

# 2023 Water Legislation

Utah's 2023 legislative session expanded on the previous year's water legislation, expanding water infrastructure, development and conservation. Between 2022 and 2023's sessions, over \$1 billion dollars were appropriated.

Bill Summary	Impact to Water Resources
<b>HB 207</b> appoints the State Engineer as Chair of the <a href="#">Bear River Compact Commission</a> rather than having that position appointed by the Board of Water Resources as done historically.	Changes the chair of the commission from being a Board of Water Resources appointee to being the <a href="#">State Engineer</a> .
<b>HB 217</b> authorizes the Utah State Board of Education to issue grants to reduce the use of energy and water by a school district.	The division is part of a new review panel for grants.
<b>HB 307</b> provides for the creation of a new nonprofit, statewide partnership to optimize the use of water. Provides \$2 million one-time and \$1 million ongoing to the Division of Water Resources to help establish the Utah Water Ways Board, which will have 13 members.	Tasks the division with establishing the Utah Water Ways Board. The division will work closely with Utah Water Ways once it's established. The director of the division will serve as a board member. An executive director will be hired by August.
<b>HB 349</b> prohibits approval of new water reuse projects that could impact Great Salt Lake. Provides for investigation of water reuse impacts as part of the integrated assessment of Great Salt Lake.	Adds an additional mandate to investigate potential water reuse project impacts on Great Salt Lake as part of the development of the <a href="#">Great Salt Lake Basin Integrated Plan</a> (formerly the integrated assessment).
<b>HB 450</b> authorizes certain landscaping requirements for homeowners associations: requires use of waterwise plant materials and prohibits an HOA from requiring a homeowner to have more than 50% plant coverage.	Further facilitates <a href="#">waterwise landscaping</a> within HOAs and prohibits certain landscaping requirements.
<b>HB 491</b> creates a Great Salt Lake Commissioner who will develop a strategic plan and coordinate the agencies and interests aligned with the lake.	Adds a member representing Great Salt Lake to the <a href="#">Board of Water Resources</a> . The division will coordinate with the Great Salt Lake Commissioner as they engage in lake-related projects.

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## Bill Summary

**SB 76** addresses coordination of growth and conservation planning related to water. Provides \$500,000 one-time for grants to assist local governments with water planning. Also provides ongoing \$130,000 each to the Division of Water Resources, the Division of Drinking Water and the Department of Agriculture and Food for staff.

**SB 118** authorizes water conservancy districts to receive grants to provide incentives, provides conditions on when an owner may receive an incentive, addresses rulemaking authority and addresses tracking of local government implementation of water use efficiency standards. Provides \$3 million ongoing from the general fund for landscape conversion rebates.

**SB 119** provides that per capita consumptive use is the standard in certain geographic areas. Requires reporting districts to calculate per capita consumptive use.

**SB 251** provides additional exemptions to secondary water metering requirements under certain conditions.

**SB 277** creates the Agricultural Water Optimization Committee. Addresses agricultural water optimization change applications and water savings. Repeals the Agricultural Water Optimization Task Force. Appropriates \$200 million for [agricultural optimization](#); \$50 million ongoing for projects that benefit the Colorado River Drainage including water reuse, dam construction, desalination and other conservation projects; and \$5 million for construction related to Hyrum Reservoir.

## Impact to Water Resources

Requires certain municipal and county planning commissions to consult with the division when developing [General Plans](#). Modifies requirements related to division rules for [regional water conservation goals](#). Provides funding for a full-time employee to manage this effort.

Requires a municipality or county to report to the division regarding ordinance status related to regional-based water use efficiency standards. Requires the division to post [eligibility status online](#). Requires the division to make rules for a landscape conversion incentive program and to operate it. Rebate programs and requirements related to these incentives can be found through [Utah Water Savers](#).

Tasks the division with designating the reporting district that shall calculate the per capita consumptive use for each applicable county, with some additional conditions.

Allows the division to provide exceptions for alternative metering requirements in coordination with the State Engineer.

Adds the division director to the Agricultural Water Optimization Committee. Tasks the division to coordinate with Water Rights and the Utah Department of Agriculture and Food to compile an annual report.

