

# Provo River Restoration Project

Reconstructing Reaches 2-3  Q & A 2003

## What is the Provo River Restoration Project?

The Utah Reclamation Mitigation and Conservation Commission, a federal agency, is responsible for implementing the Provo River Restoration Project (PRRP). Its purpose is to restore the river pattern and ecological function of the entire middle Provo River (between Jordanelle Dam and Deer Creek Reservoir) to make up for fish, wildlife and related recreational losses caused by federal water reclamation projects in Utah, particularly the Central Utah Project. PRRP, which began construction in 1999, consists of creating a multiple-thread, meandering river channel, reconnecting the river to existing remnants of historic secondary channels and constructing small side channels to recreate aquatic features. Existing levees are set back to create a flood plain. Streamside vegetation is planted and fostered to provide necessary environments for healthy fisheries. The project will provide a protected 800 to 2,200-foot-wide corridor along the entire reach of the restored middle Provo River.

## Where and when will work continue this year? (See project map)

This year's work will cover the middle Provo River from the Heber Valley Railroad up to Midway Lane in Midway. We refer to this area as Reaches 2 and 3. We will begin staging and bringing heavy equipment into the project area on April 14, 2003. Due to the anticipated low water year, we will not be forced to delay start of construction until after the runoff. Channel excavation will proceed in late-April/early-May on Reach 2 and in late June/mid-July on Reach 3. Work will continue through the summer, fall and winter. This year's project is large in scale, including diverse riverine features, extensive side channels and approximately 2 miles of main river channel.

## What about public access to the river? (See project map)

Public access to the river from the Heber Valley Railroad trestle upstream approximately 1.1 miles (Reach 2) will close April 14, 2003. Other than periodic closures to safely bring heavy equipment into the area, public access to the river from Midway Lane/100 South Bridge (Reach 3) downstream approximately 0.8 miles will not close until around late June. Occasional Reach 3 closures will likely occur most during the first few weeks of the project. When possible, we will provide advanced notice of these closures through our website; we will also post temporary closure signs at the project area when public access needs to be restricted. Once public access to Reach 3 closes for river reconstruction, both reaches will remain closed until December 19, 2003. These dates are approximate, so we will provide updates on our website at: [www.mitigationcommission.gov](http://www.mitigationcommission.gov).

Public access to the river upstream and downstream of these areas is open. We have constructed four access sites upstream of the project area that include restrooms and parking lots. These sites are shown on the project map. We plan to develop three more access sites, including one that will be constructed near the project area this year. Anglers are reminded that not all the middle Provo River corridor is yet in public ownership. Please respect private and public property and obtain permission from landowners as necessary before going fishing.

## How will construction affect water quality of the river?

This year's construction will have less impact on the river than in years past because the project area is toward the downstream end of the river. In addition, most of the new channel will be constructed outside the existing channel, reducing the occasion for heavy equipment to disturb the active river channel. The river downstream of the project area will see turbid conditions periodically during construction, particularly through the first few weeks of the project. We will try to keep anglers informed of when this will happen, primarily through our web site.

## How are macroinvertebrates recovering (e.g. mayflies, midges, etc)?

We have monitored the river's macroinvertebrate population since the beginning of the project. These studies show most taxa (i.e. species) return to a reconstructed reach within about a year after reconstruction, and most taxa recover to pre-construction abundance levels or greater after about two years. The number of individuals of a given taxa may increase or decrease due to restoration, which will diversify the river's habitat. However, we expect an overall net macroinvertebrate population increase. Macroinvertebrates will also be able to recolonize the reconstructed area by drifting down from the 8+ miles of river upstream.

## What about the trees?



The PRRP Environmental Impact Statement took into account the number of trees the project would impact and identified measures to limit this effect. Generally, when a reconstruction design is "fitted" in the field, we have been able to reduce the number of trees lost. Trees that must be removed to make way for the new channel are still used as habitat features for small mammals, and instream for fish. Disturbed areas are also revegetated. We have installed about 250,000 seedlings, cuttings and poles. So far, plant survival is high. However, it may be 10-15 years before overall success may be measured against conditions in less impacted reaches of the Provo River.

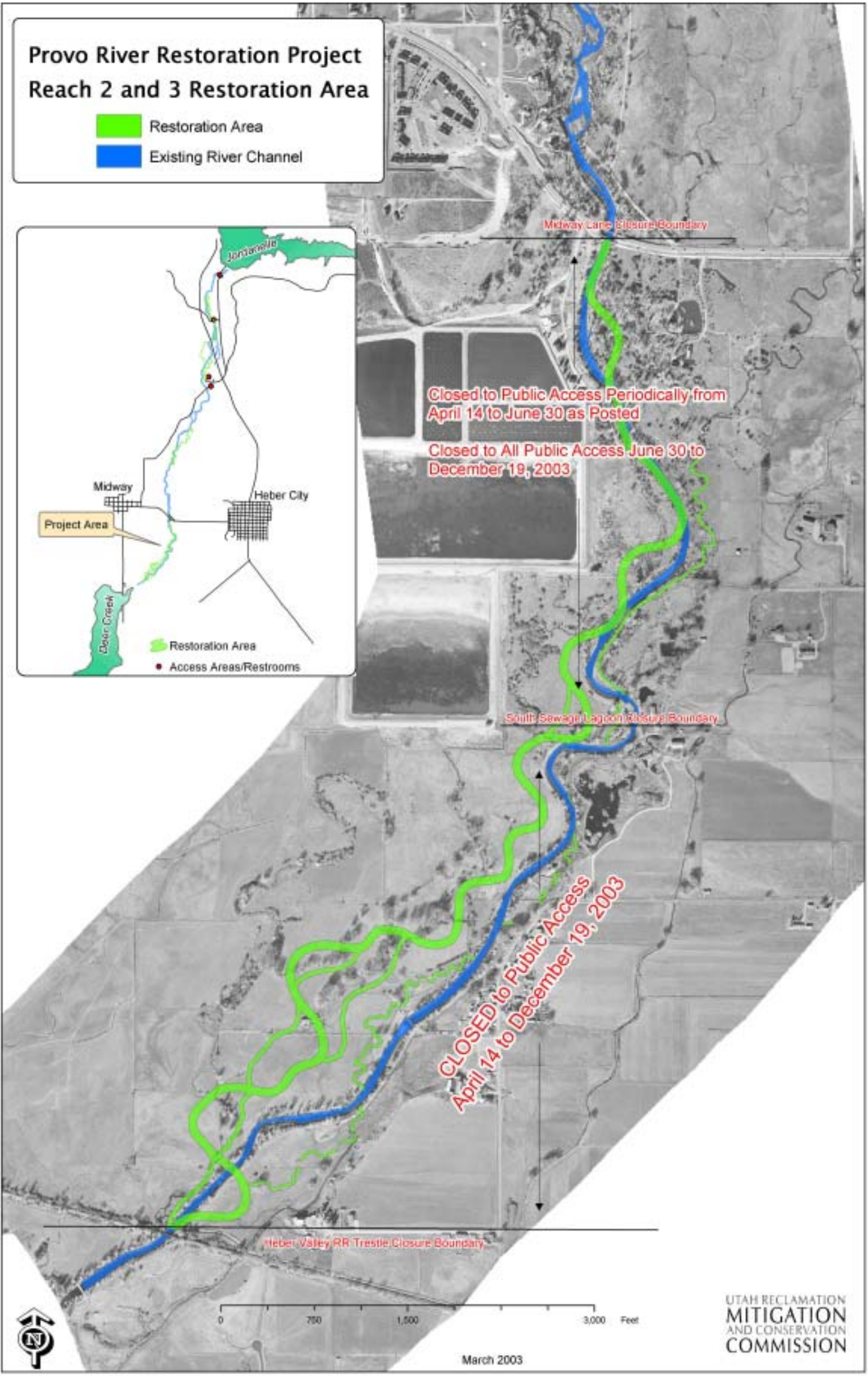
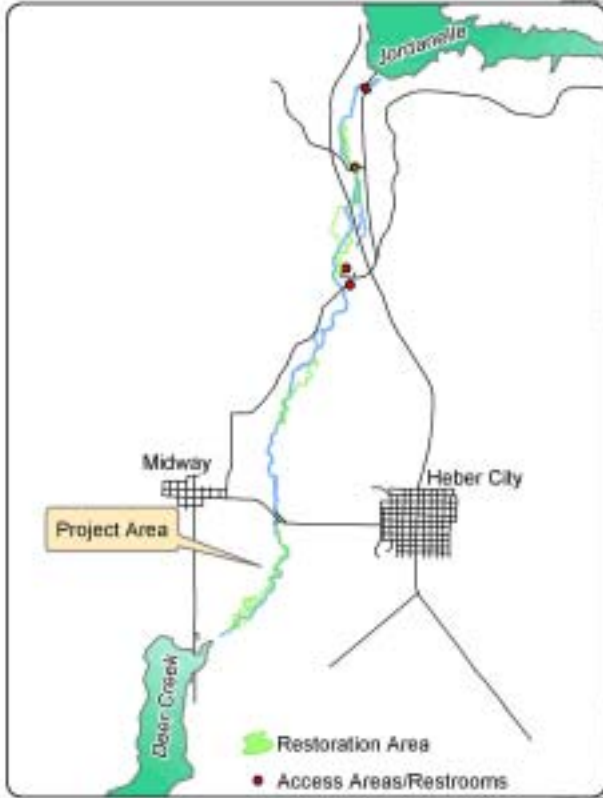
## What about water temperature?

As more of the river is created in open fields, we are aware of concerns about potentially rising water temperatures, due to lack of shade over the river. We are monitoring the river's water temperature to address this. Jordanelle Dam contains a "selective level outlet," which gives Jordanelle Dam operators capability to select water from colder locations of Jordanelle Reservoir to be released into the river, if needed, to maintain cooler temperatures for fish.

For more information about the Provo River Restoration Project or the Utah Reclamation Mitigation and Conservation Commission visit our website at: [www.mitigationcommission.gov](http://www.mitigationcommission.gov), or contact Diane Simmons at (801) 524-3146.

# Provo River Restoration Project Reach 2 and 3 Restoration Area

-  Restoration Area
-  Existing River Channel



**CLOSED to Public Access  
April 14 to December 19, 2003**