



United States Department of the Interior  
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

UTAH FIELD OFFICE  
LINCOLN PLAZA  
145 EAST 1300 SOUTH, SUITE 404  
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH 84115

In Reply Refer To  
(CO/KS/NE/UT)

December 18, 2000



Mr. Kenneth E. Wilde  
Utah Department of Environmental Quality  
Division of Drinking Water  
150 North 1950 West  
Box 144830  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-4830

RE: Emigration Improvement District Water System Expansion Project

Dear Mr. Wilde:

We have reviewed your letter regarding the proposed project referenced above. The Emigration Improvement District (EID) proposes to build a water system project in Emigration Canyon. Phase 1 of the project is located within the EID boundaries and connects the existing Emigration Oaks water system to the existing Young Oaks Subdivision, and to existing individual and small community water systems in Lower Burr Fork and Killyon Canyon. We are providing the following comments for your consideration.

Based on the information provided, it is unclear to us where the water for the expansion project is being acquired. Consequently, we are concerned that additional water depletions could result in detrimental impacts to:

**1) Bonneville cutthroat trout (BCT)-** The BCT is a fish species known to inhabit the streams and tributaries of the project area. While not listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act, the BCT is considered a sensitive species by the State of Utah. The BCT is managed under a Conservation Agreement which is a voluntary cooperative plan among resource agencies that identifies threats to a species in decline and provides for conservation measures to pro-actively conserve and protect the species. Threats that warrant listing as a sensitive species by state and federal agencies should be significantly reduced or eliminated through implementation of the Conservation Agreement. Projects that would cause degradation or loss of BCT habitat would go against the spirit and intent of this Conservation Agreement.

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**2) Riparian vegetation** - Riparian vegetation provides important habitat for a variety of wildlife species, including neotropical migrant birds. Further, riparian vegetation plays an important ecosystem function in protecting the water quality of streams in the area.

We believe that the environmental assessment prepared for the project should contain a more complete description of the project plans and evaluation of potential impacts. Results of the impact evaluation should be discussed with our agency, as well as the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, prior to funding and implementation of the project.

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on this application. If you have any questions or need further information please contact John Wrublik, Ecologist at (801) 524-5009 ext. 146.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Reed E. Harris".

Reed E. Harris  
Utah Field Supervisor

cc: UDWR - SLC