IN THE OFFICE OF THE STATE ENGINEER
DIVISION OF WATER RIGHTS
STATE OF UTAH

IN THE MATTER OF WATER RIGHT NOS. 14-118 (A76676) AND 69-101 (A76677) FILED BY CENTRAL IRON COUNTY WATER CONSERVANCY DISTRICT	)))))	LATE PROTEST OF NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
IN THE MATTER OF WATER RIGHT NO. 19-399 (A76675) FILED BY CENTRAL IRON COUNTY WATER CONSERVANCY DISTRICT	))))	PROTEST OF NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

The National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, through its legal counsel, hereby files a Late Protest to Application Nos. A76676 (Water Right No. 14-118) and A76677 (Water Right No. 69-101) and a Protest to Application No. A76675 (Water Right No. 19-399) for the following reasons:

1. The mission of the National Park Service (NPS) may be paraphrased from 16 U.S.C. §1 as conserving the scenery, natural and historic objects, and wildlife, and providing for enjoyment of the same in such a manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations. Great Basin National Park (NP) was created by Congress in 1986, to preserve a segment of the Great Basin possessing outstanding resources and significant geologic and scenic values for the benefit and inspiration of the public.

2. In the legislation establishing Great Basin NP, Congress explicitly excluded the establishment of any new Federal reserved water rights, but stated that the United States was entitled to reserved rights associated with the initial establishment and withdrawal of the Humboldt National Forest and Lehman Caves National Monument. The priority dates for these reserved rights are the dates of initial establishment of the relevant National Forest lands and Lehman Caves National Monument. These reserved rights have not been judicially quantified.

3. The water and water-related resources of Great Basin NP have local, regional, and national importance. These resources include lakes, streams, springs, seeps, and ground water. Groundwater is thought to play an important role in maintaining the features and ecology of Lehman Caves. The caves contain living limestone formations, such as stalactites, stalagmites, plate-like shields, cave coral, rimstone dykes, curling helictites, flowstone, and draperies. However, uncertainty remains about the ecology of the caves and the role played by water. There may be additional caves and cave systems within Great Basin NP that have not yet been discovered.