



Utah Anglers Coalition • P.O. Box 522220 • Salt Lake City, UT • 84152

February 4, 2026

Utah Legislature
Standing Committee For Natural Resources, Agriculture, and the Environment

RE: SB209, Gooseberry Narrows State Park Designation

Dear Committee Members:

My name is Jeff Salt, Secretary of the Utah Anglers Coalition. Our organization represents a wide variety of sport fishing interests statewide. Utah has approximately 450,000 licensed resident anglers. The economic impact of sport fishing to Utah's economy is estimated at just over \$2B

Our organization is strongly opposed to SB209, Gooseberry Narrows State Park Designation. Our opposition to this legislation is based on numerous issues of concern. 1) We oppose SB209 because it uses State Parks as a front to get a long disputed water storage project approved and funded that is actually for the benefit of Sanpete Water Conservancy. This nefarious approach to authorizing a controversial project that has previously been denied by the federal government is unacceptable; 2) We oppose SB209 because it seeks to use \$64M of taxpayer dollars from all Utahns to pay for a local water district's water storage project. This use of statewide taxpayer dollars for a local water project is repugnant to us; 3) Sanpete Water Conservancy's previous attempts to construct a dam and reservoir along Gooseberry Creek has previously been denied by the US Army Corps of Engineers back in 2016. In their scathing denial of the required wetland dredge and fill permit, the Corps found numerous flaws in the water district's proposal and the BOR's Final EIS and Record of Decision and determined this project would cause significant harm. We agree with the Corps' analysis and rationale for denying a 404 permit for the Gooseberry Narrows Dam in 2016. The impacts to fisheries in Gooseberry Creek, Fish Creek, and Scofield Reservoir will be significant. This project may also negatively impact ongoing efforts to enhance instream flows and fish habitat in the lower Price River; and, 4) We believe that if State Parks desires to convert federal lands to create a new state park, there are other locations that have a higher priority, namely, Pineview Reservoir, where demand and annual use is much higher and where recreational facilities and amenities already exist.

The Utah Anglers Coalition urges this committee to vote this bill down and prevent its passage for floor vote by the full Senate.

Respectfully,

Jeffrey Salt

Jeffrey Salt

Secretary,

Utah Anglers Coalition

(801) 485-2550



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, SACRAMENTO DISTRICT
1325 J STREET
SACRAMENTO CA 95814-2922

May 27, 2016

Regulatory Division (SPK-1992-50255)

Sanpete Water Conservancy District
Attn: Mr. Edwin Sunderland
90 West Union Street
Manti, Utah 84642

Dear Mr. Sunderland:

This letter concerns the Sanpete Water Conservancy District's proposed Narrows Dam and Reservoir project. An application package was initially submitted on January 19, 2016. The project area is located 9 miles east of Fairview, Utah, on State Road 31, on or near Gooseberry Creek, in portions of Sections 24 and 25, Township 13 South, Range 5 East, and western portions of Sections 19 and 30, Township 13 South, Range 6 East, Sanpete County, Utah.

After review of the comments and concerns related to your application and in response to our Public Notice Number SPK-1992-50255 for your proposed project, we have determined that development of the proposed project has the potential to cause significant adverse effects to the quality of the human environment. Your proposed project would result in direct impacts to approximately 5 miles of perennial headwater stream channels of Gooseberry and Fish Creeks and 72 acres of adjacent wetlands and unquantified indirect impacts to streams and wetlands, in addition to their associated fish and wildlife habitats. The Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) completed a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) in November of 2012 and a subsequent Record of Decision (ROD) was issued in January of 2013. However, we have remaining concerns with the adequacy of this FEIS relative to the Corps' Regulatory Program.

We have determined that the alternatives analysis contained in the BOR's FEIS is insufficient to satisfy the requirements of a reasonable range of alternatives under NEPA and to meet the requirements of the Section 404(b)(1) guidelines. In addition the specifics of the project's purpose and need remain unclear and problematic. Further, the analysis of many of the public interest review and 404(b)(1) factors that the Corps would evaluate under NEPA is insufficient or absent altogether in the FEIS. Some important data used to establish baseline conditions and for the alternatives impacts analysis ranges from 8 to more than 20 years old, which will require updating. Finally, new information

concerning state-sensitive and federally-listed species not considered in the FEIS has become available since the ROD was signed. Therefore, pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act, we will need to prepare a Supplement to the BOR's FEIS that appropriately addresses the above concerns before we can make a permit decision for your project.

As stipulated in 40 CFR 1506.5(c), Federal agencies may use third party contracts to prepare an EIS. The term "third party contract" refers to contractors paid by the applicant but selected and directed by the agency. The information obtained by third-party contract must be consistent with the Corps' statutory requirements to take a hard, objective look at public interest and environmental factors. As such, the third-party contractor must provide unbiased and acceptable information which can be used as the basis for making a permit decision.

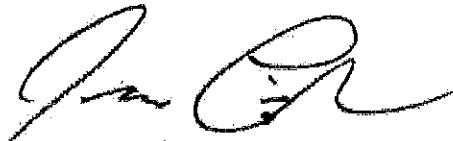
In order to initiate this EIS process, you shall identify 3 qualified contracting firms to act as the Corps third party contractor. When selecting the potential contractors, characteristics the Corps will consider include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Experience working in the area of the proposed project
2. Experience with Section 404 of the Clean Water Act
3. Experience with NEPA, including writing Draft and Final EISs, specifically Draft and Final EISs for the Corps Regulatory Program
4. Experience working on the specific type of project being proposed (i.e. water supply, dam construction). Some specific disciplines necessary for the Corps contractor team include:
 - a) Structural/Geotechnical Engineering
 - b) Economics
 - c) Hydrology
 - d) Fisheries Biology
 - e) Geo-fluvial Morphology
 - f) Water Quality
 - g) Wetlands/Riparian Biology
 - h) Water Rights

This assessment would be used to identify the experience of all individuals on the team and not just the experience of the firm. Once you have identified three qualified contracting firms, please identify your preferred firm for the Corps to consider. As a note, it is generally not acceptable to include a firm currently under contract to you so as to avoid any conflict of interest or perceptions thereof.

Please contact us if you would like to schedule a meeting to further discuss the details of our decision and the process for moving forward. Refer to identification number SPK-1992-50255 in any correspondence concerning this project. If you have any questions, please contact Jason Gipson at the Bountiful Regulatory Office, 533 West 2600 South, Suite 150, Bountiful, Utah 84010, by email at Jason.A.Gipson@usace.army.mil, or telephone at 801-295-8380 x14. For more information regarding our program, please visit our website at the following link: www.spk.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory.aspx.

Sincerely,



Jason Gipson
Chief, Utah/Nevada Branch
Regulatory Division

cc:

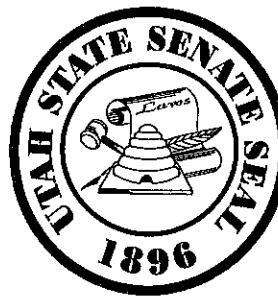
Bob Thomas, Bio-West, Inc. (bthomas@bio-west.com)

Barry McLerran, Rep. Love (UT) (barry.mclerran@mail.house.gov)

Julia McCarthy, EPA Region 8 (McCarthy.Julia@epa.gov)



Fiscal Note
S.B. 209
2026 General Session
Gooseberry Narrows State Park
Designation
by Owens, Derrin R.



General, Income Tax, and Uniform School Funds

JR4-4-101

	Ongoing	One-time	Total
Net GF/ITF/USF (rev.-exp.)	\$15,800	\$(64,215,800)	\$(64,200,000)

State Government

UCA 36-12-13(2)(c)

Revenues	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028
Transportation Investment Fund of 2005	\$0	\$6,500	\$6,500
Transportation Investment Fund of 2005, One-time	\$0	\$(6,500)	\$0
Restricted Accounts (FN Only)	\$0	\$1,700	\$1,700
Restricted Accounts (FN Only), One-time	\$0	\$(1,700)	\$0
State Park Fees (GFR)	\$0	\$485,000	\$485,000
State Park Fees (GFR), One-time	\$0	\$(485,000)	\$0
General Fund	\$0	\$15,800	\$15,800
General Fund, One-time	\$0	\$(15,800)	\$0
Total Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$509,000

Enactment of this legislation could generate an additional \$485,000 in ongoing revenue to the State Park Fees Restricted Account, beginning in FY 2028. Enactment could also generate \$24,000 in sales tax revenue, distributed as \$15,800 to the General Fund, \$6,500 to the Transportation Investment Fund, and \$1,700 to restricted accounts, beginning in FY 2028.

Expenditures	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028
State Park Fees (GFR)	\$0	\$485,000	\$485,000
State Park Fees (GFR), One-time	\$0	\$(480,000)	\$0
General Fund, One-time	\$0	\$64,200,000	\$0
Total Expenditures	\$0	\$64,205,000	\$485,000

Enactment of this legislation could cost the Division of State Parks \$25.0 million one-time from the General Fund in FY 2027 for property acquisition and construction, as well as \$5,000 one-time in FY 2027 for administrative costs that the agency can absorb, and \$485,000 ongoing from the State Park Fees Restricted Account beginning in FY 2028 for operation of the new park. Enactment could also cost the Department of Transportation an estimated \$39.2 million one-time from the General Fund in FY 2027 for road construction.

	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028
Net All Funds	\$0	\$(64,205,000)	\$24,000

Local Government

UCA 36-12-13(2)(c)

Enactment of this legislation could generate additional ongoing \$20,400 in tax revenues to local governments, starting in FY 2028.

Individuals & Businesses

UCA 36-12-13(2)(c)

Enactment of this legislation could cost Gooseberry Narrows State Park visitors up to \$25 in entrance fees and up to \$60 for camping, with total estimated impact on the park's visitors of \$529,400 per year, starting in FY 2028.

Regulatory Impact

UCA 36-12-13(2)(d)

Enactment of this legislation likely will not change the regulatory burden for Utah residents or businesses.

Performance Evaluation

JR1-4-601

This bill does not create a new program or significantly expand an existing program.

Notes on Notes

Fiscal explanations estimate the direct costs or revenues of enacting a bill. The Legislature uses them to balance the budget. They do not measure a bill's benefits or non-fiscal impacts like opportunity costs, wait times, or inconvenience. A fiscal explanation is not an appropriation. The Legislature decides appropriations separately.