

I. Project Title: Basin Wide Stream Gage Operation & Maintenance

II. Principal Investigator:  
George Smith  
P.O. Box 25486, Denver, CO 80225-0486  
E-mail: george\_smith@fws.gov  
Phone: (303) 236-4485  
Fax: (303) 236-4224

III. Project Summary:

In 1990, the Recovery Program first identified a need for a permanent USGS gage in the 15-Mile Reach of the Colorado River. The gage was installed during the summer of 1991 and became operational on October 1, 1991. The gage was to ensure that water secured under the Recovery Program is delivered to the 15-Mile Reach. In 1996, the Recovery Program again identified a need for gages on the Yampa River, and the USGS installed gages above and below the confluence with the Little Snake River. Annual gage operation and maintenance are provided by USGS under contract with CDOW. The gage on the Colorado River were again in 2003 very helpful in the management of releases from Colorado River mainstem reservoirs such as Ruedi, Green Mountain and Williams Fork to augment flows in the 15-Mile Reach. The gages on the Yampa River were used for monitoring river conditions but no water was released for habitat support of endangered fish. To better understand and manage water acquired to improve fish habitat the gage the Recovery Program had installed above the Yampa Little Snake confluence mover to above Elkhead Creek.

The Recovery Program is also a cooperator in the operation of 3 gages on the Duchesne River to facilitate water deliveries to the lower reaches of the river. These gages are used to monitor peak flow and late summer flows. The current gaging station layout along the lower Duchesne River has been in place, as a whole, for approximately 5 years. The four gaging stations have respective periods-of-record as follows:

Duchesne River at Myton – 92 years  
Duchesne River above Uinta River near Randlett – 5 years  
Uinta River at Randlett – 10 years  
Duchesne River near Randlett – 61 years

Two of these stations, Duchesne River at Myton and Duchesne River near Randlett, have been in place since before any Central Utah Project facilities were constructed. These two stations have been funded in recent years through Central Utah Project Completion Act (CUPCA) budgets for hydrologic studies and monitoring relating to CUPCA activities in the Uinta Basin. With the Uinta Basin Replacement Project (UBRP) portion of CUPCA activities drawing to a close, funding for these stations under CUPCA budgets was terminated in October 2004. Since these two gaging stations provide important

monitoring for target flows along the lower Duchesne River, a replacement funding source needs to be determined in 2006.

The other two stations, Duchesne River above Uinta River near Randlett and Uintah River near Randlett, were put in place to monitor stream flows for Upper Colorado Recovery Implementation Program (UCRIP) activities. They have been funded in recent years by the UCRIP, and, along with the two aforementioned gaging stations, provide important target flow monitoring points along the lower Duchesne River.

Upgrading these latter two gaging stations to the capabilities listed above, under “One-Time Cost Items,” will bring all four stations to a comparable, state-of-the-art status, and will provide a reliable, balanced system for monitoring target flows along the lower Duchesne River.

IV. Study Schedule: Initial Year - 1990, Final Year - Ongoing

V. Relationship to RIPRAP:

Colorado River Action Plan: Mainstem; I.A.5; Provide and legally protect instream flows pursuant to Colorado River PBO

Green River Action Plan:

Duchesne River; I.A; ID Year-round flow needs for recovery

Yampa River; I.A.1; ID fish habitat and flow needs

VI. Accomplishments of 2006 Tasks and Deliverables, Discussion of Initial Findings and Shortcomings:

The USGS operates and maintains the gages as specified in their Cooperative Agreement with the CDOW. USGS produces daily flow and temperature records, which will be published in the annual Water Resource paper for Colorado. Interim data are available by FAX from the Grand Junction USGS office, 970-245-5257. Near real-time data from the gages can also be found on the Internet @ <http://waterdata.usgs.gov/co/nwis/current/?type=flow>.

VII. Recommendations: The Recovery Program consolidating gage operation and maintenance at one agency in every State. This has made it easier to track contracts, invoices and payments.

VIII. Project Status: On track and ongoing. The gages are operational and information is available from the Internet, Watertalk, and the USGS Water Resource paper for Colorado and Utah.

X. FY- 2006 Budget:

FY- 2006 Budget Estimate	Total	UCRIP	USGS	CWCB/SEO
Williams Fork Creek near Craig	\$8,000	\$6,800	\$0	\$2,000
Yampa and Lodore Temperature	\$7,460	\$7,460	\$0	
Yampa River Near Craig	\$3,500	\$1,840	\$1,660	
Colorado River Near Palisade	\$14,000	\$14,000	\$0	
Yampa River Above Elkhead Creek	\$14,000	\$14,000	\$0	
Yampa River Below Little Snake	\$0	\$0	\$14,000	
Green River near Jensen (DCP & Temp)	\$4,550	\$2,275	\$2,275	
Duchesne River near Randlett	\$13,500	\$6,750	\$6,750	
Duchesne River above Randlett	\$13,500	\$6,750	\$6,750	
Uinta River at Randlett	\$13,500	\$6,750	\$6,750	
Duchesne River near Randlett (Temp)	\$4,400	\$2,200	\$2,200	
Price River Flow and (Temp)	\$17,600	\$8,800	\$8,800	
Duchesne R. at Myton	\$13,500	\$6,750	\$6,750	
TOTAL:	\$135,560	\$84,375	\$49,185	\$2,000

XII. Budget Summary:

FY- 2006 \$ 84,375 Recovery Program Cost

X. Status of Data Submissions: Not applicable.

XI. Signed: George Smith  
Principle Investigator

November 9 2006  
Date

