

RECLAMATION

Managing Water in the West

Weber Basin Water Conversion Environmental Assessment PRO-EA-12-002

**Provo Area Office
UpperColorado Region
Bureau of Reclamation**



**U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation**

October 19, 2012

Mission Statements

The mission of the Department of the Interior is to protect and provide access to our Nation's natural and cultural heritage and honor our trust responsibilities to Indian Tribes and our commitments to island communities.

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.

Weber Basin Water Conversion Environmental Assessment

PRO-EA-12-002

prepared by:

**Provo Area Office
Upper Colorado Region
Bureau of Reclamation**



**U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation**

October 19, 2012

Contents

	Page
Introduction.....	1
Purpose and Need for Action.....	1
Proposed Action	2
No Action Alternative.....	3
Description of Project Facilities.....	3
Environmental Consequences.....	3

Introduction

The Weber Basin Project conserves and utilizes, for multiple purposes, streamflows in the natural drainage basin of the Weber River, including the basin of the Ogden River, its principal tributary. Other areas encompassed are those lying between the west slope of the Wasatch Mountains and the east shore of the Great Salt Lake.

Water resources of the area were extensively developed before initiation of the Weber Basin Project. Prior Federal Reclamation developments include the Weber River Project with Echo Reservoir on the Weber River and the Ogden River Project with Pineview Reservoir and conveyance facilities on the Ogden River. The Weber River and Provo River Projects diverted water from the high reaches of the Weber River for multiple uses on the Provo River. Numerous private developments preceded the Federal projects. The Weber Basin Project supplements all of these earlier undertakings and the project's operations are integrated with them in approaching full development of the area's water resources. In full operation, the project was designed to provide an average of 218,200 acre-feet of water annually, including 166,200 acre-feet for irrigation, and 52,000 acre-feet for municipal and industrial (M&I) use in a heavily populated and industrialized area.

Operation and maintenance of the Weber Basin Project was turned over to the Weber Basin Water Conservancy District on October 1, 1968.

The WBWCD is Northern Utah's Regional Water Supplier for treated municipal water, wholesale irrigation water, retail secondary irrigation water, untreated industrial water and ground replacement water. It serves the needs in Davis, Weber, Summit, Morgan, and Box Elder counties. It manages its upstream storage in eight reservoirs within the drainage season of Weber and Ogden Rivers; Causey Dam and Reservoir, East Canyon Dam and Reservoir, Lost Creek Dam and Reservoir, Pineview Dam and Reservoir, Smith and Morehouse Dam and Reservoir, Wanship Dam and Rockport Reservoir, and Willard Dam and Reservoir.

Purpose and Need for Action

The purpose of the proposed action is to allow WBWCD to convert 3000 acre-feet of water from irrigation uses to M&I use through an amendment to Unit Notices 7 and 4 of the repayment contract. This Environmental Assessment (EA) analyzes the impacts resulting from the water conversion. Currently, 145,989

acre-feet of water is used for irrigation. The 3000 acre-feet of water will come from the irrigation supply. Currently 60,925 acre-feet of water is being used for M&I.

Proposed Action

The proposed action is to convert 3000 acre-feet of irrigation water to M&I water from Unit Notices 4 and 7. The Unit Notices and sub-units are described below:

Unit- 4

1M – Lands in Weber and Box Elder Counties that can be supplied project irrigation water from the Weber Aqueduct, Ogden Valley Canal, Willard Canal, or direct from the Ogden River or by exchange.

2K – Lands in Davis County supplied project irrigation water from the Davis Aqueduct

Unit – 7

6A - Lands in Summit Co. and Morgan County that can be supplied project irrigation water by diversion or exchange from the Weber River or the Gateway Canal.

6B - Lands in Summit Co. and Morgan County that can be supplied project irrigation water by diversion or exchange from the Weber River or the Gateway Canal.

6F - Lands in Davis County supplied project irrigation water from the Davis Aqueduct.

4C - Lands in Weber and Box Elder Counties that can be supplied project irrigation water from the Weber Aqueduct, Ogden Valley Canal, Willard Canal, or direct from the Ogden River or by exchange.

5E - Lands in Davis County supplied project irrigation water from the Davis Aqueduct.

4G - Lands in Davis County supplied project irrigation water from the Davis Aqueduct.

5H - Lands in Davis County supplied project irrigation water from the Davis Aqueduct.

3J - Lands in Davis County supplied project irrigation water from the Davis Aqueduct.

6L - Lands in Davis County supplied project irrigation water from the Davis Aqueduct.

A map showing the geographic locations is attached.

The Proposed Action requires no capital outlay and no extra operation and maintenance expenditures because the action demands no changes to project features or operations. The proposed action would not affect the operation of any reservoir or constructed facility within the Weber Basin Project. The pattern of historic streamflow will be unaffected by any of the proposed action discussed in the EA. Release from upstream reservoirs and maintenance of flows for fish or other purposes will continue in accordance with past practice.

No Action Alternative

The conversion of 3,000 acre-feet of water from irrigation to M&I use would not be initiated and the water will still be used for secondary irrigation purposes. This could potentially become problematic from a policy and political standpoint as water uses are re-evaluated based on shrinking water supplies.

Description of Project Facilities

The Weber Basin Project includes 6 dams and reservoirs; 3 diversion dams; about 67 miles of conveyance works including: tunnels, aqueducts, and canals; 2 power plants, 11 pumping plants; and 9 wells. All major features were completed by Reclamation by 1969. The Weber Basin Project supplements several earlier undertakings, and its operations are integrated with them. The sponsor and operator of the project is the WBWCD. The WBWCD has added three water treatment plants to meet the needs of its customers.

Environmental Consequences

The proposed action of converting 3,000 acre-feet of water from irrigation to M&I would require no ground-disturbing activities. No new water delivery facilities would be constructed and no change in the use of project water would occur under this proposal.

There are no anticipated impacts to any of the following resources as a result of the proposed action: threatened and endangered species, farmlands, flood plains, water quality, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, hazardous or solid wastes, air quality, cultural resources and Native American concerns. A no effect determination was made on each of the following environmental issues as well as no adverse cumulative impacts. Therefore, no further analysis is needed.

EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANT CRITERIA		No	Yes	Uncertain
1	This action or group of actions would have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment.	X		
2.	This action or group of actions would involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources.	X		
EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES				
1.	This action would have significant adverse effects on public health or safety.	X		
2.	This action would have an adverse effect on unique geographical features such as: wetlands, Wild or Scenic Rivers, or Scenic Rivers, refuges, floodplains, rivers placed on the Nationwide River Inventory, or prime or unique farmlands.	X		
3.	This action will have highly controversial environmental effects.	X		
4.	This action will have highly uncertain environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risk.	X		
5.	This action will establish a precedent for future actions.	X		
6.	This action is related to other actions with individually insignificant, but cumulatively significant effects.	X		
7.	This action will affect properties listed, or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.	X		
8.	This action will adversely affect a species listed, or proposed to be listed, as endangered or threatened.	X		
9.	This action threatens to violate federal, state, local or tribal law or requirements imposed for protection of the environment.	X		
10.	This action will affect Indian Trust Assets.	X		
11.	This action will not accommodate access to or allow ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites by Indian religious practitioners to the extent practicable. Neither will it avoid adversely affect, to any practicable extent, the physical integrity of such sacred sites (E.O. 13007).	X		
12.	This action will disproportionately affect minority or low-income populations (E.O. 12898).	X		

Finding of No Significant Impact
Provo Area Office

Decision: It is my decision to authorize the proposed action identified in EA No. PRO-EA-12-002.

Finding of No Significant Impact: Based on the analysis of potential environmental impacts contained in the attached Environmental Assessment, I have determined that impacts are not expected to be significant and an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

Rationale for Decision: The decision to allow the proposed action does not result in any undue or unnecessary environmental degradation.

Recommended by:



Chief, Environmental Group

10/19/12
Date

Concur:



Chief, Water and Environmental Resources Division

10/19/12
Date

Approved by:



Curtis A. Pledger
Area Manager, Provo Area Office

10/22/2012
Date