



WASHINGTON COUNTY
WATER CONSERVANCY DISTRICT

For Release in *Inside St. George*
June 15, 2015

Contact: Karry Rathje
Public Information Manager
435.668.5622
krathje@wcvcd.utah.gov

**Increased Demand for Water Resources
Lead to Continued Conservation Efforts and New Infrastructure**

Conservation and new water development are top priorities for Washington County Water Conservancy District given its charge to secure, develop and store adequate water resources for the county and one of the nation's fastest growing cities – St. George.

St. George boasts more than 80,000 residents, a \$4-plus billion economy, more than 55,000 jobs and has one of the lowest unemployment rates in the nation. All economic indicators predict continued growth requiring the district to collaborate with state and municipal water managers to meet increased demand.

Ongoing conservation efforts top the list of activities with the district and city investing millions annually into conservation efforts that include infrastructure projects (piping open canals, replacing leaking pipes etc.), dozens of rebate programs, implementing time of day watering and landscape ordinances, hosting free community water wise landscape workshops and more.

“Conservation of water resources is an essential and primary component of district operations,” said Ron Thompson, general manager for the district. “We’re leading the state in terms of conservation accomplishments – we’ve achieved a 26 percent reduction in one decade. That’s impressive. We’ve made great strides in conservation and we’re committed to doing more.”

The district has also been working with the state and local municipalities to develop additional infrastructure that will increase water availability and reliability given conservation alone is not sufficient to meet projected demand. Current projects include the Sand Hollow Regional Pipeline, Toquer Reservoir and Ash Creek Pipeline, Warner Valley Reservoir and Lake Powell Pipeline.

Sand Hollow Regional Pipeline

The district plans to install an 11.5-mile culinary water transmission line to serve the southern areas of Hurricane, Washington and St. George. The approximately \$14 million project, expected to commence in 2016, will supplement water supplies from Sand Hollow's aquifer when surface sources are low during times of drought. In addition, a concrete water storage tank will be constructed as part of this project to allow for fluctuations in pumping capacity and area demand.

(more)

Toquer Reservoir and Ash Creek Pipeline

The Toquer Reservoir and Ash Creek Pipeline project is expected to increase water availability by approximately 3,000 acre feet annually through collecting and storing water that is currently lost through ditch and reservoir seepage. The estimated \$27 million project consists of 17 miles of pipeline and a 3,640-acre-foot reservoir. Construction is scheduled to commence as soon as all necessary permits are obtained and all plans are finalized, which is expected to be in 2016.

Warner Valley Reservoir

Upon completion, Warner Valley would be the largest reservoir built to date in Washington County currently planned to store up to 55,000 acre feet at full capacity. The reservoir will increase water availability by allowing the district to capture and store its Virgin River water rights in addition to water from the St. George water reuse plant and Santa Clara project. The approximately \$90 million project includes a reservoir, approximately 7,000 feet of pipeline, a five-acre regulating pond, settling pond and pumping station. Construction would commence after necessary permits are obtained and all plans are finalized, which is expected to occur in 2020.

Lake Powell Pipeline

The Lake Powell Pipeline is a state project that will allow Utah to further develop its allocation of Colorado River water in addition to diversifying water resources in Washington and Kane counties. Water from the Colorado River at Lake Powell will be delivered to Sand Hollow Reservoir through a 139-mile, 69-inch buried pipeline. The project also includes pumping facilities and hydroelectric generation facilities that will generate power to offset pumping costs. The pipeline will deliver 86,249 acre feet of water at full capacity: 82,249 acre feet to Washington County and 4,000 acre feet to Kane County. The Utah Division of Water Resources estimates the project will cost \$1 billion. Construction will commence upon completion of federally-mandated environmental studies and an approved final design, anticipated for 2020. Water deliveries are expected to start in 2025.

Additional information on the district and its current projects is available online at www.wcwcd.org.

Photo Captions:

IMG 0097: All of Washington County's water comes from the Virgin River basin.

IMG: 10860997: St. George is one of the fastest growing cities in America.

CRW 9373: Sand Hollow is Washington County's largest water storage reservoir.