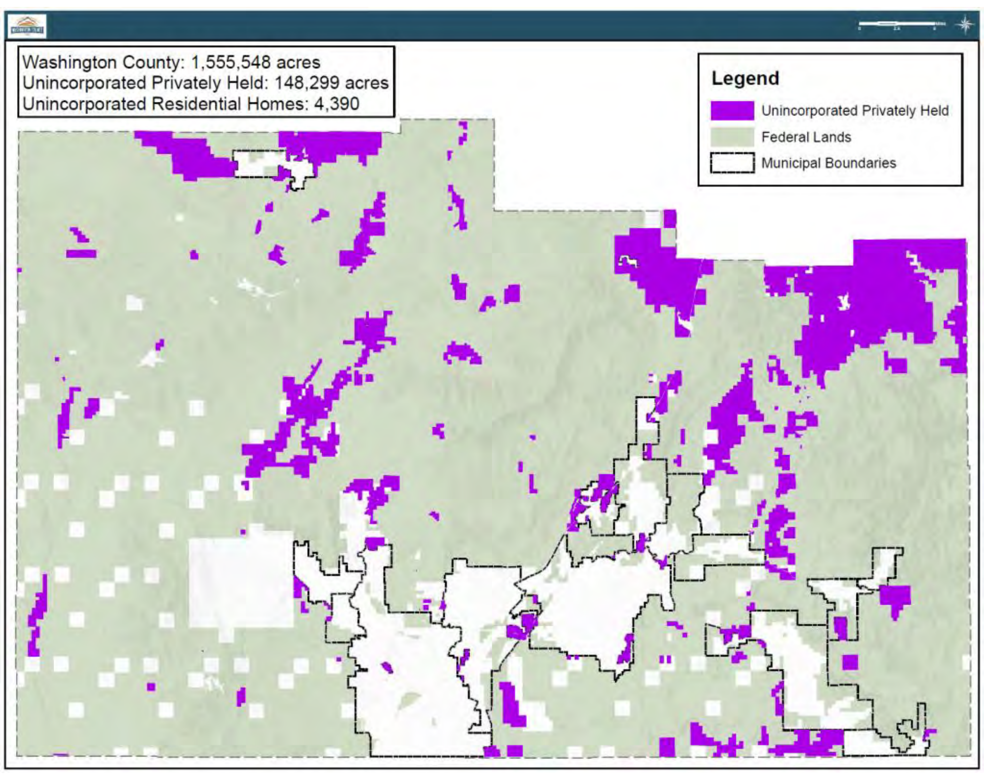
Washington County Water Use & Preservation Element

Introduction:

Washington County's rapid growth, arid climate, and finite water resources require a coordinated approach to land use and water planning. This Water Use and Conservation Element integrates state legislative requirements, local values, and regional water realities into the County's General Plan, as required under SB 110 (2022) and Utah Code 17-27a-401. Washington County works directly with the Washington County Water Conservancy District (WCWCD), and smaller regional water companies to manage Washington County's water demands. Washington County is a rather large county with approximately 1,555,548 total acres. However, only 148,299 acres are privately owned and located in the unincorporated county.



Current Water Supply and Constraints:

Washington County's water supply is sourced from a combination of surface and groundwater within the Virgin River watershed, a tributary of the Colorado River. This watershed has been the county's primary water source since its founding but has now reached near full development capacity.

- Approximately 50,000 acre-feet of potable water is delivered annually by local water suppliers.
- The Washington County Water Conservancy District (WCWCD) yields approximately 30,000 acre-feet annually from its current infrastructure.

Despite strategic development, the Virgin River watershed is highly vulnerable to extended drought conditions, making it inadequate to meet the water needs of a population projected to more than double by 2060.

To address these limitations, the County, WCWCD, municipal partners and community water and irrigation companies / special service districts are actively pursuing a diverse portfolio of water saving and land use strategies, including:

- Aggressive collaborative conservation initiatives adopted into County ordinances.
- Supporting wastewater reuse and recycling infrastructure projects.

- Public outreach and education regarding programs, rebates, and waterwise recommendations through Washington County website.
- Density bonus incentives for new developments adopted into county ordinance.
- Groundwater optimization and protection.
- Agricultural-to-municipal water conversions.

"Diversity in water sources, much like diversity in your financial portfolio, offers added security," said Eric Millis, Director of the Utah Division of Water Resources. "Washington is Utah's most arid and drought-prone county, making the diversity of its water resources a top priority for the state."

Effect of Permitted Development on Water Demand and Water Infrastructure:

Historically the unincorporated area of Washington County has been dominated by open space and agricultural land. As population and development pressure increased, an effort was made to offer zoning designations which blended new development with existing land uses and conditions. Smaller acreage agricultural zones, residential agricultural zones, and residential estate zones allowed landowners and developers to create residential lots which ranged most typically from one acre to five acre lot sizes. Our mountain communities are often zoned Forest Residential or Seasonal Forest Residential, which allows for smaller lot sizes, typically under one acre in size. All residential development in the unincorporated area of Washington County is limited by septic density (acreage) requirements, and the ability for the applicant to prove access to culinary water.

SEPTIC SYSTEM DENSITY TABLE

Location	Acres/Septic
Apple Valley/Gooseberry area	7
Brookside Summer Homes area	8
Central/Dixie Deer area	6
Dammeron Valley area	11
Diamond Valley area	11
Grassy Meadows Sky Ranch/Cliff Dwellers area	9
Gunlock area	8
Leeds/Silver Reef area	9
New Harmony Valley area	5
Pine Valley area	2
Pine Valley Mountain Farms area	8
Veyo area	8

Winchester Hills area	11

Agricultural, Residential Agricultural and Residential Estate zoning allows for the construction of single family dwellings and accessory dwellings, while also providing enough acreage for outdoor space. Keeping of animals and minor agricultural uses are permitted in these zones, which creates a need for outdoor water. As residential developments came into existence, they were often supported by local water providers who could commit available water resources to the development project, or most often, the developer would create a water system to support their proposed project. On a small scale, this could be a private well, or on a larger scale, a state approved culinary water system.

The table below illustrates regional water systems within Washington County which support existing residential development in the unincorporated area.

Unincoproprated Water Providers	Connections	Population
Angell Springs SSD	80 (R)	358
Central Culinary Water Co	31 (R)	35
Dammeron Valley Water Works	435 (R), 3 (C), 1 (I)	885
Diamond Valley Acres	338 (R), 4 (C)	1340
Dixie Deer SSD	345 (R)	482
Gunlock SSD	65 (R), 11 (A)	118
Harmony Farms Water Users	134 (R), 4 (C)	314
Harmony Heights Water	75 (R)	120
Leeds Domestic Water	359 (R), 22 (C), 1 (I)	800
Kolob Heights	45 (R)	135
Mountain Springs	259 (R)	660
Pine Valley Irrigation	460 (R)	50
Veyo Culinary Water	280 (R), 13 (C), 26 (I)	500
Winchester Hills	364 (R), 1 (C)	950
	Residential (R)	
	Commercial (C)	
	Industrial (I)	
	Agriculture (A)	

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Regional water systems are becoming increasingly restrictive with their ability to allow new connections. Infrastructure and storage capacities were designed to meet specific needs in many cases, often driven by the needs of the development. Land use applications and residential building permits within Washington County require consultation and issuance of “Will Serve” letters from the presiding water authority, to ensure all new development can be supported.

In the case of land ownership outside of a platted subdivision, property owners are required to have enough acreage to satisfy septic density requirements and proof of at least one Equivalent Domestic Unit (EDU) for water to drill a well.

Washington County requires proof of EDU's, the well drillers log, and testing of the water from the SW Utah Health Department to ensure it is safe for culinary use. Again, the end result in this scenario is a larger acreage lot to satisfy septic requirements, and the ability to drill a well with appropriate protection area, to support the permitted uses of the zone.

Washington County Subdivision Ordinance 11-5-5: WATER:

A. Supply Required: All subdivisions shall have a supply of culinary water available to each lot in the subdivision. Hauling of water to lots in a subdivision shall not be permitted.

B. Plan Approval: Quantity, quality and distribution system plans shall be approved, in writing, by the Utah Department of Environmental Quality and by the County Public Works Director's Office.

1. Quantity shall include water provided for outside watering or other usage over and above the minimum requirement for indoor use, which is 0.45 acre-feet for a standard subdivision. The minimum amount of water required for any subdivision, including indoor and outdoor use shall be 0.90 acre-feet per lot per dwelling unit; provided, that the subdivision shall have a permanent covenant (CC&R), which shall limit outside water use to 0.45 acre-feet, which covenant shall allow for enforcement by the water provider (i.e., water company). In the event that unlimited use is desired (i.e., more than 0.90 acre-feet) for the subdivision, an engineer's report shall be submitted which shall estimate the water use reasonably necessary for the subdivision, and that amount of water shall be provided as a condition of approval. The amount of water allocated to each subdivision lot for indoor and outdoor watering shall be included on the subdivision plat map to be recorded after final approval by the County Commission. The County has an official policy of promoting water conservation where reasonable and appropriate. Accordingly, the amount of water required may be reduced down to as much as 0.45 acre-feet, depending upon the location of the subdivision, the climate, soils conditions, and the vegetation in and around the subdivision, and CC&R of the development. The Planning Commission may, at their discretion, make a recommendation for consideration by the County Commission.

Methods of reducing water demand for existing developments:

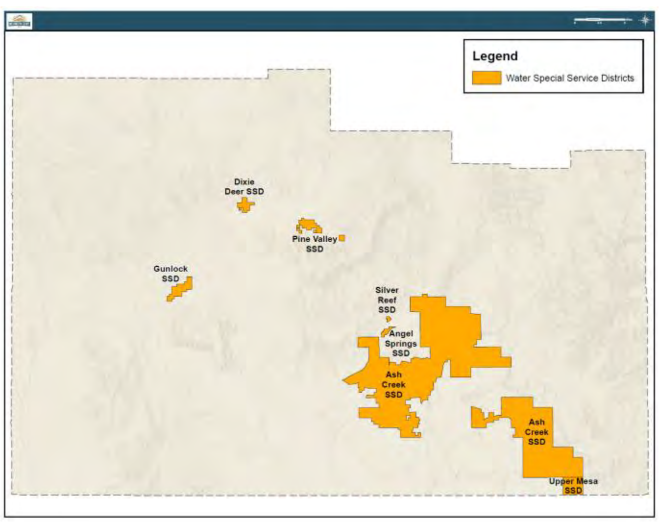
Washington County currently uses an average of approximately 43,000 acre-feet of potable water and 15,000 acre-feet of secondary water per year. Despite a rapidly growing population, overall water use has remained relatively stable in recent years, thanks to the success of conservation efforts. The County does not provide utility services, including water to the residents. Water is provided by the Washington County Water Conservancy District, or other smaller water districts and water companies.

The table below illustrates the many water companies and special service districts in Washington County.

CENTRAL CULINARY WATER CO
DIXIE DEER SSD
ENTERPRISE TOWN WATER SYSTEM
GUNLOCK SPECIAL SERVICE DISTRICT
HILDALE - COLORADO CITY
HURRICANE CITY
IVINS
LA VERKIN CITY WATER SYSTEM
LEEDS DOMESTIC WATER USERS ASSOCIATION
NEW HARMONY WATER SYSTEM
ROCKVILLE PIPELINE CO
ST GEORGE CITY WATER SYSTEM
SANTA CLARA CITY
SPRINGDALE TOWN WATER SYSTEM
TOQUERVILLE TOWN WATER SYSTEM
VEYO CULINARY WATER ASSN
VIRGIN
WASHINGTON CITY
PINE VALLEY IRRIGATION CO
DAMMERON VALLEY WATER WORKS LLC
WINCHESTER HILLS WATER CO
ZION CANYON WATER SYSTEM
KWU INC
PINE VALLEY MT FARMS
DIAMOND VALLEY ACRES
BIG PLAINS WATER SSD - APPLE VALLEY

WASHINGTON COUNTY WCD - COTTAM
WASHINGTON COUNTY WCD - SAND HOLLOW
ANGELL SPRINGS SSD
MOUNTAIN SPRINGS WATER CO
HARMONY FARMS WATER USERS
HARMONY HEIGHTS WATER COMPANY
WASHINGTON COUNTY WCD - KAYENTA WATER
NORTH VALLEY RANCHES SUB
BIG PLAINS WATER SSD - CEDAR POINT
BIG PLAINS WATER SSD - CANAAN RANCH
WASHINGTON COUNTY WCD - QUAIL LAKE
BLACK DESERT RESORT WATER SYSTEM
CANYONS RV RESORT
KINGS ROW ESTATES

The map below shows the service area of the larger water special service districts in the unincorporated county.



Washington County encourages water conservation practices and programs offered by State and local partners. Incentives offered for water wise landscapes, high efficiency appliances and fixtures, and public outreach are critical to this effort. Washington County maintains web based information where residents can learn about the importance of conservation practices and available programs to reduce use.

Washington County works closely with local water providers in adopting ordinances which support efforts to reduce water demand regionally. In all development activities, direct consultation with the appropriate water district is required before any new connections are permitted. This ensures the local water provider can review plans and ensure the project will not impact their ability to service existing users. When planning for the water needs of the community, water managers evaluate:

- Current demand and conservation goals
- Climate change impacts
- Water quality and environmental needs
- Growth projections and demographic shifts

The Washington County Water Conservancy District projects water demands using a 50-year planning horizon. Washington County Water Conservancy District's Regional Water Master Plan incorporates growth assumptions based on the Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute's countywide projections but expands on them by developing city-level water demand forecasts through 2070.

Kem C. Gardner Population Growth Projections for Washington County

Washington County Population			
Year	**Low**	**Baseline**	**High**
2010	138,579	138,579	138,579
2015	154,602	154,602	154,602
2020	185,395	186,618	187,078
2025	212,942	219,019	221,476
2030	238,686	251,636	256,759
2035	266,619	286,768	296,483
2040	293,718	320,956	337,051
2045	321,755	355,549	377,316
2050	351,732	391,468	417,124
2055	384,192	429,295	458,141
2060	419,269	468,830	501,382
2065	455,846	508,952	546,490

Kem C. Gardner Household Growth Projections for Washington County

Washington County Households			
Year	**Low**	**Baseline**	**High**
2010	46,607	46,607	46,607
2015	55,377	55,377	55,377
2020	69,040	69,547	69,837
2025	81,192	83,595	84,719
2030	91,846	96,972	99,232
2035	103,291	111,434	115,690
2040	114,286	125,452	132,357
2045	125,835	139,895	149,097
2050	138,491	155,260	166,008
2055	152,358	171,615	183,593
2060	166,893	188,271	201,665
2065	181,827	204,976	220,279

To align regional infrastructure planning with local conditions, Washington County supports the collaborated efforts of WCWCD and their partners who create a granular growth model that considers:

- Historical growth trends
- Local general plans and master plans
- Known large-scale developments
- Physical development constraints, such as land availability

Key Planning Concepts:

- Projections are measured in Equivalent Residential Connections (ERCs), a more accurate reflection of system demand than population alone.
- Both potable and secondary systems are included, with secondary irrigation offsetting potable use.
- By 2040, WCWCD anticipates serving additional communities, achieving 97.9% countywide service by 2070.
- City-specific ERC projections guide infrastructure investment planning to ensure alignment with localized growth.

This forecasting model enables infrastructure prioritization that reflects the unique growth patterns and needs of individual communities within the broader regional framework.

Indoor and Outdoor Use Analysis:

For planning purposes, it is beneficial to understand the breakdown of water use between indoor and outdoor applications. Indoor water demand includes use of toilets, showers, washing machines, and other fixtures, most of which ultimately ends up in a sewer collection system unless the property utilizes a septic tank. Outdoor demand includes irrigation of grass, trees, shrubs, gardens, as well as recreational uses, car washing, and patio cleaning.

To estimate this breakdown, municipal and industrial water use data from the City of St. George from 2016 to 2020 was analyzed. Indoor use was estimated using winter demand (when irrigation is limited), and outdoor use was derived from water use above winter levels. Based on this analysis, the average single-family Equivalent Residential Connection (ERC) uses approximately 40% of its water indoors and 60% outdoors.

Understanding how water is used indoors versus outdoors is essential for planning, conservation, and infrastructure design. Indoor demand includes water used for showers, toilets, washing machines, and dishwashers, most of which returns to the sewer system or on-site septic systems. Outdoor demand is typically used for landscape irrigation, but also includes water used for car washing, recreational purposes, and outdoor cleaning.

Based on a detailed analysis of metered water use data from the City of St. George between 2016 and 2020, indoor and outdoor usage patterns were estimated by evaluating winter water demand (when irrigation is minimal). It was assumed that winter demand reflects primarily indoor use, and any use above that baseline in other months is attributed to outdoor uses.

This countywide average of 40% indoor and 60% outdoor use has critical implications for conservation planning. Because the majority of potable water use occurs outdoors, reducing irrigation demand presents the greatest opportunity for savings.

As new conservation measures and landscape ordinances are implemented, especially for new development, it is anticipated that this ratio will shift. Data from existing residential customers who already meet future water use targets indicates that indoor use could increase to approximately 43% of total water use, with outdoor use reduced to 57%.

Methods of reducing water demand in future developments:

Washington County is actively adopting ordinances and making changes to land use policy which incentivizes the development of smaller acreage lots. Density bonuses are offered to developers to encourage clustering of residential homes to preserve open space, creating different housing opportunities to residents. The goal of these efforts is to promote the creation of patio style homes on smaller lots, with a reduced need for outdoor watering. This housing type also supports attainable housing in Washington County. Large acreage lots are financially unobtainable to many of our residents, especially those working in the service industries to support local tourism. To meet future demand while preserving water resources, Washington County and WCWCD are establishing new source sizing standards based on aggressive conservation targets. These standards distinguish between:

- Existing users, whose water demand is based on historical usage.
- New users, who are expected to adhere to more efficient water use thresholds.

The target source sizing standard is derived by applying the state's aggressive conservation goal of a 23.19% reduction to the highest metered usage year (2018–2020 average of 198,568 gallons per ERC annually). This results in a target annual use of 152,527 gallons per ERC.

After adjusting for non-revenue water and system variation factors, the final source sizing standard for new construction is:

- Average Annual Demand: 195,000 gallons per ERC
- Peak Day Demand: 1,079 gallons per day per ERC

These standards form the basis for infrastructure planning and water allocation for new development. Importantly, they align with the conservation goals set in the Utah Department of Natural Resources’ 2019 Regional M&I Water Conservation Goals and adopted in the WCWCD’s 2021 Water Conservation Plan.

Implementation Measures:

To achieve these targets, Washington County and the WCWCD and their partners are implementing several initiatives:

- New Landscape Ordinances to limit irrigated areas.

- Promote and incentivize cluster development.
- Excess Use Surcharges for users exceeding efficiency thresholds.
- Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) and dual-meter requirements.
- Public Outreach and Rebate Programs, including grass replacement incentives.
- Ongoing Monitoring to ensure compliance and refine conservation strategies.

This differentiated source sizing approach incentivizes developers to adopt ultra-efficient building and landscaping practices and supports the County's long-term water reliability.

Land Use Policy Integration

- Washington County supports land use planning to ensure thoughtful use of resources.
- Land use planning is valued as a method of intelligent growth and economic development.
- Areas outside city and town limits allow greater flexibility in land uses. The County generally requires municipalities to have the first opportunity to annex and manage adjacent developments.
- The County has a no-net-gain policy for federally managed lands unless exceptions are approved by the County Commission.

Desired Future Conditions/Objectives

- Adopt Ultra-Water efficiency standards.
- Preserve and protect utility routes to serve the growing population.
- Ensure water infrastructure is carefully planned and protected to meet future needs.
- Maintain a vibrant economy alongside natural amenities and recreational opportunities.
- Ensure resource management involves active County participation
- Coordinate land use planning with economic development.
- Work cooperatively with WCWCD, municipalities, and other agencies on county wide land use plans.

Management Actions

- Seek cooperating agency status on federal plans affecting the County.
- Maintain a current Resource Management Plan to guide decisions.
- Support data gathering and research to improve planning quality.

Background of Resource Use and Development

Washington County has proactively engaged in planning through Vision Dixie, its General Plan, land use ordinances, community overlays, and other efforts. It seeks to ensure equitable access to land, resources, and utilities. The County's land use authority is derived from Utah Code Chapter 17-27a and the Washington County Code.

Prior to 2020 Washington County did not require proof of water with a zone change application. The County established "The Big Five", which are: Water, Sewer/Septic, Fire, Power and Access. Now an applicant must address "The Big Five" before a zone change is considered. See excerpt from Washington County Land Use below:

"10-5-3: ZONE REQUIREMENTS:

Each zone change requested by an applicant, seeking a change from a less dense zone to a denser zone, shall provide proof of all required utilities and access. No zone change application will be processed or granted without meeting said utility and access requirements. Some areas of the county are not suitable for some zones due to scarcity of utilities, lack of access, or lack of compatibility of the land for the requested zone. Required proof of utilities and access shall be submitted to, and approved by, the county prior to zone change approval, with all letters, applications, studies, plans, contract terms and conditions, acceptable to the county in its sole discretion. Sections A, B, C, and D shall not apply to a zone change where the sole purpose is to bring a nonconforming lot or parcel with an existing single family dwelling into conformity with the required lot or parcel size. Section E, below, applies to all zone changes. Specific additional requirements:

A. Water: Proof of sufficient water rights, quantity, quality and source, contractually allocating wet water to the development property, to match the State Division of Drinking Water requirements needed for the proposed zone. Proof includes the following:

1. A will-serve letter from the Washington County Water Conservancy District, or the other applicable water company or district, establishing perpetual access to a sufficient quantity and quality of water for the base density in the requested zone; or

2. A feasibility study, prepared by a licensed professional engineer experienced in hydrology and water resources, with a letter from the Department of Environmental Quality approving the feasibility study, or

3. Application and approval by the Utah State Engineer of the owner's Application for Permanent Change (Change Application), granting a change in the point of diversion, the place of use, and the nature of the water right, and matching the proposed use to the zone change location……"

Open Space

Washington County recognizes the importance of preserving and planning for various types of open space to enhance quality of life, support recreation, conserve natural resources, and manage stormwater. Open spaces vary by function, management intensity, and water usage. The following are concise definitions of common open space types:

- **Active Recreation Areas**: Open spaces designed and developed for organized sports and recreation. These include sports fields, playgrounds, courts, and associated facilities. These areas often require turfgrass and irrigation.
- **Passive Natural Open Space**: Undeveloped or minimally developed areas that preserve natural landscapes, habitats, and scenic views. These spaces support hiking, wildlife observation, and environmental conservation.
- **Community Parks**: Multi-use public spaces that may include a mix of active and passive uses such as walking trails, picnic areas, and open lawns.
- **Greenways and Trails**: Linear open spaces used for transportation and recreation, often following natural corridors such as rivers or utility rights-of-way.
- **Urban Open Space**: Public plazas, courtyards, and landscaped areas within urban environments, prioritizing drought-tolerant species.
- **Conservation Areas**: Lands set aside primarily for the protection of natural resources, water quality, wildlife habitats, and scenic views.

Source Sizing and Growth Planning Coordination

The Washington County Water Conservancy District's Regional Water Master Plan serves as a foundational document for understanding how population growth, housing trends, and water use projections influence infrastructure needs and long-term supply planning. Washington County staff hold regular monthly collaboration meetings with the WCWCD. The continued collaboration ensures the County's land use decisions align with realistic water availability.

The Master Plan uses the "high growth" population projection scenario developed by the Kem C. Gardner Institute, recognizing that actual growth in Washington County has already exceeded baseline projections. The plan anticipates a countywide population of over 546,000 by 2065, supported by approximately 220,000 households.

A critical outcome of the Master Plan is the establishment of a system-specific source sizing standard, based on potable water use per Equivalent Residential Connection (ERC). This reflects updated state requirements (UAC R309-510) and ensures infrastructure is adequately sized for both average and peak day demands. Primary residences were used to set the ERC benchmark, excluding secondary and vacation homes due to their distinct usage profiles.

These standards guide the region's capital planning and ensure regional water delivery systems will meet projected demand through 2070. The integration of these metrics into County land use policy reinforces coordinated planning and reliable service to future development.

Water Quality and Hydrology

County Policy

- Washington County values clean, healthy drinking water.
- The County supports finding local solutions to water quality and hydrological concerns.
- Washington County encourages actions by individuals, groups, and local governments aimed at improving water quality and hydrology.
- Water quality is valued both for human health and ecological function.

Desired Future Conditions/Objectives

- Ensure an adequate supply of clean water for domestic, recreational, and ecological use.
- Manage and understand county hydrology to meet water needs.
- Educate the public on sustainable water resource management.
- Collaborate with state, federal, and local partners in water quality planning.
- Protect water wells through groundwater quality safeguards.

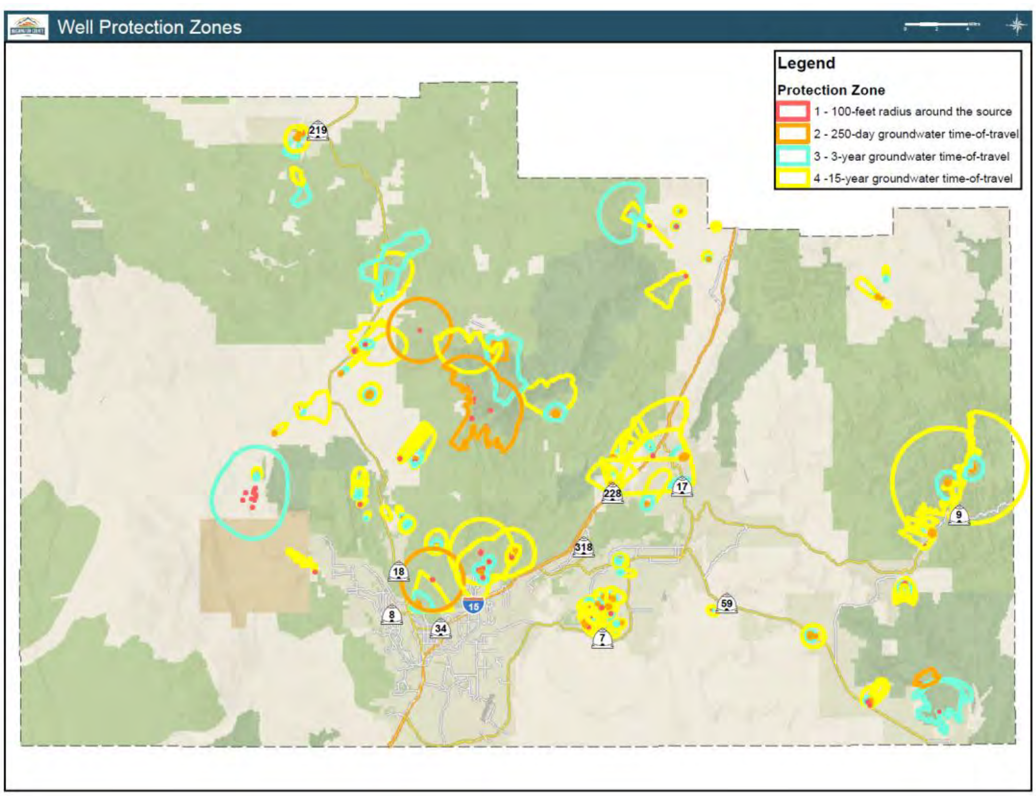
Management Actions

- Seek cooperating agency status on all federal plans affecting county water resources.
- Collaborate with WCWCD and other partners to manage existing drinking water sources.
- Promote research into hydrological best practices.

- Support public education on water quality and hydrology.
- Manage the Virgin River headwaters above Zion National Park to protect downstream resources.
- Ensure wastewater is properly managed to safeguard groundwater and surface water.

Background of Resource Use and Development

- Most cities in the county have their own water supplies; new municipal wells must undergo water quality assessments.
- State law establishes and regulates protection zones around wells.
- The County enforces a source protection ordinance for upstream drinking water safeguards *(see attached maps of well/ source protection areas)*.
- A significant portion of the drinking water supply is from diverted surface water stored in reservoirs.
- The Virgin River below Pah Tempe Hot Springs is geologically polluted and unusable for domestic purposes.

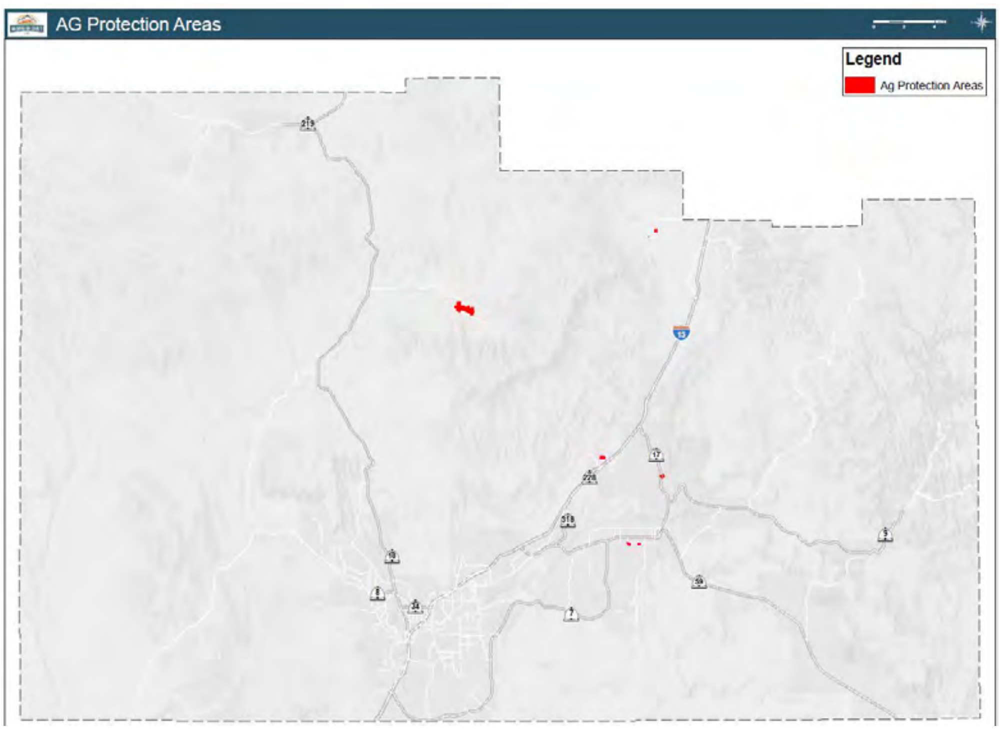


The County works with WCWCD to manage wastewater in unincorporated areas; municipalities manage their own systems, often through contracts.

Agricultural Conservation & Coordination

Washington County has 391 acres classified as Agriculture Protection Areas. These areas benefit water conservation by preserving land where water-conserving agricultural practices can be implemented, such as conservation tillage, cover crops, and improved irrigation methods. Agriculture Protection Areas also prevent water intensive development from replacing agricultural lands, which maintains regional water supplies for both agriculture and other users, particularly important in Utah's arid climate.

Agriculture Protection Areas support ground water recharge, protect water quality, and provide a framework for farmers to access funding for water-saving projects through programs like the Agricultural Water Optimization Committee. The Utah Department of Agriculture and Foods (UDAF) supports Agriculture Protection Areas by providing funding for farmers to implement water-saving technologies and techniques, such as irrigation upgrades.



Washington County has identified the following canal / ditch companies who supply water resources to agricultural operators. Collaboration with these entities is encouraged to establish regional conservation initiatives. These entities appear in state datasets or public records as operating canal/ditch or pressurized irrigation delivery in Washington County:

- Ash Creek Irrigation Company.
- Central Canal & Irrigation Company.

- Enterprise Reservoir & Canal Company.
- Gunlock Irrigation Company.
- Hall & Grafton Irrigation Company.
- Hurricane Canal Company.
- Ivins Irrigation Company.
- Knell Ditch Company.
- La Verkin Bench Canal Company.
- New Harmony Reservoir Irrigation Company.
- New Santa Clara Field & Canal Company.
- North Hurricane Irrigation Company.
- Pine Valley Irrigation Company.
- Pinto Irrigation Company.
- Rockville Pipeline Company (historic canal/pipe delivery).
- Rockville Town Ditch Company.
- South New Harmony Canal Company.
- St. George & Washington Canal Company (Washington Fields Canal; significant delivery system & shares).
- St. George Valley Irrigation Company.
- Toquerville Irrigation / Toquerville Secondary Water System (open ditch converted to pressurized secondary).
- Veyo Irrigation Company.
- Virgin Canal Company.
- Virgin Irrigation Company

Modifications that can be made to local government's operations to reduce and eliminate wasteful water practices:

- Enforcement of code violations related to landscape ordinance.
- Demonstrate leadership in water conservation practices with County buildings and remodels.
- Explore alternatives for dust control on rural unimproved roadways (enzyme treatments).
- Consider the creation of a water conservation committee comprised of representatives from local water districts.
- Encourage the use of smart meters for rural water providers.

Conclusion

Washington County's future depends on a careful balance between growth, land use, and water resource stewardship. As one of the fastest-growing regions in Utah and one of the most arid, the County must continue to pursue a proactive, collaborative, and adaptive approach to water use and preservation. This plan integrates conservation targets, land use policies, and infrastructure standards to ensure that new development is matched with reliable, sustainable water supplies.

Through close coordination with the Washington County Water Conservancy District, municipalities, state and federal partners, the County is aligning land use decisions with long-term water planning. By establishing rigorous source sizing standards, adopting ultra-efficient development practices, and prioritizing outdoor water conservation, Washington County is safeguarding its water resources while maintaining economic vitality and quality of life.

The strategies and policies outlined in this element are not static; they will be revisited and refined as growth, technology, water availability and climate conditions evolve. The integration of water conservation into land use decision-making, Washington County reaffirms its commitment to resilience, sustainability, and the protection of this critical resource helps ensure the excellent quality of life for the current and future residents.