The PCCRC has successfully managed RRGL grants in the recent past.

FIGURE 1. PROJECT LOCATION MAP





Pondera Full Discharge During June 2018 Spillway Release



Pondera Swift Dam Overview

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