

Provo River Restoration Project

2007 Construction Season Q & A

What is the Provo River Restoration Project?

The Utah Reclamation Mitigation and Conservation Commission, a federal agency, is responsible for implementing the Provo River Restoration Project (PRRP). Its purpose is to restore the river pattern and ecological function of the middle Provo River (from Jordanelle Dam to Deer Creek Reservoir) to make up for fish, wildlife and recreational angling losses caused by federal water reclamation projects in Utah, particularly the Central Utah Project. The project began construction in 1999 and consists of creating a multiple-thread, meandering river channel; reconnecting the river to existing remnants of historic secondary channels; and constructing small side channels to recreate aquatic features. Existing levees are set back to create a flood plain. Streamside vegetation is planted and fostered to provide environments for healthy fisheries and riparian communities. The project will provide a protected 800 to 2,200-foot-wide corridor along the entire reach of the restored middle Provo River. For more information, visit our website at: www.mitigationcommission.gov

Where and when will work take place this year?

This year's (2007) projects are the last pieces of in-channel construction we have planned for the Provo River Restoration Project and will not involve substantially changing the river's path (see map on reverse side). First, we will be removing a drop structure downstream of Jordanelle Dam and gradually adjusting the change in stream bed elevation both upstream and downstream of that point; hence the construction design is not very involved (see map, right).

We will begin this work **Monday, April 9, 2007** and expect to be working in or near the river channel for approximately four weeks - less if possible. Because we will be directly in the main channel, the river will run off-color downstream while crews are working. To try to minimize the negative perception this will have on anglers, we will shift to a four-day, 10 to 12 hours per day work week for this time period. Essentially, no river channel work will occur Friday through Sunday during this approximate 4-week period. Of note to those wishing to fish during working hours, it will take several hours for the discolored water to move downstream each day once work has begun. Cloudy water should not appear at the Charleston area, for example, for about 4 or more hours after work begins near the dam. **Public access from the bridge near the Jordanelle parking lot downstream to below the gas pipeline will be closed during construction (see map, right).**

We had initially proposed to do this project in July 2006, but public comments about the project's timing led us to delay until just prior to Spring runoff in 2007 - a time when higher flows would be expected out of Jordanelle Dam. We appreciate the patience, understanding and support the angling and environmental communities have provided for the Provo River Restoration Project over the past seven years, and ask for your indulgence for this last piece of river reconstruction.

Why are you taking out this drop structure?

The drop structure is actually a sill placed across the river channel many years ago to back water up so that it could be diverted out of the river for irrigation. Through a change in point of diversion of the water right, the Jordanelle Wetlands Mitigation Area receives its water supply from a pipeline that has its point of diversion near the base of Jordanelle Dam. After many years of channel erosion downstream of the sill, and sediment deposition upstream of the sill, continuity of the aquatic environment has been disrupted. Fish passage, particularly in the upstream direction, is impaired and sediment transport functions are also disrupted by the high sill placed across the river channel at that point. While many of the long-time diversions along the Provo River still exist, the large drops and sills that disrupt river continuity have been removed as part of the PRRP.

What other work will you be doing this year?

In 2007, we will work to finish an extensive list of projects. In addition to installing new fence and posting signs along much of the PRRP property boundary, all access sites and parking lots will be re-graded and repairs will be made to post and rail fences surrounding the lots. In Reach 4 (see map on reverse side), work highlights include constructing a new public access site, accessible fishing platform and parking lot at Midway Lane North. We also will replace the Island Ditch Diversion structure, located just upstream of Midway Lane, this summer; a new diversions works will be constructed a few hundred feet downstream of the existing diversion. Miscellaneous finish items include: finishing a small setback berm along the east side of Reach 4; realigning a meander in Reach 4 that is eroding non-Federal property not included in the PRRP; finishing small wetlands on acquired parcels near Midway Lane North, near Reach 1 in Casperville, and at the River Road South public access site. We'll also rip and revegetate temporary roads and equipment staging areas. We will continue to install cottonwood pole cuttings and willow wattles with volunteer groups.

What will remain to be done after this year?

In 2007, all anticipated channel reconstruction work will be completed for the PRRP. Over the next year and beyond, the Mitigation Commission will work with Utah Division of Wildlife Resources and U.S. Bureau of Reclamation to develop an agreement for long-term stewardship of the Provo River Restoration Project; continue to acquire contiguous public ownership of the middle Provo River corridor (it is not yet all in the public domain; we are about 97% complete); and continue to monitor physical and biological responses to restoration work. As part of the continued monitoring, we expect that from time to time additional channel work may be necessary. Again, we appreciate the patience, understanding and support the public has provided for the Provo River Restoration Project. Without it, our success would not have been possible.

For more maps and information about the Provo River Restoration Project, or the Utah Reclamation Mitigation and Conservation Commission, visit our website at: www.mitigationcommission.gov, or contact Diane Simmons at (801) 524-3146.



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- Restoration Areas and Year of Construction
- Pre-project River Channel
- Parking/Restrooms/Access
- Planned Parking/Restrooms/Access
- 2007 Construction

