

Utah Board of Water Resources
Board Meeting
May 15, 2025
1:00 PM
Department of Natural Resources
1594 W. North Temple
Salt Lake City, UT 84114

CHAIR MIKE DAVIS called the meeting to order at 1:01 PM and introduced himself and Board members present.

CANDICE HASENYAGER introduced the staff present and those online.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

BLAINE IPSON moved to approve the March 19, 2025 meeting minutes. DANA VAN HORN seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

NRCS SNOW REPORT:

JORDAN CLAYTON presented a report on the current snow conditions in the state.

Project #	Applicant	County	Project Manager
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FEASIBILITY REPORTS:

RE495 Co-op Farm Irrigation Company	Weber	Ethan Stayner
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ETHAN STAYNER presented the report.

BLAINE IPSON moved the Board authorize 17.5% of the project cost, up to \$348,000, and that the project be purchased at 0% interest over 15 years, with annual payments of approximately \$23,200. WILLIAM MERKLEY seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

RE496 Huntsville South Bench Canal Company	Weber	Bradley Caldwell
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BRADLEY CALDWELL presented the report.

WILLIAM MERKLEY moved the Board authorize 16.1% of the project cost, up to \$320,000, and that the project be purchased at 0% interest over 15 years, with annual payments of

approximately \$21,350. DANA VAN HORN seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

RE497 Powder Mountain Water and Sewer Improvement District Weber Ann Baynard

ANNY BAYNARD presented the report.

DANA VAN HORN moved the Board authorize 77% of the project cost, up to \$1,395,000, and that the bonded indebtedness be returned at 3.33% interest over 30 years, with annual payments of approximately \$78,000 (including reserves). BRIAN STEED seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

SPECIAL ITEMS:

RL591 Hurricane City - Additional Funds Washington Ethan Stayner

BLAINE IPSON moved the Board authorize and commit an additional \$1,282,000, from the C&D Fund, and that the bonded indebtedness be returned at 3.33% interest over 25 years, with annual payments of approximately \$81,000 (including reserves). BRIAN STEED seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

NEW APPLICATIONS:

RE494 Washington County Water Conservancy District Washington Tom Cox

AIRBORNE SNOW OBSERVATORY REPORT:

SCOTT MCGETTIGAN, Water Optimization Section Manager, presented “Wings over Weber” airborne snow observatory project.

DIRECTOR’S REPORT:

CANDICE HASENYAGER On April 24th, the Governor issued an executive order declaring a drought emergency in 17 counties, primarily in the southern part of the state. Due to recent legislation, emergency orders issued by the Governor now have a 30-day limit. We had anticipated a special legislative session this month, but it will not be happening. As a result, the current drought declaration will lapse. The Drought Response Committee is scheduled to meet next month to evaluate the situation and determine whether the Governor should issue another emergency order. We've observed that drought declarations are effective in raising public awareness about the water situation. This also allows us to require state facilities to take specific actions. While drought declarations do provide access to loan funding through UDAF and emergency funds from the Division of Emergency Management, I believe their most significant impact is in increasing public awareness.

Next week is interim week, and we've been asked to present a water conditions update. Joel Williams will be presenting on my behalf as I'll be on a water reuse infrastructure tour in San Diego.

As one of the Governor's appointees to the Western States Water Council, I recently attended a subseasonal and seasonal forecasting workshop. We discussed the current state of forecasting science, particularly how challenging it is to forecast accurately beyond 14 days, a point Jordan Clayton raised earlier. The workshop included extensive discussions on the level of accuracy needed to improve decision making and the desire for forecasts to be better than historical averages. While the science can become very technical, focusing on oscillations in the South Pacific and their movement, it was a productive session. I had the opportunity to present on Utah's water supply situation and how S2S forecasting could enhance our work. Although there's still significant progress to be made in this field, we will actively seek opportunities to support this research.

We have made substantial progress regarding the Unified Water Infrastructure Plan. The plan aims to create a comprehensive, prioritized list of all potential water infrastructure projects for the next 20 years, specifically those seeking state funds. Over the past month and a half, we've held an open application period for project submissions, asking for an estimated timeline for each project (e.g., needed within the next year, two years, five years, or 20 years). We are collecting projects, but to answer a common question: yes, there will be future opportunities to submit projects if you missed this initial application period. There will be an annual process for adding to our agency plans. At our June meeting, we will have a presentation on what projects have been submitted. Our relevant agency plan has to be done by June 30th, but then we'll also probably talk about the prioritization process and get feedback from you.

We had quite the cloud seeding year! Our ground generators operated for nearly 17,000 hours, which is approximately 2,000 hours more than our historical average of 15,000 hours. The East Shore program, which focuses on the Weber side draining into the Great Salt Lake, ran for about 2,500 hours independently. In the southern part of the state, our aircraft program accumulated approximately 42 flight hours, exceeding last season's 29 flight hours. We're also working on an evaluation and optimization study as well as an updated environmental study. There have been lots of environmental studies in other parts of the US, but never here in Utah. This is scheduled for the 2025/2026 winter.

This spring, our Conservation team has taught seven LocalScape classes and developed a landscape resource guide. We had a presentation on it yesterday at a staff meeting, and we'll send you a link to it soon. We're also hosting monthly webinars for DIY enthusiasts on installing and maintaining water-wise landscaping. It's easy to plant, but knowing how to care for plants afterward is key!

Regarding water conservation plans, 39 are due this year, with drafts due on July 15th. We also have a few upcoming outreach events:

- Jordan Valley Spring Garden Fair: May 17th
- Sandy Spring Fair: May 31st
- Weber Basin Water Conservancy District Garden Fair: June 7th, 8 AM - 2 PM

We are excited to get out and encourage water conservation, particularly converting high-water use turf to water-wise landscapes.

Update on the State Water Plan, our team is making significant progress, with a dedicated section of two full-time staff and additional members from our planning branch actively contributing. The team is moving full steam ahead, engaging with our watershed councils to encourage their participation in the State Water Plan. We have finalized the outline and are now developing specific scenarios. The deadline for this project is December 31, 2026. We are working to get basin specific information, so if you're involved in your local watershed please fill out the survey to help us better inform the public, Governor, and the legislature.

Another planning piece we're working on is the Great Salt Lake Basin Integrated Plan. We're still working with the Bureau of Reclamation to try to get a contract through the federal process so we can get some modeling done.

Update on the Colorado River negotiations: I believe many of you are already aware that discussions are still underway among the seven basin states. The Bureau of Reclamation has set a deadline for a consensus framework to be developed within the next two weeks, specifically by the first week of June. If an agreement is reached, the Bureau will include it in their plans. During the last Colorado River Authority meeting, there seemed to be a hopeful path forward, which is a positive change from what I had heard previously. Regarding upcoming meetings in Utah this summer, the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Forum and Advisory Council will be held from June 2nd to the 4th. Following that, the Western States Water Council meeting will take place the week after, also here in Utah. Additionally, an Upper Colorado River Commission meeting is scheduled to be held in Salt Lake.

The Bear River Commission met on Tuesday, April 15th here at DNR. There were some good discussions with the commission.

ADJOURNMENT: BRIAN STEED moved to adjourn the meeting. BLAINE IPSON seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 2:34 PM.