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# State of Utah

## DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

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November 19, 2009

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% Larry Jacobson  
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RE: The Gates at Utah Lake

Gentlemen:

We are directing this letter to you, the Board of Canal Company Presidents, in regards to your responsibility for the operation and maintenance of the gates at the outlet to Utah Lake as described in the Utah Lake compromise agreement that became effective on March 13, 1985.

On April 28, 2009, the Division received a complaint that the outlet gates had not been opened as required in the "Utah Lake and Jordan River Operating Procedures and Flood Management Document" that is part of the agreement.

The purpose of this letter is not to find fault with the Board's efforts to comply with the agreement. However, when the Division received this complaint it caught us a little off-guard because, at the time, we were unaware of the discussions that had been held and the plans that had been made to ensure the gates were open by the time the lake reached compromise level. The fact that we received the complaint also indicates that other interested parties also were not aware of these discussions or plans.

The difficulty of raising the gates has been discussed for many years especially during years when Utah Lake reaches or exceeds compromise level. I understand



Page 2

November 19, 2009

Subject: The Gates at Utah Lake

the Board is having a preliminary engineering study completed regarding the reconstruction of the pump station at Utah Lake and that the reconstruction or improvement of the gates is part of that study.

Those improvements certainly would make operation of the gates easier and there would be more certainty in the ability to control the gates as needed to comply with the compromise agreement. In addition, there are several procedural improvements that could be made that might reduce the uncertainty that other parties feel regarding the operation of the gates when the lake is near compromise level.

We would request that the Board of Canal Company Presidents consider adopting the following operating procedures in addition to the procedures in the "Utah Lake and Jordan River Operating Procedures and Flood Management Document":

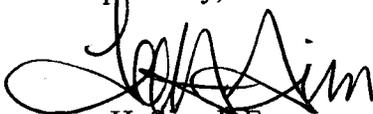
- A method for determining the level of Utah Lake.
- A method for forecasting the date when the level of Utah Lake will reach the compromise level of 4489.045.
- A method for determining when the compromise level has been exceeded.
- A method for communicating the level of Utah Lake, the forecast date when the compromise level will be reached, and the open/closed status of the Utah Lake gates to landowners and water users who are affected by the operation of the gates.

We realize the difficulty the Board faces in balancing the need to comply with the compromise agreement with the need to avoid flooding on the Jordan River and we commend the Board for its efforts to meet both of these needs. Regardless of the concerns expressed, it appears the gates were operated as they should have been this year when the lake reached and exceeded the compromise level.

We would like to discuss the possibility of developing and implementing these additional procedures at the 2010 Distribution Meeting for the Utah Lake/Jordan River Distribution System, which will be held on January 19, 2010. A meeting notice will be sent out about two weeks prior to the meeting

If you have any questions concerning this letter please contact me by phone at 801-538-7380 or by e-mail at [LeeSim@utah.gov](mailto:LeeSim@utah.gov)

Respectfully,



Lee H. Sim, P.E.

Assistant State Engineer for Field Services

cc: Kent Jones, State Engineer  
John Larsen, Water Commissioner  
Robert Fillerup