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## Statewide Water Marketing Strategies and Utah Water Banking Act



### Starting the Conversation: Water Banking as Entry Into Water Marketing Principles

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Utah has a long and proud history of water planning: it is part of the State's pioneering spirit and contemporary character. Seeing the need to address looming water challenges head-on, in 2017, several working groups began to explore the means and methods of managing the State's water. In particular, four independent groups began parallel discussions about what was legally and practically possible.



First, Democratic Senator Jani Iwamoto ran a bill allowing municipalities to use municipal water for instream flow uses to address water quality and environmental concerns. This bill did not pass, but a study group was formed to continue exploring the topic. Second, Republican Representative Tim Hawkes began an agricultural efficiency study group to study how Utah's agricultural community could better manage and conserve water. Third, the Central Utah Water Conservancy District, the largest wholesaler of water in the State, began reviewing how to adapt the State's administrative Change Application process to move water between water users more quickly and efficiently. Fourth, Governor Gary Herbert convened a working group of 40+ water experts to draft the 2017 Governor's Water Strategy Report outlining various priorities, methods, and tools for managing Utah's water.

All four groups independently identified "water banking" as a possible solution to Utah's water challenges. However, "water banking" remained a novel and undefined concept without the necessary specifics to implement concrete actions or programs. To move ahead, the groups combined their study efforts into an unprecedented 70+ Stakeholder working group ("Stakeholder Working Group") organized to study "water banking" concepts across the West and to develop a Utah-specific water banking program tailored to Utah's particular needs. The Stakeholder Working Group comprised a wide range of water users and interests, including the Utah Farm Bureau, municipalities, NGOs, water conservancy districts, state agencies, and interested citizens.

