

[DRAFT] UTAH WATERSHEDS COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

April 10, 2025
1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Department of Natural Resources Auditorium
1594 W. North Temple
Salt Lake City, UT 84116



Meeting Recording: <https://www.youtube.com/live/eml4Gi-iRMo>

Council members present:

Scott Paxman, Chair, Reclamation Projects

Nathan Daugs, Bear River Watershed Council

Marcelle Shoop, Environmental Conservation Interests

Warren Peterson, Water Attorney

Sterling Brown, Vice Chair, Utah Lake Watershed Council

Mike Noel, Kanab Creek/Virgin River Watershed Council

Cody Allred, West Colorado River Watershed Council

Kelly Pehrson, Utah Department of Agriculture and Food

Rick Smith, Weber River Watershed Council

Mark Stratford, Utah League of Cities & Towns

ValJay Rigby, Agricultural Interests

Laura Briefer, Jordan River Watershed Council

Andy Nickle, Sevier River Watershed Council

Candice Hasenyager, Utah Division of Water Resources

Teresa Wilhelmsen, Utah Division of Water Rights/State Engineer

Robert Moore, Utah Association of Special Districts

Peggy Killian, Uintah Watershed Council

Joel Ferry, Utah Department of Natural Resources

Rikki Hrenko-Browning, Industrial Interests

Council Members not present:

Victor Iverson, Utah Association of Counties

Dustin Jansen, Utah Division of Indian Affairs

Kris Hamlet, Utah Division of Emergency Management

Tammy Pearson, Cedar/Beaver Watershed Council

Brett Palmer, West Desert Watershed Council

Ken White, USU Extension Vice President

Tim Davis, Utah Department of Environmental Quality

Bill Winfield, Southeastern Utah Watershed Council

Others present:

Carly Payne, Watershed Councils Coordinator, WRe

Todd Stonely

Sarah Shechter

Stephanie McGinnis

Aspen Johnston

**Russell Seeley
Rachel Shilton
Joel Williams
Jordan Clayton
Melissa Noble
Hailey Kirlin
Jaylene Mahleres**

**Jim Bowcutt
Ashley Sampson
Michael Sanchez
Gary Brimley
Dex Winterton
Lori Maughan**

Meeting Minutes

1:05 - 1:10 p.m. - Welcome and roll call (Chair Scott Paxman)

Chair Scott Paxman called the meeting to order and led introductions of attending Utah Watersheds Council (UWC) and audience members.

1:10 - 1:11 p.m. - Approval of the January 14, 2025 meeting minutes (Scott Paxman)

Warren Peterson moved to approve the January 14, 2025 meeting minutes with the correction of the spelling of "Fool Creek Reservoir". Sterling Brown seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

1:11 - 1:17 p.m. - Southeastern Utah Watershed Council report (Lori Maughan)

Lori Maughan (in place of Bill Winfield) reported on the Southeastern Utah Watershed Council's activities. Some council members attended the Utah Water Users Workshop. Maughan noted concern about the lack of water in their region. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) recently made a drought declaration in their area.

1:17 - 1:47 p.m. - West Colorado River Watershed Council report (Cody Allred)

Cody Allred reported on the West Colorado River Watershed Council's activities. He stated that the council has held four meetings over the past 10 months, focusing on assembling a list of water projects within their watershed and developing a council map of the watershed. Allred noted this map has been useful in helping the council become familiar with the unique features of their basin. Moving forward, the council will focus on defining their role and how they can add value by conducting field tours, supporting the development of the 2026 state water plan and increasing representation from the southern portion of their watershed and possibly establishing a mission statement and goals.

Mike Noel suggested that members from the Kanab Creek/Virgin River Watershed Council attend the West Colorado River Watershed Council meetings.

Laura Briefer asked about the West Colorado River Watershed's population and economic base, stating that would be helpful information. Allred stated he will look into obtaining those numbers.

Peterson asked Allred what would help their watershed council. Allred responded that it was too early for him to have a precise answer but that would be something to which the council would give consideration.

1:47 - 2:15 p.m. - Presentation on the Drinking Water Source Protection Program (Melissa Noble, Utah Division of Drinking Water)

Melissa Noble, Environmental Scientist with the Utah Division of Drinking Water (DDW), presented on the Drinking Water Source Protection Program (SPP), which is part of a multi-barrier approach to protect Utah's drinking water. She would like to promote increased collaboration with small drinking water systems through the watershed councils.

Noble discussed the Safe Drinking Water Act, which established the wellhead protection program and required source water (rivers, streams, lakes, springs, wells) assessments for all drinking water sources. The SPP looks at potential contamination sources (waste, pesticides, industry, etc.) and current controls. If suppliers have contamination sources, they are required to implement control strategies.

Noble referenced a map by the Department of Environmental Quality that acts as a tool to find source protection zones and contacts within drinking water systems. It can be found at <https://enviro.deq.utah.gov/>.

Noble shared that she plans on attending future watershed council meetings and encouraged state or local watershed council members to reach out to her with any questions.

Chair Paxman recommended that each local council consider this program as a topic of discussion and identify where source water zones are located within their watershed.

Candice Hasenyager asked who is required to do the source water protection programs. Noble responded that all public drinking water systems are required to have a Drinking Water Source Protection Plan and to update it every 6 years.

Briefer suggested the Division of Drinking Water investigate wildfire's potential to be a contamination source. Further discussion followed regarding wildfire and watershed health.

Noel asked if there were any requirements in place for counties regarding contaminant protection. Noble responded that all Class I and II counties are required to have a Source Protection Ordinance as mandated by the Legislature in 2010. Currently, 17 of Utah's 29 counties and 100-150 municipalities have some level of Source Protection Ordinance.

2:15 - 2:38 p.m. - Presentation on the state water plan (Stephanie McGinnis, Utah Division of Water Resources)

Chair Paxman emphasized the importance for local watershed council representation and encouraged councils to get involved with and add input to the state water plan.

Stephanie McGinnis, State Water Plan Manager with the Utah Division of Water Resources, presented on the state water plan legislation, the intent of the plan, and the current draft outline. She explained that the 2026 state water plan will be more collaborative and encompassing than previous iterations and will rely on watershed councils for accurate information to include in the plan.

McGinnis explained that Utah Code 73 requires the plan to be updated every 10 years and calls for increased collaboration between various state agencies, partners, watershed councils and water conservancy districts. However, the Division of Water Resources has an internal goal to update the plan every five years. The division would like the plan to act as a framework to identify water strategies with actionable steps to optimize and manage current and future water supply.

McGinnis explained that she and the division are asking each watershed council to help identify the biggest challenge they are facing within their basin, the need(s) required to address said challenge and a success to highlight. She has begun to meet with each council to discuss this. After these initial meetings, she will send out a survey to all council members to provide an opportunity for more detailed feedback. McGinnis requested help from all councils to identify a subcommittee of interested council members to look at the survey results and decide which themes and information should be highlighted in the 2026 plan. She also requested help from the watershed councils to plan and execute a public scoping meeting within each basin this July through September, especially with regards to venue suggestions, date and time suggestions, and to have local representation from each watershed council attend these meetings.

Marcelle Shoop asked what differences this new plan would have compared with the most recent plan in 2021. Hasenyager responded that the 2021 plan was geared toward the Division of Water Resources, whereas this 2026 plan will include all state partners. She drew comparisons between the 2026 State Water Plan and the 2017 Recommended State Water Strategy and its influence on Utah water policy. She also emphasized the importance of watershed council participation so this plan truly represents the whole state of Utah.

Noel asked if there would be involvement from the State Engineer. Teresa Wilhelmsen responded that she is on the statewide planning team and that the regional offices were involved, as well.

2:38 - 2:39 p.m. - Confirm local council reporting schedule for upcoming year:

Chair Paxman shared the proposed local watershed council reporting schedule:

- July 10, 2025: Bear River, Weber River, Utah Lake
- October 7, 2025: Jordan River, Uintah, West Desert

- January 2026: Kanab Creek/Virgin River, Sevier River, Cedar/Beaver
- April 2026: West Colorado River, Southeastern Utah, Great Salt Lake

Carly Payne will be reaching out to each watershed council for feedback regarding this proposal.

2:39 - 2:50 p.m. - Public comments

Briefer suggested adding a funding discussion to a future agenda. This discussion could focus on how federal funding cuts are impacting aging water infrastructure. Chair Paxman recommended council members reach out to federal partners to express how critical those federal funds are toward our water infrastructure.

Chair Paxman recommended local councils seek out involvement from their local conservation districts.

Peterson commented on the value of the local watershed councils and the Utah Watersheds Council. He reported hearing concerns from local council members and suggested that members from this council come prepared at the July meeting to discuss potential changes to statute or the program to ease these issues. He also reemphasized the importance of designating a proxy if you are unable to attend the UWC meetings to make sure the flow of information between the local to state levels happens consistently.

Chair Paxman emphasized that any local councils with ideas for legislation that would help with their own efforts or the efforts of the UWC should share that information and the legislative subcommittee would be happy to discuss them.

2:50 - 2:51 p.m. - Administrative updates and other business

Chair Paxman requested that local council representatives remind their councils to appoint a new representative to the UWC if their term is expiring at the end of 2025. He also requested that all UWC members come prepared in July to discuss the transition of members and officers that will take place in October. Payne will send out a list of expiring members to the members.

Peterson suggested that any local watershed councils with suggestions for the UWCI's meeting agenda should contact Paxman and Payne.

2:51 - 2:52 p.m. - Confirm upcoming council meeting

Chair Paxman stated the next UWC meeting will be held on Thursday, July 10, 2025 at 1 p.m. at the Salt Lake City Department of Natural Resources building, located at 1594 W. North Temple, Salt Lake City, UT 84116.

2:52 p.m. Meeting Adjourned

WEST COLORADO RIVER WATERSHED COUNCIL STATUS REPORT

April 10, 2025





Timeline of Events

- Initial Meeting June 2024
 - Election of officers
 - Establishment of organizing documents
- Received Council Certification July 2024 – last of the 11 councils to be formed
- We have met three more times – October 2024, February & March 2025



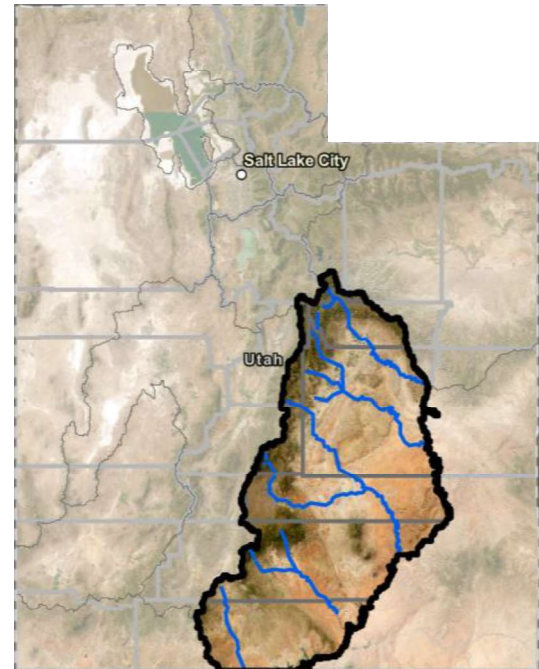
Who We Are

- 20 Council Members and 1 Vacancy
 - Council Officers
 - Kerry Cook (Wayne County) & Kevin Cotner (Carbon County) – Co-Chairs
 - Miles Nelson (Price City) – Secretary
 - Cody Allred (Emery County) – Representative to State Council
- 8 Liaisons to the Council (from various state and federal agencies)
- Division of Water Resources Staff
 - Carly Payne – Watershed Councils Coordinator
 - Rachel Shilton – Area Planning Specialist



What We Are

- **LARGE**
 - 15,000 sq. miles (nearly 10 million acres)
 - Represents 18% of the total area of Utah
 - 2nd largest watershed in the state
 - Covering all or parts of 12 of the 29 counties in the state
- **DIVERSE**
 - Elevation Range from 11,500 feet down to 3,700 feet
 - Annual Precipitation from 30 inches to less than 8 inches
 - Growing Seasons from 163 days to 88 days
 - Land Uses (Agriculture, Municipal, Industrial, Recreation, National Parks/Monuments/Recreation Areas/Forests, State Parks, etc.)
- **NOT DIVERSE**
 - Land Ownership
 - > 84% Federal (BLM 69%, USFS 16%, NPS 15%)
 - 8% State (SITAL 93%, DNR 6.9%, UDOT 0.1%)
 - < 8% Private





ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- The establishment of our council
 - Certification
 - Organizing Documents
- Held a handful of meetings
- Started assembling a list of water projects in the watershed area
- Development of a watershed council base map

[West Colorado River Watershed Map](#)



CHALLENGES

- Dealing with such a large geographic area
- Dealing with the vast diversity from north to south and east to west
- Knowing what our role and function is as a council
 - How and Where do we add value
 - What is our mission
- Fair representation on the council across the watershed
 - 20 council members – 14 are located north of I-70 and only 6 are located south of I-70
 - 7 liaisons – only two are located south of I-70



FUTURE FOCUS

- Find our identity
 - Establish a Mission Statement & Goals
- Integrate more involvement/representation from the southern portion of our watershed
- Conduct some field tours
- Support the development of the 2026 State Water Plan





Drinking Water Source Protection

Utah Watershed Council
Melissa Noble , P.G.



Let me
introduce
myself



Presentation Outline

Drinking Water Source
Protection Program

Groundwater Protection
zones

Surface Water
Protection zones

Drinking Water Source
Protection plans

DEQ Interactive Map

How can we work
together?

Safe Drinking Water Act

1986 Amendments

Established the wellhead protection program

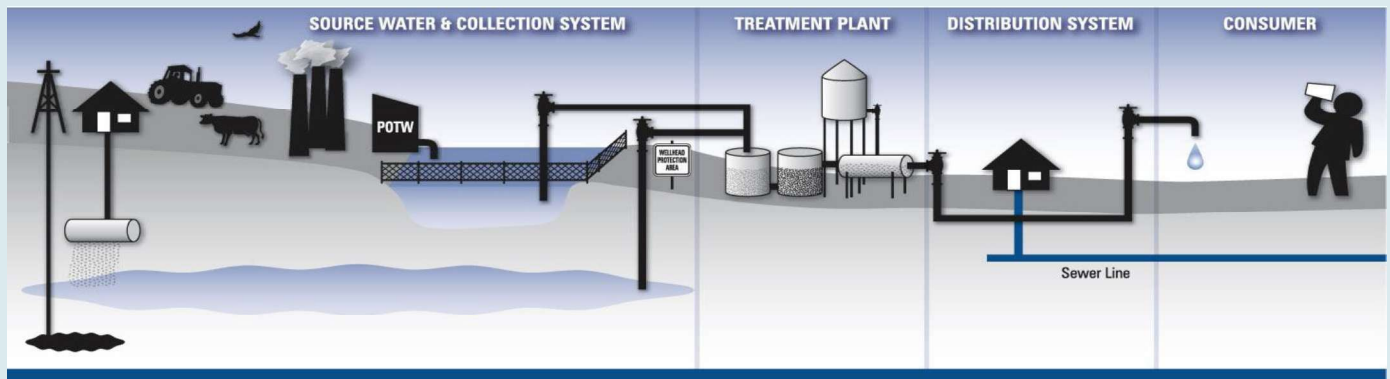
1996 Amendments

Source water assessments required for all drinking water sources

Source Water

Refers to sources of water (rivers, streams, lakes, springs, and wells)

Multi-Barrier Approach



Barrier #1: Risk Prevention

Focuses on proper selection and protection of drinking water sources.

Barrier #2: Risk Management

Focuses on protection provided by water treatment and system operations.

Barrier #3: Monitoring & Compliance

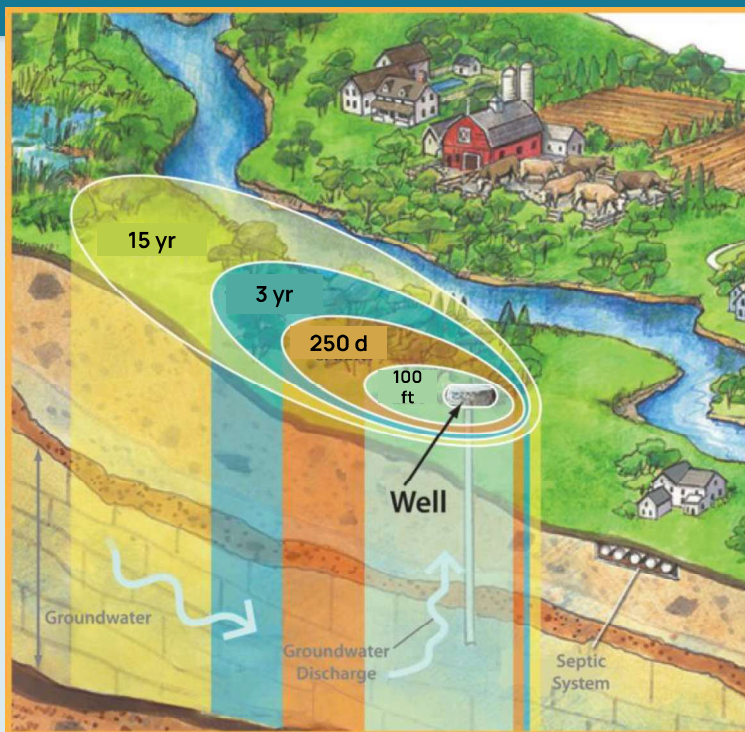
Systems aim to detect and fix problems in the source and/or distribution system as early as possible.

Barrier #4: Individual Action

Consumer awareness and participation are key components in a multiple barrier approach.

Groundwater

Drinking Water Source
Protection zone
Delineation

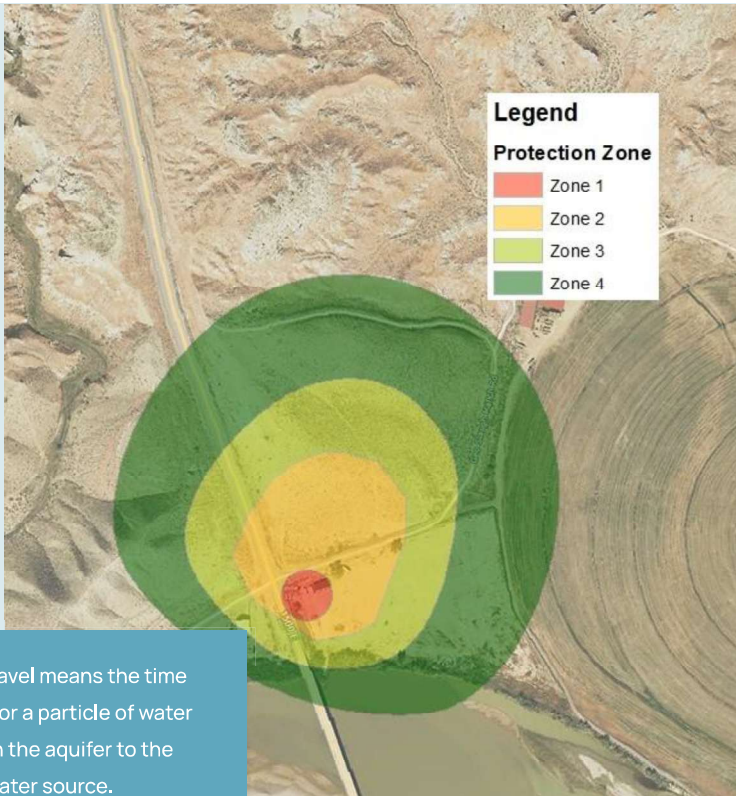


- Zone 1: 100-foot radius around the source
- Zone 2: 250-day groundwater time-of-travel
- Zone 3: 3-year groundwater time-of-travel
- Zone 4: 15-year groundwater time-of-travel



Delineation Report

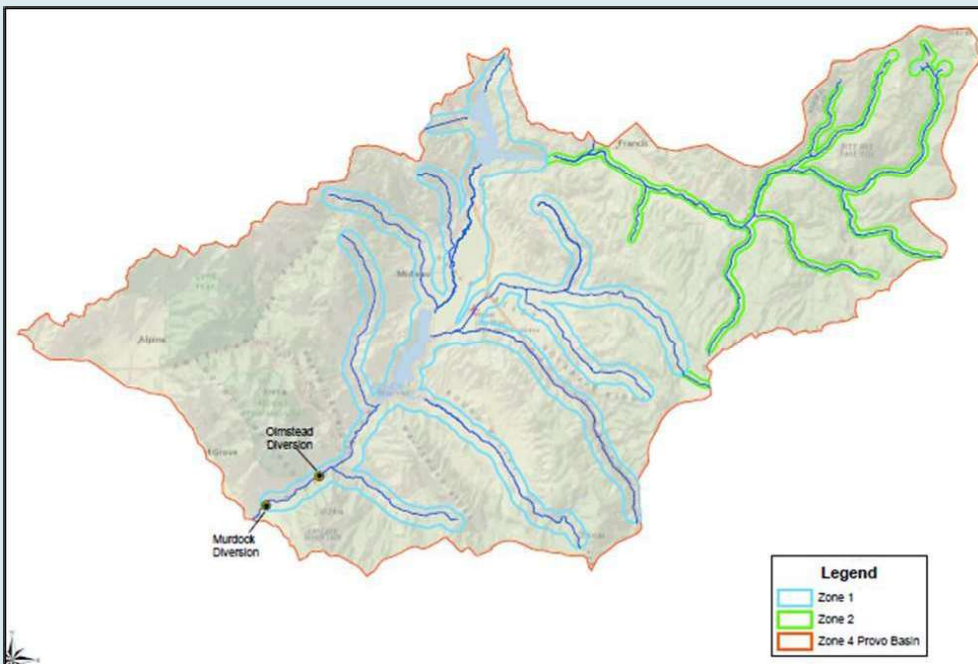
- Zone 1: 100-foot radius around the source
- Zone 2: 250-day groundwater time-of-travel
- Zone 3: 3-year groundwater time-of-travel
- Zone 4: 15-year groundwater time-of-travel



Time of travel means the time required for a particle of water to move in the aquifer to the ground-water source.

Surface Water

Drinking Water Source
Protection zone
Delineation



- **Zone 1:** ½ mile each side from 100 ft downstream and to 15 miles upstream
- **Zone 2:** 1000 ft buffer from zone 1 up 50 miles upstream
- **Zone 3:** 500 ft buffer from zone 2 to limits of watershed or state line.
- **Zone 4:** remainder of the watershed area or up to the state line.

Drinking Water Source Protection Plan



Potential
Contamination
Sources



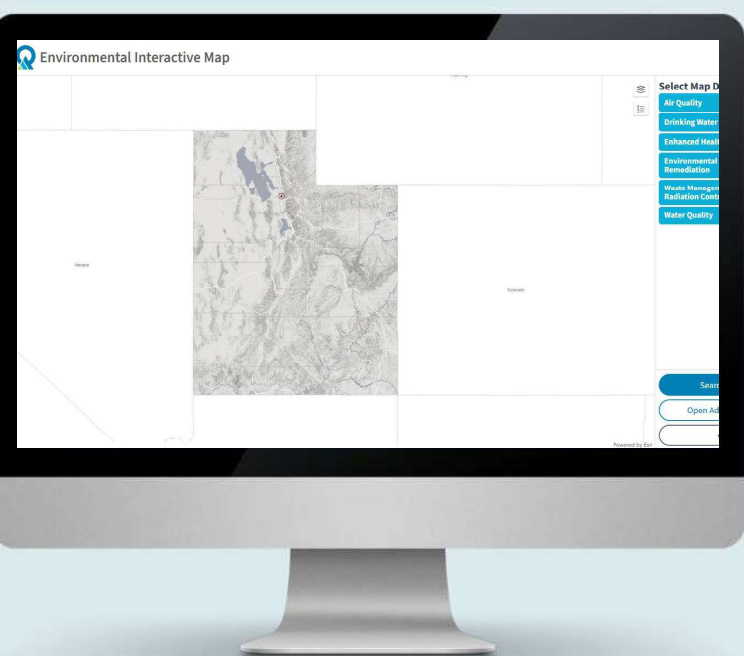
Current Controls



Plan Management
Strategies



Update



DEQ Interactive Map

<https://enviro.deq.utah.gov/>

DEQ Interactive Map

Groundwater Zones



Ground Water Protection Zones 596

SYSFACID	FACNAME	SYSNUMBER	SYSNAME	Protection Zone
27002WS001	3 MI SE OF TOWN SPRING	27002	CENTRAL CULINARY WATER CO	1
27002WS001	3 MI SE OF TOWN SPRING	27002	CENTRAL CULINARY WATER CO	2
27002WS001	3 MI SE OF TOWN SPRING	27002	CENTRAL CULINARY WATER CO	3
27002WS001	3 MI SE OF TOWN SPRING	27002	CENTRAL CULINARY WATER CO	4
27002WS002	CENTRAL CULINARY WELL 1	27002	CENTRAL CULINARY WATER CO	1
27002WS002	CENTRAL CULINARY WELL 1	27002	CENTRAL CULINARY WATER CO	2
27002WS002	CENTRAL CULINARY WELL 1	27002	CENTRAL CULINARY WATER CO	3
27002WS002	CENTRAL CULINARY WELL 1	27002	CENTRAL CULINARY WATER CO	4



<https://enviro.deq.utah.gov/>

DEQ Interactive Map

Surface Water Zones



<https://enviro.deq.utah.gov/>

Presentation closing

This is what we talked about.
Is there more information you
need or want?



DWSP Program

Safe Drinking Water Act



Delineation

Groundwater and Surface
Water



DWSP Plan

PCS, Controls, management
strategies,
updates/implementation



Interactive Map

Find source protection zones
and contact water systems

Questions



- What more information can I provide?
- Are there any projects that Water Systems could be included?
- Any interest in the interactive map?



Thank you



Melissa Noble, PG
Environmental Scientist



PHONE
(385) 271-7043



EMAIL
mnoble@utah.gov

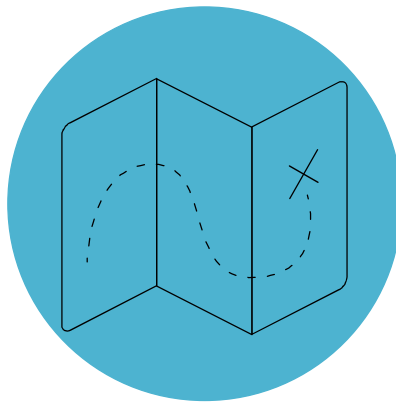
Questions? Contact us

Updating Utah's State Water Plan

Division of Water Resources



Stephanie McGinnis | State Water Plan Manager
Division of Water Resources



What's New | Development | Timeline | Engagement



Utah Division of Water Resources

water.utah.gov

What's New

Enrolled Copy

H.B. 280

WATER RELATED CHANGES

2024 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Casey Snider

Senate Sponsor: Scott D. Sandall

Utah Code § 73-10-15

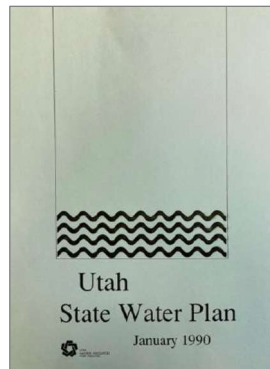


Utah Division of Water Resources

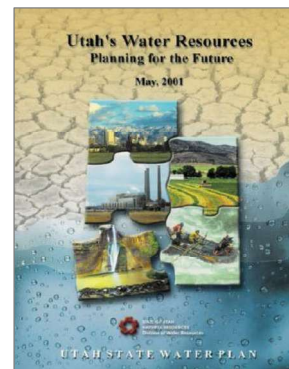
water.utah.gov

What's New - Frequency of Updates

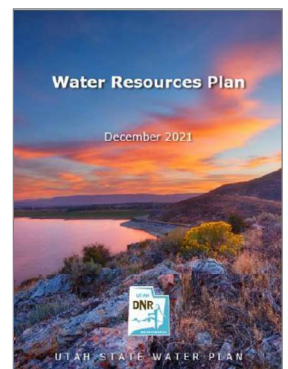
- Statute requires the plan to be updated no less frequently than every 10 years
- WRe has an internal goal to update every five years



1990



2001



2021



Utah Division of Water Resources

water.utah.gov

What's New - Increased Collaboration



Utah Division of Water Resources

water.utah.gov

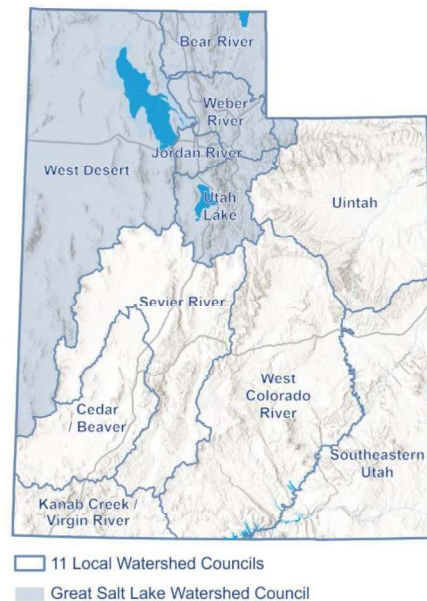
What's New - Increased Collaboration

- Governor's Office of Planning & Budget
- Office of the Great Salt Lake Commissioner
- Colorado River Authority of Utah
- Department of Natural Resources
- Department of Environmental Quality
- Department of Agriculture & Food



What's New - Increased Collaboration

- Water Conservancy Districts
- Watershed Councils



Utah Division of Water Resources

water.utah.gov

Plan Development

- Provide a strategic framework to support informed decision-making at the individual, local, and state level
- Identify available water resources and recommend strategies to optimize and manage now and into the future
- Foster communities and businesses, agriculture, outdoor recreation, and a healthy environment



Plan Development

“A safe, reliable water supply is critical to Utah’s prosperity and quality of life. Climate scientists predict...**drier conditions** and more **extreme weather events**, both of which we have seen in 2021. We look to science and data and continued collaboration as we prepare for the future”



Utah Division of Water Resources

water.utah.gov

Plan Development

Chapter 1: Introduction
Chapter 2: Water in Utah
Chapter 3: Future Uncertainty
Chapter 4: Water Administration
Chapter 5: Vibrant Communities
Chapter 6: Productive Agriculture
Chapter 7: Healthy Watersheds & Ecosystems
Chapter 8: Basin Perspectives
Chapter 9: Conclusion





2. Water in Utah

**3. Future
Uncertainty**

**4. Water
Administration**



Utah Division of Water Resources

water.utah.gov



Plan Development

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Water in Utah

Chapter 3: Future Uncertainty

Chapter 4: Water Administration

Chapter 5: Vibrant Communities

Chapter 6: Productive Agriculture

Chapter 7: Healthy Watersheds & Ecosystems

Chapter 8: Basin Perspectives

Chapter 9: Conclusion



Utah Division of Water Resources

water.utah.gov

Plan Development

Challenges	Focus on the problems
Needs	Highlight the solutions
Success	Positive project or effort

Chapter 8: Basin Perspectives



Utah Division of Water Resources

water.utah.gov

Engagement

2025

Watershed Council
Meetings
April - June

2026

Public Comment
Period
July - August

2025

Public Scoping
July - September

2026

Final Draft
December

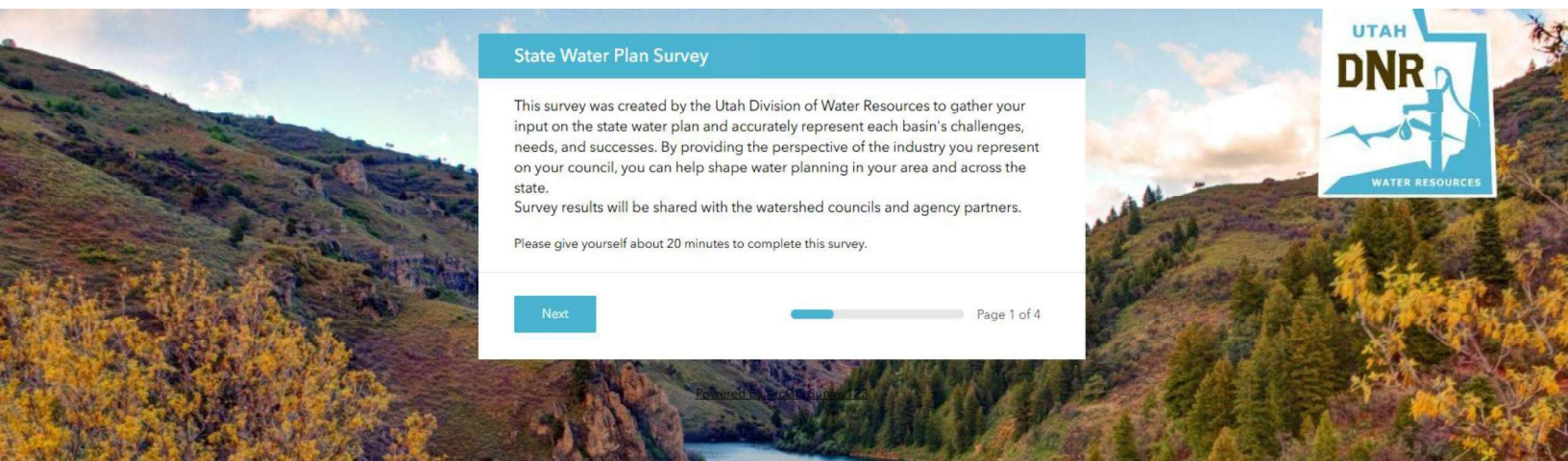


Utah Division of Water Resources

water.utah.gov

Engagement

Surveys for each watershed council will be emailed soon after initial visit



Utah Division of Water Resources

water.utah.gov

Engagement



Basin Perspective Help



Public Scoping Help



Utah Division of Water Resources

water.utah.gov



Thank you.

Utah Division of Water Resources
water.utah.gov

1594 W North Temple
Suite 310
Salt Lake City, UT 84114-6201
(801) 538-7230

