



## Benefits of the Hungry Horse Project

The Hungry Horse Project releases stored water to generate electricity and maintain streamflow for the fishery. It reduces downstream flood damage by storing snowmelt and precipitation. The reservoir draws thousands of recreation visitors year round.

### What's the Yearly Value?

Power generated:	\$57.7 million
Flood damage prevented:	\$2.7 million
Recreation:	100,000 visits – \$2.9 million



The mission of the Bureau of Reclamation is to manage, develop, and protect water and related resources in an environmentally and economically sound manner in the interest of the American public.

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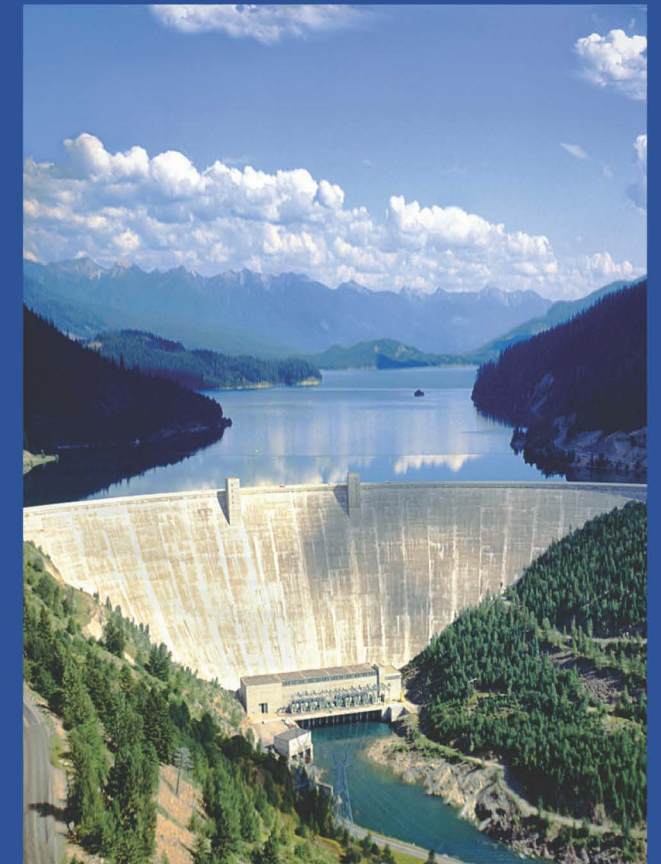
July 2014

# RECLAMATION

*Managing Water in the West*

## The Story of the Hungry Horse Project

MONTANA



U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Reclamation



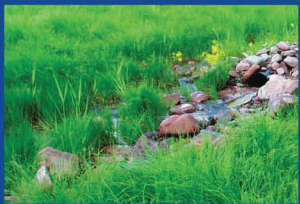


### Making Electricity

Hungry Horse Project plays an important role in meeting the needs for electricity in the Pacific Northwest. The reservoir stores almost 3.5 million acre-feet of water for later release to produce clean hydroelectricity. Reclamation upgraded the Hungry Horse generators in the early 1990s to produce up to 428,000 kilowatts of electricity, enough for almost 270,000 homes. The Bonneville Power Administration sells the electricity to help pay the cost of constructing, operating, and maintaining Hungry Horse Project.

### Dam Construction Specifications

Structural Height:	564 ft
Crest Length:	2,115 ft
Crest Elevation:	3,565 ft
Base Width:	330 ft
Crest Width:	39 ft
Volume of Concrete:	3,086,200 cu yd



### One Big System

Hungry Horse Project is part of the Federal Columbia River Power System.

Reclamation and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers operate dams and powerplants, including the nearby Libby and Albeni Falls Dams, as a single system. The Federal system produces electricity, reduces flooding, and provides water for irrigation, navigation, recreation, and fish and wildlife.

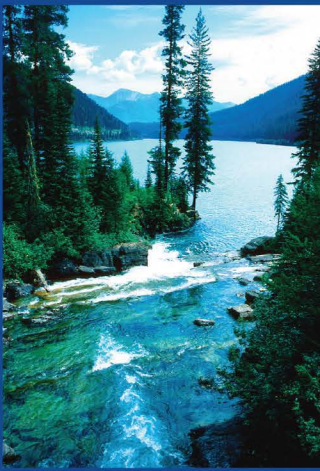
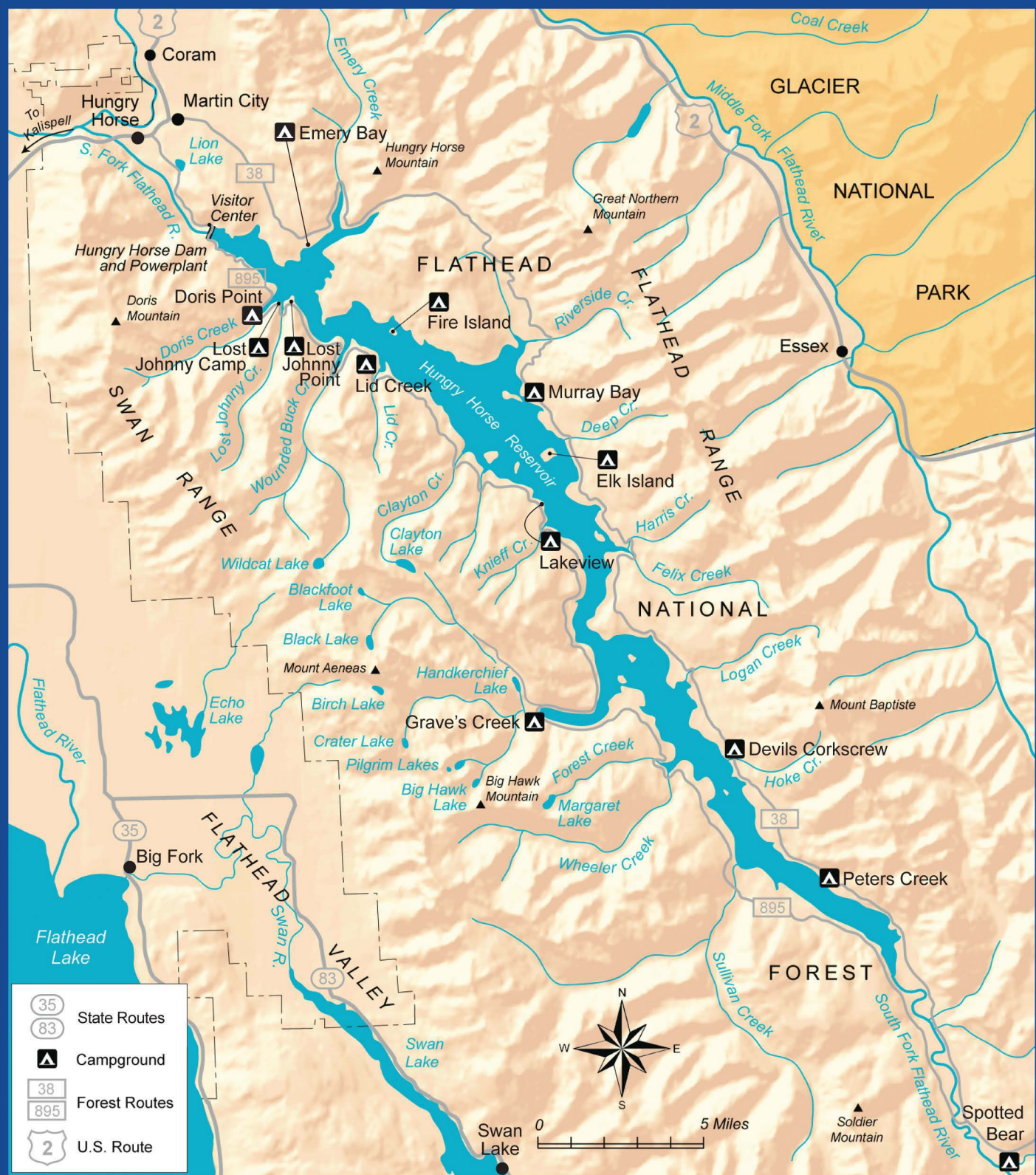


### Quite an Attraction

Hungry Horse Reservoir is the center of attention for

those who enjoy a wide variety of year-round outdoor activities. The U.S. Forest Service (Flathead National Forest), in cooperation with Reclamation, manages the numerous campgrounds and boat launches around the reservoir. The 34-mile-long reservoir has over 6,800 acres of water surface and about 170 miles of shoreline.

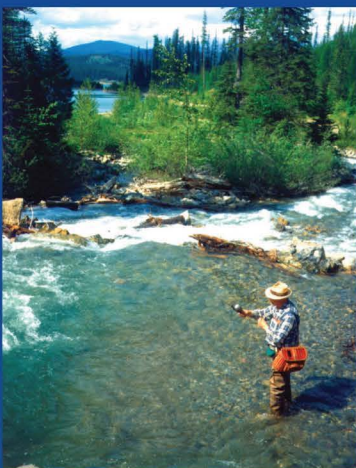
Visitors enjoy fishing, boating, swimming, and waterskiing.



### From the Mountains of Montana

The cool, clear water of the South Fork Flathead River begins in the Bob Marshall Wilderness along the western slopes of the Continental Divide. The water

flows into Hungry Horse Reservoir where it is stored for later use.



### Improving an Excellent Fishery

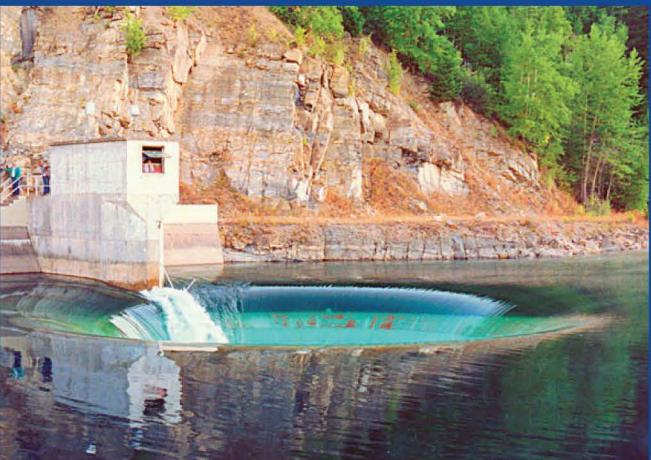
Reclamation supports efforts to improve habitat and increase species' populations by releasing water year-

round to preserve the river habitat downstream from Hungry Horse Dam. Through innovative engineering and Bonneville Power Administration funding, Hungry Horse Dam now releases water from specific reservoir elevations to more closely follow the natural cycle of seasonal water temperatures. This and other projects with the U.S. Forest Service and the State of Montana have improved habitat and fishery throughout the Flathead River Basin.



### Rich Habitat Supports Many Species

The reservoir and surrounding area provide rich habitat for a variety of species such as elk, moose, deer, bear, upland birds, and fish. Bull trout, listed as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act, spawn in tributaries and then migrate to Hungry Horse Reservoir.



### Seasons of the Reservoir

Hungry Horse Reservoir captures spring runoff to reduce flood damage along the Flathead and Columbia River systems in Montana, Idaho, Washington, and Oregon. The reservoir remains high throughout the summer for recreation. The dam releases water during the fall and winter to produce electricity.



## What's in a Name?

The severe 1900–01 winter left two freight horses lost and starved in the rugged Flathead River wilderness. Found a month later, their owners nursed them back to health. “Hungry Horse” became the name of a nearby mountain and creek and, later, this Reclamation project.

## Reclamation's Beginning

The Reclamation Act of 1902 established what is now the Bureau of Reclamation to help develop the arid West. Later legislation stated that those receiving electricity produced by Reclamation projects would pay part of the construction and ongoing operation and maintenance costs.

## Looking to the Future

The first permanent settlers entered the Flathead Valley in 1860. As the Flathead Valley grew in the new century, so did the belief that a new dam could reduce flooding and harness the river's force to produce electricity. Montana citizens worked for 30 years toward bringing this belief to life. Federal agencies surveyed lands and began efforts toward Congressional approval to build a large water project.

## Where to Build?

During World War II, some considered raising Flathead Lake to increase electricity production at several downstream dams. Local opposition to this plan and the need to also reduce flooding turned the investigations to Hungry Horse Dam. In 1944, Reclamation proposed a 564-foot-high dam on the South Fork Flathead River and obtained Congressional approval to build Hungry Horse Project. Construction would begin as soon as the war effort could spare the materials and workers.

## Delays Are Costly

Workers spent 3 years of hard labor (1945–1948) building an access road and digging a tunnel to divert the river away from the damsite. Just as they prepared to start work on the dam, disastrous flooding hit the entire Columbia River Basin. Many lives were lost and communities destroyed.



May 1948 flood cleanup

## A Dam Rises



1949 jackhammer crew

Hundreds of workers—many were returning veterans—started building Hungry Horse Dam in July of 1948. They blasted rock, built cableways, and poured concrete as the huge dam took shape. Workers relocated many U.S. Forest

Service facilities that the new reservoir would flood. President Truman threw the switch in 1952 to start generating electricity at Hungry Horse Dam Powerplant. Workers completed the dam in 1953. The availability of low-cost electricity attracted new industries, such as an aluminum plant at Columbia Falls.

## Four States, Two Countries



A single drop of Hungry Horse Project water travels more than 1,100 miles from Montana's mountains to the Pacific Ocean. Along the way, this water produces electricity at many more dams downstream. Some are federally owned and operated; others belong to public utilities.

