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October 31, 2016

Certified Mail – Return Receipt

STRICTLY PRIVILEGED AND CONFIDENTIAL

President Thomas A. Monson
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints
50 E. North Temple Street
Salt Lake City, UT 84150

Dear President Monson:

Re: The Wanton Destruction of Great Salt Lake In Order To Grow Subsidized Hay For Export To China
Official Doctrine of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (aka The Mormon Church)

[Comments of the Working Group of an SLC 11-Year-Old 150-Member Public-Policy Study Group]

For anyone who has for decades treasured your every-Sunday-morning telecast entitled “Music And The Spoken Word,” two of the most appealing features are the scenes of the incomparable natural beauty of God’s Creation that accompany the music, and how “The Spoken Word” often focuses on God’s Creation and the importance of protecting it.

This is not surprising in light of the Official Doctrine of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints regarding “Environmental Stewardship and Conservation” as set forth on www.mormonnewsroom.org/article/environmental-stewardship-conservation -- which claims to be “The Official Resource [of the Mormon Church] for News Media, Opinion Leaders, and The Public” -- as follows:

“All humankind are stewards over the earth and should gratefully use what God has given, avoid wasting life and resources and use the bounty of the earth to care for the poor and the needy.

“God created the earth to provide a place for the human family to learn, progress and improve. God first created the earth and all living things spiritually, and all living things have great worth in His eyes.

“The earth and all things on it should be used responsibly to sustain the human family. However, all are stewards — not owners — over this earth and its bounty and will be accountable before God for what they do with His creations.

“Approaches to the environment must be prudent, realistic, balanced and consistent with the needs of the earth and of current and future generations, rather than pursuing the immediate vindication of personal desires or avowed rights. The earth and all life upon it are much more than items to be consumed or conserved. God intends His creations to be aesthetically pleasing to enliven the mind and spirit, and some portions are to be preserved. Making the earth ugly offends Him.

“The state of the human soul and the environment are interconnected, with each affecting and influencing the other. The earth, all living things and the expanse of the universe all eloquently witness of God.”

Destroying Great Salt Lake In Order To Grow Subsidized Hay For Export To China

You may not be aware that the Utah Governor had appointed a Water Strategy Team to prepare for him a Water Strategy White Paper and that at the Water Strategy Team’s 9/21/2016 meeting to review a draft of the White Paper, there was a public uproar over the fact that the public had not been permitted to see the draft.

Accordingly, the Governor’s Water Strategy Team decided to defer any discussion until the 142-page draft had been made available to the public on <http://envisionutah.org/projects/utah-water-strategy> and public comments solicited with a 10/24/2016 deadline.

[Comments of our Working Group of the SLC 11-Year-Old 150-Member Public-Policy Study Group were sent Certified Mail - Return Receipt on 10/14/2016 to each of the 38 members of the Governor's Water Strategy Team, and to both the CEO and the COO of Envision Utah which had prepared the 142-page draft for the Water Strategy Team.]

The 142-page Draft is truly a wonderful compilation of zillions of recommendations that have been classified into 10 categories.

However, the Draft makes no sense of all of the zillions of recommendations, many of which conflict with each other.

Fortunately, a bottom-line assessment was provided by Prof. Daniel McCool (U/Utah Political Science Professor and Director of the U/Utah's Environmental and Sustainability Studies Program) in a 6/12/2015 interview by KSL, a report of which is still at the moment available on KSL's website.

Prof. McCool's assessment???

- 82% of all of Utah's water usage is consumed by the agricultural industry (vs. only 6% for residential lawns and gardens).
- "Most of Utah's water is used to grow alfalfa hay -- which consumes relatively high amounts of water -- and much of the hay is sold to China to feed dairy cows"!!!
- [U/Utah Economics Prof. Gabriel Lozada stated in a presentation in the U/Utah Law School's Moot Court Room on 9/21/2016 that growing hay accounts for 65% of total Utah water usage, which is 1.5 million acre-feet/year or enough to cover all of Salt Lake County in 2.98 feet of water/year.]
- Prof. McCool (cont'd from the KSL article): "Farmers are using thousands of dollars of water to grow hundreds of dollars of hay."

Funding For The Bear River Pipeline Through The Utah Sales Tax -- Enacted 3/25/2016

You may not be aware that on 3/25/2016, Senate Bill 80 was signed into law without even waiting for the Water Strategy Report.

In "Ready-Fire-Aim" fashion, the enactment of Senate Bill 80 means that a portion of Utah State Sales Tax has already been dedicated to the construction of the Bear River Pipeline and the Lake Powell Pipeline -- the only two construction projects that have been on the drawing boards in recent years.

An Environmental-Impact Statement Of The Wanton Destruction Of Great Salt Lake

As you probably know, the Bear River is one of three rivers that feed Great Salt Lake -- (1) the Bear River flowing from Bear Lake which straddles the Utah-Idaho border, (2) the Jordan River flowing from Utah Lake, and (3) the Weber River between the other two and starting in the Uinta Mountains.

According to the Great Salt Lake State Park website, Great Salt Lake is 7.8 feet below normal!!! The plaque at the lookout point in the Great Salt Lake State Park states that the average depth is only 13 feet!!! Which means that Great Salt Lake is already only 48% full!!! This despite last season's snowfall (438.5 inches) being 95% of the average for the previous 5 years per the website of Alta Ski Resort!!!

It should not be necessary to marshal all of the facts regarding what an environmental and ecological treasure The Great Salt Lake is to the entire world, much less our nation.

And how disastrous its destruction would be for many of God's creatures -- both those which are year-round residents of The Great Salt Lake and those for which it is an essential stop during their migrations!!!

Indeed, it is considered a mystery by many why The Great Salt Lake and its tributaries have not long since been designated a National Park in order to protect so many of God's creatures!!!

The State of Utah To Be Reimbursed For Only 10% Maximum Of The Cost Of The Bear River Pipeline

The Utah Legislature's Joint Water Commission comprising 14 Senators/Representatives and 3 Legislative Staffers met on 10/17/2016 to consider the first draft of "Guidelines" for how to allocate money from the Water Infrastructure Restricted Account (WIRA), funded by sales tax pursuant to the legislation enacted 3/25/2016 as Senate Bill 80.

The report of that meeting in the Salt Lake Tribune states that the current draft of the "Guidelines" provides that "beneficiaries of projects to develop the Colorado and Bear rivers as described in the Lake Powell Pipeline Development Act and Bear River Development Act will be required to provide at least 10 percent of the project cost."

Opponents note that this means (1) Utah taxpayers would permanently foot 90% of the \$5 billion of construction costs that proponents of the Bear River Pipeline and Lake Powell Pipeline want to obtain via the Utah State Sales Tax, and (2) Utah taxpayers may, in fact, have to permanently foot 100% of the \$5 billion of construction costs because the final "Guidelines" need only be treated as suggestions that can be disregarded.

The Salt Lake Tribune article states that Eric Millis, Director of the Utah Division of Water Resources which prepared the draft "Guidelines," claimed that the clause requiring beneficiaries to pay only 10% was intended, instead, to provide that beneficiaries will be required to pay 10% up front.

For anyone who has spent 50 years practicing law in NYC and London, such behavior would in those venues be typical of a strategy to draft precisely what is intended and then, whenever challenged, to claim unofficially that it means something else. Until, of course, the original offending language is finalized.

Whether The Mormon Church Will Apply Its Environmental Doctrine To The Real World

With "the eyes of the world watching" whether the Wanton Destruction of Great Salt Lake will be condoned, it is noted that several of the members of the First Presidency of The Mormon Church and of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles, which together govern The Mormon Church, are attorneys.

As a Good Samaritan, the following law-school-style hypothetical questions are respectfully posed for your prayerful consideration and the prayerful consideration of your colleagues who are responsible for leading Christ's Church:

1. If Utah farmers who currently consume 82% of all Utah water usage according to Prof. McCool, wanted to "cash in their winnings" by selling their existing farms for prices reflecting the "free water" from the Bear River Pipeline, and to buy replacement land "for a proverbial song" at Lake Sevier 90 miles southwest of Utah Lake (please assume arguendo the land would be available "for a proverbial song" since, as you probably know, Lake Sevier has for many decades been a dry lakebed in the Sevier Desert) -- then would the Mormon Church condone the Wanton Destruction of Utah Lake by "looking the other way" as a pipeline from Utah Lake to the Sevier Desert is constructed at no cost to the new farms in the Sevier Desert?
2. If the initial reaction to Question 1 is that The Mormon Church only proclaims religious principles but always refrains from applying them to real-world situations -- then if another Hitler posed a credible threat to kill millions of people in a policy of blatant genocide, would The Mormon Church "turn a blind eye" and refuse to apply its religious principles?

A Good Samaritan's Respectful Suggestion Of Effective Action For Your Consideration

It is respectfully suggested that The Mormon Church consider issuing a Press Release stating that it will take the following actions:

1. The Mormon Church will sponsor a "legislative initiative" pursuant to Utah Constitution Art. VI Sec. 1 and Utah Code Title 20A Chapter 7 to require --
 - Immediate cessation of all actions in furtherance of the Bear River Pipeline Project; and
 - Dedication of all Utah State Sales Tax Funds that would have been allocated to the Bear River Pipeline Project to be spent, instead, on purchasing (or taking by eminent domain) farmland in the water districts to have been served by the Bear River Pipeline -- based on the value (if any) of the farmland if the full costs (including construction) of the Bear River Pipeline were reflected 100% in water prices.
2. If the Mormon Church's "legislative initiative" should fail, The Mormon Church will lobby the U.S. Government to create a new National Park comprising the Great Salt Lake and its tributaries.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

John S. Karls
JD, Harvard Law School, 1967
Who's Who in American Law, 1988-2003
Who's Who in America, 1988-2003
Who's Who in the World, 1994-2003

Identical letters sent to --

Each of Your Colleagues in The First Presidency of The Mormon Church - Certified Mail Return Receipt
Each of Your Colleagues in The Quorum of The Twelve Apostles of The Mormon Church - Certified Mail Return Receipt

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