

COLORADO WATER CONSERVATION BOARD
102 Columbine Building
1845 Sherman Street
Denver, Colorado 80203

March, 1975

SAVERY-POT HOOK PROJECT

The Savery-Pot Hook project is located in the Little Snake River basin in northwestern Colorado and southwestern Wyoming. The project was authorized by the Congress in 1964 as a participating project of the Colorado River Storage Project Act. The Pot Hook Water Conservancy District was organized in 1960 to act as a sponsoring and contractual agency for that portion of the project located in the state of Colorado. The district includes a portion of Moffat County.

Plan of Development

Unused flows of Little Snake River and its tributaries, Savery Creek from the north and Slater and Willow Creeks from the south, will be developed for irrigation, recreation, and fish and wildlife. Flood control also will be provided. The project will generally be compatible with the environment of the area.

Storage regulation will be provided in Savery Reservoir on Savery Creek in Wyoming and in Pot Hook Reservoir on Slater Creek in Colorado. Releases from the reservoirs and usable natural and return flows will be diverted by new and existing canals and ditches. New canals will include the Dolan Mesa Canal heading on Savery Creek and the Pot Hook Canal heading at the Pot Hook Reservoir. Two major laterals will branch from the Pot Hook Canal. New lateral systems will be constructed for full irrigation service lands. Drains will be constructed as needed.

Dead and inactive storage will be available in both Savery and Pot Hook Reservoirs for fishing and recreation, and minimum flows for fish will be maintained in Savery Creek. Recreational facilities will be constructed at both Savery and Pot Hook Reservoirs. Range lands below the project will be improved as wildlife habitat to compensate for habitat lost through inundation of reservoir basins and irrigation of new lands.

Some federal and state land will be acquired to permit enlargement of existing farms and establishment of new farm units. Assistance to settlers will be provided as part of project development.

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Estimated Costs (January, 1974 prices)

Irrigation	\$51,984,000
Settlement	575,000
Fish and wildlife enhancement	1,721,000
Recreation	762,000
Flood control	<u>928,000</u>
Total Cost	\$55,970,000

Water allocations

Colorado	29,100 a.f.
Wyoming	<u>22,400 a.f.</u>
Total	51,500 a.f.
Annual depletion of the Colorado River (Colorado)	15,000 a.f.
Annual salinity increase to Colorado River at Imperial Dam	3.9 mg/l
Benefit-cost ratio	1.72 to 1
Total Annual benefits	\$ 3,593,800

Environmental Impact

a. Mitigation of the losses of big game range resulting from new irrigation in Wyoming has not been resolved.

b. Loss of big game range in Colorado has been established and will be mitigated by land purchase.

c. Big game access across canals is a significant problem that was resolved by including big game crossings.

d. Salt loading from project irrigation will result in 1.2mg/l increase in salinity in the Lower Colorado River at Imperial Dam, while concentration due to stream depletion will increase the salinity at that point by 2.7 mg/l.

Topographic mapping of the project area was initiated in F.Y. 1965 with funds contributed by local interests. Advance planning studies were initiated with federal funds in F.Y. 1966 and the definite plan report was completed in January, 1972.

Negotiations with the Little Snake River Water Conservancy District in Wyoming and the Pot Hook Water Conservancy District in Colorado on the project repayment contract have been initiated. A draft of this contract has been approved as to form by both districts and should be executed soon.

The draft environmental statement is being revised after consideration of the comments received. The final environmental statement is

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scheduled for completion in September, 1975.

The President has included \$2,230,000 in his proposed budget for F.Y. 1976 to begin construction of the project.

Total investigation costs to June 30, 1974, including feasibility and advance planning, amount to \$1,084,602.

Local Interest

High enthusiasm for construction of the Savery-Pot Hook project has been expressed by state and local interests. The Savery-Little Snake Water Conservancy District was organized in September, 1959 to be the administrative and contracting agency for the reclamation features and obligations in Wyoming, and the Pot Hook Water Conservancy District was formed in June, 1960 for the same purposes in Colorado. The state of Colorado through the Colorado Water Conservation Board, the Colorado River Water Conservation District, and the Pot Hook Water Conservancy District have all contributed funds to the Bureau of Reclamation to expedite the investigations. The Colorado River Water Conservation District has also assisted the project districts in making project water right applications.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The greatest need for the area, in addition to a stabilized water supply for agriculture, is a dependable base for service industries and economic expansion of agricultural opportunities. With limited reservoir storage now available, the area averages about 28 percent of ideal diversion requirement. This limited water supply has prevented any agricultural expansion and has forced the area's young people to elsewhere for work.

The states of Colorado and Wyoming both agree to the need of recreational facilities in this area and have encouraged the development of water based recreation and fish and wildlife enhancement. Other benefits are erosion control and sediment deposits into the Colorado River main stream that will be controlled by the proposed flood control regulation of spring flows into the Little Snake River from Savery and Slater Creeks.

The Savery-Pot Hook project area lies in a somewhat isolated section of Colorado and Wyoming. While there is great local interest and support for the project, the relatively small number of people involved have not been able to generate any great political support for their project. However, the project is sound and would contribute considerably to the economic base of the Little Snake River Valley.

The project should be constructed at the earliest possible time. In view of the current situation, it is recommended that the Governors and the members of Colorado's and Wyoming's congressional delegations be requested to support the President's proposed budgetary item of \$2,230,000 for this project in F.Y. 1976 to initiate project construction.