



Regional Water Supply Agreement Administration Advisory Committee

Meeting date: January 31, 2024
Time: 12:00 – 2:00 pm
Location: 533 E. Waterworks Dr., St. George, UT 84770
Participants: Administration Advisory Committee members Zach Renstrom, Justin Sip, Afton Moore, Kelly Wilson, Kyle Gubler, Kress Staheli, Jeremy Redd, Rick Rosenberg, Brock Jacobsen, Scott Taylor, John Willis, Chris Hart, Dale Coulam, Nannette Billings, and Kaden DeMille. Washington County Commissioner Adam Snow and Victor Iverson were not present. Other meeting attendees are noted on the attached sign-in sheet.

Minutes

Welcome

General Manager Zach Renstrom welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Staff Engineer Whit Bundy gave an update on water production, lot numbers and drought.

For 2023, the District produced 14.9 billion gallons of water, that is down 1.2 million from last year. The number of connections is 88,700, the number is up about 4600 connections from the previous year. The water produced breaks down as follows: District 50%, St. George 25%, Washington 8%, Hurricane 11%, Santa Clara 4%, LaVerkin and Toquerville 1%. The total number of lots in some phase of development is 73,113. The drought stage is currently zero.

Discussion regarding digital documents

Mr. Renstrom asked the board if they would like documents printed or sent digitally. The board said they would like to receive the meeting materials via email but have a printed copy of just the agenda.

Growing Water Smart Conference

Mr. Renstrom asked the committee for feedback on the Growing Water Smart Conference. Mr. Renstrom said that a bill with the Utah State Legislature that would allocate money for this program to be implemented in the rest of the state, so they wanted feedback from people who attended the conference.

Mayor Billings commented that it was positive for Hurricane City. There was discussion on the difference between land and water use. Hurricane City has not been asking some of those questions with their planning commission or City Council. It helped knowing what questions to ask, and to coordinate and talk about the issues. The liaison did an excellent job and helped with discussions and setting goals.

Mayor Chris Hart commented that he was skeptical and that it was a big ask to have eight important people from the city spend 2 1/2 days, but the participants left feeling it was valuable. The facilitator was terrific. USU is going to do some training next month with Ivins City to help develop irrigation standards.

Scott Taylor with St. George City Water emphasized the value of the experience was not just the specific information shared, but more importantly the communication and collaboration within the city. The significance of sitting down together with various departments, planning department, City Council, and legal. The forced interaction led to valuable conversations that contributed to improved communication and understanding between departments within the city.

City Manager John Willis thought it was highly beneficial. It provided an opportunity for an overview of everything happening within the county. Mr. Willis liked the general session within his own city that identified what is going well and what areas need improvement.

City Manager Kyle Gubler appreciated the collaborative aspect of the session and found the structure effective. He looks forward to further engagement and to concentrating on the established goals.

City Manager Afton Moore commented that Toquerville City appreciated the diversity of the presenters and facilitators. During one breakout group, one participant was the reviewer of the city's water conservation plan, so they received great feedback, eliminating the need for separate follow-up efforts.

Mr. Renstrom will report back to the Utah legislature that Washington County supports the Water Smart Conference.

Government entity conservation rebate program

Water Conservation Manager Doug Bennett explained that the District is planning to offer conservation incentives for public agencies. In launching the program, the District is open to ideas so that the program aligns with the joint objectives of the city and the District. To enhance the effectiveness and transparency of the collaborative effort, the district proposes a structured approach to provide better data and information about the allocation of funds.

The District expects that much of the money for the program will come from the surcharges and the excess water use surcharges. The District is looking at a simple application form with some basic criteria to return some conservation funds back into the cities to help with their conservation projects.

Mr. Bennett shared a draft application and requested the board members and their staff let him know what they feel should be the structural components of the program and whether there is any confusion around the terms.

Regional Reuse System Overview and Update

Reuse Program Manager Morgan Drake presented an overview of the regional reuse system. The District's 20-year plan anticipates about 24,200 acre-feet of new potable water becoming available due to the reuse program, which is more than half of the supply needed to serve the area's growing community.

Currently, Virgin River water that could be treated for drinking water is being used for secondary irrigation and agriculture. The goal of the reuse project is to implement additional reuse treatment and send the reuse water to the dry purple pipes for outdoor irrigation and then do an exchange with the agriculture water to free up drinking water.

Components of the reuse system include secondary irrigation reservoirs, treatment plants, and pipelines. At some point, the system will include advanced water treatment, where treated reuse is sent to drinking water reservoirs, then treated to drinking water standards.

The project components will be implemented in phases. Upper East side is underway, Chief Toker Reservoir is under construction, and Upper West side is underway as well. Warner Valley Reservoir is in the future, it still requires more planning and feasibility studies.

George Elliott is the project manager overseeing the reservoirs and Trinity Stout is the project manager over pipelines. St. George City and Ash Creek will be over their respective facilities. Saint George City and Ash Creek Special Service District are critical partners as are each of the municipal partners.

The regional reuse system aims to improve drought resilience by efficiently reusing the water. Potable reuse is planned to enhance drought resilience even further by maximizing water reuse over multiple cycles. The 20-year plan includes groundwater optimization studies to protect groundwater and the Virgin River water, considering their current constraints. Implementation of reuse will enhance system flexibility, allowing the distribution of reuse water to various areas. This will help protect local agriculture.

Ms. Drake provided a funding overview. Saint George City, Ash Creek Special Service District and the District have worked together to secure over \$20 million in funding from various grants. In addition, there is a pending application for an additional \$20 million.

The grant awards contain deadlines to qualify for the award. To implement the regional reuse system, all the partners must sign reuse authorization contracts. The necessary contracts are grouped into three different categories.

Treatment Contracts: To be executed with St. George City and Ash Creek Special Service District.

Delivery Contracts: To be executed with each municipal partner.

Reuse Exchange Contracts: To be executed with each irrigation and canal company.

The treatment and delivery contracts adhere to specific code requirements under the Wastewater Reuse Act. The plan is to deliver the reuse water under the existing terms of the Regional Water Supply Agreement (RWSA).

2024 Outreach Overview

Communications & Government Affairs Manager Karry Rathje explained some of the District's communications and outreach plans for the year 2023.

The District did ninety-one media interviews, thirty community presentations, thirty infrastructure tours, twenty-five landscape workshops, a 50% increase in our social media followers, a legislative infrastructure tour with all our state legislators, and the Chief Toquer Reservoir groundbreaking.

Washington County used 1.2 billion gallons less water in 2023 than 2022, with a 5% increase in connections. There have been more than one-million square feet of grass replaced. The District is getting state and national attention for its conservation efforts.

The District would like to educate the community on water resources in general, where their water comes from, and how it gets to their home. The goal is to increase awareness and participation in conservation programs and support infrastructure development projects.

The District currently uses social media, digital ads, redirecting ads, streaming ads, and billboards. The District will use direct mail targeting non-functional turf areas in the community and encouraging participation in the grass replacement program. The District is also running campaigns about grass replacement and irrigation compliance.

Ms. Rathje explained the importance of amplifying message reach and gave some examples. Mayor Staheli came to the District office and did an overview about water conditions and the grass replacement program. When the cities and the county share the District's social media posts, there is a significant uptick in website visits and applications to rebate programs. If all municipal partners would share the district's social media posts, they would reach about 37.4 thousand more residents.

The District would like to encourage the cities, county, elected officials, staff, community leaders and residents to actively participate in water conservation efforts, such as landscape conversion, water audits, planning, touring facilities, investing in infrastructure, integrating water-wise technology, leak detection and repair, showcasing water-efficient plants and trees.

Ms. Rathje expressed a desire to document and celebrate conservation efforts through photos and write-ups and the intention to provide recognition of the work being done in the community and share the knowledge with a broader audience.

Mayor Billings asked if there was a way for the city to know who in their community is doing landscape conversion so they can do a personalized story about someone in their own community. Ms. Rathje responded that the District will send information to the cities with the names of residents participating in the landscape program.

Mayor Staheli commented that he agrees with Mayor Billing's idea because personal stories contribute to building and sustaining community interest and participation.

Scott Taylor asked about the direct mail campaign. Ms. Rathje explained that it sends a letter or postcard encourage recipients to consider the landscape rebate program, but it is generic and not personalized to specific individuals.

Other

Mr. Renstrom discussed House Bill 280, which is related to water connections. Mr. Renstrom reported that there is controversy surrounding the bill and there are doubts about its passage. The bill proposes imposing a tax on every water connection, the collected money would be sent to the state, and a board would allocate the funds back to the cities. The bill is primarily driven by cities' requests to the legislature for funding assistance for infrastructure projects.

Consider approval of November 29, 2023, minutes

Kelly Wison made a motion to approve the November 29, 2023, minutes, the motion was seconded by Rick Rosenberg, and all voted aye.

Next meeting: Wednesday, May 29, 2024, from 12:00 pm – 2:00 pm

The meeting was adjourned.

Mindy Mees

Secretary



Conservation Incentives for Public Agencies

Eligibility

- Applicant must be a public agency, funded in whole or in part by citizens within Washington County, Utah and operating in the public interest for citizens in Washington County, Utah. Eligible entities may include, but are not limited to, public education institutions and governments.
- The proposed project must be within a jurisdiction compliant with the Water Efficiency Standards of the Washington County Water Conservancy District ("District").
- The District must deem the project to serve the public interest and advance the objectives of the district.
- The applicant must be in good standing with district policy.
- If the proposed project involves capital improvements to real property, the applicant must be the property owner or the property owner's agent.
- The project must reduce or avoid water demand for one or more water accounts in good standing with a member agency of the District.
- The project must be an improvement within the scope of an existing, on-going business process. It cannot be a change in the business type or product type (for example, converting a park into a parking lot).
- The proposed project must not have been started at the time of application.
- Projects already fully funded by the applicant or from another source are not eligible.

Technical requirements

- The project must have a projected lifespan of at least ten (10) calendar years. In the event project components require replacement prior to the 10-year requirement, they must be replaced with equipment, facilities or processes of equal or greater water efficiency.
- The District may opt to provide funding for initial operational expenses or start-up subscriptions associated with the project, however, if the project requires continuing service fees or subscriptions, the applicant agrees to sustain such services at their own expense such that the project provides at least 10 years of water conservation benefits.
- If a project qualifies for other incentive programs, the District may reject the application and instead require the applicant to enroll in another program.

Calculation of water savings and rebates

- Maximum rebates are calculated at \$50 per 1,000 gallons of reduction in annual water use (\$16,300 per acre-foot).
- Rebates may not exceed 50 percent of the project cost or the incentive amount stated in the project acceptance letter, whichever is greater.
- The District has total and final authority in determining the potential water savings for each project.
- If water efficiency of a replacement device is subject to a regulatory code or standard, only the water savings exceeding the code or standard will be considered in the rebate calculation.
- Water savings calculations will not include water use attributable to degradation, malfunction or defects of existing equipment. For example, the District, at its own discretion, may support a project to improve water loss detection, but may not provide funding for replacing aging pipes.

Terms of incentive

- Participation is conditional upon acceptance of the project by the District. Applications will be accepted or rejected in writing. Letters of approval may specify terms and requirements, which will become part of this agreement.
- The District reserves the right to limit or reject applications subject to availability of funds.
- Payment will not exceed 50 percent of the total project materials cost (labor, tax, shipping and other related costs will not qualify as part of the project cost).
- The agreement expires in one calendar year. The term begins the day after the applicant's receipt of the letter of acceptance and ends at 5 p.m. on the first business day after one calendar year has elapsed. The applicant must notify the District of completion prior to expiration of the agreement.
- Upon project completion, the District may conduct a final inspection to verify compliance with the program conditions. If the property fails inspection, the applicant will be allowed 60 days or the remainder of the one-year period, whichever is greater, to comply with the program conditions.
- Equipment or fixtures replaced through the program cannot be reinstalled within the District service area.

Other responsibilities of the applicant

- The District enforces only the conditions of this agreement. The applicant is responsible for complying with all laws, policies, codes and covenants that may apply.
- The applicant is responsible for submitting calculated water savings information in electronic format, if the District so requests.
- The applicant is responsible for any post-implementation evaluation that may be required to document water savings.



Application for Water Conservation Project Funding

Washington County Water Conservancy District

NAME _____

TITLE _____

AGENCY _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____

EMAIL _____

By my signature, I attest that I am a lawful representative of the agency and that the proposed project conforms with the program requirements.

Signature _____ Date _____

Please attach a written document that addresses the following questions, at minimum. You may attach a narrative to this application.

1. Describe the project and explain how it will reduce or avoid water demands. If literature for the proposed technology is available, please insert a website link or attach documentation.
2. How much water is estimated to be saved annually and how was the estimate calculated?
3. What is the projected useful lifespan of the project?
4. What is the total project cost for materials and equipment? If a written estimate exists, please include it with this application.
5. When is the project expected to commence and complete? If a detailed timeline exists, please include it with this application.

Proposals should be emailed to:

Doug Bennett, Conservation Manager

doug@wcwcd.org

435-673-3617 x208



RWSA AAC Meeting

January 31, 2024

Agenda

- Discussion regarding digital documents
- Growing Water Smart Conference
- Government entity conservation rebate program
- Regional Reuse System overview and update
- 2024 outreach overview
- Other?
- Consider approval of Nov 29, 2023 minutes
- Next meeting: May 29 at noon





Digital Documents

Zach Renstrom



Growing Water Smart Conference

Zach Renstrom



Government Entity Conservation Rebate Program

Doug Bennett



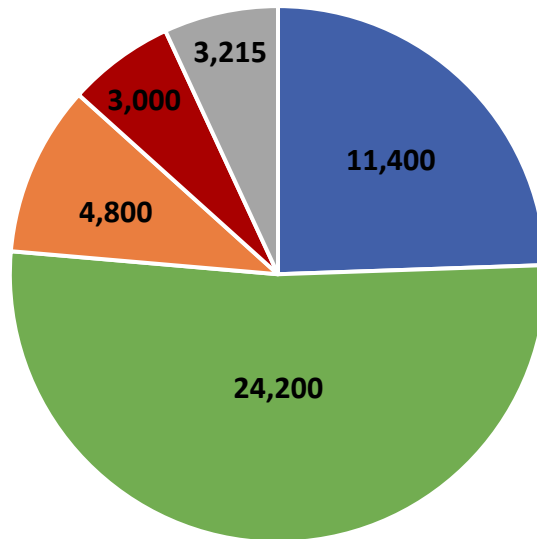
Regional Reuse System Overview & Update

Morgan Drake



20-Year Plan

Water Supply (acre-feet)

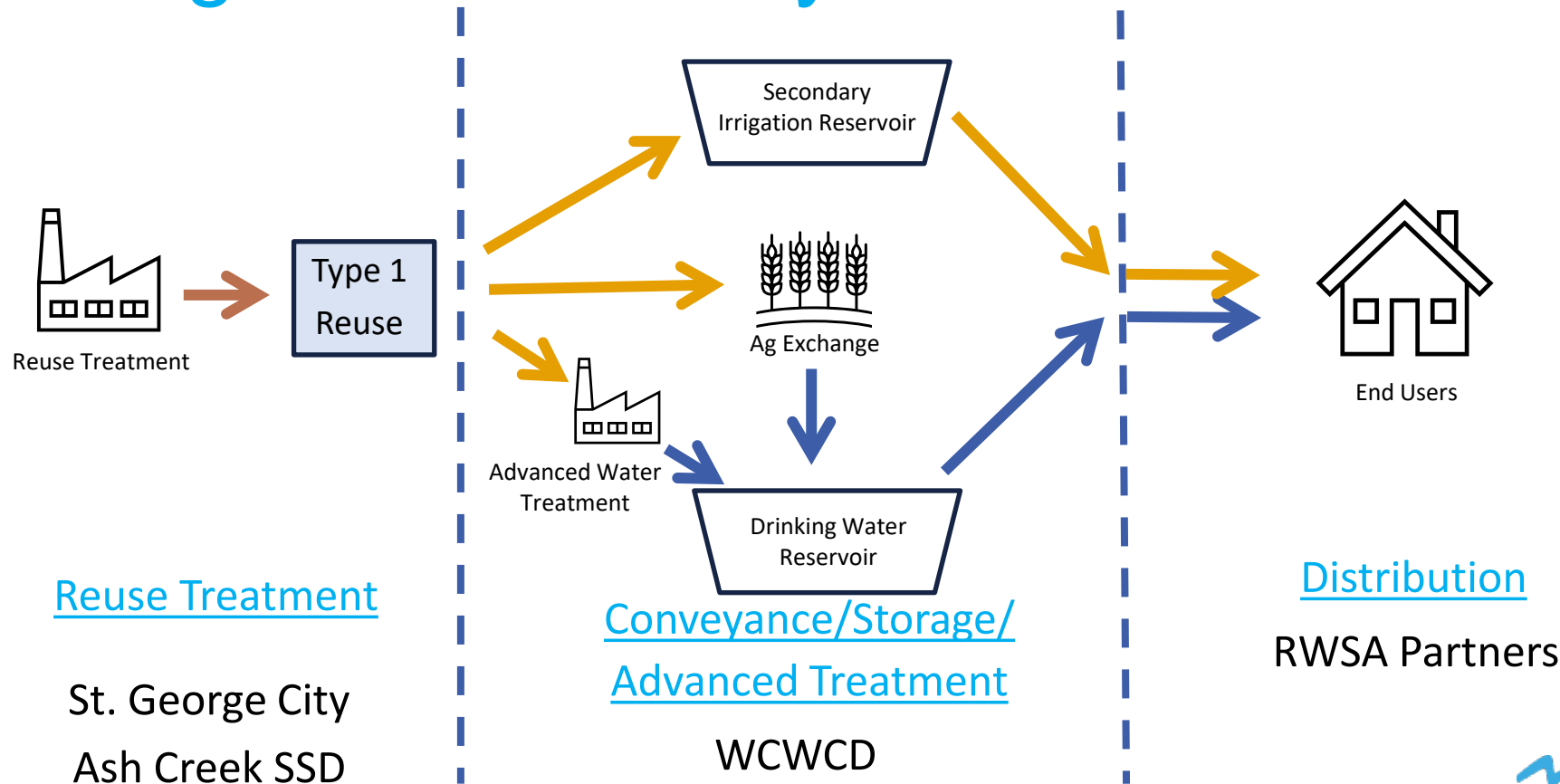


■ Conservation ■ Reuse ■ Supply Development ■ Groundwater Optimization ■ Agricultural Conversion



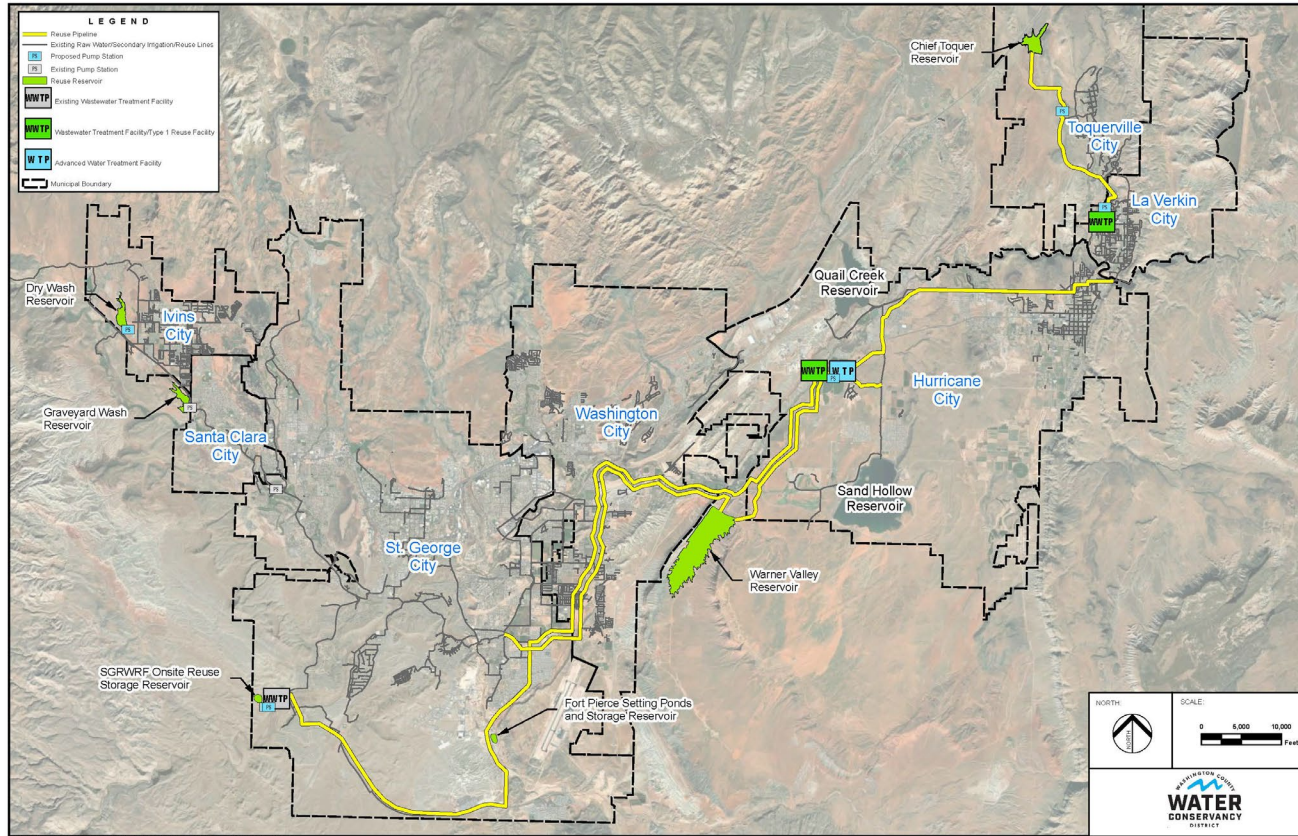


Regional Reuse System





Regional Reuse System





Benefits

- Enhances water supply
- Improves drought resiliency
- Protects groundwater resources
- Protects Virgin River streamflow
- Improves system flexibility
- Protects local agriculture





Funding

Amount	Reuse Component	Funding Agency
\$1.4 million	Regional Reuse System	Bureau of Reclamation
\$4.7 million	Chief Toquer Reservoir	Bureau of Reclamation
\$5 million	Ash Creek Project	Washington County
\$5 million	Chief Toquer Reservoir	Department of Water Quality (DWQ)
\$2.4 million	Dry Wash Reservoir	DWQ
\$1.9 million	Graveyard Wash Reservoir	DWQ
\$20.5 million (application)	Regional Reuse System	Bureau of Reclamation





Reuse Authorization Contracts

- Treatment
 - Ash Creek Special Service District
 - St. George City
- Delivery
 - Municipal Partners (separate agreements with each)
- Reuse exchange
 - Irrigation and canal companies (separate agreements with each)





Communications & Outreach Overview

Karry Rathje

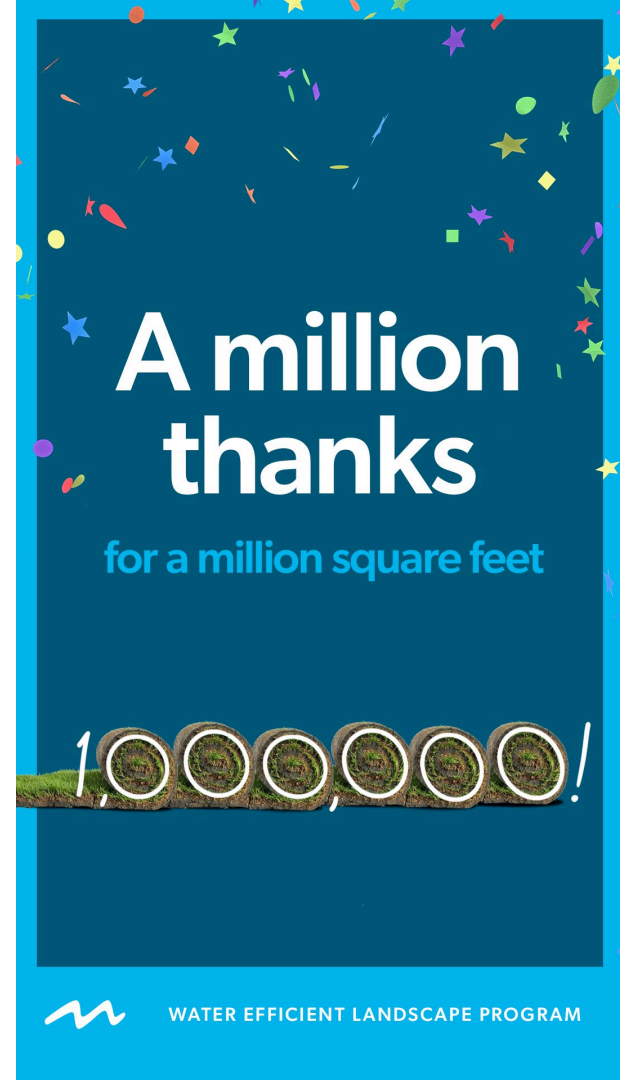
2023 Year in Review

- 91 media interviews
- 30+ community presentations
- 30 infrastructure tours
- 25 landscape workshops
- 50% increase in social media followers
- Legislative infrastructure tour
- Chief Toquer Reservoir groundbreaking



Conservation

- Used 1.2 billion gallons less in 2023 than in 2022, despite a nearly 5% increase in connections
- Replaced more than 1 million square feet of grass with water-efficient landscaping



2024 Objectives



EDUCATE COMMUNITY ON
WATER RESOURCES



INCREASE AWARENESS AND
PARTICIPATION IN WATER-
SAVING EFFORTS



ENHANCE SUPPORT OF WATER
INFRASTRUCTURE
DEVELOPMENTS



Outreach Mediums

- Social media
- Local media digital
- Streaming ads
- Digital display
- Billboards
- E-mail blasts
- Radio
- Direct mail (new)
- Earned media coverage
- Presentations
- Creative materials



Campaigns

- Grass replacement (ongoing)
- Irrigation compliance periods (seasonal)

Get off your lazy grass
and we'll pay you \$2 per sq ft

Amplify Message Reach



Municipal partner	Followers
Hurricane	3.1K
Ivins	1.4K
La Verkin	1.7K
Santa Clara	2.6K
St. George	15K
Toquerville	952
Virgin	602
Washington City	6K
Washington County	6.1K
TOTAL	37.4k



Social Post Ideas

- What are the **city/county, elected officials, staff, community leaders and residents** doing to conserve and plan for future water needs?
 - Landscape conversion
 - Water audits/budgeting
 - Planning
 - Touring facilities
 - Investing in infrastructure
 - Integrating water-wise technologies
 - Leak detection and repair
 - Showcasing water-efficient plants, trees



Other?



Next Meeting

- Wednesday, May 29 at noon

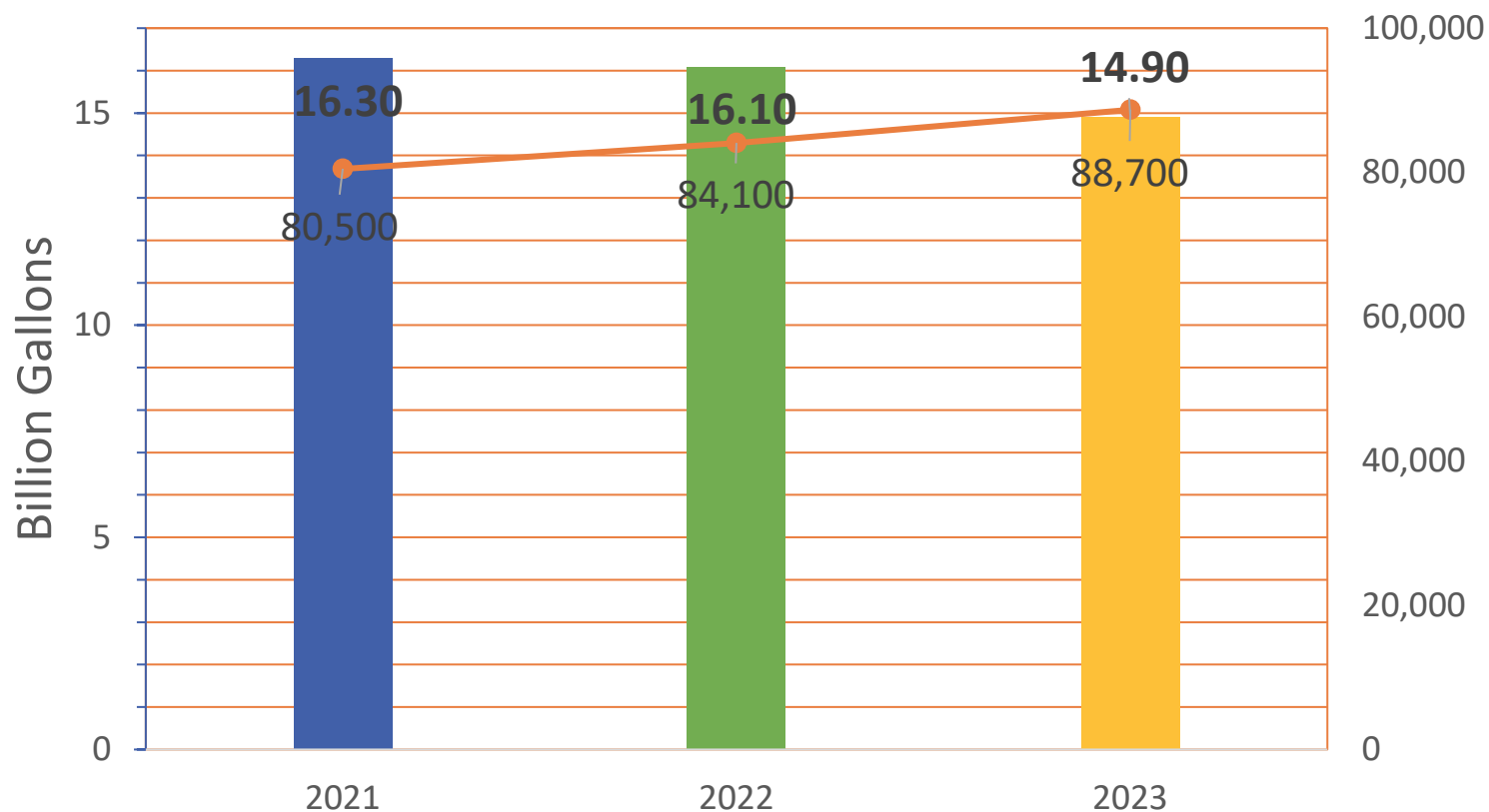




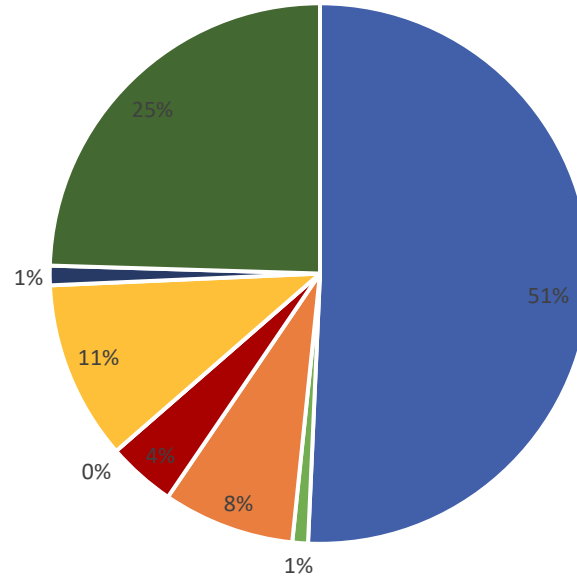
Water Production, Lot Numbers and Drought Update

January 2024

2023 Countywide Water Production

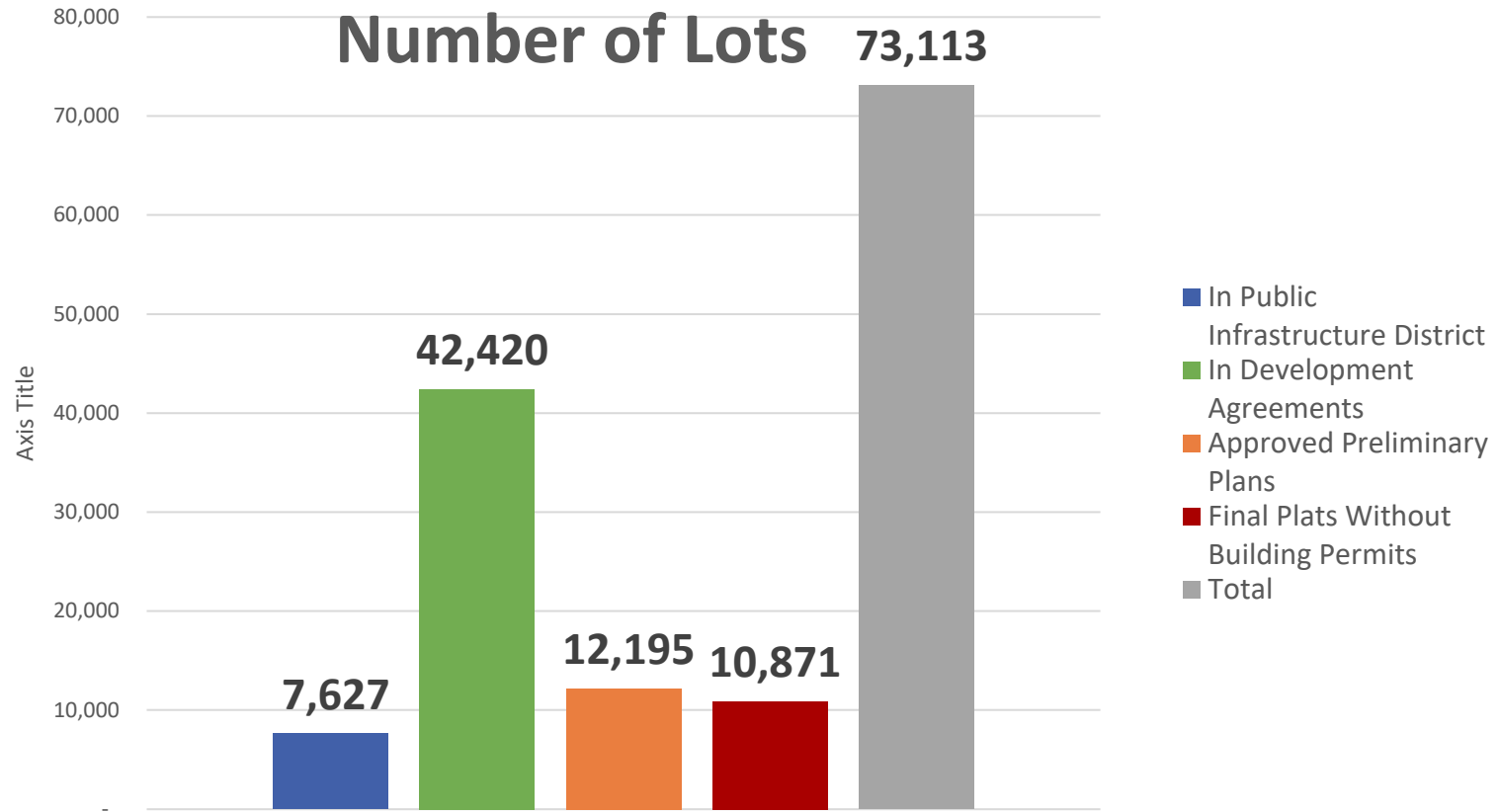


Water Supply Breakdown 2023



■ WCWCD ■ Toquerville ■ Washington ■ Santa Clara
■ Ivins ■ Hurricane ■ La Verkin ■ St. George





Date of Data: Jan 2024

CURRENT DROUGHT STAGE

0

Abnormally Dry

