

I. Project Title: Steamboat Lake Water Lease

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III. Project Summary:

In 1992, the Recovery Program identified a need to secure storage water in the Yampa River Basin for late summer flow augmentation. Colorado Division of Parks (Parks) secured a change of the water right decree for Steamboat Lake in 1997, which recognized the use of water for instream flows. With the change decree in place, the last obstacle to leasing water from Steamboat Lake was surmounted, and a lease was executed on April 17, 1997, between Parks, Colorado Water Conservation Board, and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service). A lease price of \$16.00 per acre-foot for 2,000 acre-feet of water was negotiated for the 5-year term of the lease. During late summer of 2000, flows in the Yampa were monitored closely and when flows dropped to near Service flow recommendations, Parks was notified on August 17, 2000, to begin releasing water from Steamboat Lake at the rate of 25 cfs. The lease was funded in 2000 by funds held at the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

IV. Study Schedule: Initial year - 1997, Final year - 2001.

V. Relationship to RIPRAP: Yampa River Action Plan I.B.2.a.(1)(b)
Lease 3,300 acre-feet to augment later summer flows.

VI. Accomplishments of FY 2000 Tasks and Deliverables, Discussion of Initial Findings and Shortcomings:

The late summer flows in the Yampa were monitored closely and when flows dropped significantly and on August 17, 2000, Parks was notified to begin releasing water from Steamboat Lake at the rate of 25 cfs. The lease of water from Steamboat Lake is useful in helping to stabilize late summer flows in the Yampa River to maintain habitat for Colorado pikeminnow. The release of water was monitored by the Division Engineer, Parks, and Service.

2000 release schedule: 8/17/2000–9/26/2000 25 cfs 2,000 acre-feet

VII. Recommendations:

The current lease expires on April 17, 2001, and the Service must notify Parks of our

intent to renew the lease 60 days before the lease expires. The Service/Recovery Program is building the continuation of this lease into the Yampa River Management Plan, and staff has been assigned to begin discussions on renewing the lease.

VIII. Project Status: Ongoing, the current lease runs from 1997 to 2001.

IX. FY 2000 Budget Status:

A. Funds Provided:	\$32,000	
B. Funds Expended:	<u>\$32,000</u>	
C. Difference:	\$ 0	All funds were expended in 2000.

X. Status of Data Submission: Not applicable

XI. Signed: George Smith December 8, 2000
Principal Investigator Date