June 19, 2020

Mr. Rick Baxter

Program Manager

Bureau of Reclamation

Provo Area Office

302 East Lakeview Parkway

Provo, UT 84606

Dear Mr. Baxter:

We have the honor of serving on the Utah Board of Water Resources (UBWR). Our board is comprised of eight individuals who were appointed by Gov. Gary R. Herbert to represent the eight river districts in the State of Utah. The board has specific powers and duties which include working closely with water conservancy districts, including the Washington County Water Conservancy District, to ensure they have the water resources needed to meet future demands.

Recognizing the need to increase the water supply due to a growing population, the Utah State Legislature passed the 2006 Lake Powell Pipeline Development Act (Utah Code 73-28) that authorized the UBWR to build the Lake Powell Pipeline (LPP). In fact, the LPP has been included in the state’s comprehensive water plans for nearly 20 years.

Since the late 1980s, Washington County has experienced the most rapid growth rate in Utah and one of the most rapid in the nation. There are 10 communities in Washington County that need the LPP to improve the reliability of water systems, protect against droughts and support economic vitality.

For over a century, the State of Utah and the Bureau of Reclamation have worked together on many important projects and policies including the allocation of water under the terms of the 1922 Compact and the Law of the River. Currently, Utah does not use its full share of water under this law. The LPP will use approximately 6% of Utah’s annual average reliable supply from the Colorado River. Operating at full capacity, the LPP will deliver 0.5% of the average annual amount of water in Lake Powell according to the Bureau’s statistics. Any impact will, therefore, be minimal.

The LPP is a crucial water delivery project that, with the benefit of modern technology and engineering, President Theodore Roosevelt envisioned when he signed the Reclamation Act in 1902. We’re pleased the Bureau of Reclamation and the technical experts who conducted the Draft LPP Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) concluded that Washington County needs the water and can afford to repay the state for the costs of building the project. And it points out that any impacts created during the construction of the project can be mitigated. We ask that the Bureau continue its heritage of supporting the western arid states by finalizing the LPP EIS and issuing a Record of Decision approving the Southern Alternative.

Sincerely,

Blaine Ipson, Sevier River District, Board Chairman

Kyle Stevens, Weber River District, Board Vice-Chair

Wayne Andersen, Provo River District

Randy Crozier, Green River District

Charles Holmgren, Bear River District

Norman L. Johnson, Upper Colorado River District

James Lemmon, Lower Colorado River District

Juliette Tennert, Salt Lake District

Utah Board of Water Resources

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