



Southeastern Utah Watershed Council  
Meeting Minutes  
07/14/2025  
10am  
San Juan County - Hideout Community Center

In attendance: Trish Hedin, Richard Salas, Carly Payne, Rick Webster, Jay Olsen, Gary Wilson, Rosa Vargas, Adrianna Berk, Alexi Lamm, Amy Dickey, Arne Hultquist, Brooke Laughter, Christine Osborne, Daren Rasmussen, Didar Charles, Ken Minor, Lori Maughan, Mack McDonald, Mark Jolissaint, Stephanie McGinnis, Kara Dohrenwend, Brian Martinez, Ben Musselman, George Matocha, Ann Holquist, Ken Minor, and Daren Rasmussen

- Public Comment: No public comments
- Approval of Minutes: April 14, 2025 - No motion made due to missing minutes action moved for next meeting
- Reminder of the OPMA training: Trish Hadin confirmed that all members have completed their OPMA training, with the exception of a few individuals who do not regularly attend the meetings. She plans to contact these members separately.
- Christine Osborne and Adrianna Burke presented the Lower San Juan Watershed Plan, funded by WIIN Act grants after the Gold King Mine spill. The plan aims to address issues within the extensive watershed, covering parts of Utah, Navajo Nation, Arizona, and Ute Mountain Ute land, by gathering stakeholder feedback and identifying improvement projects.

- (1) Adrianna Burke stressed the importance of stakeholder input and invited attendees to share information for upcoming watershed tours in September.
- (2) Trisha Hedin suggested that data from an ongoing statewide watershed plan survey, specifically the Colorado River portion, might be relevant.
- (3) Christine Osborne showed a map of the watershed boundaries.
- (4) Mack McDonald emphasized addressing drainage systems and beetle-killed forest overgrowth to prevent contamination from fires.
- (5) Christine Osborne invited Brooke Laughter (Ute Mountain Ute tribe) to participate and share data.
- (6) Mack McDonald offered Navajo Nation contacts, with whom Osborne confirmed they are already collaborating.
- (7) Adrianna Burke provided her email and suggested alternative communication 1 methods.

- (8) Brian Martinez asked if Christine Osborne and Adrianna Burke had engaged with Mike Dehoff (Returning Rapids), offering his contact.
- (9) Kara Dohrenwend offered historical aerial photographs and geological materials from her father's research for baseline data.
- State Water Plan Survey Update: Stephanie McGinnis reported that nine surveys were submitted, providing valuable information. A subcommittee, including Dana, Bill, Trish, Mack, and Lori, had volunteered to review these results to identify key focus areas for the plan's basin perspective section. Common concerns highlighted in the surveys included conservation easements, promoting agriculture, and addressing scarce water supply across Utah. Stephanie outlined plans for a 90-minute public scoping meeting for the state water plan. This meeting will feature a presentation on the state water plan, emphasizing agriculture, vibrant communities, healthy watersheds, and ecosystems, with highlights from the survey results. Attendees can provide feedback at breakout tables. A virtual attendance option with a separate survey will also be available for online participants.
  - (1) Trish Hedin suggested the Monticello Hideout as the venue, which Mack McDonald confirmed was suitable and offered to book.
  - (2) Stephanie proposed late August for the meeting and designated Mack McDonald as the point of contact for venue reservations.
  - (3) Plan to coordinate with area planning specialists and the DNR AV team to ensure technical support for the hybrid meeting format.
- General Plan, Water Element Requirement presented by Jay Olson and Rick West: A 2023 legislative task force, including Rick West, Haley Kurlin, Jay Olson, and Dixon Ekins, was formed to help communities over 10,000 residents integrate a water element into their general plans, focusing on water budgets, efficiency, and waste reduction. Counties must also map irrigation systems for development planning.
  - (1) Jay Olson highlighted the need for agriculture protection ordinances, absent in Grand and San Juan Counties but encouraged, emphasizing collaboration with irrigation companies to prevent negative development impacts. Mack McDonald welcomed assistance for San Juan County's general plan to protect agricultural areas.
  - (2) Rick West and Jay Olson offered technical assistance for general plan updates and water element incorporation. Trish Heidi announced a July 29th meeting at the Grand Center for Grand County, where UDAF will present on agriculture protection programs. Grand County is adopting an ordinance for these protections, and Jay Olson offered sample ordinances to San Juan County.
  - (3) Trish Hedin mentioned the RAMP plan's water budget as a potential resource. Rick West noted the benefit of coordinated planning to avoid issues with subpar subdivisions and new legislation allowing preliminary municipalities with significant water rights. Jay Olson observed a shift in rural counties towards prioritizing agriculture protection due to increasing development pressure.

- (4) Jay Olson shared their website (via QR code) for contact information. Dixon Ekins (Drinking Water) can provide lists of irrigation companies and drinking water systems, and guidance on state code for water facilities and subdivisions.
- (5) Rick West and Jay Olson offered on-site county visits. Rick West and Jay Olson acknowledged varying county progress on growth and water issues, with some resistant despite public complaints about uncontrolled development. Trish affirmed Grand County's planning department is making progress despite staffing challenges.
- Tour Possibilities: The council explored potential watershed tours to identify areas needing attention or showcasing interesting developments.
  - (1) Mack McDonald highlighted state funding that provides one tour to be available to visit other watershed projects within the state, aiming to foster new ideas for San Juan and Grand County.
  - (2) Trish Hedin suggested focusing a tour on a recent major fire in San Juan County to assess its immediate impact on the watershed.
  - (3) Gary Wilson raised critical questions about aquifer recharge, specifically concerning water rights, property ownership, and credit allocation. He emphasized the need to prioritize clarifying rules and regulations. Paul Monroe from the Iron County Water Conservancy District was recommended as a speaker to present on their recharge program and address regulatory concerns; Carly Payne offered to provide his contact information through email.
  - (4) Kara Dohrenwend offered assistance with post-fire efforts, leveraging their experience from the Pack Creek fire. As a small nonprofit, they can also help various entities with grant proposals.
- Roundtable Updates:
  - Carly Payne encouraged continued involvement with the state watershed council and noted that their legislative subcommittee is open to receiving information for the legislature
  - Arne Hultquist announced his upcoming retirement within six weeks and the selection of Daniel Lei as his replacement for watershed coordinator. He also indicated his intention to remain on the council as an official representative for water quality after retirement.
  - Ken Minor reported that the dam repair on Mill Creek is nearing completion.
  - Kara Dohrenwend shared that the final phase of instream work for aquifer protection in Upper Pack Creek, initially spearheaded by Daniel Lei, is fully funded and will begin soon.
  - Ben Musselman mentioned that they are still waiting for the B2E funding.
  - Trish Hedin is preparing to send out invitations for the Agricultural Protection Program.
- The meeting was adjourned at 10:56 am

