

A large dam with water cascading over it, set against a backdrop of a rocky cliff and a cloudy sky. The dam is a long, low structure with multiple spillways. Water is flowing over the spillways, creating a series of small waterfalls. The sky is blue with some white clouds. The overall scene is a mix of natural and man-made elements.

Hydroelectric Power in Montana and the Region

Regulated and Federal Dams



NorthWestern Energy currently has 501 MW of Hydro capacity in its portfolio.

- 10 utility-owned dams, 459 MW of nameplate capacity.
- 8 dams classified as run-of-river, 2 classified as storage.
 - There can be limited storage on run-of-river dams.
- 13 qualifying facilities (“QFs”), 38 MW of nameplate capacity.
 - 10 of the QFs are small QFs (3 MW or less).
 - Broadwater Dam is owned by the State of Montana (DNRC).

A photograph of the Thompson Falls Dam and Power Plant. The dam is a large, multi-story concrete structure with many arched windows, situated on a rocky riverbank. The river flows in the foreground, and a steep, rocky slope with some sparse vegetation is to the right of the dam. In the background, there are dense evergreen forests and mountains under a clear sky.

Thompson Falls

- 7 units, Storage plant on the Clark Fork River in Thompson Falls.
- 94 MW Nameplate Capacity.
 - 73 MW WRAP Winter accredited capacity.
 - 84 MW WRAP Summer accredited capacity.
- 57% Capacity Factor.
- 71 MWh Estimated Usable Storage
- Online 1915.

Ryan

- 6 Units, Run-of-River plant on the Missouri River, 10 miles downstream of Great Falls.
- 72 MW Nameplate Capacity.
 - 54 MW WRAP Winter accredited capacity.
 - 52 MW WRAP Summer accredited capacity.
- 70% Capacity Factor.
- 172 MWh Estimated Usable Storage.
- Online 1915.



Rainbow

- 1 Unit, Run-of-River plant on the Missouri River, 10 miles downstream of Great Falls.
- 64 MW Nameplate Capacity.
 - 37 MW WRAP Winter accredited capacity.
 - 46 MW WRAP Summer accredited capacity.
- 69% Capacity Factor.
- Online 1910.



Cochrane

- 2 Units, Run-of-River plant on the Missouri River, 8 miles downstream from Great Falls.
- 62 MW Nameplate Capacity.
 - 64 MW WRAP Winter accredited capacity.
 - 64 MW WRAP Summer accredited capacity.
- 52% Capacity Factor.
- 100 MWh Estimated Usable Storage
- Online 1958.



Holter

- 4 Units, Run-of-River plant on the Missouri River, 43 miles NE of Helena.
- 50 MW Nameplate Capacity.
 - 29 MW WRAP Winter accredited capacity.
 - 34 MW WRAP Summer accredited capacity.
- 64% Capacity Factor.
- Online 1918.



Morony

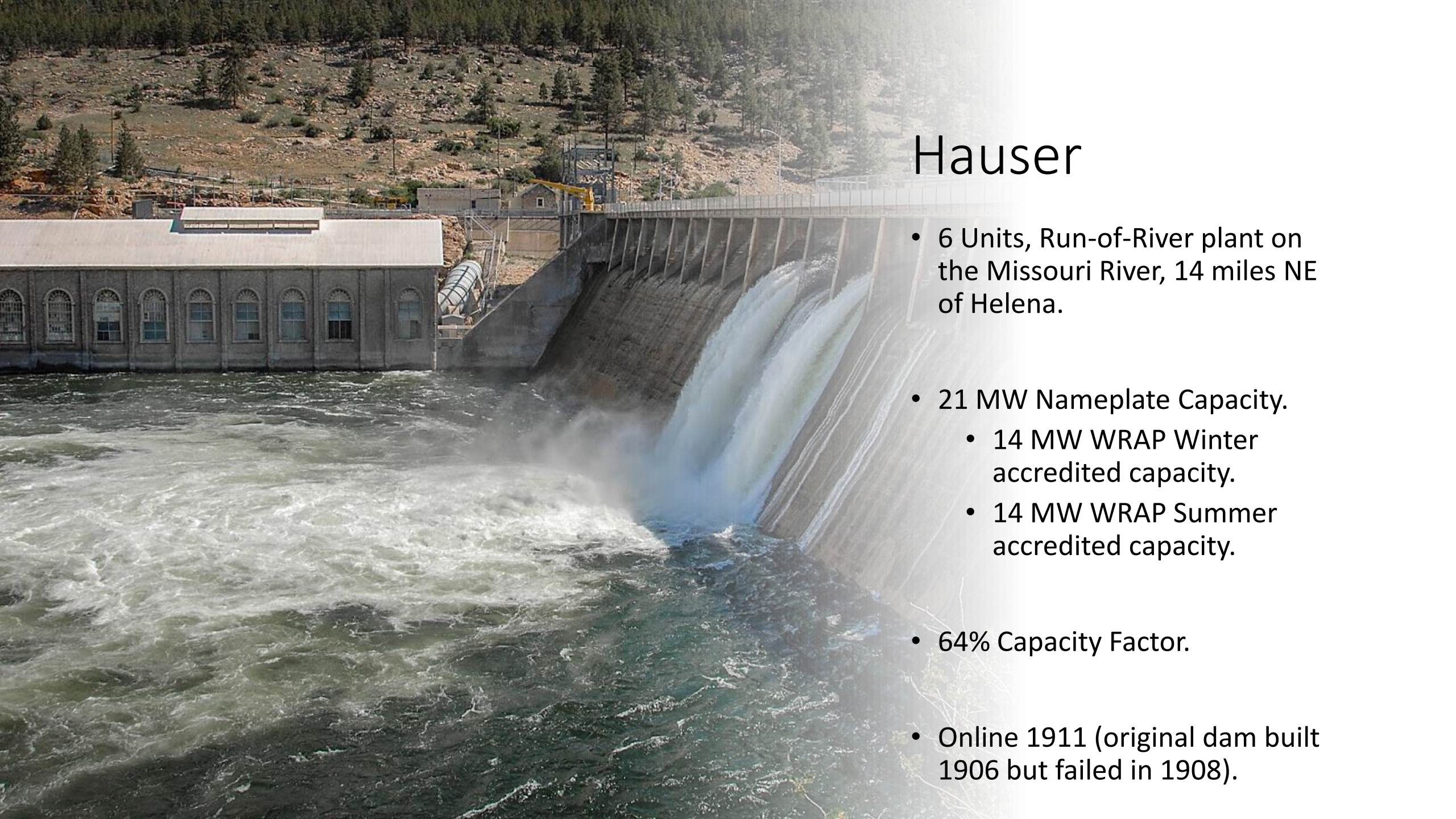
- 2 Units, Run-of-River plant on the Madison River, 15 miles NE of Great Falls.
- 49 MW Nameplate Capacity.
 - 28 MW WRAP Winter accredited capacity.
 - 33 MW WRAP Summer accredited capacity.
- 67% Capacity Factor.
- Online 1930.



An aerial photograph of the Black Eagle Dam and power plant. The dam is a large concrete structure with multiple spillways on the left. The power plant building is a long, multi-story structure with many arched windows, situated behind the dam. A bridge crosses the river to the right of the plant. The river flows through a valley with green vegetation and rocky banks. The background shows a steep, rocky hillside.

Black Eagle

- 3 Units, Run-of-River plant on the Missouri River, 2 miles downstream of Great Falls.
- 23 MW Nameplate Capacity.
 - 13 MW WRAP Winter accredited capacity.
 - 15 MW WRAP Summer accredited capacity.
- 60% Capacity Factor.
- Online 1927.



Hauser

- 6 Units, Run-of-River plant on the Missouri River, 14 miles NE of Helena.
- 21 MW Nameplate Capacity.
 - 14 MW WRAP Winter accredited capacity.
 - 14 MW WRAP Summer accredited capacity.
- 64% Capacity Factor.
- Online 1911 (original dam built 1906 but failed in 1908).



Madison

- 4 Units, Run-of-River plant on the Madison River, 10 miles N of Ennis.
- 12 MW Nameplate Capacity.
 - 5 MW WRAP Winter accredited capacity.
 - 7 MW WRAP Summer accredited capacity.
- 17% Capacity Factor.
- Online 1906.



Mystic

- 2 Units, Storage plant on West Rosebud Creek (dam forms Mystic lake), 75 miles SW of Billings.
- 12 MW Nameplate Capacity.
 - 6 MW WRAP Winter accredited capacity.
 - 11 MW WRAP Summer accredited capacity.
- 53% Capacity Factor.
- Online 1925.

Qualifying Facilities

Dam	Nameplate Capacity	Winter WRAP Accredited Capacity	Summer WRAP Accredited Capacity	Capacity Factor	Online Date	Expiration Date
Turnbull Hydro LLC	13	0.0	13	24%	2011	2032
State of MT DNRC (Broadwater Dam)	10	4.7	6	49%	1989	2024
Tiber Montana LLC	7.5	5.0	5	82%	2004	2025
Flint Creek Hydroelectric LLC	2	0.9	2	75%	2013	2037
Hydrodynamics Inc (South Dry Creek)	2	0.0	2.0	22%	1985	2041
Wisconsin Creek LTD LC	0.6	0.2	0.4	16%	1989	2024
Boulder Hydro Limited Partnership	0.5	0.2	0.4	31%	1988	2022
Lower South Fork LLC	0.5	0.2	0.4	15%	2012	2037
Ross Creek Hydro LC	0.5	0.2	0.4	58%	1996	2032
Gerald Ohs (Pony Generating Station)	0.4	0.2	0.3	23%	1989	2025
Allen R. Carter (Pine Creek)	0.3	0.1	0.2	49%	1989	2024
Donald Fred Jenni (Hanover Hydro)	0.2	0.1	0.2	15%	1988	2034
Hydrodynamics Inc (Strawberry Creek)	0.2	0.1	0.2	67%	1987	2023

Federal Dams In the Northwest

An aerial photograph of a large concrete dam with multiple spillways, situated in a valley. The dam is surrounded by a large reservoir of water. The surrounding landscape is a mix of green forested hills and some cleared areas with roads and buildings. The sky is overcast.

- The US Army Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation own and operate 31 hydroelectric dams in the Northwest, with a total nameplate capacity of 20,060 MW.
- Power from these dams is marketed by the Bonneville Power Administration (“BPA”), with preference going to cooperative and public power entities.



BPA Customers 2022

Cooperatives	54
Municipalities	42
Public Utility Districts	28
Federal Agencies	7
Investor-owned utilities	6
Direct Service Industries	1
Port District	1
Tribal Utilities	3
Total	142

US Army Corps of Engineers Dams

- The US Army Corps of Engineers owns and operates 21 dams in the Northwest, with a total nameplate capacity of 12,524 MW.

US Army Corps of Engineers Dams

Dam	Capacity (MW)	River, State	Online
Big Cliff	18	N Santiam, OR	1953
Cougar	25	McKenzie, OR	1963
Detroit	100	N Santiam, OR	1953
Dexter	15	Middle Fork Willamette, OR	1954
Foster	20	S Santiam, OR	1967
Green Peter	80	S Santiam, OR	1967
Hills Creek	30	Middle Fork Willamette, OR	1962
Lookout Point	120	Middle Fork Willamette, OR	1953
Lost Creek	49	Rouge, OR	1977
Albeni Falls	42	Pend Oreille, ID	1955
Libby	525	Kootenai, MT	1975
Chief Joseph	2629	Colombia, WA	1958
Dworshak	400	Clearwater, ID	1973
McNary	980	Colombia, OR/WA	1952
John Day	2160	Colombia, OR/WA	1971
The Dalles	1780	Colombia, OR/WA	1957
Bonneville	518	Colombia, OR/WA	1938
Lower Granite	810	Snake, WA	1975
Lower Monumental	810	Snake, WA	1969
Little Goose	810	Snake, WA	1970
Ice Harbor	603	Snake, WA	1962

Bureau of Reclamation Dams

- The Bureau of Reclamation owns and operates 10 dams in the Northwest, with a total nameplate capacity of 7,536 MW.



Bureau of Reclamation Dams

Dam	Capacity (MW)	River, State	Online
Grand Coulee	6809	Colombia, WA	1942
Hungry Horse	428	Flathead, MT	1953
Anderson Ranch	40	Boise, ID	1950
Black Canyon	10	Payette, ID	1925
Boise River Diversion	3	Boise, ID	1912
Chandler	12	Yakima, WA	1956
Green Springs	17	Emigrant Crk, OR	1960
Minidonka	28	Snake, ID	1909
Palisades	176	Snake, ID	1958
Roza	13	Yakima, WA	1958

Neighboring Investor-Owned Utilities

- PacifiCorp has approximately 1057 MW of hydroelectric generation.
- Idaho Power has approximately 1799 MW of hydroelectric generation.
- Avista has 905 MW of hydroelectric generation.

PacifiCorp

Dam	Type	Capacity (MW)
Copco No .1	Storage	20
Copco No. 2	Run-of-River	27
Iron Gate	Storage	18
JC Boyle	Storage	97.98
Clearwater No. 1	Run-of-River	15
Clearwater No.2	Run-of-River	26
Fish Creek	Run-of-River	11
Lemolo No. 1	Storage	31.99
Lemolo No. 2	Run-of-River	38.5
Slide Creek	Run-of-River	18
Soda Springs	Storage	11
Tonketee	Storage	42.5
Grace	Storage	33
Oneida	Storage	30
Soda	Storage	14.45
Yale	Storage	134
Swift No. 1	Storage	240
Cutler	Storage	30
Prospect No. 2	Run-of-River	32
Merwin	Storage	136

PacifiCorp Continued

Dam	Type	Capacity (MW)
Ashton	Run-of-River	6.85
Bend	Run-of-River	1.11
Big Fork	Run-of-River	4.15
Eagle point	Run-of-River	2.18
East Side	Run-of-River	3.2
Fall Creek	Run-of-River	2.2
Granite	Run-of-River	2
Gunlock	Run-of-River	0.75
Last Chance	Run-of-River	1.73
Paris	Run-of-River	0.72
Pioneer	Run-of-River	5
Prospect No. 1	Run-of-River	3.76
Prospect No. 3	Run-of-River	7.2
Prospect No. 4	Run-of-River	1
Sand Cove	Run-of-River	0.8
Stairs	Run-of-River	1
Veyo	Run-of-River	0.5
Viva Naughton	Run-of-River	0.74
Wallowa Falls	Run-of-River	1.1
Weber	Run-of-River	3.85
West Side	Run-of-River	0.6

Idaho Power

Dam		Capacity (MW)
American Falls	Run-of-River	92.34
Bliss	Run-of-River	75.04
Brownlee	Storage	675
C.J. Strike	Run-of-River	82.8
Cascade	Run-of-River	12.42
Clear Lake	Run-of-River	2.5
Hells Canyon	Storage	391.5
Malad	Run-of-River	21.77
Milner	Run-of-River	59.45
Oxbow	Storage	190
Salmon Falls (upper and Lower)	Run-of-River	94.5
Shoshone Falls	Run-of-River	14.73
Swan Falls	Run-of-River	27.2
Thousand Springs	Run-of-River	6.8
Twin Falls	Run-of-River	52.9

Avista

Dam	Type	Capacity (MW)
Cabinet Gorge	Storage	265
Little Falls	Run-of River	43
Long Lake	Storage	71
Monroe Street	Run-of River	15
Nine Mile Falls	Run-of River	38
Noxon Rapids	Storage	448
Post Falls	Storage	15
Upper Falls	Run-of River	10

Colombia River Basin Restoration Initiative

- The Colombia River Basin restoration Initiative (“CBRI”) was developed by the states of Oregon and Washington, and the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakima Nation, the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation, and the Nez Perce Tribe. It is a proposal to the Federal Government.
- The CBRI explicitly calls for the services of the four lower Snake River Dams (Lower Granite, Little Goose, Lower Monumental, and Ice Harbor) to be replaced and the dams to be breached within two fish generations (approximately 8 years). Replaced services include energy, irrigation, transportation, and recreation.
- The Federal Government’s commitments to the CBRI do not include a decision to breach the dams.
- Addition information on the CBRI can be found at

[snake-river-litigation-cbri.pdf \(earthjustice.org\)](#)

[Biden-Harris Administration Announces Ten-Year Partnership with Tribes & States to Restore Wild Salmon, Expand Clean Energy Production, Increase Resilience, and Provide Energy Stability in the Columbia River Basin | CEQ | The White House](#)