

United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

September 10, 2024

Commissioner M. Camille Calimlim Touton  
Bureau of Reclamation  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20240-0001

Dear Commissioner Touton:

We want to thank you again for the dedication you have shown to the Southern Ute Indian Tribe as they work to repair their critical water infrastructure on their reservation. We appreciate that you have taken the time to see first hand the water infrastructure challenges they are working to overcome.

Today we write to express our support for the Southern Ute Indian Tribe's application to the Bureau of Reclamation for Upper Colorado River Basin Environmental Drought Mitigation Fiscal Year 2025 funding. If awarded, the Southern Ute Tribe's collaborative Pine River Environmental Drought Mitigation Project (The Project) will improve the Pine River's stability through redesign and reconstruction of a deteriorated flume and ecological restoration of river sections that together have long impaired the Pine River's water flow and ecosystem.

The Project is a collaboration with the Southern Ute Water Resources Division, the Pine River Canal Company and the Spring Creek Extension Ditch Company to complete the Pine River Environmental Drought Mitigation Project. Project completion has two important components. The first component is a redesign and construction of an improved diversion structure along the Pine River Canal to ensure the release waters provide appropriate and adequate flows to mitigate the stagnation and fish entrapment that occurs during periods of drought. The second component will restore a section of Beaver Creek, a tributary to the Pine River, to improve the habitat for threatened and endangered fish species. Both components of The Project promote sustainable water management practices and address the ongoing drought conditions impacting the Pine River ecosystem.

We encourage you to give the Southern Ute Indian Tribe's application your full and fair consideration consistent with all applicable laws and regulations. Thank you for your consideration, and please notify our offices of any funds awarded.

Sincerely,



Michael F. Bennet  
United States Senator

Sincerely,



John Hickenlooper  
United States Senator