

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

NorthWestern Issues Update on Hebgen Dam Project; Madison River Basin Holding Steady, Despite Weather Conditions

Butte, Mont. – August 4, 2017 – The rehabilitation of Hebgen Dam is moving ahead and water conditions in the Madison River drainage are steady despite the hot, dry weather in July.

Despite little precipitation, Hebgen inflows came in at 97 percent of average for the month of July. Outflow for July averaged 1,200 cubic feet per second (cfs). The outflow was kept at this level, in part, to refill Ennis Lake due to required downstream pulse flows. Pulse flows reduce lower Madison River water temperature for fisheries protection. Pulse flows have been required since July 4. Pulse-flow requirements typically reduce as the days become shorter and nights become longer in mid-August.

Although a break in temperatures is forecast in the near term, the longer term forecast indicates above average temperatures and below average precipitation. Hebgen's outflow is currently 1,100 cfs. The lake elevation is 6,533.67 feet, which is 1.20 feet below full pool.

The outlet pipe rehabilitation project at Hebgen is well under way and on track. By the end of July all of the original wood stave lining had been removed and work inside the pipe was focused on sealing minor leaks in the existing concrete encasement.

The existing concrete encasement is structurally sound and in better condition than was anticipated, especially for being more than 100 years old. Preparations are being made for concrete placement in the outlet pipe, including tying reinforcing cages above ground and testing and refining the concrete mix and placement techniques. By the middle of August, the first concrete pours will be under way inside of the outlet pipe.

In 2009, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) required safety repairs to the Hebgen Dam intake, spillway and outlet pipeline to meet current dam-safety standards and reflect advances in earthquake seismology. The approximately \$40 million project is expected to be finished by the end of 2017.

About NorthWestern Energy (NYSE: NWE)

NorthWestern Energy provides electricity and natural gas in the Upper Midwest and Northwest, serving approximately 709,600 customers in Montana, South Dakota and Nebraska. More information on NorthWestern Energy is available on the company's website at www.northwesternenergy.com.

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