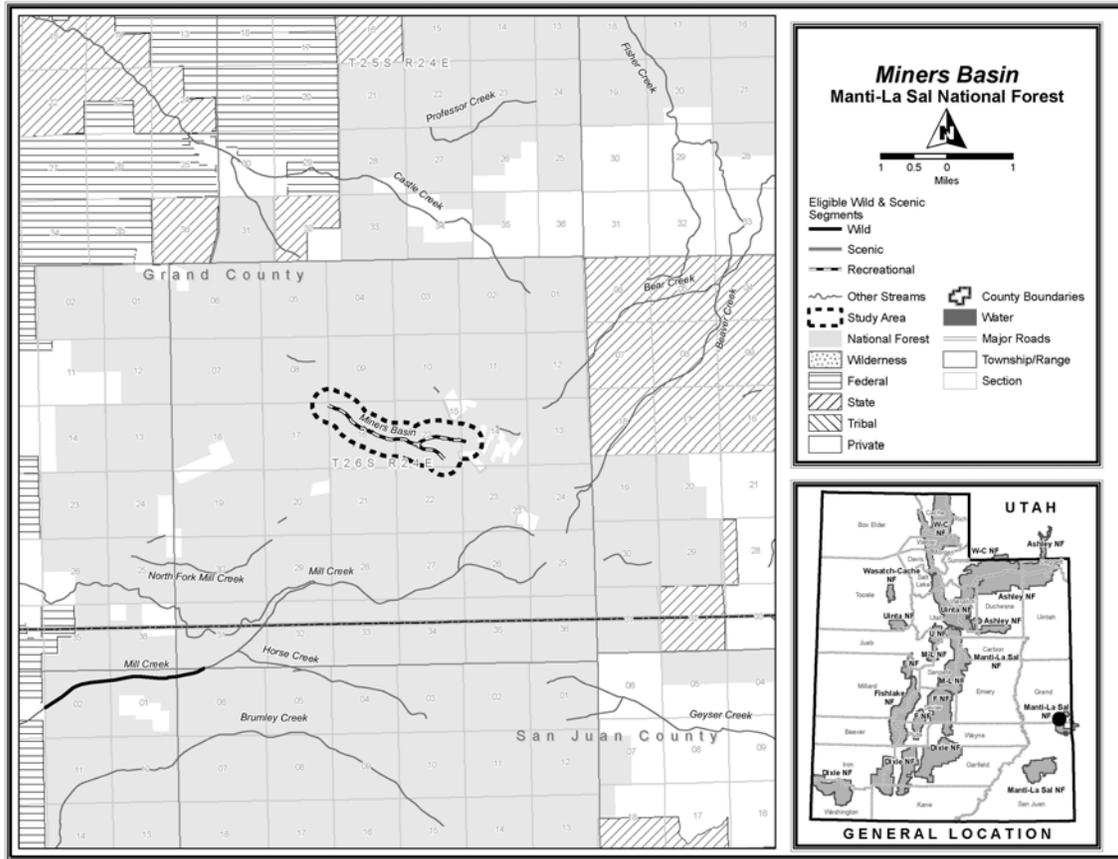


**Miners Basin (Placer Creek)  
Suitability Evaluation Report (SER)**



**STUDY AREA SUMMARY**

**Name of River:** Miners Basin (Placer Creek)

**River Mileage:**

Studied: 1.74 miles from the headwaters in Miners Basin on the southwest slopes of Horse Mountain to the junction with Pinhook Creek.

Eligible: Same

**Location:**

|                             |  |                  |                          |       |
|-----------------------------|--|------------------|--------------------------|-------|
| Miners Basin (Placer Creek) | Manti-La Sal National Forest, Moab Ranger District, Grand County, Utah |                  | Congressional District 2 |       |
|                             | Start  | End              | Classification           | Miles |
| Segment 1                   | North Tributary  | Northing 4267995 | Recreational             | 1.74  |
|                             | Northing 4267112   | Easting 649262   |                          |       |

|  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|
|  | 652594<br><br>South Tributary<br>Northing<br>4266716<br><br>Easting<br>652068<br><br><i>Coordinates are in UTM<br/>         Zone 12 N. NAD 83,<br/>         meters</i> |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|

**Physical Description of River Segment:** The majority of the water in the Miners Basin (Placer Creek) drainage originates from a mine adit. Snowmelt and summer monsoons also augment flows in this small rocky drainage. Even though the gradients are steep in the headwaters, the channel is stable due mainly to rocky bottoms. The middle reaches cut through shale, and bank erosion is more prevalent. Lower reaches are in Castle Valley alluvial material that moves easily during spring runoff and intense summer rainstorms. There is no fish habitat in the watercourse, due to lack of perennial water, a small stream channel, and limited cover from bank vegetation and channel boulders.

**ELIGIBILITY**

**Name and Date of Eligibility Document:** Final Eligibility Determination of Wild and Scenic Rivers of Rivers, March 2003, (USDA Forest Service Supplement to the Manti-La Sal NF Final Eligibility Determination of Wild and Scenic Rivers, 2005)

**Determination of Free-flow:** The watercourse is primarily free flowing but an old earthen impoundment has created a pond within the segment.

**Summary of Outstandingly Remarkable Values:**

**Historic** – Historical mining operations (buildings, mine shafts, tailings) are highly visible in the headwaters in Miners Basin. Miners Basin at one time supported a community of several hundred mineworkers and was one of the area’s largest gold mining operations. The watercourse has high ratings for significance, education and interpretation opportunities, and national listing eligibility.

**CLASSIFICATION**

**Basis for the Classification of River:** Recreational  
 Forest Road 4065 roughly parallels the segment and crosses it in two places. A Forest Service Trailhead and restroom are also located along the segment.

**SUITABILITY REPORT**

**Landownership and Land Uses**

The entire 1.74 miles of the eligible segment and corridor are located on NFS lands.

Patented mining claims occur at the headwaters of Placer Creek above and east of the main channel. Also, Pinhook Creek runs along private land for 1/4 mile just upstream from the Forest boundary. This is approximately 2 1/8 miles downstream from the confluence of Placer Creek (Miners Basin) and Pinhook Creek.

There are approximately 20 mining claims in Miners Basin and along Placer Creek. Some claims have surface rights. None of the claims have been patented.

### **Mineral and Energy Resource Activities**

Gold exploration and mining occurred in Miners Basin during the early 1900s. Gold occurred both in hydrothermally altered igneous intrusions and placer deposits in glacial till and outwash derived from the igneous source rock. Most of the "hard rock" gold mining occurred in the upper part of Miners Basin. Copper was also found in various forms but the primary target was gold.

Placer gold mining took place along Placer Creek and nearby Bald Mesa and Wilson Mesa.

Exploration continued into the early 1990s. There are still four active claims within the studied segment. The Yale, Dartmouth, Wabash and Perdue claims are all listed as actively seeking minerals.

### **Water Resources Development**

The State of Utah Water Rights Database indicates that there is one surface water diversion (an earthen impoundment) and one groundwater diversion within the proposed wild and scenic segment. Designation into the Wild and Scenic river system does not affect existing, valid water rights.

### **Transportation, Facilities, and Other Developments**

Forest Road 4065 roughly parallels the segment and crosses it in two places. A large constructed Forest Service Trailhead consisting of a graveled parking area, restrooms, information kiosk, trail register, and a gate are located adjacent to the segment.

There is one right of way in the name of Grand County that crosses the studied segment.

### **Grazing Activities**

The entire segment is located within the Castle Valley Cattle Allotment and is grazed throughout the summer months.

### **Recreation Activities**

The primary recreation that occurs within the corridor is auto touring along the Forest Road. The Miners Basin trailhead is relatively heavily used by hikers, mountain bikers and equestrians to access the trails in the area. Fishing also occurs in the pond adjacent to the trailhead.

**Other Resource Activities** – No other potential resource activities exist.

### **Special Designations**

No special designation exists, but the segment is located between two Inventoried Roadless Areas.

### **Socio-Economic Environment**

The eligible segment is located within Grand County, with the nearest population base being Moab, Utah. The socio-economic setting of Grand County is one based primarily on the hospitality and tourism industries. The main reason that visitors come to the area is the incredible scenery and the wide range of outdoor activities available in the surrounding public lands. While the majority of visitors to the area come to see Arches and Canyonlands National Parks, the La Sal Mountains in the Moab Ranger District provide a magnificent backdrop to the Parks and other public lands around Moab. While Miners Basin itself may not be the primary reason that visitors travel to the area, it is a popular area for hiking, biking, hunting and sightseeing and provides additional recreational opportunities to the Moab area.

**Current Administration and Funding Needs if Designated** The current administering agency is the USFS.

The following information is based on 2001 data, which doesn't account for inflation over the past six years, but is the best available data. If a river is designated as Wild, Scenic, or Recreational, the actual cost of preparing the comprehensive river management plan would average \$200,000 per plan for 86 segments, which would cost approximately \$17.2 million the first two to three years following designation. It was estimated that annual management costs for a high complexity river would be \$200,000; a moderate complexity river would be \$50,000; and a low complexity river at \$25,000. Using an average of complexity costs, it would cost the Forest Service around \$7.8 million annually for 86 segments. (Estimated Costs of Wild and Scenic Rivers Program - V. 091104)

**SUITABILITY FACTOR ASSESSMENT:**

**(1) The extent to which the State or its political subdivisions might participate in the shared preservation and administration of the river, including costs, should it be proposed for inclusion in the National System.**

There is no demonstrated commitment to share the administration of the eligible section by the State or its political subdivision.

**(2) The state/local government's ability to manage and protect the outstandingly remarkable values on non-federal lands. Include any local zoning and/or land use controls that appear to conflict with protection of river values.**

The entire corridor is on NFS managed lands.

The State and county governments currently do not have the authority or ability, to protect the outstandingly remarkable historic value on non-federal lands. It is highly unlikely that either the State or counties would pass legislation or zoning ordinances that would protect the outstandingly remarkable scenic, geologic or other values on non-federal lands.

**(3) Support or opposition to designation.**

In verbal comments received at the Suitability Open House in Moab, Utah, Grand County was not opposed to designation of this segment nor were they supportive of the designation. The Utah Rivers Council and Red Rock Forests have both expressed support for designating this segment as a Recreational River.

**(4) The consistency of designation with other agency plans, programs or policies and in meeting regional objectives.**

Designation as a recreational river is consistent with current management plans of the area but it would not protect the historic values associated with the segment. As long as the mining claims remain active, the structures on the mining claims related to the historic mining are owned by the claimant.

The entire stream segment lies within the Semi-Primitive Recreation emphasis area where the management direction is to provide semi- primitive recreation opportunities. Other uses may occur so long as they are rehabilitated to reflect as close as possible previous undisturbed conditions. Designation would be consistent with this direction.

Grand County General Plan Update – April 2004 states:

***Wild and Scenic Rivers***

Public Lands Policy 19. Grand County will participate and promote cooperation with the administering Federal agency for any proposed or designated wild, scenic or recreational river components to the national wild and scenic river system for planning

and administrative purposes. Management plans for any component added to this system shall be established to accommodate the component's special attributes and existing regular uses. This designation should not interfere with the current B and D road map developed by the County, unless the County agrees to vacate those rights-of-way. [Code 16 U.S.C. § 1279, Withdrawal Of Public Lands From Entry, Sale, Or Other Disposition Under Public Land Laws, and more specifically, (b) Lands Constituting Bed or Bank of River; Lands Within Bank Area] or with any valid existing water right (Code 16U.S.C. § 1284, Existing State jurisdiction and responsibilities, and more specifically (b)Compensation for water rights].

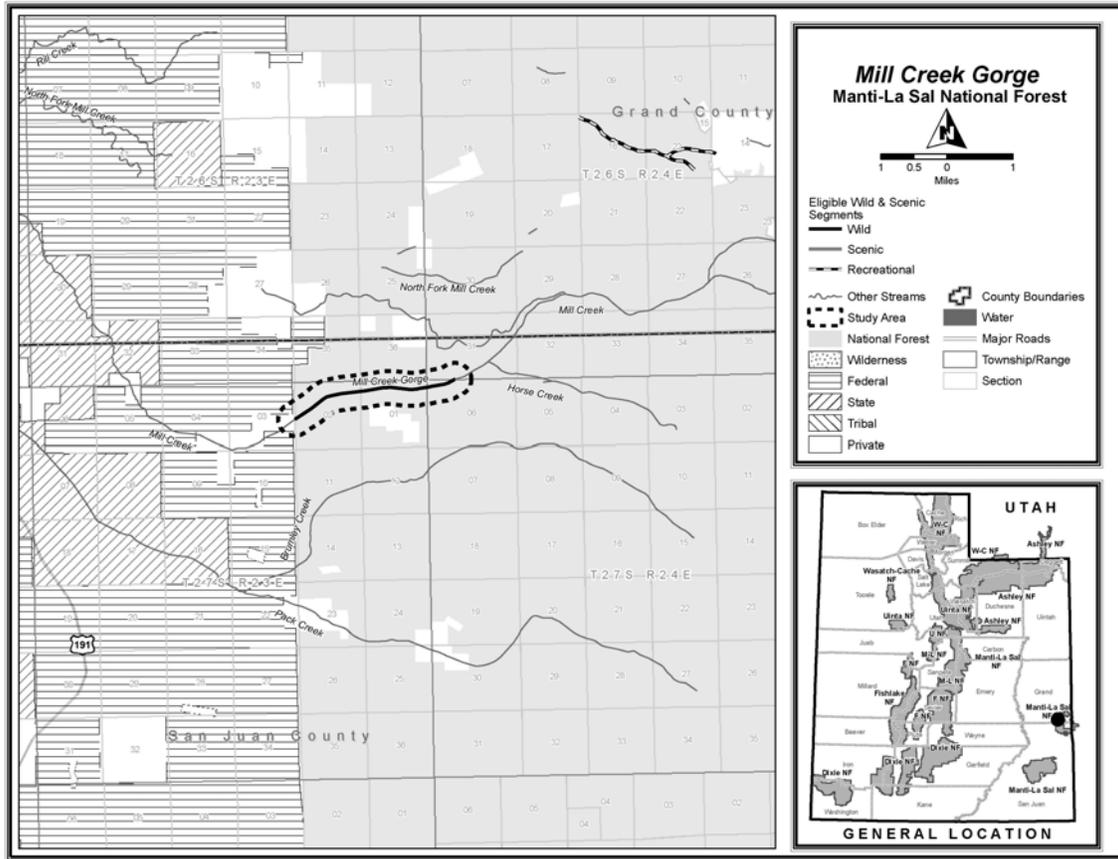
**(5) Contribution to river system or basin integrity.**

Miners Basin (Placer Creek) is a very small stream and the designation of this small portion of it would not contribute to river system or basin integrity nor would it protect the historic structures in Miners Basin.

**(6) Demonstrated or potential commitment for public volunteers, partnerships, and/or stewardship commitments for management and/or funding of the river segment.**

Several local environmental organizations have expressed interest in volunteering to assist in the management of Miners Basin (Placer Creek) as a Recreational River.

## Mill Creek Gorge Suitability Evaluation Report (SER)



### STUDY AREA SUMMARY

**Name of River:** Mill Creek Gorge

**River Mileage:**

Studied: 2.57 miles from the eastern most boundary of the Mill Creek Gorge Research Natural Area (RNA) to the boundary of the National Forest.

Eligible: Same

**Location:** *Coordinates are in UTM Zone 12 N. NAD 83, meters*

|                  |   |                     |                             |       |
|------------------|---|---------------------|-----------------------------|-------|
| Mill Creek Gorge | Manti-La Sal National Forest, Moab Ranger District, San Juan County, Utah |                     | Congressional District Ut-2 |       |
|                  | Start   | End                 | Classification              | Miles |
| Segment 1        | Northing<br>4261597   | Northing<br>4260621 | Wild                        | 2.57  |
|                  | Easting<br>646240   | Easting<br>642342   |                             |       |
|                  | <i>Coordinates are in UTM Zone 12 N. NAD 83, meters</i>                   |                     |                             |       |

Private land occurs above the rim along portions of Mill Creek Gorge but no private lands occur within the gorge itself.

**Physical Description of River Segment:** Mill Creek flows originate from snowmelt from the La Sal Mountains. Flows typically peak in early June and taper off to base flows sustained from springs present in the upper reaches and summer monsoons. This is a sediment limited system with clear and clean flows. At the beginning the river segment, the channel cuts through exposed rock in a very narrow canyon as the watercourse descends the west facing slopes of the La Sal Mountains. Water has cut through sandstone formations in the upper areas of the segment, forming a moderately deep gorge with vertical walls, small cascading water falls, and deep pools. The narrow riparian corridor consists of dense stands of river birch, alder, various willow species and box elder. The channel cuts down into an inner gorge of darker geologic parent material near the RNA boundary. Bench lands of moderately deep soils are present above the inner gorge. Towards the bottom of the segment, the canyon becomes more open in character.

## **ELIGIBILITY**

**Name and Date of Eligibility Document:** Final Eligibility Determination of Wild and Scenic Rivers of Rivers, March 2003, (USDA Forest Service Supplement to the Manti-La Sal NF Final Eligibility Determination of Wild and Scenic Rivers, 2005)

**Determination of Free-flow:** Within the eligible river segment, there are no major diversions or significant channel modifications. However, upstream of the segment there are several ditches on the main stem of Mill Creek and its tributaries. These ditches dewater the stream to some degree during summer months; however, the stream recovers along its length from spring inputs above the eligible segment.

### **Summary of Outstandingly Remarkable Values:**

**Scenic** – Prominent peaks with sheer cliffs of jagged rock form the backdrop of the watercourse. At the beginning of the eligible segment, the channel cuts through exposed rock in a very narrow canyon as the watercourse descends the west facing slopes of the La Sal Mountains. Water has cut through sandstone formations in the upper areas of the watercourse, forming a moderately deep gorge with vertical walls, small cascading water falls, deep pools, and dense riparian vegetation. At mid-elevation the channel cuts across bench lands of moderately deep soils before entering a defined canyon of exposed sandstone.

Vegetation cover changes dramatically with elevation and soil structure. At mid-elevation, Douglas-fir and mountain brush community types line the ridge tops and grow in interesting mosaic patterns on side slopes. In the lower canyon area, visually attractive willow, cottonwood, and poplar trees outline the watercourse in canyon bottoms, and pinyon-juniper stands grow on adjacent ridges and side slopes.

Views of the alpine peaks are dramatic. Defined and narrow canyons focus the eye from the peaks to the majestic views of the desert floor below, including the long, narrow Spanish Valley at the foot of the mountains. Color contrast is exceptional. Shades of green against rock-capped peaks draw the eye upward. The contrast changes to greens, yellows and tans at mid-elevation as the channels cut through layers of sandstone rock. Near the terminus of the watercourse, the yellows, tans and reds of Navajo, Chinle and Moenkopi sandstone formations provide vivid contrast with the colors of mountain brush, pinyon-juniper and deciduous trees. Fall color changes are dramatic and visually appealing, and are highly visible from the US Highway 191 traversing the foothills of the mountains.

**Geologic/Hydrologic** – The watercourse descends through five different formations in the main canyon areas (Mancos shale, Dakota sandstone, Morrison formation, Summerville formation, and Entrada sandstone). The terminus of the watercourse ends in the Navajo, Chinle and Moenkopi sandstone formations. This geology is dipping to the west, with the western edges along a collapsed salt dome (Spanish Valley). The middle canyon area has moderately steep valley bottoms, while the lower canyon areas are within narrow and steep sandstone canyons. At mid elevation, the channel crosses bench lands and drops again along moderately steep gradients over sandstone bedrock. The channel is rocky with steep gradients in the headwaters and then levels out as it crosses through basin areas. Soils are generally stable except for the channel locations on bench lands. Here, soil erosion is moderate due to erosive shale and other sedimentary rock layers.

**Other Similar Values** – Mill Creek Gorge is part of the Mill Creek Gorge Research Natural Area exhibiting dense, vigorous riparian and woody shrubs in a wet environment. The narrow and deep canyon area is unique to the surrounding xeric ecosystems.

### **CLASSIFICATION** –

#### **Basis for the Classification of River: Wild**

The river is not accessible by roads, and there is little evidence of human activity. Above the segment Mill Creek Gorge is crossed by the La Sal Loop Scenic Backway, but the segment itself is unroaded and without constructed trails.

## **SUITABILITY REPORT**

### **Landownership and Land Uses**

The entire 2.57 miles of the eligible segment and corridor are located on NFS lands.

### **Mineral and Energy Resource Activities**

The upper canyon slopes above the rim of the Mill Creek Gorge are formed in the potentially uranium bearing Salt Wash Member of the Morrison Formation. Three abandoned uranium-vanadium prospects are located on these slopes. The first is located 1 1/2 miles downstream from the La Sal Loop Road on the north side of the canyon. The other two are located 2 ¼ miles downstream from the La Sal Loop Road on the south side of the canyon. A number of old roads that are probably related to historic uranium exploration are located in the general vicinity of these prospects.

### **Water Resources Development**

There are no existing water developments within the eligible segment. Several developments and diversions exist above and below the segment. It is not foreseen that designation will limit and future water developments on the segment itself because the segment is so rugged and inaccessible. No historic or current preliminary FERC permits or license applications have been issued on the segment. Designation into the Wild and Scenic river system does not affect existing, valid water rights

### **Transportation, Facilities, and Other Developments**

No roads exist within the corridor of the eligible segment. No authorized trails exist in the corridor but, several user created foot trails provide access to popular rock climbing areas within the gorge.

The Rattlesnake power line crosses above the eligible segment. Power poles are not visible from the river segment but the suspended power lines are visible.

There is one road right of way in the river corridor, issued to Grand County.

### **Grazing Activities**

The entire eligible segment is within the Brumley Cattle Grazing Allotment, however due to the ruggedness of the terrain within the gorge very little actual grazing occurs within the corridor.

### **Recreation Activities**

Mill Creek Gorge has become a popular climbing area and provides a place to climb in relatively cool temperatures compared to other popular lower elevation climbing areas around Moab. Numerous bolted routes exist throughout the gorge with the majority of developed routes occurring upstream of the eligible segment. In recent years more routes have begun to be developed lower in the gorge along the eligible segment. The climbing is generally located along the vertical cracks formed in the sandstone of the gorge and most of the climbs are rated as difficult routes (5.10 and above). Aside from the climbing itself, several user created trails have been built to provide access to the base of the climbing routes. Some of the trails actually use cable ladders and constructed steps to reach the bottom of the gorge. The area is featured on several websites and has been written about in popular climbing magazines. Recreational use in the gorge is expected to increase. The Forest Service will be considering more intensive management of the area as monitoring shows impacts occurring to the resources that the Research Natural Area was designated to protect.

The stream also provides opportunities for stream fishing for brown trout, a relatively rare opportunity in southeast Utah. Due to the dense vegetation and rugged nature of the gorge, fishing use is very light.

No designated or authorized trails or other recreational facilities exist within the corridor.

### **Other Resource Activities**

No other potential resource activities exist due to the ruggedness of the terrain.

### **Special Designations**

The entire eligible segment is within the Mill Creek Gorge Research Natural Area (RNA). The RNA was designated to protect the unique riparian area in the gorge. The designation of RNAs is an administrative decision, designed to preserve a representative sample of an ecological community primarily for scientific and educational purposes. Intrusive management practices are not generally allowed in RNAs. The Mill Creek Gorge RNA was designated in June of 2000.

### **Socio-Economic Environment**

The eligible segment is located within San Juan County, however the nearest population base is Moab, Utah, located in Grand County. The socio-economic setting of Grand County is one based primarily on the hospitality and tourism industries. The main reason that visitors come to the area is the incredible scenery and the wide range of outdoor activities available in the surrounding public lands. While the majority of visitors to the area come to see Arches and Canyonlands National Parks the La Sal Mountains in the Moab Ranger District provide a magnificent backdrop to the parks and other public lands around Moab. While Mill Creek itself may not be the primary reason that visitors travel to the area it is becoming an increasingly popular climbing area and provides additional recreational opportunities to the Moab area. Several permitted local climbing guide companies operate in the gorge.

### **Current Administration and Funding Needs if Designated**

The current administering agency is the USFS. The entire eligible portion is located on National Forest land. Funding would not be required to acquire adjacent lands.

The following information is based on 2001 data, which doesn't account for inflation over the past six years, but is the best available data. If a river is designated as Wild, Scenic, or Recreational, the actual cost of preparing the comprehensive river management plan would average \$200,000 per plan for 86 segments, which would cost approximately \$17.2 million the first two to three years following designation. It was estimated that annual management costs for a high complexity river would be \$200,000; a moderate complexity river would be \$50,000; and a low complexity river at \$25,000. Using an average of complexity costs, it would cost the Forest Service around \$7.8 million annually for 86 segments. (Estimated Costs of Wild and Scenic Rivers Program - V. 091104)

#### **SUITABILITY FACTOR ASSESSMENT:**

**(1) The extent to which the State or its political subdivisions might participate in the shared preservation and administration of the river, including costs, should it be proposed for inclusion in the National System.**

San Juan County will not share in the administration, the cost or preservation of a wild and scenic river designation of Mill Creek Gorge. The State has indicated no interest in sharing the administration or costs associated with of the eligible section of Mill Creek Gorge.

**(2) The state/local government's ability to manage and protect the outstandingly remarkable values on non-federal lands.**

The entire corridor is located on lands managed by the US Forest Service.

The State and county governments currently do not have the authority or ability, to protect the outstandingly remarkable wildlife value on non-federal lands. It is highly unlikely that either the State or counties would pass legislation or zoning ordinances that would protect the outstandingly remarkable scenic, geologic or other values on non-federal lands.

**(3) Support or opposition to designation.**

In verbal comments made during the Suitability Open House in Moab, Utah, June of 2007, a San Juan County commission member and two Grand County Council members expressed neither opposition nor support for designation of Mill Creek Gorge as a Wild and Scenic River. They preferred to remain neutral on the subject. In correspondence dated September 2005, San Juan County stated "The vast majority of San Juan County residents do not support wild and scenic designation for Mill Creek Gorge. Many have expressed a strong opposition to such designation". The Utah Rivers Council and Red Rock Forests have both expressed support for designating this segment as a Wild River.

**(4) The consistency of designation with other agency plans, programs or policies and in meeting regional objectives.**

The designation is consistent with the management plan prepared for the Mill Creek Gorge RNA, as it would further protect the unique resources within the RNA. The entire segment lies within the Semi-Primitive Recreation emphasis area where the management direction is to provide semi-primitive recreation opportunities. Other uses may occur so long as they are rehabilitated to reflect as close as possible previous undisturbed conditions. Designation would be consistent with this direction.

The designation would conflict with the San Juan County Master Plan (Chapter 1 Policy of Public Lands, General/State: pages 9-13; Policy on Multiple Use: pages 13-15; Policy of Public Access: pages 18-21; Policy on Private and Public Land Ratios: pages 22-24; and Policy on Water Resources: pages 30-32).

Grand County General Plan Update – April 2004 states:

### ***Wild and Scenic Rivers***

Public Lands Policy 19. Grand County will participate and promote cooperation with the administering Federal agency for any proposed or designated wild, scenic or recreational river components to the national wild and scenic river system for planning and administrative purposes. Management plans for any component added to this system shall be established to accommodate the component's special attributes and existing regular uses. This designation should not interfere with the current B and D road map developed by the County, unless the County agrees to vacate those rights-of-way. [Code 16 U.S.C. § 1279, Withdrawal Of Public Lands From Entry, Sale, Or Other Disposition Under Public Land Laws, and more specifically, (b) Lands Constituting Bed or Bank of River; Lands Within Bank Area] or with any valid existing water right (Code 16U.S.C. § 1284, Existing State jurisdiction and responsibilities, and more specifically (b)Compensation for water rights].

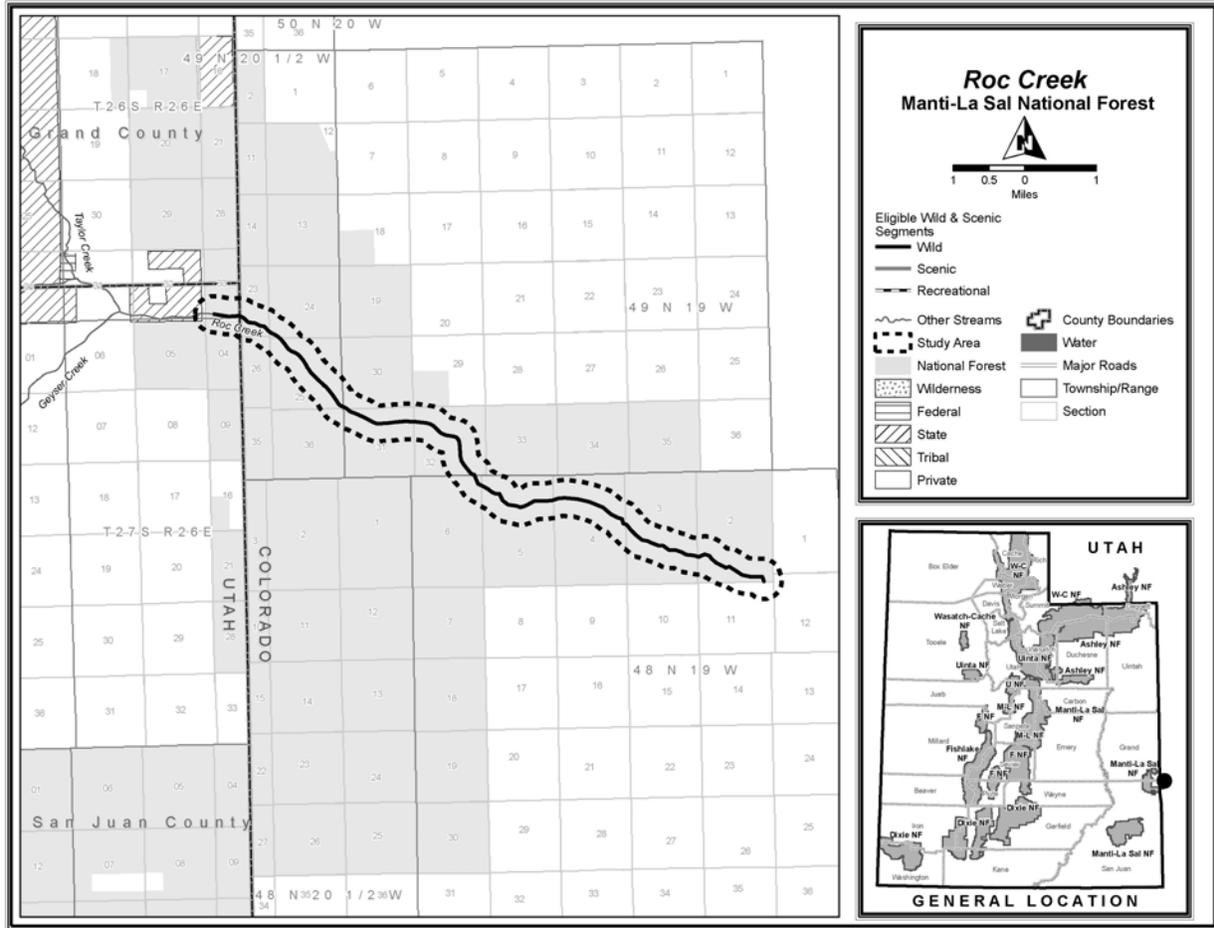
#### **(5) Contribution to river system or basin integrity.**

Mill Creek is a small tributary of the Colorado River. The stream is unique in that it is a perennial stream in an arid environment. Before joining the Colorado the stream flows through BLM and private lands including the City of Moab. If the Forest Service segment was designated by itself it would contribute very little to river system or basin integrity, as the segment is a very small portion of Mill Creek. However if the BLM and Forest Service portions of the creek were designated it would add protection to a large portion of the stream system and would protect a unique desert watercourse. Even if the BLM and Forest Service portions were designated a significant amount of the stream would remain unprotected on private lands.

#### **(6) Demonstrated or potential commitment for public volunteers, partnerships, and/or stewardship commitments for management and/or funding of the river segment.**

Several local environmental organizations have expressed interest in volunteering to assist in the management of Mill Creek as a Wild River.

## Roc Creek Suitability Evaluation Report (SER)



### STUDY AREA SUMMARY

**Name of River:** Roc Creek

**River Mileage:**

Studied: 9.40 miles from a point 0.1 miles east of western boundary of the National Forest in San Juan County, Utah to the eastern boundary of the National Forest in Montrose County, Colorado.

Eligible: Same

**Location:** *Coordinates are in UTM Zone 12 N. NAD 83, meters*

|           |   |                                |   |       |
|-----------|---|--------------------------------|---|-------|
| Roc Creek | Manti-La Sal National Forest, Moab Ranger District, San Juan County, Utah and Montrose County, Colorado |                                | Congressional District<br>UT -2<br>CO-3 |       |
|           | Start   | End                            | Classification                          | Miles |
| Segment 1 | Northing<br>4262375<br>Easting  | Northing<br>4256363<br>Easting | Wild                                    | 9.4   |

|  |        |        |  |  |
|--|--------|--------|--|--|
|  | 668565 | 680957 |  |  |
|--|--------|--------|--|--|

**Physical Description of River Segment:** The majority of the flows in Roc Creek originate from artesian groundwater (Geyser Spring) in the upper reaches of the watercourse. Snowmelt and summer monsoons augment these flows. A waterfall exists within the canyon that breaks the canyon into two somewhat distinct sections. Above the waterfall, the canyon vegetation could generally be categorized as a forested ecosystem with Douglas fir, aspen, ponderosa pine and box elder present. The gradient of the stream is steeper in this section with water cascading over large cobble alluvium. Below the waterfall, the canyon widens and the gradient flattens. This section is typical of lower elevation, desert type canyon systems with cottonwood and sagebrush present in the riparian area and upland terraces. The channel bottom consists of sandier materials interspersed with cobble and gravel. In this section, considerable alluvium has been deposited within the canyon due to uniformity of gradient producing bench land areas along the canyon bottom.

**ELIGIBILITY**

**Name and Date of Eligibility Document:** Final Eligibility Determination of Wild and Scenic Rivers of Rivers, March 2003, (USDA Forest Service Supplement to the Manti-La Sal NF Final Eligibility Determination of Wild and Scenic Rivers, 2005)

**Determination of Free-flow:** Within the eligible river segment, there are no major diversions or significant channel modifications. However, upstream of the segment several ditches remove some of the natural flow.

**Summary of Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORVs):**

**Scenic** – Sinbad Ridge forms the north wall of the 1,500-foot gorge of Roc Creek. Green forests of Douglas fir and ponderosa pine frame the brilliant red walls of the canyon. A pinyon-juniper forest covers the mesa above the canyon. Faulting and erosion have created ledges, benches and spire-like sandstone columns along the cliff areas of the gorge and along Sinbad Ridge. Views within the canyon range from 3 to 5 miles. The free-flowing stream descends through diverse riparian vegetation. Flows are gentle with some cascading water. One waterfall exists within the canyon. Alluvial deposition has produced bench land areas along the canyon bottom, especially in the middle section. Vistas within several areas of the gorge are expansive and varied, ranging from high mountain peaks to canyons and mesas, and eventually to wide valley areas. Diversity of view and special features are rated high.

**Geologic/Hydrologic**– Roc Creek descends through a geologic sequence beginning at the Forest boundary at the upper end of the canyon in the upper Jurassic Morrison Formation. The sequence continues through the Jurassic-Triassic Glen Canyon Group (Navajo, Kayenta, Wingate) to the Triassic Chinle Formation at the Forest boundary at the lower end.

Massive sandstone cliffs vary from 1,500 to 1,800 feet in height. The canyon follows fault lines between two collapsed salt domes (Sinbad Valley and Paradox Valley), and terminates in the Dolores River Canyon area. The channel gradient is uniform for most of its length, with moderate gradients. Considerable alluvium has been deposited within the canyon due to uniformity of gradient. Faulting and erosion has created patterns of ledges, benches and slick rock aprons along Sinbad Ridge. Ratings are high for feature abundance and diversity.

**CLASSIFICATION** –

**Basis for the Classification of River:** Wild

The river is not accessible by roads, and there is little evidence of human activity. Roc Creek Trail (310) descends in to the middle section of the canyon from a trailhead located on Carpenter Ridge. This trail crosses the channel and connects to the Sinbad Trail (001) on Sinbad Ridge.

## **SUITABILITY REPORT**

### **Landownership and Land Uses**

The entire 9.4 miles of the segment and the corridor are on NFS managed lands.

### **Mineral and Energy Resource Activities**

Numerous abandoned uranium mines and prospects of the Uravan Mining District are located in the Roc Creek area. The uranium bearing Salt Wash Member of the Morrison Formation crops out along the southern rim of Roc Creek Canyon. The Red Bird Mine and numerous prospects are located in this area.

The Morrison Formation also crops out on a mesa between Garvey Gulch and Roc Creek on a downdropped fault block. This locality is east of the Forest boundary and downstream from the stream segment being considered for suitability. It is here that the Rajah Mine is located. The Rajah may have been the first mine in Colorado to produce carnotite with history of production dating back to the late 1800s.

These mines have been abandoned since the uranium boom of the 1950-80s. Since uranium prices have risen in the last few years, interest in the Uravan Mining District has been rekindled including the Carpenter Flat area along the southern rim of Roc Creek. There are, however, no producing mines within the Manti-La Sal National Forest in the Roc Creek area at this time.

Additionally, the potentially uranium bearing Chinle Formation crops out in the lower part of the canyon, but no historic mines or prospects are evident.

Finally, an oil and gas lease exists within the upper portion of the eligible segment.

### **Water Resources Development**

There are no existing water developments within the eligible segment. Several developments exist above the segment. The ownership of the headwaters of Roc Creek, above the eligible segment, consists of privately owned land and lands administered by the State of Utah School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration. Numerous spring and instream diversions exist throughout these above-mentioned lands, including the large ditch that diverts water from Deep Creek and Geyser Creek (two major tributaries of Roc Creek) into Buckeye Reservoir. Development of springs throughout the headwaters of Roc Creek has probably decreased recharge to shallow aquifer systems somewhat and may reduce base flow during the summer months in Roc Creek. Likewise, ditch diversions would have the greatest impact on base flows during summer months.

It is not foreseen that designation would limit any future water developments because the segment is so rugged and inaccessible. No historic or current preliminary FERC permits or license applications have been issued on the segment. Designation into the Wild and Scenic river system does not affect existing, valid water rights.

### **Transportation, Facilities, and Other Developments**

No roads exist within the corridor of the eligible segment. One Forest Service Trail (310) provides access to the middle portion of the segment and crosses the canyon.

### **Grazing Activities**

The creek is the boundary between two cattle allotments, Sinbad Allotment on the north and the North Paradox Allotment on the south. Due to the rugged nature of the terrain only incidental grazing occurs along the creek.

### **Recreation Activities**

Forest Service Trail #310 provides access to the canyon of Roc Creek. The segment also contains a trout fishery and provides opportunities for stream fishing in the lower end.

### **Other Resource Activities**

Some timber harvesting has occurred on the adjacent mesa tops some of it within a ¼ mile of the eligible segment. This use could potentially occur again in the area.

### **Special Designations**

The entire segment is located within the Roc Creek Inventoried Roadless Area and is currently managed under the 2001 Roadless Rule.

### **Socio-Economic Environment**

The majority of the segment is within Montrose County, Colorado. The largest sectors of the county economy are the retail trade and manufacturing sectors. The river corridor itself is in a remote, unpopulated portion of the county. Designation may increase tourist visitation in this portion of the county.

**Current Administration and Funding Needs if Designated** – The current administering agency is the USFS.

The following information is based on 2001 data, which doesn't account for inflation over the past six years, but is the best available data. If a river is designated as Wild, Scenic, or Recreational, the actual cost of preparing the comprehensive river management plan would average \$200,000 per plan for 86 segments, which would cost approximately \$17.2 million the first two to three years following designation. It was estimated that annual management costs for a high complexity river would be \$200,000; a moderate complexity river would be \$50,000; and a low complexity river at \$25,000. Using an average of complexity costs, it would cost the Forest Service around \$7.8 million annually for 86 segments. (Estimated Costs of Wild and Scenic Rivers Program - V. 091104)

### **SUITABILITY FACTOR ASSESSMENT:**

**(1) The extent to which the State or its political subdivisions might participate in the shared preservation and administration of the river, including costs, should it be proposed for inclusion in the National System.**

There is no demonstrated commitment to share the administration, cost or preservation of the eligible section by the State or its political subdivision.

**(2) The state/local government's ability to manage and protect the outstandingly remarkable values on non-federal lands. Include any local zoning and/or land use controls that appear to conflict with protection of river values.**

The entire corridor is on NFS managed lands. Montrose County plans do not mention either wild and scenic rivers or management of public lands on the Manti-La Sal National Forest.

**(3) Support or opposition to designaton.**

In verbal comments received at the Suitability Open House in Moab, Utah, San Juan and Grand Counties were neither opposed nor supportive of designation of this segment. However, San Juan County is concerned about the effects Wild and Scenic River status would have on the private and State lands which form the headwaters of this drainage. The Utah Rivers Council and Red Rock Forests have both expressed support for designating this segment as a Wild River.

**(4) The consistency of designation with other agency plans, programs or policies and in meeting regional objectives**

Designation would be consistent with current management of the area as a Roadless Area. The stream segment passes through two different areas of management emphasis as outlined in the Manti-La Sal Land and Resource Management Plan of 1986. The majority of Roc Creek lies within the Semi-Primitive Recreation emphasis area where the management direction is to provide semi-primitive recreation opportunities. Other uses may occur so long as they are rehabilitated to reflect as close as possible previous undisturbed conditions. Designation would be consistent with this direction. The remainder of Roc Creek is within the Range Emphasis area where the management direction is to produce wood fiber and where appropriate, forage. Other uses occur and the use or its rehabilitation emphasizes rangeland maintenance or enhancement. Designation would not be entirely inconsistent with this direction.

There is no mention of wild and scenic rivers in the Montrose County plan.

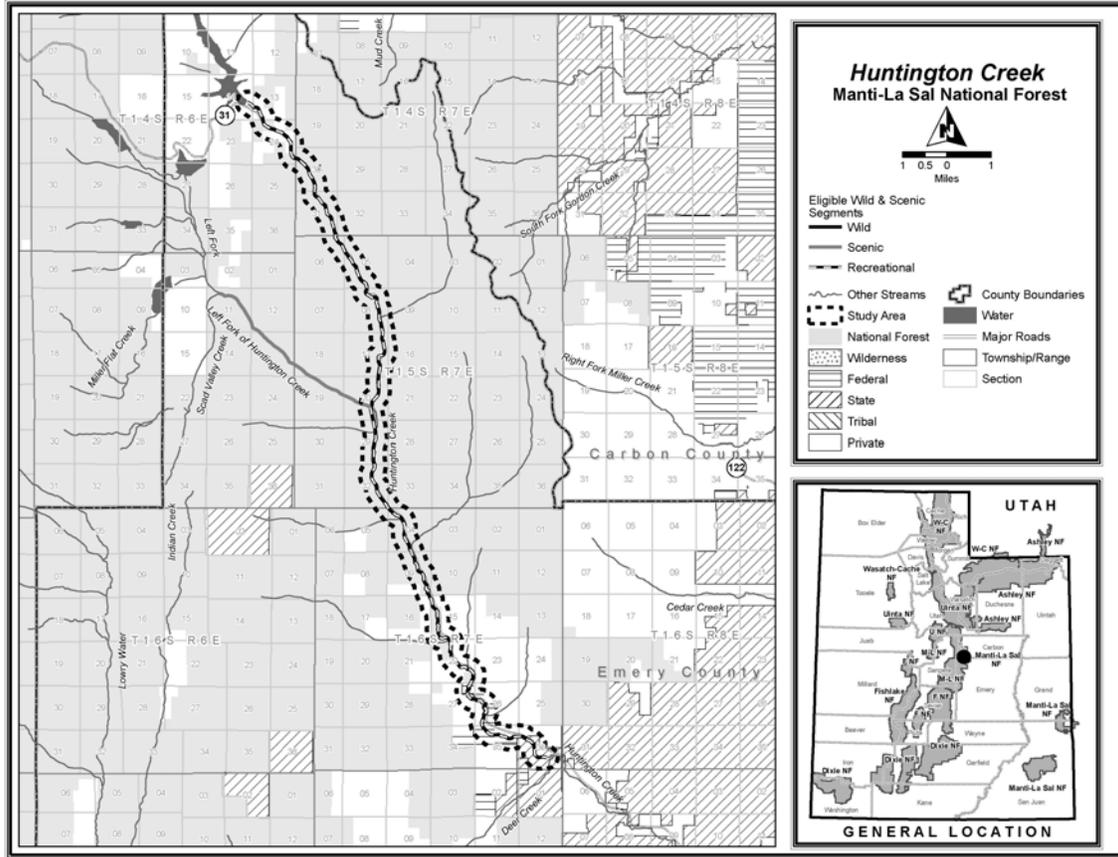
**(5) Contribution to river system or basin integrity.**

Roc Creek is a relatively small tributary of the Dolores River. The stream is unique in that it is a perennial stream in an arid environment. Before joining the Dolores, the stream flows through BLM and private lands. If the Forest Service segment were designated it would contribute some to overall river system or basin integrity as it would add additional protection to the majority of the stream length. However, much of the creek outside of the eligible segment is located on private and State lands and would not be protected by the designation.

**(6) Demonstrated or potential commitment for public volunteers, partnerships, and/or stewardship commitments for management and/or funding of the river segment**

Several local environmental organizations have expressed interest in volunteering to assist in the management of Roc Creek as a Wild River.

## Huntington Creek Suitability Evaluation Report (SER)



### STUDY AREA SUMMARY

**Name of River:** Huntington Creek

**River Mileage:**

Studied: 19.29 miles from the outlet at Electric Lake to the point of diversion at the Huntington Power Plant.

Eligible: Same

**Location:** *Coordinates are in UTM Zone 12 N. NAD 83, meters*

| Huntington Creek | Manti-La Sal National Forest, Ferron and Price Ranger Districts, Emery County, Utah |         |          |         | Congressional District 2 |               |
|------------------|---|---------|----------|---------|--------------------------|---------------|
|                  | Start   |         | End      |         | Classification           | Rounded Miles |
|                  | Northing  | Easting | Northing | Easting |                          |               |
| Segment 1        | 4376482   | 480759  | 4372300  | 486303  | Recreational             | 19            |

**Physical Description of River:** Huntington Creek flows through well-defined canyons with steep side slopes and rock outcrops. Relatively flat terrain is associated with the flood plains of the creek. Flows in Huntington Creek have been artificially regulated to the point that what is now considered “normal” flow is actually a reflection of how PacifiCorp has operated the Huntington Power Plant. In this reach of Huntington Creek, the quantity and quality of water are comparable to a natural condition.

## **ELIGIBILITY**

**Name and Date of Eligibility Document:** Final Eligibility Determination of Wild and Scenic Rivers of Rivers, March 2003, (USDA Forest Service Supplement to the Manti-La Sal NF Final Eligibility Determination of Wild and Scenic Rivers, 2005)

**Determination of Free-flow:** There are no diversions on the stream channel. The dam at Electric Lake at the beginning of the segment and the Huntington Power Plant diversion at the end of the segment are considered segment breaks and, therefore, are not part of the watercourse.

### **Summary of Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORV):**

**Scenic** – The canyon area is narrow, with a willow/riparian bottom and tree covered side slopes. The corridor of the creek exhibits rich diversity in vegetation and geology. The canyon areas and side canyons are capped with sandstone formations. The colorful geology, aspen and mountain brush on south facing slopes, conifer cover on north facing slopes, lush riparian vegetation along crystal clear streams, and rock outcrops and ledges all provide outstanding scenery in canyon environments. As with the higher elevations of Huntington Canyon, the beauty and diversity of these canyons attract thousands of visitors each year. The Huntington Canyon and Eccles National Scenic Byways and Skyline Drive Scenic Backway are the principal access routes in the area. These well-traveled roads provide access to several Forest development roads and the trails located within the corridor.

**Recreation** – Huntington Creek is the main attraction in the watershed. The creek and adjacent terrain serve as base areas for exceptional recreation opportunities, such as camping, fishing, hiking, horseback riding, all terrain vehicle use, driving for pleasure, and rock climbing. The Castle Valley Ridge Trail system is also located within the corridor of the watercourse. There are many popular developed recreation sites adjacent to the creek, including campgrounds and trailheads. The creek also supports a significant brown trout sport fishery and fishing pressure is high. Cross-country skiing also occurs on some of the trails within the canyon area during winter months.

## **CLASSIFICATION**

**Basis for the Classification of River:** Recreational

Some developments exist, there is substantial evidence of human activity, the river is accessible by road with parallel roads on the banks, and there are bridge crossing points within the segment.

## SUITABILITY REPORT

### Landownership and Land Uses

| Segment          | Ownership      | River Mile    | Distance in Miles | Square Miles | Acres           |
|------------------|----------------|---------------|-------------------|--------------|-----------------|
| Huntington Creek |                |               |                   |              |                 |
|                  | Private        | 0-0.56        | 0.56              | .280         | 179.20          |
|                  | Forest Service | 0.56-0.93     | 0.37              | .185         | 118.40          |
|                  | Private        | 0.93-1.68     | 0.75              | 0.375        | 240.00          |
|                  | Forest Service | 1.68-13.35    | 11.67             | 5.835        | 3734.4          |
|                  | Private        | 13.35-13.63   | 0.28              | 0.140        | 89.6            |
|                  | Forest Service | 13.63-14.52   | 0.89              | 0.445        | 284.80          |
|                  | Private        | 14.52-14.59   | 0.07              | 0.035        | 22.40           |
|                  | Forest Service | 14.59-15.12   | 0.53              | 0.265        | 169.60          |
|                  | Private        | 15.12-15.71   | 0.59              | 0.295        | 188.80          |
|                  | Forest Service | 15.71-16.01   | 0.3               | 0.115        | 73.60           |
|                  | BLM            | 16.01-16.32   | 0.31              | 0.155        | 99.20           |
|                  | Private        | 16.32-16.55   | 0.23              | 0.115        | 73.60           |
|                  | BLM            | 16.55-16.76   | 0.21              | 0.105        | 67.20           |
|                  | Private        | 16.76-16.83   | 0.07              | 0.035        | 22.40           |
|                  | BLM            | 16.83-16.84   | 0.01              | 0.005        | 3.20            |
|                  | Private        | 16.84-16.95   | 0.11              | 0.055        | 35.20           |
|                  | BLM            | 16.85-17.08   | 0.13              | 0.065        | 41.69           |
|                  | Private        | 17.08-17.37   | 0.29              | 0.145        | 92.80           |
|                  | BLM            | 17.37-17.80   | 0.43              | 0.215        | 137.60          |
|                  | Private        | 17.80-18.34   | 0.54              | 0.270        | 172.80          |
|                  | State          | 18.34-19.30   | 0.96              | 0.480        | 307.20          |
|                  |                | <b>Total=</b> | <b>19.3</b>       |              | <b>5975 ac.</b> |

Readers Note: The study area boundaries displayed in Appendix A, Suitability Evaluation Reports, do not represent actual Wild and Scenic River boundaries, but the area of interest for eligible river segments. It should be noted that of the eligible rivers studied, 14 of the 86 river segments appear to include portions of private land, at the end of segments near the National Forest boundary. These typically short river stretches (1/4 to 4 miles long) were included in the eligibility study as part of the river segment length because they brought the river segment to a logical terminus at a confluence with a larger stream, also contained the ORV's of the National Forest portion of the segment, or National Forest land was located within 1/4 mile of these segments. These lengths are also included in the tables found in this suitability study. The magnitude of this effect is small, representing approximately 22 miles total over 14 segments, or less than 3 percent of the total mileage in the study. Prior to finalization of this EIS, the actual miles of river segments recommended for designation will be calculated and the maps redrawn to exclude the private lands outside of the National Forest ownership to avoid the appearance of including these private lands in recommended river segments.

The Manti-La Sal National Forest and the Price Field Office of the BLM coordinated the beginning and ending points of Huntington Creek eligible river segment since it did not make sense to abruptly stop at the Forest boundary. The Forest agreed to take care of any analysis that would be made of the BLM portion of Huntington Creek.

The 5.65 miles from the Huntington Power Plant inlet to the National Forest System boundary is privately and publicly owned with a short section managed by the BLM. These parcels of land (including a 1/2-mile buffer zone on either side of the river corridor) are owned by the following entities:

|   |  |
|---|--|
| PacifiCorp (UP&L Co.)<br>One Utah Center<br>Suite 2100<br>201 South Main<br>Salt Lake City, UT 84111-0021 | US Department of the Interior<br>Bureau of Land Management (BLM)<br>324 South State St. Suite 301<br>Salt Lake City, UT 84111-2303 |
| Nevada Electric Investment Co.<br>P.O. Box 230<br>Las Vegas, NV 89151                                     | State of Utah<br>School and Institutional Trust Lands<br>Administration (SITLA)  |
| The Malcolm McKinnon Estate<br>Zions First National Bank Trustee<br>Salt Lake City, Utah 84111            | Emery County<br>75 East Main Street<br>Castle Dale, UT 84513   |
| Dick N. & Guinevere A. Nielson<br>C/o Kristie N. Ligon<br>4819 Mandel St.<br>Houston, TX 77006            | C.O.P. Coal Development Corp.<br>3753 South State<br>Salt Lake City, UT 84115  |
| Huntington Haven LTD Land Co.<br>Von S. Pratt M.D.<br>P.O. Box 879<br>Gunnison, UT 84634                  | Mike H. Carson<br>1625 N. Freedom Blvd.<br>Provo, UT 84604   |
| Steven E. and Lezlee C. Jones<br>555 E. 4450 N.<br>Provo, UT 84604  | David G. and Julie G. Robinson<br>2368 Parley's Circle<br>Salt Lake City, UT 84109   |

### **Mineral and Energy Resource Activities** –

**Coal:** Three mines are located along the Huntington River corridor. Genwal Resources and Deer Creek mines operate on the East Mountain side of the drainage, while Coop operates their mine on the Gentry Mountain side of the drainage. A total of approximately six million tons are mined from these facilities each year. Each mine anticipates additional “shoreline” development and depends on water for its operations.

The Genwal mine currently employs 67. Employees utilize State Route (SR) 31 and the Crandall Canyon road (Forest Road 248) to access mine facilities. Approximately 50 vehicles use this road each day. The mine facilities are located within National Forest System boundaries. Currently 75 to 100 trucks haul coal from the Genwal mine site daily. Future mining will expand to the new South Crandall Lease. Production is expected to increase from 1.5 million tons per year to 2 million tons per year. Truck haulage is expected to increase to 250 to 300 trucks per day.

The employee base at the Deer Creek mine is currently 305. This number will remain constant into the foreseeable future. Mine facilities are accessed via SR-31 and the Deer Creek Canyon road (owned and maintained by Emery County). Traffic is particularly heavy during shift changes when traffic from the power plant combines with the mine traffic. The Deer Creek mine has recently been granted a permit to develop a portal in Rilda Canyon where it currently has a fan and delivery access. The County road will be upgraded and paved. Turn and acceleration lanes on SR-31 have already been installed. Access to the Rilda Canyon portal will be year-round. Coal production at the Deer Creek mine exceeds four million tons annually.

The Coop mine employs approximately 146 management and labor personnel. Traffic accesses both Trail Canyon and Bear Canyon (approximately 75 vehicles per day). This number is expected to increase in the future as the mine expands its operations. Expansion will include new construction of facilities and increased production. At this time, approximately 10 to 25 trucks transport coal from the Coop mine each day. As many as 20 to 40 private trucks haul coal each day in the wintertime.

**Electrical Power:** The Huntington Power Plant, owned by PacifiCorp, is a major direct and indirect employer in the area and an important part of the electric generation base for the western United States. The plant is located at the bottom of Huntington Canyon. PacifiCorp has long-held interests in Huntington Canyon and relies exclusively on both the main channel, Left Fork of Huntington Creek, and their tributaries to deliver water critical to Huntington Power Plant operations.

**Coalbed Methane:** Coalbed methane gas has been produced commercially for just over a decade in Utah. During this period production has grown dramatically, reaching over 100 billion cubic feet (Bcf) in 2002 alone. The cumulative production from the four principle fields stands at 412 Bcf. So far, production is limited to a relatively small area at the southwest edge of the Uinta Basin and the eastern slope of the Wasatch Plateau in Carbon and Emery Counties. However, significant coal deposits exist across many other parts of the region. Most of these have good potential for coalbed methane development, but are yet untested.

**Gas:** Presently, Chevron Texaco has natural gas wells on both sides of Huntington Creek. Associated with these wells are natural gas and water gathering lines, power lines, and other wellhead equipment needed for production. The company has plans to expand development for natural gas production in the Huntington Canyon area. New wells have either already been permitted or are in the process of being permitted. These new wells would require the construction of additional gathering and powerlines. Current and planned gathering or flowlines run parallel to the creek and cross the creek at different locations.

Without the planned expansion, there would be lost revenues from potential wells and lost investment in leases. Existing facilities could be affected if additional development and production does not occur. The flowlines downstream of the development in Huntington Canyon have been sized to handle additional volumes in anticipation of future production. It is expected that some cost would be recovered from new wells added to the gathering system. If no new wells were drilled, the cost would be shared by fewer wells possibly causing premature abandonment.

**Water Resources Development** – Water resources and their development are the lifeblood of Emery County. The annual precipitation rate in the valley, where the population is concentrated, is about eight inches. This places the area in a semi-arid climate classification. It becomes obvious that supplemental water resources must come from somewhere else. The solution has been diversions from streams that originate on the Wasatch Plateau and from Huntington Creek. Annual precipitation at the higher elevations is about 25 inches, most of which is in the form of snow. Irreversible commitments or restrictions to water use could be costly and prevent the fulfillment of basic community survival and development needs.

#### **Over-Appropriation of Existing Water Supplies**

Much of the west Colorado River Basin is over-appropriated and, as a result, late season shortages exist in many of the agricultural areas. The San Rafael River, which is intricately tied to Huntington Creek, is the most over-appropriated drainage in the Basin.

**Table 2. Perfected water rights versus the yields of the major drainages within the West Colorado River Basin.**

| Water Rights versus Yield |                   |            |           |
|---------------------------|-------------------|------------|-----------|
| Perfected Water Rights    |                   |            |           |
| Drainage                  | Yield (acre foot) | Use        | Acre Foot |
| Price                     | 138,000           | Irrigation | 80,566    |
|                           |                   | M&I        | 64,147    |
|                           |                   | Subtotal   | 144,713   |
| San Rafael                | 233,000           | Irrigation | 267,003   |
|                           |                   | M&I        | 41,128    |
|                           |                   | Subtotal   | 308,131   |
| Dirty Devil               | 147,000           | Irrigation | 57,059    |
|                           |                   | M&I        | 27,864    |
|                           |                   | Subtotal   | 84,923    |
| Escalante                 | 86,000            | Irrigation | 14,616    |
|                           |                   | M&I        | 4,207     |
|                           |                   | Subtotal   | 18,823    |
| Paria                     | 21,000            | Irrigation | 6,644     |
|                           |                   | M&I        | 5,966     |
|                           |                   | Subtotal   | 12,610    |

Source: Table 5-21 from the “West Colorado River Basin Water Plan”.

Figures include some water rights based on high flows that only occasionally occur.

The economy and communities on the Huntington Creek drainage depends upon the regulation of limited water resources. Upstream flow regulation is constant except during brief periods of spring runoff when flows from tributaries below the reservoirs exceed the capabilities of the down stream users to utilize the water. During summer months, the flows from upstream storage reservoirs are regulated to meet the demands of industrial, agricultural, and municipal users. During the spring and winter months, storage reservoirs are filled and flows are reduced to meet demands of industrial, municipal, and stock water users.

Records from the past few years substantiate the regulated uses. The average annual flow in Huntington Creek is about 51,000 acre-foot (Utah State Engineer’s Office). Flows and diversions over the last few years are shown below:

**Table 3. Flows and Diversions in Huntington Creek.**

| Year | Annual Flows | Total Diversions Ac-ft. | Industrial Use Ac-ft. | % Industry |
|------|--------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| 1991 | 50,000       | 50,000                  | 8,600                 | 17         |
| 1992 | 43,900       | 41,400                  | 8,820                 | 21         |
| 1994 | 44,900       | 44,400                  | 10,880                | 25         |
| 1995 | 73,700       | 70,000                  | 8,354                 | 12         |
| 1996 | 66,100       | 66,100                  | 10,924                | 17         |
| 1998 | 84,100       | 82,600                  | 9,142                 | 11         |
| 1999 | 75,250       | 73,500                  | 10,950                | 15         |
| 2000 | 53,500       | 48,000                  | 12,016                | 25         |

Flows in the river during a typical year (1991) are as follows:

**Table 4. Flows in Huntington Creek during 1991.**

| Month     | Flow Rate<br>(cubic feet/second) |     |      | Flow<br>acre-feet) |
|-----------|----------------------------------|-----|------|--------------------|
|           | Min                              | Max | Mean |                    |
| October   | 25                               | 73  | 45   | 3,400              |
| November  | 13                               | 30  | 22   | 1,812              |
| December  | 12                               | 24  | 17   | 1,864              |
| January   | 9                                | 19  | 14   | 1,699              |
| February  | 7                                | 22  | 11   | 1,432              |
| March     | 13                               | 22  | 16   | 1,838              |
| April     | 16                               | 49  | 32   | 2,486              |
| May       | 48                               | 185 | 115  | 7,632              |
| June      | 132                              | 234 | 188  | 11,642             |
| July      | 64                               | 178 | 92   | 6,444              |
| August    | 48                               | 102 | 66   | 4,882              |
| September | 41                               | 109 | 65   | 4,944              |

It is impossible to consider management of Huntington Creek and its tributaries as an isolated river segment. The design of water storage facilities, delivery systems (canals and pipelines), and the water demand of the two coal-fired power plants (Hunter and Huntington) has created a system that incorporates all of the San Rafael River system. The depletion of stored water in Electric Lake and the subsequent leasing of water from Huntington/Cleveland Irrigation Company members have, in effect, placed water that will be used by the power company in the four reservoirs on the Left Fork of Huntington Creek and in Joes Valley Reservoir on Cottonwood Creek. These transactions also affect the value and use of water stored in Millsite Reservoir on Ferron Creek.

Five privately owned reservoirs impound water at the head of Huntington drainage. Several smaller man-made earth and dam reservoirs currently exist or have existed in the area. Through a series of canals and diversions, water from the top of this drainage can be diverted to Carbon, Emery, or Sanpete Counties. Huntington Cleveland Irrigation Company has multiple diversions for industrial, municipal, and agricultural use.

Additionally, in scoping comments, the Utah Division of Water Resources identified two potential water developments upstream from the eligible segment.

Russell Site (T14S R06E Section 24, 121 ft high, 3,325 ac-ft capacity). This site is located downstream of Electric Lake on the studied Huntington Creek Wild and Scenic River segment. Electric Lake has been leaking into the nearby coal mines and may have to be replaced or supplemented in the future if leaks cannot be plugged.

Millset Creek (T13S R06E Section 27, 69 ft high, 1,060 ac-ft capacity). USBR site just upstream of Electric Lake and the Huntington Creek Wild and Scenic River segment. The State Engineer performed preliminary design and cost estimates.

From 1974 through the present, flows in Huntington Creek have been artificially regulated to the point that what is now considered “normal” flow is actually a reflection of how PacifiCorp has operated the Huntington Power Plant. Prior to the creation of Electric Lake, flows were between 4 and 6 cubic feet per second (cfs). Since that time, PacifiCorp has been permitted to change flows to between 12 and 15 cfs. In 2003, however, an extended drought combined with the unforeseen loss of water from Electric Lake required flows to be reduced to 40 percent of the new “normal” levels. This was done in cooperation and with permission from the Forest Service. Until the water loss and drought issues are remedied, this flexibility to control river flow is essential for PacifiCorp to maintain its operations.

At one time, a small hydroelectric generator was installed at the base of Electric Lake Dam and has since been decommissioned. Although there are no current plans for using Huntington River for hydroelectric generation, future economic conditions or technological advances could make that option viable or necessary.

A future impoundment along Huntington Creek is actively being sought by the Huntington Cleveland Irrigation Company in order to better control, distribute, and preserve water for its owners. Engineering studies have been completed on one reservoir site, and others are currently being considered. Although any potential impoundment likely would be below the stretch of river currently under consideration, WSR status upstream could have a direct impact on the value and use of water shares administered by Huntington Cleveland Irrigation Company. PacifiCorp has no immediate plans to construct future impoundments along Huntington Creek. However, because of the current water loss at Electric Lake, it is not possible to predict with certainty what actions PacifiCorp may need to take in the future to secure a long-term water source for the Huntington Power Plant.

Castle Valley Special Service District and North Emery Water Users Special District currently have water transmission lines and springs that are used for culinary water supply and transmission in the Huntington Canyon area. Some of these springs and lines have been in place and used by Huntington City since the mid 1920s. These lines run through Huntington Canyon and terminate at the springs located in Rilda, Big Bear, Little Bear, and Tie Fork Canyons. In addition, a surface water treatment plant is being constructed to use water diverted from Huntington Creek. These springs and lines are important to North Emery, and the communities of Huntington, Cleveland, Lawrence, and Elmo. They provide the only source of drinking water for these communities. Future growth in these communities will require new structures and upgrades of these facilities.

The ability to transfer and sell water rights during drought years is especially critical. Power generating plants, which distribute power throughout western states, are dependent on water and the ability to purchase water from others. An extended drought combined with unforeseen loss of water from Electric Lake has required flexibility for river flows which are essential for PacifiCorp to maintain its power generating operations.

WSR designation could impact the potential of federally assisted water resource development projects. Salinity projects are being developed in the area with the goal of reducing salinity in the Colorado River by providing pressurized water delivery systems to local agricultural users. These systems will significantly reduce water loss from seepage, evaporation and over-application. Salinity projects are typically federally subsidized. Without that subsidy, local farmers are unlikely to pursue widespread use of these systems. To date \$28.6 million has been funded, with additional projects in various stages of planning or implementation (see appendix B).

PacifiCorp “has investigated construction of a lower site reservoir to better regulate water from this drainage. This has been suggested as one of several ways to obtain additional water supplies for a possible fourth unit at the Hunter power plant. This would indicate keeping open the possibility of future impoundments and making certain that WSR planning does not foreclose that possibility,” (David Sharp, PacifiCorp, July 11, 2003).

Although water is over appropriated, the flows are regulated to maintain an instream flow for the Blue Ribbon Fishery.

**Transportation, Facilities, and Other Developments** – State Route 31 parallels Huntington Creek throughout the canyon. Along the route, dirt roads lead to private property. It is probable if coal development expands, that new highway access points may be needed. This means additional creek crossings with attendant construction, bridges, diversions, and river corridor improvements. Much of the

economy in Emery and Sanpete Counties is tied to workers who are employed at coal mines and power plants in this area.

Public roads access the Deer Creek, Coop, Genwal, and Larsen Rigby mines, and Rilda, Mill Fork, Tie Fork, Nuck Woodward, Meeting House, and Trail canyons. A major gas line crosses the corridor in the upper end of the canyon. Gathering gas lines are present on upper and lower ends of the river segment. Municipal water transmission lines parallel the river for approximately 7 miles on the lower portion of the river segment.

**Grazing Activities** – Grazing occurs within Huntington Canyon. Grazing allotments under permit within the canyon include the Gentry Allotment, for cattle; and Candland, Trough Springs, Monument Peak, Crandall Ridge, Crandall Canyon, East Mountain, Trail Mountain, Horse Creek, and Bear Ridge sheep allotments.

**Recreation Activities** – After Electric Lake was built, significantly altering the flows in the main channel, upper Huntington Creek developed into a blue-ribbon trout stream. Many anglers travel from throughout the West to test their flies on the savvy trout. At the same time brown trout began to flourish in the enhanced stream, the Yellowstone cutthroat trout were established above the dam in Electric Lake. For a period of time after whirling disease affected every other State-owned broodery for Yellowstone cutthroat trout, Electric Lake was the unique source of this species for all plantings throughout the State.

Huntington Creek is the main attraction in the watershed. The creek and adjacent terrain serve as base areas for exceptional recreation opportunities, such as camping, fishing, hiking, horseback riding, all-terrain vehicle use, driving for pleasure, cross-country skiing, and rock climbing. A well-developed system of trails access both federal and private properties through most side canyons draining into Huntington Canyon. The Castle Valley Ridge Trail system is located within the corridor of the watercourse.

State Route 31 has been designated a State Scenic Byway, a National Forest Service Scenic Byway, and most recently, a National Scenic Byway, “The Energy Loop: Huntington and Eccles Canyons National Scenic Byway”. Stuart Guard Station is a CCC era facility currently used as a visitor center. The visitor center provides area interpretation of some of the history of the Huntington Canyon.

**Other Resource Activities** – Spruce throughout the Huntington Creek corridor are dead or dying and create a potential hazard for campers and those traveling the Scenic Byway. These trees will eventually be removed.

**Special Designations** – State Route 31 that runs parallel to Huntington Creek is a National Forest Scenic Byway and a National Scenic Byway (DOT designated). Huntington Creek has been designated as a Blue Ribbon Fishery by the State of Utah. The Utah Division of Water Quality, Department of Drinking Water data has also identified Huntington Creek as a drinking water source protection zone.

**Socio-Economic Environment** – A very large part of the economic base of Carbon, Emery, and Sanpete Counties comes from electrical generation power plants, providing those power plants with fuel, and auxiliary businesses associated with the workforce employed by companies conducting business along the corridor. Apart from local needs is the rapid growth in electrical demand along the Wasatch Front. PacifiCorp’s coal-fired power plants, including the Huntington Power Plant, are the primary source of electricity for the Wasatch Front due, in part, to existing transmission facilities from those plants. At this point, there are insufficient transmission facilities leading from other plants to meet growth needs. Rolling

brownouts would be expected along the Wasatch Front if regulations were tightened controlling water use and limiting Huntington Power Plant's ability to produce power.

Most of Emery County's employment is in the mining, government, trade, transportation, and utilities industries. (Governor's Office of Planning and Budget 2003) The mining, trade, and utilities industries rely on water to develop and sustain their business.

Figure 1. Non-agricultural Employment by Major Industry: 2001.

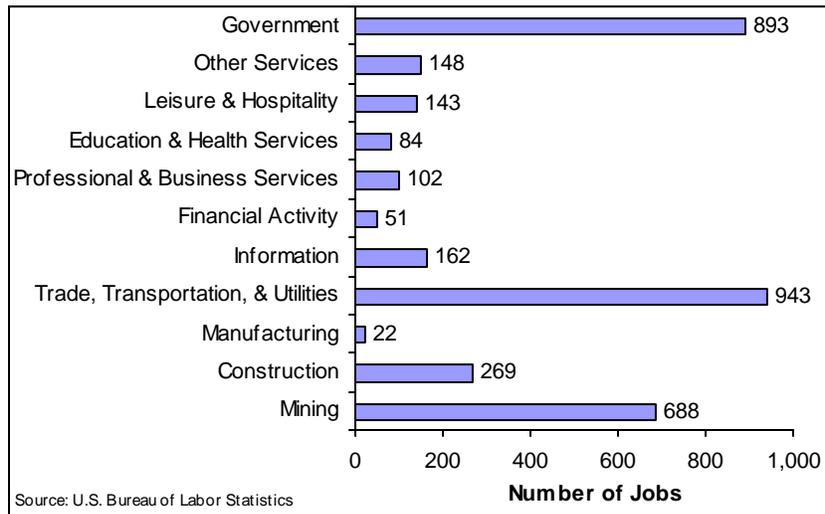
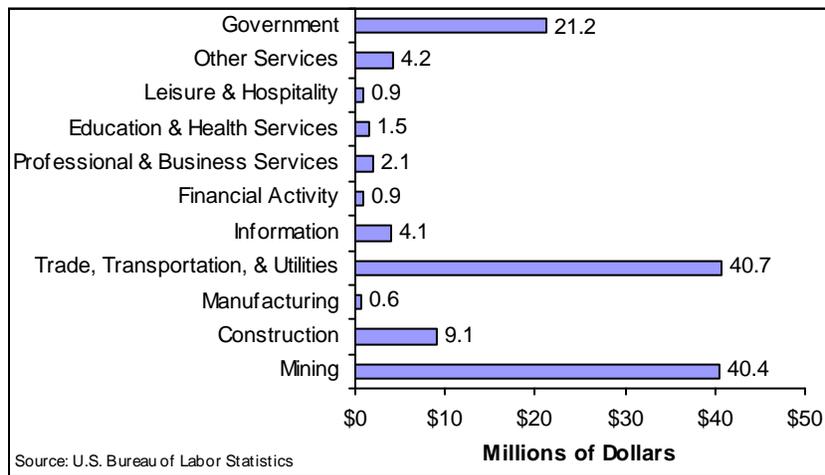


Figure 2. Non-agricultural Payroll Wages by Major Industry: 2001.



PacifiCorp power plants in Emery County generate 17,400 megawatts annually. At a sale value of \$20/megawatt, the annual revenues would be \$350,000,000. They provide work for 750 employees (including their mining operations) with an annual payroll of over \$64,000,000. The addition of the proposed Hunter #4 project would add an additional 350 needed jobs in Emery County (see Appendix A prepared by the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget).

The following reports support the important uses of water to employment and income:

**1997 Agriculture Report for Emery County**

Acres irrigated - 55,000

Appendix A: Wild and Scenic River Suitability Study for National Forests in Utah Draft EIS

- Value of Farms & Improvements - \$100,000,000
- Annual Crop Sales - \$1,300,000
- Number of Cattle and Calves - 28,500
- Annual Livestock Sales - \$5,000,000
- Total Annual Agricultural Sales - \$11,000,000

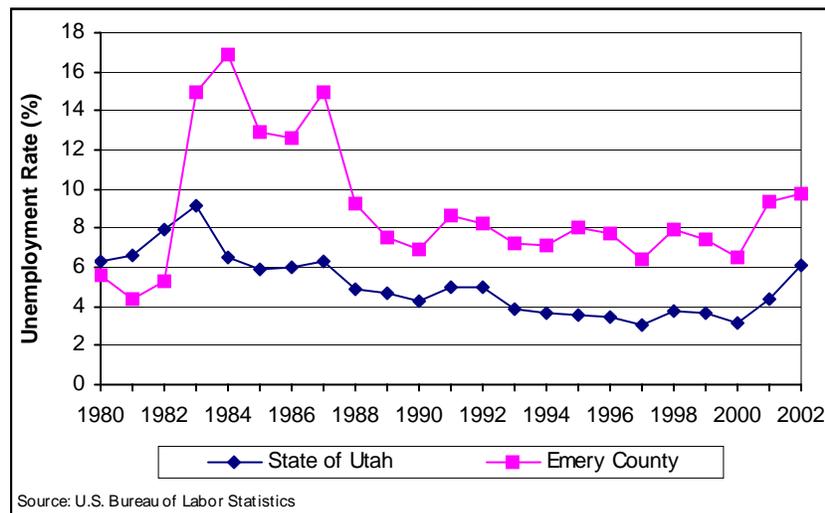
Table 5. Municipal Water Demand and Income.

|                               | Huntington | Cleveland | Elmo     | North Emery | Total     |
|-------------------------------|------------|-----------|----------|-------------|-----------|
| Municipal - Population        | 2,131      | 508       | 368      | 1,400       | 4,400     |
| Number of Connections         | 856        | 185       | 129      | 460         | 1,630     |
| Annual Municipal Water Income | \$77,000   | \$16,600  | \$11,600 | \$145,000   | \$250,000 |

\*See Appendix B for a report on economics and water projects.

It is difficult to develop a sustainable economy in an arid rural community without the continued ability to use, transfer, and sell water. The unemployment rate in Emery County (9.8% compared to 6% for the State) would continue to increase if water development projects were curtailed.

Figure 3. Unemployment Rate



**Current Administration and Funding Needs if Designated** –At a minimum, the river corridor would extend for the length of the river segment and one quarter mile in width from each bank of the river. That is, the corridor would run approximately 19.66 miles in length by ½ mile wide.

**Land Survey:** The cost of surveying the private land adjacent to the river corridor would be approximately \$60,000.

**Land acquisition:** Huntington Creek, from Electric Lake to the Forest boundary, is on National Forest System lands. Private and State lands beyond the Forest boundary may be available for purchase or trade.

Some of the private lands within the corridor may not be for sale because of the water delivery function for which they were purchased.

There are a total of 5.65 miles of watercourse from the Forest boundary to the Huntington Power Plant's inlet; 4.25 miles are on private land. An estimate of the cost of creek side land, 4.25 miles in length, based on the value of land of this type is approximately \$1,500 an acre. Final costs cannot be determined at this time.

**Developing a Management Plan:** Developing a management plan would require the expertise of a number of specialists in soils, hydrology, wildlife, recreation, archaeology, and botany. The plan would take approximately three months to complete. Developmental cost is approximately \$85,000.

**Development of Lands and Facilities:** No development, expansion, or modifications of facilities are currently anticipated by the Manti-La Sal National Forest in Huntington Canyon. However, the Forest maintains the recreational developments that it has within the corridor.

**User Capacities** – No formal study to establish use or capacity has been made. The cost of such a study is estimated at \$29,000.

**Resource Protection:** Maintenance functions on this WSR segment would include inspection/replacement of signs, monitoring of riparian/aquatic habitat, and invasive species monitoring. Law enforcement would also be an expense. The estimated cost is \$45,500 annually.

**Enhancement projects:** Control of invasive plants is estimated at \$10,000 annually.

**Reporting to Congress on WSR:** An annual report to Congress to highlight use and management activity would take an individual five days at a cost of approximately \$2,000.

**First year start up costs on WSR: Approximately \$239,000 (does not include any land acquisition costs).**

Additional Annual Operating Costs: Approximately \$57,500.

#### **SUITABILITY FACTOR ASSESSMENT:**

**(1) The extent to which the State or its political subdivisions might participate in the shared preservation and administration of the river, including costs, should it be proposed for inclusion in the National System.**

Neither the state of Utah nor Emery County supports any designation and has said that they would not participate in any cost sharing of this proposal.

#### **The Utah Governor's Office of Planning and Budget wrote:**

The state supports the statements of the Emery County Commission concerning participation in the management of the river corridor, and has no interest in participating in any efforts, through funding or otherwise, to manage the Huntington Creek corridor under provisions of the Act. (August 2004)

#### **Emery County Commissioners wrote:**

Emery County opposes Wild and Scenic River designation of river segments within Emery County and counties downstream from Emery County. We want it to be unmistakable from comments provided to the Bureau of Land Management and the United States Forest Service in their respective Wild and Scenic River (WSR) planning processes that our position has remained clear and consistent.” (July 2004)

**(2) The state/local government’s ability to manage and protect the outstandingly remarkable values on non-federal lands. Include any local zoning and/or land use controls that appear to conflict with protection of river values.**

The State and county governments have no desire, nor do they currently have the authority or ability to protect the outstandingly remarkable scenery value on non-federal land. It is highly unlikely that either the State or counties would pass zoning ordinances that would protect the outstandingly remarkable scenery or recreation values on non-federal land. County planning documents do not support a Wild and Scenic River designation.

**(3)Support or opposition to designation.**

Congressmen Jim Matheson and Chris Cannon, the Governor’s Office of Planning and Budget, the Governor’s Office of Public Lands Policy Coordination, and the Emery County Commission have all written in opposition to designation. The majority of county residents, water users, and individuals who have commented oppose designation. The preponderance of comments from attendees at the Forest Plan Revision public meetings held in Castle Dale was against designation. Environmental groups and a number of individuals have written or spoken in support of designation.

These same State and local agencies and individuals that oppose designation support continued management as stated in the current Forest Plan. They prefer to see maintenance assumed under authorities that are more flexible to changing needs and water interests than can be afforded from designation.

**The Governor’s Office of Planning and Budget wrote:**

The State acknowledges the following statements contained in the analysis:

‘The current management of Huntington Creek by the Forest Service, BLM, State of Utah, and many private interests has allowed industry to develop while maintaining the outstandingly remarkable recreation and scenic values of the corridor.’

‘There is no interest from the counties, water users or energy companies to participate in funding efforts to manage the Huntington Creek corridor as a Wild and Scenic River and the Forest does not receive adequate funding to purchase easements, provide improvements, and monitor a river segment designated under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. The Emery County Commission considers participation in administration of such designation unjustified and unwise.’

The State strongly concurs with the statement that management of the creek by the parties has kept the creek in good condition, and suggests that the following two additional points are pertinent to the analysis: (1) Huntington Creek is a source of culinary water; therefore, it currently receives a level of protection that it would not otherwise be afforded, (2) the BLM Price Field Office, in its recently updated Resource Management Plan, did not find the segment of Huntington Creek crossing BLM land to be eligible for Wild and Scenic Rives designation; thus, there is a lack of consistency with other agency plans.

The State concludes that neither Huntington Creek nor the Lower Left Fork of Huntington Creek meets the suitability standard of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, and reserves comment on the eligibility of the creek based upon the comments above and the provisions of the state law. (August, 2004)

**Congressman Chris Cannon wrote:**

I write to inform you of my opposition to Wild and Scenic River (W&SR) designation of river segments within Carbon and Emery Counties...

Additionally, W&SR designation is not necessary to protect the values of river segments in question. Existing management options are available to effectively protect those values.

Finally, W&SR designation could be devastating on a socio-economic basis. The limited water resource in Emery and other counties are already over allocated. Any interruption of these resources will have a far reaching impact locally, regionally and, in the case of electrical generation, nationally. Any such designation could have a harmful consequence on water rights and proper land management, could cripple agriculture, and have serious impacts on the economic viability of the local economy. (August 25, 2004)

**Congressman Jim Matheson wrote:**

Local officials in Emery County are particularly concerned about the proposal to designate river segments within the County as a Wild and Scenic River because of the potential impact that such a designation could have on water rights and land management across the West. Throughout Emery County and much of Utah, a large system of canals, ditches and impoundments save and move water from one watershed to another, sending water where it is most needed. The ability to transfer and sell water rights during drought years is especially critical. There is question as to what effect Wild and Scenic River designation could have on this practice, given that the rivers in question are a part of this larger water system.

I hope that you will work with the local officials to ensure that no actions taken on behalf of your agency will encumber the ability of Emery County to provide water resources for its residents. (August 3, 2004)

**The Emery County Commission wrote:**

Emery County opposes Wild and Scenic River designation of river segments within Emery County and counties downstream from Emery County.

We believe that the identified river segments are not suitable for designation. W&SR designation is not necessary to protect the values of river segments in question. Existing management options are available to effectively protect those values.

Finally, W&SR designation would be devastating on a socio-economic basis. What limited water resources Emery County possesses are already over allocated. Any interruption of these resources will have far reaching impact locally, regionally and, in the case of electrical generation nationally. (July 8, 2004)

**The Huntington-Cleveland Irrigation Company wrote:**

In reviewing the proposed area for any of the three possible designations it is the opinion of Hunting Cleveland Irrigation Company (HCIC) that none of these designations would be acceptable to us...

Any restrictions placed upon us could have catastrophic results to the already difficult distribution and delivery of our water. HCIC feels Congress didn't have areas like this in mind when they created the Wild and Scenic Rivers act due to the fact that it would totally devastate the local economy & way of life. When the Act was passed in 1968, a number of river systems were classified within the Act itself. Those river systems (see

section 1273 & 1274 of the original act) were large rivers. Huntingtons' river system doesn't really fit this profile. HCIC feels that we have been as good of stewards of the environment as is possible and not maintaining our system would be more detrimental to the environment than the current course. We strongly urge careful consideration to this process, as decisions made here can be very devastating to people in this drainage for a long time. (June 25, 2003)

**The Castle Valley Special Service District wrote:**

Castle Valley Special Service District and North Emery Water Users Special District currently have water transmission lines and springs that are used for culinary water supply and transmission in the Huntington Canyon area. Some of these springs and lines have been in place and used by Huntington City since the mid 1920's. These lines run up through Huntington Canyon and terminate at the springs located in Rilda, Big Bear, Little Bear and Tie Fork Canyons.

These springs and lines are of the utmost importance to North Emery and the communities of Huntington, Cleveland and Elmo. They provide the only source of drinking water for these communities. Future growth in these communities will require new structures and upgrades of these facilities. We emphasize that we will need to maintain and service the existing facilities and provide for future expansion. This needs to be accomplished without the impediments and controls that Wild and Scenic River Designation may impose upon these facilities and our operations. (September 22, 2003)

**PacifiCorp wrote:**

...PacifiCorp has long-held interests in Huntington Canyon and relies exclusively on both the main channel and left fork of Huntington Creek, and their tributaries, to deliver water that is critical to Huntington Plant operations at the bottom of the canyon. The Huntington Plant, in turn, is a major direct and indirect employer in the area and an important part of the electric generation base for the western United States. The importance of continued operations of the Huntington Plant cannot be over-emphasized and PacifiCorp, by necessity, will oppose any action that impacts its ability to operate the Huntington Plant in the manner that it has in the past or that restricts future plant operations. At the same time, PacifiCorp recognizes the important recreational and other values that are associated with the Huntington Creek and has expended considerable resources to make sure that its operations do not adversely impact those values. PacifiCorp has done very well at this effort for more than thirty years.

...Based on the information provided in this letter, PacifiCorp believes that Huntington Creek will not benefit from W&SR status in any category and that existing land use controls and operating practices are sufficient to protect the values associated with Huntington Canyon for all to enjoy while also protecting the critical role that Huntington Creek and Huntington Canyon play in the area's economy. (July 11, 2003)

**In a later letter, PacifiCorp wrote:**

...PacifiCorp is particularly concerned that the EIS and all future land use documents not impair our ability to exercise valid and existing rights to access and develop coal leases, including the right to drill, explore, extract, mine and remove coal and to locate and construct necessary facilities, structures, buildings, improvements, etc. (Dec 23, 2004)

Other organizations such as Trout Unlimited, The Wilderness Society, The Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, Red Rock Forests, The Grand Canyon Trust, the Three Forests Coalition, and the Utah Environmental Congress support designation.

**Trout Unlimited wrote:**

The three creeks currently under suitability review for Wild and Scenic River designation (Fish Creek, including Gooseberry Creek, Huntington Creek and the Lower Left Fort of Huntington Creek) are among the most highly valued trout fisheries in Utah and, accordingly, are of great interest to TU... Because of their recreational and scenic value, they contribute significantly to local and regional economies. These streams merit Forest Service care and protection.

...Even if you determine they are not suitable for W&S designation, TU encourages you to take every appropriate step to protect and preserve the recreational, scenic, wildlife and other values identified in your eligibility analysis. (July 7, 2004)

**A coalition of environmental groups wrote:**

We are greatly concerned that the Manti-La Sal National Forest's current analysis of eligibility and suitability under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act is mistakenly excluding numerous deserving rivers and river segments and needs to be redone. We support each of these segments receiving designation under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. ...This river should receive designation as a scenic river. (July 15, 2004)

**The Utah Environmental Congress wrote:**

All rivers, not just a select few should be evaluated and final recommendations made in the Forest Plan revision process. It is arbitrary, capricious, and inconsistent with the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, NFMA and the APA to make determinations regarding a hand-picked few eligible rivers while ignoring others in the revision process. (December 22, 2004)

**(4) The consistency of designation with other agency plans, programs or policies and in meeting regional objectives.**

Emery County planning documents do not support the designation of Wild and Scenic Rivers for this segment.

Designation would not be consistent with PacifiCorp development plans, the Huntington/Cleveland Irrigation Company, Castle Valley Special Service District, Genwal, and local agricultural interests.

Most resource activities currently emphasized and allowed under the current Forest Plan are compatible with a Recreational classification under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. However, because this is an energy corridor and primary water source for Emery County and industries doing business along the corridor, their ability to impound, divert and manipulate water for economic development and sustenance could be curtailed under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. Wild and Scenic River designation could also impact potential federally assisted water resource development projects above or down stream from the river segment. Salinity projects are being developed in the area with the goal of reducing the salinity in the Colorado River by providing pressurized water delivery systems to local agricultural users.

Chapter III page 55 of the 1986 Forest Plan specifies that Huntington Creek be managed for the most part with emphasis on semi-primitive recreation use.

Management emphasis is for providing semi-primitive motorized and non motorized recreation opportunities. Recreation opportunities such as hiking, horseback riding, hunting, cross-country skiing, vehicular travel etc., are available...

Investments in compatible resource uses such as timber harvest, livestock grazing, wildlife habitat, mineral exploration and development, special uses, etc., may occur as long as they

meet the planned VQO and maintain a high quality semi-primitive recreation opportunity. When the approved activity ceases, roads, structures, and appurtenances will be rehabilitated as closely as possible to reflect the previous, undisturbed condition.

Other smaller emphasis areas along the river corridor include management for general winter range, range, leasable mineral development, key winter range, and municipal water supply.

Compared to the Forest Plan language above, the following wording from the Interagency Wild and Scenic Rivers Coordinating Council Questions & Answers shows that activities allowed under a scenic or recreational classification are very similar to direction in the Forest Plan. The major discrepancy is the ability to manipulate water.

Federal lands within the boundaries of river areas designated and classified as scenic are not withdrawn under the Act from the mining and mineral leasing laws. Existing valid claims or leases within the river boundary remain in effect, and activities may be allowed subject to regulations that minimize surface disturbance, water sedimentation, pollution, and visual impairment. For rivers designated **scenic** or **recreational** filing of new mining claims or mineral leases is allowed but is subject to reasonable access and regulations that minimize surface disturbance, water sedimentation, pollution and visual impairment.

Harvesting practices on federal lands located within WSR corridors must be designed to help achieve land management objectives consistent with the protection and enhancement of the values which caused the river to be added to the National System. WSR designation is not likely to significantly affect timber harvesting or logging practices beyond existing limitations to protect riparian zones and wetlands which are guided by other legal mandates and planning direction. Federal timber management activities outside the corridor will be designed to not adversely affect values which caused the river to be designated.

Generally, existing agricultural practices (e.g., livestock grazing activities) and related structures would not be affected by designation. Guidelines issued by the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of Interior indicate that livestock grazing and agricultural practices should be similar in nature and intensity to those present in the area at the time of designation to maintain the values for which the river was designated. (Interagency Wild and Scenic Rivers Coordinating Council Questions & Answers)

Designation of Huntington Creek into the Wild and Scenic Rivers System would likely have a great effect on current activities within the river corridor.

- Designation would foreclose the following types of activities in or adjacent to the river corridor: future diversions, transmission lines, water conduits or storage capability. From the WSR Act, Section 7 (a), "...no department or agency of the United States shall assist by loan, grant, license, or otherwise in the construction of any water resources project that would have a direct and adverse effect on the values for which such river was established.
- Designation could limit the Forest Service's options for future management activities. "Resource management practices will be limited to those which are necessary for protection, conservation, rehabilitation or enhancement of the river area resources". Section 12 (a) of the Act instructs the agency having authority over the river segment designated to enter into management agreements with appropriate entities for the planning, administration and management of designated lands. "Particular attention shall be given to scheduled timber harvesting, road construction and similar activities which might be contrary to the purposes of this Act.
- Designation might enhance riparian area management and interpretation.

The 1986 Forest Plan is inconsistent with designation in that it does not prohibit water uses or development.

**(5) Contribution to river system or basin integrity.**

The BLM did not identify the river segment as an eligible river. Both upper and lower impoundments segment this river. This segment would have more basin integrity if the entire stretch were found eligible.

River system or basin integrity is considered to include water quantity, water quality, and timing of flows in relation to natural conditions. In this reach of Huntington Creek, the quantity and quality of water are comparable to a natural condition.

Huntington Creek is a perennial tributary of the San Rafael River. However, from a river system perspective, Huntington Creek does not contribute natural quantity or quality of water to the San Rafael River. The flow from Huntington Creek contributes little to the river system of the San Rafael River. Timing may be similar to natural conditions, since some spring runoff from Huntington Creek is contributed to the San Rafael. However, once the irrigation season begins the duration of these flows is shortened and very little of the flow in Huntington Creek makes it to the San Rafael River.

The hydrology and possibly ecology of the San Rafael River watershed has been altered by diversions and irrigation practices throughout its drainage area, including those in Huntington Creek. State policy directs that water quality in the stream on National Forest System lands may not be degraded unless determined to be allowable through an interagency and public planning process. This stream segment is protected by the State's anti-degradation policy, which states:

Waters whose existing quality is better than the established standards for the designated uses will be maintained at high quality unless it is determined by the [Utah Water Quality] Board, after appropriate intergovernmental coordination and public participation in concert with the Utah continuing planning process, that allowing lower water quality is necessary to accommodate important economic or social development in the area in which the waters are located. However, existing in stream water uses shall be maintained and protected. No water quality degradation is allowable which would interfere with or become injurious to existing in-stream water uses.

From the Forest boundary upstream, Huntington Creek is not listed as water quality impaired.

Huntington Canyon is a source of regional energy and is a major utility provider to western homes and businesses. PacifiCorp's coal fired power plants, including the Huntington Power Plant, are the primary sources of electricity for the Wasatch Front. The water from the canyon provides life to desert homes, farms and businesses. It provides recreation opportunities for the hundreds of campers and anglers that come each year. The Huntington Creek blue-ribbon fishery attracts novice and serious anglers. Its scenic values bring enjoyment to thousands of visitors annually.

Reservoirs store water for business, homes, farms, and utility production ensuring a water source during dry years. Coal from Huntington Canyon brings heat to homes and businesses and energy to powerful regional generating plants. From the nearby power plants electricity flows to thousands of locations throughout the western states.

**(6) Demonstrated or potential commitment for public volunteers, partnerships, and/or stewardship commitments for management and/or funding of the river segment.**

Although interest has been expressed in the designation of Huntington Creek as a Wild and Scenic River by several environmental groups, none have indicated interest in partnerships, volunteering, stewardship arrangements or funding of the river segment at this time.

Local, county and state governments have indicated their disapproval of designation of Huntington Creek as a Wild and Scenic River and their disinterest in any involvement in any management partnerships or funding.

**Economic Impact Analysis  
Proposed Hunter #4 Unit**

**Emery County, Utah**

**Utah Governor's Office of Planning and Budget  
116 State Capitol  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84114  
(801) 538-1027  
[www.governor.utah.gov/gopb](http://www.governor.utah.gov/gopb)**

**September 29, 2003**

**Purpose:**

This document was prepared for Emery County to show the projected economic impact of the proposed development of an additional electric power generator at the Hunter Power Plant near Castledale. This proposed generator is known as the Hunter #4 Unit. Data was cost and employment data that was obtained from PacifiCorp. Analysis for projections was conducted by the Utah Governor's Office of Planning and Budget.

**Background:**

The following text was taken from the draft *Utah Coal Report*, 2003; Utah Energy Office.

**Utah Markets*****PacifiCorp Power Plants***

The Hunter, Huntington and Carbon thermal units are controlled by PacifiCorp, which has filed an updated Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) with the Utah Public Service Commission.

The plan projects the need for 4,000 MW of additional electric power capacity during the first ten years of the twenty year IRP. For the region including Utah, power demand is expected to grow by more than two percent per year. To meet that need, the company would like to pursue a diverse portfolio of conservation programs (called "demand side management" or DSM), renewable energy sources and additional thermal units, fired by either coal or natural gas.

The least-cost portfolio calls for at least four new thermal units, three fired by natural gas and one by coal. Three of these units would be located in the eastern portion of PacifiCorp's service area, which includes Utah.

The IRP provides for long term evaluation of the viability of a new coal baseload thermal unit, and says that, nationally, natural gas has emerged as the industry's thermal resource of choice. According to the IRP filing, ". . . the long term impacts of atmospheric emissions cast doubt upon the viability of coal-fired generation." The plan also acknowledges that increasing reliance on natural gas for power generation has reached the point where issues of gas supply and price volatility are now also issues of price and supply of electric power itself.

After a long period when few power plants were added to the western states' grid, a sudden burst of power plant construction, 95 percent of which is fired by natural gas, may only temporarily meet demand. Moreover, increasing reliance on natural gas for power production may make electricity prices less predictable, due to underlying volatility of natural gas prices.

PacifiCorp predicts that a gap will emerge between power demand and resources available for power production. The IRP notes that the potential benefits of expanding

existing thermal plants include the fact that they do not require the cost and uncertainty of acquiring new power plant sites and power line corridors. Clean coal technology is not included in portfolio analysis due to expected high cost.

## **Existing PacifiCorp Coal-Fired Plants**

### ***Hunter 1, 2 and 3***

Built in 1980, each of the Hunter #1 and #2 units produce 662 net MW on a nameplate rating of 782 MW. The more recent Hunter #3 unit, completed in 1983, produces 460 net MW on a rating of 495 MW. A fourth unit at Hunter is the next logical expansion of the system, as hinted in the PacifiCorp IRP described above. For now the new gas peaking plants at West Valley City and Gadsby adequately supply peak, as well as some baseload demand.

A significant increment of new power can be squeezed from existing turbines when, during overhaul, they may be upgraded for approval to run on overpressure, typically raising yield by 50 MW. Hunter #1 suffered an extended forced outage during 2000 that required PacifiCorp to purchase power from the open market during a period of coincidentally high prices. This painful situation is prone to occur more often as rising demand confronts three difficulties: an aging, over-stressed grid, the difficulty of getting regulatory approval of new coal-fired plants, and potential over-reliance on gas-fired power.

The Hunter power plant has a technology-leading coal blending facility that has captured national attention, by allowing flexibility and precision in coal-blending that are increasingly required for meeting air emission standards. Hunter can also do some light washing of coal to remove sulfur, but due to high cost have not done so for years.

PacifiCorp's IRP calls for about 4,000 MW in new power. Very conceptual plans have identified Hunter as a potentially good candidate for a fourth combustion unit, of about 400 MW. A fourth thermal unit has been envisioned at Hunter for some time, due to the natural advantage of using an existing site and existing power line rights-of-way. Preliminary application has been made for regulatory review of this option. Based on much cheaper coal in Wyoming, expansion of an existing plant in that region might be relatively more competitive were it not for power transmission weaknesses through that area.

The company's IRP filing concludes that somewhere in the 2008-2012 timeframe a new 575 MW base load coal-fired thermal unit (ostensibly as Hunter #4) would be a valuable addition to the company portfolio. Questions regarding air emission regulations and the cost-effectiveness and reliability of new coal combustion technology would also have to be resolved favorably.

Hunter power production was higher in 2002 than in 2001, with plant equivalent availability for units #1 and #2 running at 92 percent. Unit #3 availability averaged 83 percent. The three Hunter units are delivering at 90 percent of capacity, after completing a five week overhaul in 2002. Hunter had begun stockpiling coal after PacifiCorp determined that poor seam conditions warranted mining-out Trail Mountain quickly. The resulting 1.5 million ton stockpile allowed Hunter to stay fueled during the overhaul and

during two recent long wall moves by Sufco, which also supplies the plant. Contracts with Canyon Fuel allow some flexibility in the mix of coal coming from either Sufco, which supplied about four million tons in 2002, or Dugout Canyon, which supplied about 400,000 tons. This dual-source arrangement is particularly important because of air quality problems associated with burning Dugout Canyon's relatively high sulfur coal.

Additional information can be found at <http://www.pacificorp.com/Navigation/Navigation23807.html>.

### **Economic Impact Analysis:**

Using information provided by Mr. James Lacey from PacifiCorp, we used an economic model to produce the impacts of the Hunter #4 Unit project. Our results are based on total costs, number of employees, and average salaries for these employees.

The data we collected is as follows:

- Total Cost: \$800,000,000
- Peak labor during construction: 1000 employees
- Completed plant employees: 75 employees
- Average salaries for employees: \$65,000-\$80,000
- Additional contract employees for maintenance: 20 full-time persons
- Construction would begin in March 2005 and set to begin operation in June 2008

We entered this raw data into our economic model for the Emery County area. We used the model from Regional Economic Models, Inc (REMI). The REMI economic model is a leading economic forecasting model and is able to take into account all of the economic variables within the county.

The results are as follows for the Emery/Carbon County area:

- Peak construction (2007): 1,500 jobs and \$60 million personal income<sup>31</sup>
- Normal operation (after 2008): 300 jobs and \$23 million personal income
- Carbon and Emery County: 50 coal mining jobs

The results show peak construction jobs of 1,500, an increase of 500 jobs due to the number of indirect links. The total jobs created with normal operation is 350: 75 normal operation jobs, 20 maintenance contract jobs, 50 coal-mining jobs, and 205 jobs due to the number of indirect links. These are annual figures, based on today's dollars. These jobs will be in addition to the employment projections shown in the document "Population, Employment, and Income Profiles and Trends" prepared by the Utah Governor's Office of Planning and Budget for Emery County.

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<sup>31</sup> **U.S. Personal Income:** Measures the total income received by U.S. households from employment, self-employment, investments, and transfer payments. **Source:** Bureau of Economic Analysis. Release dates available at <http://www.bea.doc.gov>.

## Appendix B

### **BENEFITS OF COUNTY FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO SAN RAFAEL SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT SEPTEMBER 2003**

COUNTY FUNDING: **\$45,000/year – Irrigation coordinator (actual spending is over \$50,000/year)**

#### DIRECT BENEFITS AND RESULTS

This one act of support has resulted in the following benefits to Emery County, with the San Rafael Soil Conservation District coordinating the actions:

**Irrigation Coordinator:** This position has had a direct impact on Salinity Control (water savings) Projects throughout the county.

**Increased funding:** This funding is used as leverage to secure additional funds from Utah Association of Conservation Districts, and irrigation companies. These additional sources of funds have been used to help hire one full time and one part time employee. Their jobs are directly related to soil and water conservation efforts.

**Countywide irrigation projects:** Ferron, Moore, Emery, Huntington Canyon, Fillmore South Group, Green River, Huntington-Cleveland Proposal. See summary below.

**Millsite Sedimentation Committee:** This committee has been responsible for watershed restoration projects in the Ferron Watershed area. The main effort is to save Millsite Reservoir water storage. The Forest Service has increased their efforts in the Ferron Watershed because of this committee's organization. This committee has received grants and will continue to seek grants to improve the situation.

**Watershed Quality Assessment Committee:** A committee established to improve water quality in the Price River, San Rafael River, Muddy Creek and Green River. This committee was organized to address the mandates of the Environmental Protection Agency. The organization of this committee will be instrumental in bringing federal, state, private and local financial assistance to all watersheds in the county.

**Depletion Allowance:** Returned over \$34,000 to local landowners for water depletion costs assessed by US Fish and Wildlife. Ferron, Moore, Huntington Canyon landowners, and Lawrence South have received funds. Have a commitment from state to pay any other depletion allowance costs occurring in the next two years.

**Watershed Management Plans:** Bureau of Reclamation, Utah Board of Water Resources and other groups require all irrigation companies to have a water management plan before any funding will be given for irrigation projects. The soil conservation district is helping companies to write these plans. Ferron Canal and Reservoir Company and Huntington Cleveland Irrigation Company plans are complete.

**Direct Link to Landowners:** The soil conservation district is a direct link and contact with landowners. We work with them on irrigation needs, soil and water conservation training, financing, manure application, water quality problems, salinity proposal preparation and submittal, grazing improvements, etc.

**Increased Crop Yields:** Landowners are reporting an increase in alfalfa yields (up to 1.5 tons increase per acre). This is significant considering the drought situation we are currently in.

## **SUMMARY OF IRRIGATION PROJECTS AS A RESULT OF FUNDING FROM EMERY COUNTY**

All sprinkler irrigation projects will save up to 50% of water that is currently being used on irrigated farms. As an example, the Ferron Project is 80% complete and the communities of Ferron and Clawson, as well as local landowners are already seeing extended water usage.

### **Ferron Watershed Project:**

\$10,802,744 from Bureau of Reclamation for off-farm system

\$ 4.5 Million in on-farm cost share funding –70%

\$867,234 paid by landowners (3% loan available through the district- (State ARDL program).

Current expenses.

\$816,000 – Payroll expenses paid to local people.

**(Over \$1.3 million have been committed to the Molen, Rock Canyon, Clawson and Paradise Ranch projects in 2003)**

### **Moore Irrigation Project: INSTALLED!**

Off-farm funds came as a result of Ferron Project getting into the Salinity Program. Installed by local labor.

\$4,733,160 – in off-farm grant

\$601,422 – in on-farm cost share funding –70%

\$257,752 – paid by landowners (3% loan available through the district (State ARDL loan program).

### **Seely-Collard Project: INSTALLED!**

Off-farm funds came as a result of Ferron Project getting into the Salinity Program.

\$185,690 – off-farm

\$101,585 – in on-farm cost share –70%

\$43,536 – paid by landowners (3% loan available through the district (State ARDL loan program).

### **Lawrence South – Fillmore Group (part of Huntington-Cleveland): INSTALLED!**

\$1,440,792 – Approved by Bureau of Reclamation for off-farm in 2001.

\$ 438,060 - On-farm cost share funding

\$187,740 – to be paid by landowners.

**Cottonwood Winter Water (Livestock) Project: COMPLETE!**

\$2,100,000 - Bureau of Reclamation funds

**Huntington-Cleveland Salinity Proposal:**

Projects are being prepared to submit to the Bureau of Reclamation for salinity control efforts. These project proposals will come from Elmo North, Huntington North and Emery.

Projected cost of irrigation system: Federal - \$88,000,000, Private - \$6,764,612  
(this includes \$14.1 mil for storage res., \$2 mil for stock water)

**Green River:**

\$15,000 -Sought and received a sprinkling demonstration project from Bureau of Reclamation. Landowners will pay an additional \$3,500.

Some small irrigation projects are being installed now.

Helped them receive an interest free loan of \$13,000 to install a water measuring weir.

EA to be written in 2004

**Emery:**

Proposal being written.

Projected cost: \$16,000,000

EA being written.

TOTAL FUNDS RECEIVED INTO EMERY COUNTY FOR IRRIGATION PROJECTS as of

September 2003:

|                 |                          |
|-----------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Off-farm</b> | <b>– \$19,262,386</b>    |
| <b>On-farm</b>  | <b>- \$6,941,067</b>     |
| <b>Private</b>  | <b>- \$2,356,271</b>     |
| <b>Other</b>    | <b>- <u>\$34,500</u></b> |
| <b>TOTAL-</b>   | <b>\$28,594,224</b>      |