

Blaine County NCIA North Chinook Reservoir Dam Outlet Rehabilitation Project

The North Chinook Irrigation Association (NCIA) is located just north of Chinook, MT and receives its water from Lodge Creek, a tributary to the Milk River. The NCIA serves approximately 1,948 irrigated acres and 9 water users. The primary focus of this application is the rehabilitation of the North Chinook Reservoir Dam Outlet. The proposed project will involve replacing the old, leaking outlet pipe and headgate system with a new outlet works. The proposed project has been identified by the NCIA Board and Management as a priority for the NCIA system due to increasing O&M costs, water conservation benefits, improved management of the system, increased crop production, and its potential for development within the NCIA. **The proposed project will result in the conservation of over 2,100 acre-feet (685 million gallons) of water each year. In addition, revenue generated from crop production as a direct result of water savings could increase by approximately \$262,071 per year.** The project provides the following benefits:

Renewable Resource Benefits:

- **Conservation:** Providing a new outlet structure with an automated headgate will result in the **conservation of up to 741 million gallons of water each year for the NCIA.**
- **Management:** The proposed project will optimize management of the water resource and **significantly reduce annual O&M costs (100 man-hours per year) associated with operation and monitoring of the dam outlet works.**
- **Development:** Replacing the leaking outlet works and providing automation and monitoring will conserve enough water to allow carryover water to be stored in North Chinook Reservoir, storing enough water to provide a 25% increase in water to the NCIA users.
- **Preservation:** Replacing the leaking outlet works and providing automation and monitoring will conserve enough water to allow carryover water to be stored in North Chinook Reservoir throughout the winter. The proposed improvements will preserve fish and wildlife habitat within North Chinook Reservoir.

Public & Citizen Benefits:

- **Economic Benefit:** The proposed dam outlet works improvements will result in increased revenues at the local, regional and state levels due to increased agricultural production that directly supports feed for the support of an additional 500 head of cattle.
- **Recreational Opportunities:** The proposed dam outlet works replacement will provide a more efficient system that will increase water levels within North Chinook Reservoir, therefore providing recreational opportunities for Montanans that recreate and hunt at that reservoir.
- **Crop Production:** The proposed project will lead to a **25% increase in production of alfalfa, grass hay, and feed barley in areas served by the NCIA.** Assuming a 2.9% interest rate over the 30-year project design life, **increased crop production would result in an additional \$5,190,915 over the life of the project.**
- **Safety and Health:** Decrease safety risks for NCIA personnel to operate the dam outlet gate (standing on a thin ledge over flowing water with no safety equipment) will be mitigated.

Grant Request Amount:	\$125,000.00
NCIA Match Amount:	\$143,340.00
Estimated Total Project Cost:	\$268,340.00

Blaine County and the NCIA sincerely appreciates your consideration of this project and hopes that you will find it as important and necessary as our residents and your constituents have. Blaine County and the NCIA have successfully managed RRGL grants in the recent past.

