

# Provo River Restoration Pilot Project Q & A

## Fall Construction

This handout provides a map and information about fall activities for the Provo River Restoration Pilot Project. A handout describing accomplishments of the spring pilot project is also available.

**Q: Where is the pilot project?**

**A:** The pilot project covers approximately 1.45 miles. It starts about 1.6 miles downstream of Jordanelle Dam and ends about .9 miles south and west of Highway 40.

**Q: What will be done during the fall portion of the pilot project?**

**A:** New meanders and side channels will be constructed along the main Provo River channel between Cottonwood Canyon bridge and Highway 40. The Valeo Diversion and associated dikes will be removed and incorporated into the new meandering river channel. Access trails in the area north of the Cottonwood Canyon bridge will be relocated, expanded and improved. Public access at the bridge will also be further improved to provide a restroom and better parking. There will be no vehicle access beyond the parking lot. Approximately 25,000 native trees and shrubs will be planted to revegetate areas disturbed by construction and to improve the health of the forest around the river, creating a better environment for the animals that live there now and for those that thrived there fifty years ago. (See map on back.)

**Q: When will work occur?**

**A:** The pilot project is being conducted in two phases: the spring and the fall of 1999. Spring projects are complete, except for recontouring and revegetating constructed areas. Equipment staging and other preparatory work for the fall portion of the pilot project begins around mid-August. Construction of meanders and side channels will start after Labor Day. The bulk of work will proceed in mid-September in conjunction with reconstruction of the Wasatch Canal Diversion as part of the Wasatch County Water Efficiency Project. The pilot project is scheduled to be completed in November, 1999.

**Q: What is the purpose of fall construction activities?**

**A:** The overriding objective of the Provo River Restoration Project and of the Pilot Project is to restore the river pattern and ecological function of the Provo River to a more natural condition. Our analyses and studies confirmed that the natural pattern for the middle Provo River is a multiple-channel pattern. This is verified by early historic aerial photographs from 1938. This pattern is still evident today in a short reach (reach 4) of the Provo River that has never been diked or channelized. This reach starts above Midway Lane and extends upstream about 1 ½ miles.

**Q: How will restoration be achieved during the pilot project?**

**A:** We will achieve river restoration by (a) constructing a multiple-thread channel, (b) reconnecting the river to existing remnants of historic Provo River channels, and (c) constructing small side channels to recreate aquatic features where they have been obliterated by past channelization, diking, or other efforts.

**Q: How will the fishery be affected?**

**A:** The fishery will not be affected outside the construction area. Within a newly constructed river reach we expect it to take about six months to a year for the fishery to recover (it takes this long for the food base to rebuild). After this period, the fishery will be greatly improved. Anglers can fish the Provo River outside the construction zone. We've planned measures to maintain water quality. Any increase in turbidity (cloudy water) will be short term - a few hours at most.

**Q: Why didn't you start the project immediately below Jordanelle Dam?**

**A:** Starting the project a little lower in the river allows for an undisturbed reach upstream to provide a source of aquatic insects. Insects will float downstream and colonize the constructed reach when it is complete. After a couple of years, this reconstructed reach can in turn serve as a source area for other reaches.

**Q: How will you address noxious weeds?**

**A:** We are cooperating with Wasatch County, the Central Utah Water Conservancy District and U.S. Bureau of Reclamation to implement noxious weed control.

**Q: Will private landowners be affected by the pilot project?**

**A:** The pilot project area is on publicly-owned property, so private landowners should not be directly affected. We scheduled construction around the irrigation season, so irrigation flows will not be interrupted. There will be increased truck traffic during construction, but little effect will occur on paved highways. Most truck traffic will be seen on dirt roads.

**Q: Who is doing the work?**

**A:** The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and Utah Division of Wildlife Resources construction crews are doing the work under the oversight of the Mitigation Commission.

**Q: What is the cost of the pilot project?**

**A:** The cost for the spring and fall activities is estimated at \$1.1 million

**Q: What will happen after the pilot project is completed?**

**A:** What happens next depends in part on our progress to acquire needed properties in the next few months. We hope to continue restoration efforts immediately downstream. Currently, the Commission has acquired about 280 acres of the approximately 600 acres needed to complete the entire Provo River Restoration Project.

**The Utah Reclamation Mitigation and Conservation Commission is responsible for implementing the Provo River Restoration Project. For more information, contact Diane Simmons at 801-524-3146.**

**Provo River Restoration Project**  
**Fall 1999 Construction Projects**

**Legend**

- main channel
- side channel
- frog ponds
- hollow
- new dike
- parking
- reclaimed areas
- riparian
- wetland

- dikes removed
- existing dike
- new dike
- trail/wetland dike

- gate
- outlet

- existing river channel

**UTAH RECLAMATION  
 MITIGATION  
 AND CONSERVATION  
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400 0 400 800 Feet

1:9000 September 5, 1999

