



July 22, 2020

Mr. Rick Baxter  
Program Manager  
Bureau of Reclamation  
Provo Area Office  
302 East Lakeview Parkway  
Provo, UT 84606

Dear Mr. Baxter:

I was pleased to see that the Lake Powell Pipeline Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) identified the Southern Alternative as its Preferred Alternative. In my opinion, this option best meets the water needs for St. George and the other nine communities in Washington County.

St. George is an active community, rich in culture with a diverse and vibrant economy. Our city has consistently been one of the fastest growing metropolitan regions in the U.S. in recent years. This growth has resulted in a boom in commercial and residential development that requires new transportation and water systems to keep up with demands. Given the population growth expected and our reliance on a single source for municipal water, St. George lies at a juncture where a new water supply is critically important to our future.

In the last decade, the construction growth in St. George was up 4% while area sales were up 7% and unemployment was at 2.4%, its lowest figure since March 2007. While growth has slowed moderately, I expect more businesses and individuals across the state and country will consider moving to the Southern Utah area because of our strong economic policies, the outdoors, general quality of life and the risks associated with coronavirus in higher-density communities.

Some opponents of the LPP are spreading misinformation about St. George's water use. These critics often compare Washington County's water use with other desert cities such as Las Vegas and Tucson without communicating that these cities calculate water use in a way that reduces their numbers compared to Utah's practices. For example, some cities only report water use by certain industries and/or water types (treated vs. untreated), or they apply a credit to their numbers for water that is returned to the system (such as indoor water use being returned via the sewer system). It is important that numbers are calculated using consistent methodology and that other impacting factors, such as a community's climate and demographics, are considered to give an accurate picture of actual water efficiency.

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Other critics of the LPP suggest we can't afford to pay for the cost of constructing the project. The Washington County Water Conservancy District, our water provider, has a sound funding plan that includes gradually increasing new construction impact fees, water rates and property taxes. This plan will allow new growth to pay for itself. In addition, two independent studies and an Environmental Protection Agency's index confirm LPP is affordable.

St. George is a fiscally conservative city and we are careful to safeguard taxpayer dollars. We will continue to follow our conservative practices as we continue to provide essential services that focus on people and advancing a thriving economy.

I ask Reclamation to issue a Record of Decision in favor of the LPP Southern Alternative.

Sincerely,



Adam Lenhard  
City Manager