The Provo River Water Users Association (the Association) is the sponsor of the Provo Reservoir Canal Enclosure Project (PRCEP). The Association and the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) recently announced they completed final preparations and are moving forward with the PRCEP.

The 21 mile project will enclose the Provo Reservoir Canal (PRC) into a 126-inch steel pipe. The canal starts at the mouth of Provo Canyon in Orem, Utah, and runs to the Point of the Mountain in Salt Lake County, Utah. It will have the capacity to carry more than 400 million gallons of water daily. The Provo Reservoir Canal supplements the Salt Lake Aqueduct (SLA) and the Jordan Aqueduct (JA) and is one of the main water delivery arteries along the Wasatch Front.

In addition to the Association, which operates the canal, and Reclamation, which owns the canal, other project participants include: Metropolitan Water District of Salt Lake and Sandy (MWDSLS), Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District (JVWCD), Central Utah Water Conservancy District (CUWCD), and Provo Reservoir Water Users Company. Reclamation will oversee project construction and inspection and then transfer title of the canal to the Association once the enclosure project is complete.

Enclosing the PRC provides several benefits to taxpayers including safety, redundancy of drinking water supplies, increased water savings, and improved water quality.
The PRCEP goes through Salt Lake and Utah counties, including the cities of Orem, Lindon, Pleasant Grove, Cedar Hills, American Fork, Highland, Lehi, and Bluffdale.

Why Enclose The Canal?

There are several reasons why the canal is being enclosed.

- **Safety**: Enclosing the canal in a buried pipe increases safety for residents in the Utah County communities through which the canal flows.
- **Redundancy for drinking water supplies**: During high demand periods of the year the PRC, SLA, and the JA water delivery systems run at full capacity. Failure of any of these systems would create water shortages in the Salt Lake Valley.
- **Water savings**: Water savings of approximately 8,000 acre-feet per year will be realized since the current unlined canal loses 10 percent of the water it transports to evaporation and seepage.
- **Improved water quality**: Water quality will be improved because the water will no longer be exposed to potential contaminants.

Timeline

Construction on the PRCEP is expected to start in October 2010 and be completed by spring 2013. The contractor has an incentive for early completion, and may finish the project as early as spring 2012.

Funding

The $150 million PRCEP will receive half of its funding from CUWCD and the Department of the Interior. The PRCEP is also authorized to receive a $60 million loan from the Utah Board of Water Resources. The Board of Water Resources portion of the funding will be a loan to be repaid by the water users.

Recreational Trail

The PRCEP provides a perfect corridor for a recreational trail. After the canal is enclosed, a trail will be built on top of it by Utah County and the cities through which it travels. The Association worked diligently to secure $11.75 million of the total $17 million trail budget, and has been very involved with local governments to seek funding and plan for the trail.