



PPL Montana Donation Pays for Schoolyard Habitat

Students at Broadwater Elementary School in Helena now are able to experience outdoor environmental learning thanks to one of PPL Montana's educational grants.

A donation from PPL Montana enabled the school to develop a schoolyard habitat. What was once an unused asphalt playground is now home to birds, squirrels, rabbits and insects. The area also includes native vegetation, aquatic plants, bat houses, a ladybug house, birdhouses and feeders, a birdbath heated for year-round use and a stream that flows into a pond.

"Studies have shown that students who participate in outdoor learning perform well on standardized tests, have better attendance records, are more well-behaved and develop into better problem-solvers and creative thinkers," said David Hoffman, PPL Montana's manager of External Affairs.

PPL Montana's \$2,000 donation was made through the Helena Education Foundation, a nonprofit organization whose goal is to enrich education in Helena public schools through community investment of time, talent and other resources.

Equipment Upgrade at Thompson Falls Plant Safeguards Environment

PPL Montana's Thompson Falls hydroelectric plant has completed equipment upgrades that will help safeguard the environment.

All six of the governors — the equipment that controls the flow of water through the plant's turbines — have been replaced. The old governors had been in use since Thompson Falls began operation in 1915.

"The governor is very important at a hydroelectric plant," said Gary Peterson, senior engineer in PPL Montana's hydro plant management department. "It's the primary water pressure regulator. It controls how fast a hydro plant can start producing electricity."

Peterson said the company decided to replace the old mechanical governors because they were worn out, and parts and the know-how to fix 89-year-old equipment were getting harder to find.

Peterson said environmental exposure has also been reduced. The old system had 3,000 gallons of oil that fed all six governors from one tank, and there was always a risk of leaks into the Clark Fork River. The new system has only 40 gallons of oil per governor.

The Thompson Falls plant in northwestern Montana is the second largest of the company's 11 hydroelectric plants.

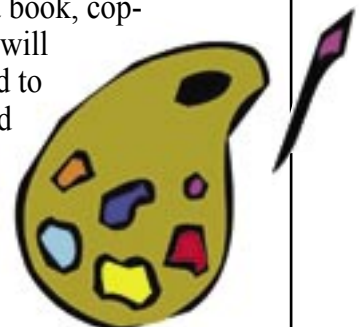


PPL Montana Promotes Art and Poetry Contest

PPL Montana is partnering with The Montana Watercourse and Montana Project WET (Water Education for Teachers) to sponsor a River of Words program in the state.

River of Words is an international poetry and art contest focusing on the theme of watersheds. The contest is designed to help students explore

the natural and cultural history of the place in which they live, and express, through poetry and art, what they discover. The contest runs through the current academic year. The winning entries will be included in a book, copies of which will be distributed to educators and community leaders throughout Montana.





School Groups Transform Gravel Pits into Aquatic Ecosystem

Student from Billings area public schools showed off their hard work in transforming a 65-acre tract of gravel pits into an outdoor science laboratory. They gave employees from PPL Montana a tour of the Conservation Education Center and thanked them for funding their study of the ever-changing aquatic ecosystem.

Activities at the site near Norm's Island include monitoring chemical and biological factors in the waters of the ponds. Students also collect and identify plankton samples as well as study fish populations. Birds are catalogued and changes in species are compared over the seasons.

Students have an opportunity to study a variety of plants, such as hard-stemmed bull rushes, cattails, wild rose, snowberry, skunk bush sumac, aspen, ponderosa pine, junipers and cottonwoods.

PPL Montana donations enabled teachers to purchase a variety of equipment for use in studying the ponds. The donations also provided funds for students to design and build an equipment storage trailer.

PPL Montana Names Poster Contest Winners



Winner - Grade 3

Ali Orr

Riverview Elementary School
Great Falls

Teacher: Mrs. Mary Ann Freeman

Winner - Grade 5

Stephanie Spencer

Loy Elementary School, Great Falls
Teacher: Mr. Joel Carlson

PPL Montana sponsored a water safety poster contest in 21 Great Falls area schools. Students in grades three through six could choose any outdoor activity – swimming, fishing, canoeing, etc. – and draw a poster containing a message about safety around Montana's many lakes, rivers and streams.

“Because our power plants are located near major rivers in the state, we have an interest in the safety of boaters, swimmers and fishermen,” said David Hoffman, PPL Montana's manager of External Affairs.

A panel of teachers and PPL employees selected a grand-prize winner and a runner-up for each grade level. Each grand-prize winner received a certificate and two shares of PPL Corporation

stock, runners-up each received a certificate and one share of stock, and each participating student received a special PPL prize.

PPL Montana also gave \$50 for instructional materials or supplies to each teacher of grand-prize winners. In addition, the first 50 teachers who submitted their students' posters received a special gift from PPL Montana.

The six prize-winning posters will be featured on a special 2005 PPL Montana Water Safety Poster, copies of which will be distributed to schools, community leaders and PPL facilities in Montana.

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Rainbow Dam Project *(Continued from page 1)*

fell, the river revealed large mud flats and exposed its original channel near Giant Springs-Heritage State Park north of Great Falls.

“The exposed river caught the attention of Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks and others who marveled at seeing the same stretch of river discovered by explorers Lewis and Clark,” said Russ Dunn, manager of hydro operations and maintenance.

“It was a rare opportunity to take in the same view of the Missouri that was experienced by the Corps of Discovery,” Dunn said.

Crews replaced 600 boards — 10-foot-long wooden planks fixed on top of the dam that hold back river flows to help the hydroelectric plant run more efficiently.



Environmental currents is your source of information about PPL Montana's commitment to the environment. It's just one more way we're putting our energy into Montana communities.

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