

[DRAFT] UTAH WATERSHEDS COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

October 9, 2024

1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Department of Natural Resources Auditorium
1594 W. North Temple
Salt Lake City, UT

Council members present:

Scott Paxman, Chair, Reclamation Projects
Nathan Daugs, Bear River Watershed Council
Marcelle Shoop, Environmental and Conservation Interest Groups
Warren Peterson, Water Attorney
Sterling Brown, Vice Chair, Utah Lake Watershed Council
Kris Hamlet, Utah Division of Emergency Management
Mike Noel, Kanab Creek Virgin River Watershed Council
Peggy Killian, Uintah Watershed Council
Bill Winfield, Southeastern Utah Watershed Council
Cody Allred, West Colorado River Watershed Council

Rick Smith, Weber River Watershed Council
Rikki Hrenko-Browning, Industry
Brett Palmer, West Desert Watershed Council
Kim Shelley, Department of Environmental Quality
Craig Buttars, Utah Department of Agriculture and Food
Mark Stratford, Utah League of Cities & Towns
Valjay Rigby, Agricultural Interest Groups
Laura Briefer, Jordan River Watershed Council
Andy Nickle, Sevier River Watershed Council

Others present:

Todd Stonely, Division of Water Resources (WRe)
Carly Payne, Watershed Councils Coordinator, WRe
Eric McCulley, Jordan River Watershed Council (JRWC)
Soren Simonsen, JRWC

Rachel Shilton, WRe
David Jessop, Kanab Creek/Virgin River Watershed Council
Ashley Sampson, WRe
Adam Clark, WRe
Katie Sattelmeier
Jay Olsen, Utah Department of

Agriculture and Food (UDAF)
David Harris, Cedar/Beaver Watershed Council
Laura Haskell, WRe
Mark Quilter, UDAF
Paul Monroe, West Desert Watershed Council

Sam Braegger
Scott Taylor, Kanab Creek/Virgin River Watershed Council
Mack McDonald, Southeastern Utah Watershed Council
Ben Palmer
Heidi Hoven, JRWC

Council Members not present:

Tammy Pearson
Victor Iverson
Dustin Jansen
Robert Moore

Ken White
Candice Hasenyager
Teresa Wilhelmsen

Meeting Minutes

1:03 - 1:09 - Welcome and introductions

Vice Chair Sterling Brown called the meeting to order and led introductions of attending Utah Watersheds Council (UWC) and audience members. Chairman Scott Paxman led the meeting after joining during introductions.

1:09 - 1:11 - Approval of minutes, July 11, 2024 meeting

Warren Peterson moved to approve the July 11, 2024 minutes with a number of clarifying grammatical but not substantive changes to be submitted. It was also requested that page numbers be added to the minutes. Rikki Hrenko-Browning seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

1:12 - 1:14 - Updates to the “Rules of Order and Procedure”

Chairman Paxman reviewed the suggested changes to the Rules of Order and Procedure, primarily concerning the designation of two new non-voting members. The Division of Water Resources Director and the State Engineer/Division of Water Rights Director have been designated by legislation as non-voting members of the council. Redline document available with the meeting materials at the end of these minutes. Laura Briefer moved to accept the changes and approve the updated Rules of Order and Procedure as presented. Rick Smith seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

1:14 - 1:45 - Presentation on the Great Salt Lake Trust

Marcelle Shoop, Executive Director of the Great Salt Lake Watershed Enhancement Trust, presented an overview of the trust's mission, vision, goals and current projects, including wetland restoration efforts and water transactions. They are focused on protecting and enhancing the water flows for the Great Salt Lake. Marcelle highlighted the importance of collaboration with various water partners, including government agencies, NGO's, and private landowners.

The presentation slides are included with the meeting materials at the bottom of these minutes.

Reports by Jordan River, West Desert, and Uintah Watershed Councils

1:45 - 2:08 Jordan River Watershed Council

Laura Briefer provided a brief background of the Jordan River Commission, which doubles as the Jordan River Watershed Council, and their plans to implement a long term plan for the Jordan River corridor. Their members include state, county, and city stakeholders. They meet at least monthly. The Jordan River basin is one of the most heavily populated regions in the state. Laura shared some of the commission's history and restoration efforts, reporting on several projects going on throughout the watershed. They plan to continue evolving, bringing in additional partners as they identify them. There is now an opportunity to invite federal land managers into this process.

Eric McCulley presented information to the UWC, detailing specific projects such as the "Get to the River" Festival and school curriculums. He and Soren Simonsen shared two publications (BluePrint Jordan River Refresh and Best Practices for Riverfront Communities), which are both available to view on the Jordan River Commission website. They expressed that having the watershed council engage with the water users, including the agricultural and tribal interests, has been a key aspect of what they've been able to achieve.

2:08 - 2:17 West Desert Watershed Council

Paul Monroe reported on the activities of the West Desert Watershed Council. He stated this is one of the largest watersheds in Utah. Because a large portion of the watershed is federally owned, there are several non-voting federal partners that sit on the council, providing an opportunity for local stakeholders and federal partners to work together.

Mr. Monroe shared that the first tour the West Desert Watershed Council did was in Box Elder County to see their sage grouse restoration efforts, which shed light on creating better habitats. Unlike other watersheds, West Desert Watershed has no large rivers. There

is a long history in the area of how to make every drop count, which can translate to the whole state.

Mr. Monroe stated the council recently toured the Morton Salt Plant on Great Salt Lake, where they saw how salt is made. Learning about the many uses of water helps everyone understand how things are all tied together throughout the watershed and provides a good perspective of what everyone is faced with. The council is still trying to get fully up and running. It can be difficult to get a quorum of members together due to the large geographical size of the watershed.

2:17 - 2:19 - Technical Difficulties, moved onto next agenda item

Due to technical difficulties, the UWC moved on to the next agenda item, planning to come back to the Uintah Watershed Council.

2:20 - 2:31 - Letter from the Utah Lake Watershed Council

Vice Chair Sterling Brown covered the letter from the Utah Lake Watershed Council. The Watershed Councils Act specifies that one of the fundamental purposes of the UWC is to consult and seek guidance from the local councils, then provide advice to the governor and Legislature on water issues. This letter from Utah Lake Watershed Council came to the UWC in the spirit of these purposes. They made two requests in the letter: 1) improved reseeding/rehabilitating of the watershed after large wildfires, and 2) improved coordination efforts on Utah Lake to avoid continued duplication of money and research.

Chairman Paxman stated that the first item is a statewide issue which needs to be addressed immediately after wildfires. This is an important issue that the UWC can take to the Legislature to see about enhancing existing programs and possible additional funding.

Eric McCulley mentioned a riverscape restoration group that works throughout the country doing fire rehabilitation immediately after fires and added that it takes more than just seeding. He suggested this would be a good topic to cover at a future UWC meeting. Because many of these lands are on federal property, there are permitting processes and steps that need to be taken to get these done. He added that it would be beneficial if there were some kind of fund available around the state that could be implemented quickly after wildfires, as this is something we will be facing more and more.

Rikki Hrenko-Browning commented that the Utah Lake Watershed Council's letter contains good examples of specific, actionable requests. She suggested incorporating the top two issues or resource needs from each of the watershed councils as an addendum to the UWC's annual report to the Legislature. Chair Paxman agreed. Warren Peterson suggested

they could add a section to the end of their report that contains recommendations from the local councils.

Sterling Brown commented that the window of opportunity to get a message to the Legislature before the session begins is narrowing, which is why the Utah Lake Watershed Council wanted to get this letter in front of the UWC today in hopes they could present it in time for the 2025 legislative session.

Sam Braegger, the Deputy Director of the Utah Lake Authority, informed the UWC that the Utah Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands (FFSL) is currently working on the “Utah Lake Study” which is a literature analysis and review of all the research that has been done on the lake, forming it into one cohesive plan. FFSL is hiring a contractor to assist with this process. The Utah Lake Authority is currently pursuing an initiative with the Legislature to help fund a nature center at Utah Lake, and this project is well underway.

It was determined that further discussion on this topic would be held during the designated agenda item.

2:31 - 2:37 Uintah Watershed Council

Peggy Killian presented for the Uintah Watershed Council. The council has been working to become familiar with the watershed. They are currently working toward a vision of what they can offer and what benefits they can provide their watershed area. They have met with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the Colorado River Authority of Utah and other entities.

Ms. Killian stated the council has been on tours to become familiar with their watershed. They toured an industry production water site, observing how water is cleaned and mixed. They were also able to visit the Moon Lake Dam. This area was negatively affected by the East Fork Fire and a spring was lost, but luckily the fire missed the dam. The tour provided insight into the devastation that occurs to a watershed after a fire, and has raised concerns for how this fire may affect the watershed through scarring and flooding. Peggy reiterated that a more comprehensive plan regarding wildfire management is needed, stating that the watershed areas aren't as strong as they could be.

2:37 - 2:52 - Recommended Changes to the Watersheds Councils Act

Chair Paxman referenced a list of three previously suggested changes to the Watershed Councils Act with a visual of the changes being shared on screen. Carly Payne elaborated that these suggestions came directly from previous UWC meetings. The suggestions listed were to 1) Change “Southeast Colorado River” to “Southeastern Utah” at all levels of

watershed council legislation and documentation, suggested by Sterling Brown in the July 2024 meeting, 2) Ease watershed council quorum requirements, suggested by Todd Stonely, West Desert WC and Bear River WC in multiple meetings, 3) Merge the GSL Watershed Council and GSL Advisory Council, suggested by the GSL Commissioner, and supported by members of UWC in multiple meetings.

There was discussion about the second item, “ease watershed council quorum requirements”. Marcelle Shoop reminded the council of a previous discussion on this topic where proxies were suggested as the best solution for this issue. Sterling Brown suggested updating the verbiage to include “ease ‘local’ watershed council”. It was emphasized that a broad representation within each group was necessary to ensure inclusivity and prevent a smaller subset of members from inadvertently dominating the decision-making process.

The council discussed merging the GSL Watershed Council and the GSL Advisory council through legislation. Marcelle Shoop suggested not to get too specific with language without having an advisor to explain options for how to do so. Mark Stratford suggested that any language should recognize the need to have representatives from those local watershed councils within the GSL basin.

Warren Peterson suggested establishing a subcommittee from this council and WRe staff to prepare draft language for legislation, then bring it back to UWC for discussion and approval. Warren Peterson moved for a committee and Rikki Hrenko-Browning seconded the motion, however, further questions and discussion continued, which led to requests for a more specific motion. Mike Noel suggested opening a bill file with a name immediately, obtaining a sponsor and a subject line so they could continue to work on it during the first part of the session.

Vice Chairman Brown clarified that the proposed motion was for Chairman Paxman to appoint a standing committee from this council to address the three suggested changes to the Watersheds Councils Act and to also serve to provide input and counsel during the 2025 legislative session and possibly beyond. Warren Peterson added that the committee would also be responsible to find a sponsor for a bill if necessary.

With these clarifications, Chairman Paxman took a vote and the motion passed unanimously.

Chair Paxman appointed himself, Warren Peterson, Mark Stratford, Laura Briefer, Mike Noel, Marcelle Shoop, Rikki Hrenko-Browning and a staff member from the Division of Water Resources to serve on the subcommittee.

2:53 - 2:55 - Review of Draft Legislative Report

Chair Paxman stated he hoped everyone had a chance to review the excellent report that Carly Payne had put together and was happy that it will include another section regarding the suggested legislative changes after the newly formed committee completes their report. It was agreed that once this report was finalized, it would be forwarded to all of the local watershed council members.

2:55 - 3:00 - Open and Public Meetings Act Training

A training video on the Utah Open and Public Meetings Act had been arranged to be shown; however, due to technical issues and given the time, it was agreed that UWC council members would watch this video and report completion of this training to the Chair. This training must be completed by all watershed council members, both UWC and local councils.

3:00pm - 3:00pm Public Comments

No public comments.

3:00pm - 3:03pm - Set 2025 Meeting Dates and Times

Laura Briefer moved to set January 14th, April 10th, July 10th and October 7th 2025 as the meeting dates for 2025. Rick Smith seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

3:03pm - 3:08 - Administrative Updates

Todd Stonely shared that there were two administrative updates: (1) Mark Stratford's term on the UWC was due to expire at the end of the year, so the Division of Water Resources (DWRe) reached out to the Utah League of Cities and Towns, and they voted to reappoint him for another four years, and (2) Marcelle Shoop's term on the UWC will also expire at the end of the year, so WRe has initiated the process to submit nominations to the governor's office.

Chairman Paxman brought up an issue regarding Pioneer Pipeline clear cutting vegetation along the Weber River Corridor. The issue was briefly discussed by UWC members.

Nathan Daug's moved to adjourn the meeting. Sterling Brown seconded the motion, the motion to adjourn passed unanimously.

3:08pm Meeting adjourned.

Meeting materials are attached below.

UTAH WATERSHEDS COUNCIL MEETING

October 9, 2024

1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Department of Natural Resources Auditorium
1594 W. North Temple
Salt Lake City, UT

YouTube livestream:

<https://youtube.com/live/MJTljKgspRY>

AGENDA

- 1:00-1:03 - Welcome and introductions
- 1:03-1:05 - Approval of minutes, July 11th meeting
- 1:05-1:10 - Updates to the "Rules of Order and Procedure" document
- 1:10-1:30 - Presentation on the Great Salt Lake Trust (Marcelle Shoop and staff)
- 1:30-2:00 - Reports by Jordan River, West Desert, and Uintah watershed councils
- 2:00-2:15 - Letter from the Utah Lake Watershed Council (Sterling Brown)
- 2:15-2:30 - Recommended changes to the Watershed Councils Act
- 2:30-2:45 - Review the draft legislative report
- 2:45-2:52 - Open and Public Meetings Act training (required annually)
- 2:52-2:55 - Public comment
- 2:55-2:57 - Administrative updates
- 2:57-2:59 - Set 2025 meeting dates and times

Proposed dates:

- January 14
 - April 10
 - July 10
 - October 9
- 3:00 - Adjourn



UTAH WATERSHEDS COUNCIL RULES OF ORDER AND PROCEDURE

Adopted **April 14, 2022**
Revised October 9,
2024

These Rules of Order and Procedure (“Rules of Procedure”) shall govern the proceedings of the Utah Watersheds Council (the “Council”) and shall be consistent with applicable provisions of Utah Code and regulations promulgated by the Division of Water Resources.

I. Role, Authority, and Duties

Section 1. Role. The Council:

- a. serves as a forum to encourage and facilitate discussion and collaboration by and among the stakeholders relative to the water-related interests of the state and the state's people and institutions;
- b. facilitates communication and coordination between the Department of Natural Resources, the Department of Agriculture and Food, the Department of Environmental Quality, and other state and federal agencies in the administration and implementation of water-related activities;
- c. facilitates the establishment of local watershed councils by certifying local councils;
- d. provides resources and support for the administration of local councils;
- e. consults and seeks guidance from local councils; and
- f. provides advice to the governor and Legislature on water issues.

Section 2. Authority. The Council is responsible for all matters that arise within the Council’s jurisdiction as required or permitted by the Watershed Council Act, Utah Code Ann. §§ 73-10g-301 et seq. The Council does not have separate or inherent adjudicative, regulatory, infrastructure development, infrastructure financing, enforcement, or other powers or responsibilities beyond those stated in the Watershed Councils Act.

Section 3. Duties. The Council shall provide updates on the Council’s activities annually, or as invited, to:

- a. the Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Environment Interim Committee;
- b. the Legislative Water Development Commission; and
- c. the Utah Water Task Force.

Section 4. Supporting Agency. The Division of Water Resources (“Division”) shall be the supporting agency of the Council and provide staffing to the Council as resources allow.

II. Membership

Section 1. Appointment of Members. The Council shall be composed of up to ~~28~~**26** individuals (“Members”). Membership is by appointment in accordance with Utah Code § 73-10g-304 with up to twelve Members being appointed by the Member’s respective local watershed council certified under § 73-10g-306.

Section 2. Rights of Members. All voting Members, including the Chair, shall be entitled to one vote on all matters properly brought before the Council for action. If a Member is unable to attend a meeting of the Council or is otherwise unable to act, the Member may designate a proxy to act in the Member's stead by providing written notice of the designation to the Chair of the Council no later than 24 hours prior to a meeting of the Council in which the Member intends the proxy to participate. The Council shall enter in the record of a meeting proper documentation of a designated proxy's authority to act on behalf of a Member. No designation of a proxy shall exceed one year in duration. The Member may revoke the proxy designation at any time.

The Division of Water Resources Director and the State Engineer/Division of Water Rights Director are designated as non-voting Members of the Council.

Section 3. Council Member Terms. The following Members shall serve for a term of four (4) consecutive years, with each term expiring at the end of the designated calendar year. A Member whose term has expired shall continue to serve as a Member of the Council until the Member is reappointed or replaced for the ensuing term by the appointing authority. There is no limit to the number of terms a Member may serve if reappointed by the Member's appointing authority. The initial terms shall be staggered as indicated, with all subsequent terms being for a period of four years.

- a. The Member appointed by the Utah Association of Counties (2027)
- b. The Member appointed by the Utah League of Cities and Towns (2024)
- c. The Member appointed by the Utah Association of Special Districts (2025)
- d. The Member appointed by the Governor to represent reclamation projects (2026)
- e. The Member appointed by the Governor to represent agricultural interests (2027)
- f. The Member appointed by the Governor to represent environmental conservation interests (2024)
- g. The Member appointed by the Governor to represent business and industry water interests (2025)
- h. The Member appointed by the Governor who is a Utah attorney with recognized expertise in water law (2026)

The initial term of a Member appointed by a local watershed council shall begin in the calendar year the Member is appointed and expire at the end of the second full calendar year after the appointment is made.

Section 4. Member Responsibilities. As a Member of the Council, each Member shall be responsible for:

- a. Reading and studying the agenda, staff reports, and all attached documents prepared by Division staff so that they are fully informed prior to the scheduled public meeting;
- b. Acting in an honest, courteous and respectful manner with their fellow Members, the Division staff, and the public, during all meetings;
- c. Attending Council meetings and arriving on time; and
- d. Complying with all laws and regulations applicable to the Council, as a body, and to the Member, as an individual.

Section 5. Vacancies. Any vacancy during a Member's term shall be filled in the same manner as a regular appointment and the person appointed to replace the Member shall serve the remainder of the Member's unexpired term.

Section 6. Compensation and Reimbursement. Members shall receive no compensation or benefits for their service but may receive per diem and travel expenses in conformance with state laws and the policies of the Council and Division. All reimbursements shall be processed through the Division.

III. Officers

Section 1. Officers. The officers of the Council shall consist of a Chair and at least one Vice Chair elected from the Members. The Council may appoint additional Vice Chairs or other officers as the Council deems appropriate following a vote by a majority of the Members of the Council to designate an additional officer position.

Section 2. Election of Officers. The Members shall elect the initial Chair and Vice Chair of the Council on the date these Rules of Procedure are adopted by the Council. At the last regular meeting of odd-numbered years, the Council shall hold elections for the offices of Chair, Vice Chair, and any other officer positions, from among the Members by majority vote of the Members of the Council. Election practices may comply with Robert's Rules of Order.

Section 3. Officer Terms. Officers shall serve a term of two years. If an election is not held by the one-year mark, the officers will continue serving in their positions until new officers are elected.

Section 4. Vacancies. Should an officer be unable to complete their two-year term, a new Member will be elected at the next regular or special meeting to fill the remainder of the officer's term.

Section 5. Officer Duties.

- a. The Chair Shall:
 - i. Serve as the Presiding Officer of the Council;
 - ii. Implement the Rules of Procedure;
 - iii. Coordinate with the Division staff to schedule meetings, ensure meetings comply with the Open and Public Meetings Act, prepare and notice an agenda and minutes for each public meeting, and prepare timely reports and other relevant information for the Council;
 - iv. Execute all official documents and letters of the Council;
 - v. Identify and bring before the Council such policy matters as are within the purview of the Council;
 - vi. Fulfill the role of the Council as directed in Utah Code § 73-10g-305(1); and
 - vii. Provide updates on the Council's activities as directed in Utah Code § 73-10g-305(2).

- b. The Vice Chair Shall:
 - i. Assist the Chair in all necessary capacities; and
 - ii. Assume the duties and responsibilities for the Chair in all instances where the Chair is not available or unable to carry out the duties and responsibilities.

Section 6. Chair *pro tem*. In the absence or incapacity of both the Chair and the Vice Chair for a Council meeting, the Chair may select a board member to act as Presiding Officer for that meeting, or the Members present at the meeting shall elect by majority vote a Chair *pro tem* to serve as Presiding Officer only for that meeting.

IV. Meetings of Members

Section 1. Quorum. A quorum shall consist of a majority of the voting Members of the Council and shall be necessary to conduct any business of the Council.

Section 2. Open and Public Meetings Act. The Council is a public body as defined in Utah Code § 52-4-103 and shall comply with Title 52, Chapter 4, Open and Public Meetings Act.

Section 3. Government Records Access and Management Act. The Council and its Members shall comply with Title 63G, Chapter 2, Government Records Access and Management Act.

Section 4. Rules of Procedure Availability. The Council shall make these Rules of Order Procedure available to the public: 1) at each meeting of the Council; and 2) on a public website maintained by the Division for the business of the Council.

Section 5. Regular Meetings. Meetings shall be held semi-annually, or more frequently as determined by the Chair. Meeting dates, times, locations, and agenda shall be posted in accordance with the Open and Public Meetings Act.

Section 6. Creation of Agenda. Division staff will create the agenda for each meeting of the Council under the direction of the Chair. Any Member may request that an item be included on an agenda. Division staff shall send the agenda to the Council at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to each meeting.

Section 7. Federal Liaisons. The Council may invite tribes or federal agencies to name representatives as liaisons to the Council.

Section 8. Subcommittees. The Council may create subcommittees as deemed necessary or convenient in assisting the Council in its business. The number of Members participating on a subcommittee should be less than a quorum of the Council and other participants of suitable expertise who are not Council Members may be invited to participate.

VI. Procedures

Section 1. Order. The order of business at the regular Council meeting should follow the noticed agenda. The Chair, with the consent of the Council by majority vote, or upon recommendation of the Division staff may consider matters out of the agenda order.

Section 2. Decisions. A matter for decision will be placed before the Council by motion made by any Member at the meeting. The Chair will not make motions before the Council except in the absence of a response from other Members to an invitation by the Chair that a motion on a pending matter would be in order. Any Member may second a motion.

Section 3. Majority Vote. A majority vote of the voting Members of the Council at the meeting in favor of a motion shall carry the motion.

Section 4. Robert's Rule of Order. Robert's Rules of Order may be used by the Council in conducting its meetings. Any violation or departure from Robert's Rules of Order incidental to a Council action will not act to nor may it be used to retrospectively invalidate, set aside, or reverse that action.

VII. Amendments and Adoption

The Council may amend these Rules of Procedure. All amendments must be consistent with all applicable laws, regulations, and policies and be approved by majority vote of the Members of the Council.

GREAT SALT LAKE
WATERSHED ENHANCEMENT TRUST

Utah Watersheds Council
October 9, 2024

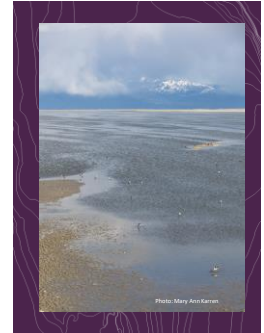
Marcelle Shoop, GSLWET Executive Director

1

Great Salt Lake Watershed Enhancement Program

H.B. 410 – Utah Code Title 65, Chpt. 16 (2022)

- \$40 million to establish and implement water trust
 - Benefit Great Salt Lake
 - Water – Quantity/Quality
 - Wetlands Hydrologic Connection
- Significant in-kind or monetary match
- Not a government entity or policy-making body
- Utah Division of Forestry, Fire, & State Lands



2

GREAT SALT LAKE
WATERSHED ENHANCEMENT TRUST



Audubon



The Nature Conservancy

Co-Managers

Fiduciary





COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF UTAH




3

Coordination







Utah Division of Forestry, Fire & State Lands



Great Salt Lake
Commissioner's Office

Oversight





4

Trust Advisory Council

	Agriculture Spencer Gibbons, Chief Executive Officer, Utah Farm Bureau
	Private Landowner Adjacent to Great Salt Lake Jack Ray, Shareholder, Rudy Duck Club, South Shore of Great Salt Lake
	Conservation Organization Dedicated to the Preservation of Migratory Waterfowl Thomas Wright, Member, Ducks Unlimited
	Conservation Organization Dedicated to the Protection of Non-Game Avian Species Tim Brown, President/CEO, Tracy Aviary
	Conservation Organization Working on Great Salt Lake Issues Jordan Nielson, Utah Water and Land Habitat Director, Trout Unlimited
	Aquaculture Tim Hawkins, Vice President and General Counsel, Great Salt Lake Artemia
	Mineral Extraction Joe Havasi, Vice President, Natural Resources, Compass Minerals
	Water Conservancy District Darren Hess, Assistant General Manager, Weber Basin Water Conservancy District
	Wastewater Treatment Facilities Jill Jones, General Manager, Central Davis Sewer District



5

VISION STATEMENT

Contribute to an enduring Great Salt Lake that sustains people and wildlife for generations to come.



6

MISSION STATEMENT

Help preserve the irreplaceable wetlands and waters of Great Salt Lake by fostering collaborative partnerships and innovative water projects for the benefit of people and wildlife.



7

PROTECT & ENHANCE WATER FLOWS



Photo: Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District



8

PROTECT & RESTORE WETLANDS/HABITAT TO BENEFIT HYDROLOGY



Photo: Max Malmquist/Audubon



9

WATER DISTRIBUTION & MANAGEMENT



Photo: Stuart Rackman/Audubon



10

ENGAGE & LEVERAGE FUNDING





Photo: Shaela Adams/Audubon




11

Strategic Plan Program Objectives 2024-2028

Outcome	Program Objective (by 2028)
Water Transacted	Protect or secure additional flows of 100,000* acre-feet per year (diversion basis)
Habitat Protected & Restored	Protect or restore at least 20,000* acres of wetlands and associated habitat surrounding Great Salt Lake
Flexible Water Distribution	Conduct studies to identify key water distribution bottlenecks and contribute to improving at least five of them
Leveraged Funding	Leverage or match 25 percent of total expended state grant money

*These goals build on, and are inclusive of, the Trust accomplishments to date.
 Figure 5: Summary of GSLWET's Program Objectives



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Wetlands & Habitat Funding Applications Grants

Grant Awards DU (4), TNC, DWR, USFWS, SLCPU*	8
Project Total Costs	\$26M
Project Grant Award Total	\$8.5M
Awardee's Match	\$6.5M
Acres (Identified)	~13,000

Awards made by Trust Advisory Council; scored by Technical Review Committee

<https://www.gslwatertrust.org/wetland-grants>



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Benefits

- Hydrology
 - Improved water conveyance to Great Salt Lake
 - Improved monitoring and measurement
 - Reduced water loss from ET
- Wetland Services
 - ~13,000 acres of improved wildlife habitat
 - Creation of new habitat
 - Enhanced water filtration and water control to improve habitat
 - Reduction of invasive species



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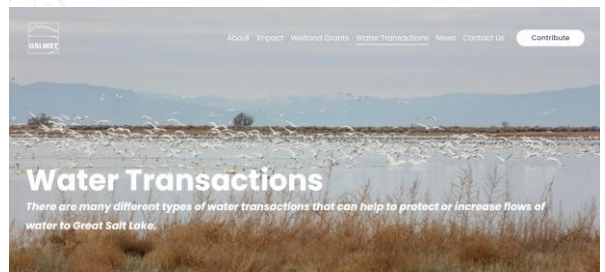
Wetland Funding 2024

- Forestry, Fire, and State Lands (FFSL) - \$5 million wetland protection/restoration
 - "The Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands shall administer a one-time grant(s) of \$5.0 million to protect and restore wetlands and habitats of the Great Salt Lake for the benefit of the Lake."
- GSLWET \$1.5 million remaining of the \$10 million dedicated to wetland protection/restoration
- Technical Review Committee (Application review/scoring)
- Trust Advisory Council (Recommendations)

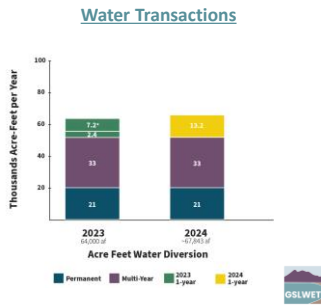
<https://www.gslwatertrust.org/wetland-grants>

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Water Transaction Criteria



16



17

Jordan River to Great Salt Lake



18



19

Building and Strengthening Partnerships

- Utah Division of Wildlife
- Utah Division of Forestry, Fire & State Lands
- Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
- Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District
- Weber Basin Water Conservancy District
- Central Utah Water Conservancy District
- Rio Tinto Kennecott
- Utah Reclamation Mitigation Conservation Commission
- Irrigation Companies, Duck Clubs & Many Others

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Websites



<https://utahcl.org/community-impact/community-impact-funds/gslwatertrust>



<https://fs.utah.gov/state-lands/great-salt-lake/great-salt-lake-watershed-enhancement-program/>

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<https://www.gslwatertrust.org/>

marcelle.shoop@oudubon.org
GSLWET@goudubon.org



22



October 2, 2024

Utah Watershed Council
Utah Division of Water Resources
1594 West North Temple – Suite 310
Salt Lake City, Utah 84116

Chair Scott Paxman:

On July 13, 2023, the Utah Lake Watershed Council was officially certified. Our diverse membership immediately identified a broad-range, initial list of issues we felt were urgent, relevant and priority to enhancing the quality of the Utah Lake Watershed. The Council organized and attended multiple field trips for the primary purposes of seeing firsthand these priority watershed issues and listening to our local, private and government experts. Field trips included visits to the Jordan River Pump House, Timpanogos Special Service District, multiple Utah Lake shorelines, Deer Creek Reservoir Dam and Hydroelectric Power Plant, upper and lower tributaries to the Spanish Fork River drainage and the Provo City Aquifer Storage and Recovery Project.

Without question, each site visit and every presenter provided needed insights and expanded perspectives to the challenging and dynamic issues facing the Utah Lake Watershed, including its urban and rural communities. I'm pleased to report the Utah Lake Watershed Council has operated, I believe, comfortably within our role, authority and duties to serve "as a forum to encourage, facilitate discussions and collaboration on water-related concerns."

In a recent Utah Lake Watershed Council meeting, the Council acted unanimously to recommend the following priority issues to the Utah Watershed Council. It's our understanding and intent the Utah Watershed Council will consider these recommendations and advise necessary government agencies, the Utah Legislature and/or Governor on these specific, priority issues.

1. Further align government agencies and necessary funds to promptly and properly reseed lands impacted by wildfires within the watershed to help mitigate the impacts of erosion. For example, after the 2018 Pole Creek and Bald Mountain wildfires, large amounts of sediment and debris impacted the Spanish Fork River and drainage resulting in significant impacts to the quality of Utah Lake, its tributaries and significant, increased costs to industry and local governments. A focus on wildfire mitigation and an increase in the number of resources available immediately after a wildfire would facilitate large area reseeded projects, reducing the amount of erosion and limiting its detrimental impacts.
2. Improve coordination efforts among the research projects and funds being spent and intended for Utah Lake. We recognize and applaud both private and public sectors spending research dollars to better understand and improve the quality of

water and habitat on Utah Lake. However, to minimize research duplication and wasteful spending, intentional and specific efforts should be made that would facilitate collaboration among stakeholders, enabling timely research advancements to guide lake recovery efforts.

On behalf of the Utah Lake Watershed Council, we appreciate and value this opportunity to collaborate and coordinate with local citizens, leaders and entities. We believe we are in a strong position to inform and recommend priority issues to the Utah Watershed Council which, in turn, will advise those with influence and authority to cause change and make a difference.

Please respond to me with what actions the Utah Watershed Council takes to address these priority issues so I can report to the Utah Lake Watershed Council.

Regards,



Joe Crawford
Watershed Programs Manager for the Central Utah Water Conservancy District & Chair
of the Utah Lake Watershed Council

Suggested changes to the Watershed Councils Act by the Utah Watersheds Council
 Compiled 9/24/24

Suggestion	Suggested by	Date
Change "Southeast Colorado River" to "Southeastern Utah" at all levels of watershed council legislation and documentation	Sterling Brown	July 2024
Ease watershed council quorum requirements	Todd Stonely, West Desert WC, Bear River WC	Multiple
Merge the GSL Watershed Council and GSL Advisory Council	GSL Commissioner, some members of UWC have expressed support	Multiple



Utah Watersheds Council

CHAIR: SCOTT PAXMAN
VICE CHAIR: STERLING BROWN

Utah Watersheds Council Annual Report 2024

Introduction

The Utah Watersheds Council (UWC) brings together state agency, agriculture, industry, conservation, reclamation project, county, city, special district and USU Extension representatives as well as local watershed council members from across Utah to discuss and collaborate on important water-related issues. For a public body, the diversity of water resources interests represented by the UWC is both impressive and unique. The UWC provides a forum for discussion, collaboration and coordination among water interests, provides advice to the governor and Legislature on water issues and supports local watershed councils (Figure 1). Local councils provide a similar forum for watershed interests at the watershed level and in turn advise the UWC on important local/regional water issues. The UWC meets four times per year and local councils are encouraged to do the same.

Appointment of new officers

The UWC has had a successful year. In October 2023 and April 2024, the council elected a new chair and vice chair in Scott Paxman (Weber Basin Water Conservancy District General Manager) and Sterling Brown (Utah Lake Watershed Council and Strawberry Water Users Association General Manager) respectively.

Establishment of local watershed councils

Over the last year, the UWC facilitated the

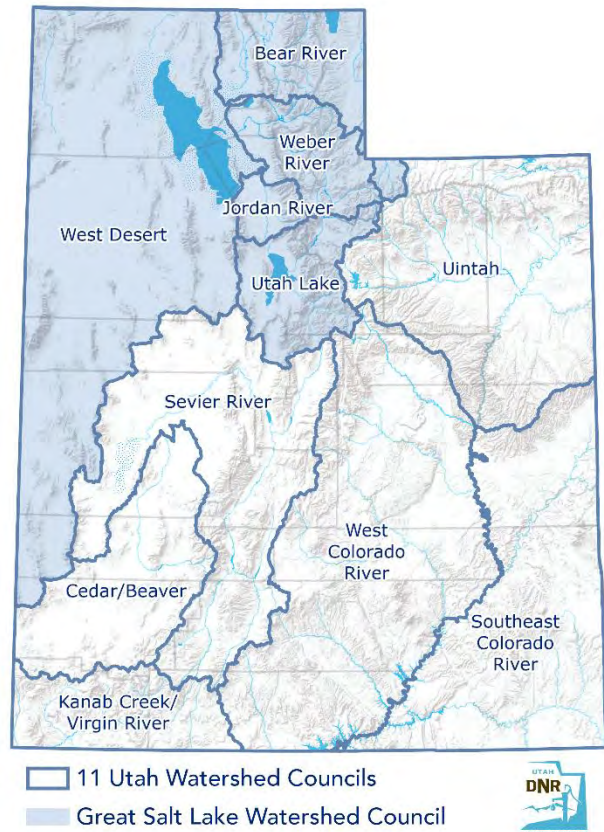


Figure 1. Map of local watershed council boundaries based on Division of Water Resources' hydrologic basins.

establishment of eight local watershed councils by ensuring their compliance with legislation and granting certification. As of July 2024, the state now boasts an active watershed council in nearly every basin, surpassing the expected timeline of establishing all councils by the end of 2025.

The Great Salt Lake Watershed Council is the only council still in development, with its role in the watershed currently being met by the Great Salt Lake Advisory Council. Representatives from each of the five watershed councils within the Great Salt

Lake Basin have been invited to attend the advisory council meetings, and the UWC and Division of Water Resources are working closely with the Office of the Great Salt Lake Commissioner to explore the best options for the watershed council moving forward.

Several local watershed councils have already made creative adaptations to best suit the needs of their watershed. For example, the councils in the Colorado River Basin have opted to establish northern and southern co-chairs to better represent their large geographical areas. These thoughtful choices showcase not only the flexibility of watershed councils to benefit the unique needs of each area, but also the members' willingness to help them become valuable to the community.

Watershed Councils Coordinator and staffing

In April 2024, the Division of Water Resources hired a full-time watershed councils coordinator. The coordinator not only supports the UWC as the council's only staff member, but also supports each local watershed council. With the certifications of 11 of the 12 local watershed councils and the travel necessary to attend their meetings, the coordinator has been busy. The division has assigned existing team members to assist each local council. Division administrative staff have also



Figure 2. Members of the Weber River Watershed Council coordinated with the Division of Wildlife to attend a site visit and tour of Great Salt Lake and its ongoings via airboat.

been helpful in supporting this exciting, yet immense effort.

Education and reports

The Utah Watersheds Council has hosted a wide array of presenters to learn about water resources topics, including agricultural water optimization, state and federal legislation, Great Salt Lake, endangered species, Natural Resources Conservation Service funding programs, cloud seeding, shared stewardship and more.

The UWC encourages each local watershed council to do the same. By familiarizing themselves with their watersheds through local site visits (Figure 2) and presentations, the local councils can promote and engage in better collaboration and more informed discussion. This watershed-level knowledge is then reported at least annually to the UWC via reports on each council's activities, challenges and successes. With greater knowledge of both statewide and regional water issues, the UWC can better serve local watershed councils, the Legislature and the governor.

Local watershed council recommendations

Based on local watershed council knowledge and reports, the UWC recommends the governor and Legislature consider the following priority issues identified by the Utah Lake Watershed Council:

1. Further align government agencies and necessary funds to promptly and properly reseed lands impacted by wildfires within the watershed to help mitigate the impacts of erosion. For example, after the 2018 Pole Creek and Bald Mountain wildfires, large amounts of sediment and debris impacted the Spanish Fork River and drainage resulting in significant impacts to the quality of Utah Lake, its tributaries and significant, increased costs to industry and local

governments (Figure 3). A focus on wildfire mitigation and an increase in the number of resources available immediately after a wildfire would facilitate large area reseeding projects, reducing the amount of erosion and limiting its detrimental impacts.

2. Improve coordination efforts among the research projects and funds being spent and intended for Utah Lake. We recognize and applaud both private and public sectors spending research dollars to better understand and improve the quality of water and habitat on Utah Lake. However, to minimize research duplication and wasteful spending, intentional and specific efforts should be made that would facilitate collaboration among stakeholders, enabling timely research advancements to guide lake recovery efforts.

Due to their recent certification, other councils are focused on developing a greater understanding of their watersheds and do not yet have information or recommendations for the UWC or state. We look forward to benefiting from their shared knowledge in coming years.

Future of watershed councils

HB 280 – Water Development Coordinating Council and the State Water Plan

Moving forward, the Utah Watersheds Council has been tasked with additional responsibilities. As provided in HB 280 during the 2024 legislative session, the council will advise both the Water Development Coordinating Council and the Division of Water Resources on the State Water Plan. Local councils will also advise on the State Water Plan, providing valuable information and ensuring better representation for local communities. This will be a



Figure 3. The Spanish Fork River's high levels of silt and debris, as captured by a member of the Utah Lake Watershed Council during a council site visit to the river drainage and diversion dam.

large undertaking that contributes to an effective and accurate plan.

Other areas of opportunity

State and federal agencies attend and show ongoing interest in watershed council meetings at both state and local levels. Because of their diverse member and attendee makeup, the UWC and local councils can function as easily accessible stakeholder groups for these agencies. We have already seen their involvement in large projects such as the Great Salt Lake Basin Integrated Plan.

Councils are also a great place for federal agencies and non-governmental organizations to communicate funding opportunities, increasing Utah residents' access to resources that help utilize, protect and preserve valuable water resources.

With such diverse interest, the watershed councils show great promise in fulfilling their role as venues of important water resources discussion, collaboration, and coordination across political, social and industrial boundaries. The Utah Watersheds Council is proud to play an active role in facilitating improved water management.

This report was prepared by Carly Payne, Watershed Councils Coordinator with the Division of Water Resources, under the direction of the Utah Watersheds Council. November 2024.

Utah Watersheds Council

Local Councils

Bear River • Cedar/Beaver • Great Salt Lake • Jordan River • Kanab Creek/Virgin River • Sevier River
Southeastern Utah • Uintah • Utah Lake • Weber River • West Colorado River • West Desert

WatershedCouncils.utah.gov • WatershedCouncils@utah.gov