

STATEMENT OF RONALD JOHNSTON
PROGRAM DIRECTOR
CENTRAL UTAH PROJECT COMPLETION ACT OFFICE
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BEFORE THE HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE
ON ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT
ON THE 2005 PRESIDENT'S BUDGET REQUEST

MARCH 4, 2004

My name is Ronald Johnston. I serve as the Program Director of the Central Utah Project Completion Act Office under the Assistant Secretary - Water and Science in the Department of the Interior. I am pleased to provide the following information about the President's fiscal year 2005 budget for implementation of the Central Utah Project Completion Act.

The Central Utah Project Completion Act, Titles II - VI of P.L. 102-575, provides for completion of the Central Utah Project (CUP) by the Central Utah Water Conservancy District. The Act also authorizes funding for fish, wildlife, and recreation mitigation and conservation; establishes an account in the Treasury for deposit of these funds and other contributions; establishes the Utah Reclamation Mitigation and Conservation Commission to coordinate mitigation and conservation activities; and provides for the Ute Indian Water Rights Settlement.

The Act provides that the Secretary may not delegate responsibility under the Act to the Bureau of Reclamation. As a result, the Department has established an office in Provo, Utah, with a Program Director to provide oversight, review, and liaison with the District, the Commission, and the Ute Indian Tribe, and to assist in administering the responsibilities of the Secretary under the Act.

The 2005 request for the Central Utah Project Completion Account provides \$46.3 million for use by the District, the Commission, and the Department to implement Titles II - IV of the Act, which is \$8.3 million more than the 2004 enacted level. Most of this increase is due to a transfer of budgetary authority and responsibility from the Western Area Power Administration to the Department of the Interior (\$6.1 million).

The funds requested for the District (\$28.4 million) will be used to continue the completion of the Diamond Fork System (\$8.5 million); to continue construction on Uinta Basin Replacement Project (\$13.0 million); and to implement water conservation measures, local development projects, and continue planning and NEPA compliance for the Utah Lake System (\$6.9 million). We are pleased to report that the problems in the Diamond Fork System associated with a cave-in and dangerous levels of hydrogen

sulfide gas have been resolved, the construction of the alternative facilities is nearly complete, and water should be delivered through the facilities this summer. We are planning a celebration of the completion of these major facilities this summer. The members of the committee will be invited to attend.

The funds requested for the Mitigation Commission (\$15.5 million) will be used to implement the fish, wildlife, and recreation mitigation and conservation projects authorized in Title III (\$7.4 million); to implement the fish and wildlife activities associated with the Uinta Basin Replacement Project (\$1.0 million); to complete mitigation measures committed to in pre-1992 Bureau of Reclamation planning documents (\$1.0 million); and to fulfill the mitigation obligations required under section 402(b)(3)(B) of the Act (\$6.1 million) . Title III activities funded in 2004 include the Provo River Restoration Project; acquisition of habitat, access, and water rights; and fish hatchery improvements.

Finally, the request includes \$2.4 million for the Program Office. This includes \$1.7 million for program administration, \$300,000 for mitigation and conservation projects outside the State of Utah, and \$400,000 for operation and maintenance costs associated with instream flows and fish hatchery facilities.

In conclusion, we appreciate the opportunity to testify before the Committee and would be happy to respond to any questions.