

Testimony of Gary Anderson

Utah County Commissioner

In support of

H. R. 2008

Before the

House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Water and Power

May 14, 2008

Madame Chairwoman and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for allowing me to appear today in support of H.R. 2008 which was introduced by Representatives Matheson and Chaffetz. It will help bring to reality a project that is very important to Utah County and the entire state of Utah. My name is Gary Anderson and I am a County Commissioner in Utah County, Utah, one of the fastest growing areas in the country. It is also my privilege to have been appointed by Governor Jon Huntsman to serve as a trustee on the Board of the Central Utah Water Conservancy District. The District is the local sponsor for the Central Utah Project or CUP that delivers water from the Uinta Mountains to the rapidly growing population along the Wasatch Front. The CUP the largest and hence the most

beneficial water project that has ever been built in Utah. The present supplies of water that are being delivered has helped the population of the State of Utah survive extreme drought, has provided water for municipal use and for agriculture production, for endangered species protection and a myriad of other environmental purposes. According to the Governor of Utah's Office of Policy and Budget, housing units in Utah County are expected to grow from 118,000 in 2005 to almost 179,000 by 2020. The projected population of Utah County is expected to grow from a 2010 number of 527,502 to 804,112 by 2020. This growth is projected notwithstanding the current downturn in the economy and is based upon our "homegrown" population growth rate that comes predominantly from the within.

In addition to the important development of water for our future, now it is time to use the water from the Bonneville Unit of the CUP for yet another purpose, to generate clean hydropower. As the water makes its' way to the Wasatch Front the drop in elevation

creates a clean, renewable, energy source that is currently being wasted. Indeed, without this change in the legislation, it will probably never be used. It simply is not economically feasible to develop hydropower if the “sunk” costs from the upstream development must be factored in to the economic development equation. No one benefits from a wasted resource that is never used and a project that is never built. Everyone benefits when a clean source of energy is captured and a project delivers clean energy.

Utah is the second driest state in the country and the opportunities for hydro power generation are few. The construction of the CUP has created a unique opportunity to benefit from an energy source that is rare in Utah. As needed water is delivered to the Wasatch Front, a new energy resource has been created by the “falling water” in the CUP Diamond Fork delivery system. A hydro power plant added to this delivery system could produce 50 Megawatts of electrical power. Fifty “megs” of clean power is a precious resource

that should not be wasted by failing to develop the resource. This bill is critically important to our state.

This bill is consistent with previous Congressional action to approve worthy hydro electric projects. The bill has the unqualified bipartisan support of Utah's entire congressional delegation, state and local governmental leaders and all of the potential participating local entities. I would like to submit for the record a letter of support from the Utah County Commission and from the Mayors of the all the communities in south Utah County in support of H.R. 2008.

Thank you again for this opportunity to address you.