

Cedar-Beaver Watershed Council Meeting Minutes

Thursday, 8/7/25, 1:00, Iron County Government Office 2nd floor, 68 S 100 E, Parowan, UT, 84761.

The Cedar-Beaver Watershed Council met to review ongoing and upcoming initiatives across the basin. Members approved previous minutes and discussed future meeting logistics, including the possibility of a joint session with the Sevier Watershed Council in November. Becca Frei presented survey findings informing the State Water Plan, highlighting water scarcity, groundwater depletion, and agricultural optimization successes. Plans were finalized for a public scoping meeting on October 1, 2025, in Cedar City to gather community input. Presentations on community and ecosystem challenges emphasized collaboration, water reuse, and watershed resilience. Jason Bradshaw outlined progress on the Parowan Valley Recharge Project and related flood mitigation efforts, supported by local and federal funding. The meeting concluded with site tours of local watershed restoration projects.

Attendees:

Carly Payne – DWRe
Amy Dickey—online
Becca Frei—DWRe—online
Nic Braithwaite--DWR
Brandon Yardley – Beaver County
Paul Bittmenn—Cedar City
Rick Webster—online
Jennifer Marshall—Beaver County
Jake Benson—UDAF
Alma Adams—citizen
Tyler Allred--Kanarraville

Candace Schaible--online
Terri Hartley – CICWCD
Scott Stubbs—Farm Bureau
Stephanie Hill—Clark Livestock; ICSDB
David Harris-- CICWCD
Cody Staheli—E&I, farmer—online
Mark Nelson—USU Extension
Tammy Pearson—Beaver County
Jason Bradshaw—NRCS
Tyce Palmer—UDAF/CDS

1. Call to Order, Introductions, and Approval of Minutes

Chair Brandon Yardley opened the meeting and welcomed participants. Attendees introduced themselves.

Minutes from the previous meeting were reviewed and approved unanimously, following a motion by Tammy Pearson and a second by Scott Stubbs.

2. Travel Reimbursement and Future Meetings

Carly Payne confirmed that mileage reimbursement is available for council members who are not compensated by a government entity.

The council discussed hosting a joint meeting with the Sevier Watershed Council in November to exchange ideas, ideally at a central location.

The January 2026 meeting will be an organizational session to review and renew member terms.

3. State Water Plan Survey Results — Presenter: Becca Frei

- Becca Frei presented findings from a survey conducted to inform the State Water Plan.
 - Results will form part of Chapter 8: Basin Perspectives, a 2–3 page summary outlining the basin overview, main waterways, water supply, and key challenges, needs, and successes for agriculture, communities, and ecosystems.
 - Top agricultural challenges identified included water scarcity, groundwater depletion, and water rights curtailment.
 - Agricultural optimization projects were noted as a major success in the basin.
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4. Public Scoping Meeting for State Water Plan

- A public scoping meeting is planned for Wednesday, October 1, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. at the Cedar Heritage Center (capacity ≈100).
 - The meeting will run 60–90 minutes and include a presentation by Stephanie McInness and breakout sessions on:
 - Productive Agriculture
 - Vibrant Communities
 - Healthy Watersheds and Ecosystems
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5. Community and Ecosystem Water Management — Presenter: Becca Frei

- Community challenges identified: rapid growth, infrastructure costs, and policies favoring the Wasatch Front.
- Needs: improved collaboration among local suppliers, water reuse projects, and public education on water-wise landscaping.
- Successes: Cedar City groundwater recharge initiatives and emerging efforts in the Parowan

area.

- Ecosystem challenges: declining groundwater recharge, wildfire risk, juniper encroachment, and water quality impairments.
 - Recommended actions: expand interagency collaboration and idea-sharing to strengthen watershed resilience.
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6. Parowan Valley Recharge Project — Presenter: Jason Bradshaw

- The Parowan Valley Recharge Project was initiated following the 2017 Brian Head Fire and subsequent flood events.
 - Groundwater management planning determined an appropriation of 53,000 acre-feet with a safe yield of 32,000 acre-feet, potentially requiring a 12,000 acre-foot reduction over 80 years.
 - The Parowan Valley Pumpers Association, a volunteer body with a seven-member board, was formed to enhance water efficiency and capture floodwaters.
 - Recharge water rights are non-consumptive, designated solely for aquifer recharge.
 - Alpha Engineering was contracted to design a 24-inch recharge pipeline using an Iron County gravel pit north of the fairgrounds.
 - Funding sources:
 - Water Optimization Funds
 - USDA support for Parowan Reservoir improvements
 - \$1 per acre-foot self-assessment (approved unanimously for four consecutive years)
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7. Flood Mitigation and Project Phases

- Parowan City is actively participating due to ongoing flood risks from a narrow river channel.
 - A new upstream diversion will allow water to flow to the Parowan Reservoir Company first, then to the recharge pipeline for metered infiltration or, during high flows, release downstream.
 - Future phases (II–IV) will extend capture efforts further down the valley to increase recharge and flood mitigation capacity.
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8. Recharge vs. Irrigation Use Discussion

- Council members discussed why collected water is used for recharge only.
- Jason Bradshaw clarified that water rights are recharge-specific, and converting them for

consumptive irrigation use would require additional regulatory approvals and infrastructure rerouting.

- Future potential exists to utilize recharged water west of I-15 for irrigation, reducing groundwater pumping through direct producer use.
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9. Project Tour

Following the meeting, members toured local watershed projects including:

- Yankee Reservoir— to review post-fire impacts from the Brian Head Fire and discuss sediment management.
 - Alma Adams Ranch, Co-op Valley — demonstration of proactive watershed and rangeland restoration efforts.
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10. Adjournment

Brandon Yardley thanked all attendees and presenters. The meeting adjourned prior to the scheduled tour of project sites.

Action Items

1. Council members to promote the October 1, 2025 Public Scoping Meeting and attend if possible.
2. DWRe staff to finalize logistics and share meeting details with council partners.
3. Continue coordination with Parowan Valley partners on recharge project phases and reporting.