



Central Wasatch License Plate

MEMO

To: Executive/Budget/Audit Committee
Chair: Jeff Silvestrini, Co-Chair: Erin Mendenhall, Treasurer and Secretary: Christopher F. Robinson

CC: Laura Briefer, Salt Lake City Public Utilities

From: Ben Kilbourne, Communications Director
Lindsey Nielsen, Executive Director
Sam Kilpack, Director of Operations

Subject: Central Wasatch License Plate

Date: August 7, 2025

In exploring long-term funding options for the CWC and, eventually, the CWNCRRA, staff has developed the idea of creating a Central Wasatch license plate. Our research intern, Emory Schwieger, brought to our attention the Sawtooth National Recreation Area license plate, which brings in \$50,000 annually. The recent success of the Utah Historical Society license plate and the forthcoming Great Salt Lake license plate suggest that there is an appetite among Utahns for more plate options that reflect their individual interests.

85% of Utahns live within 15 miles of the Wasatch Mountains, with roughly 3 million people living along the Wasatch Front, and about 1.2 million of those residing in the Salt Lake Valley, where the Central Wasatch anchors their eastern horizon. Many of these residents identify with these mountains in some way—whether as a critical water source or as a place to recreate year-round. It is likely that many would be enthusiastic about seeing the Central Wasatch represented on a license plate.

To create a license plate, we would need to submit a formal proposal to the Utah State Tax Commission, draft a bill, introduce it during the next Legislative Session, and secure the governor's signature. Initial research indicates that a minimum of 500 license plates must be ordered for the first production run. The purchase of each plate would return at least \$25 to the CWC. Additionally, the minimum \$25 annual renewal fee means that if 500 plates were sold, the CWC would receive at least \$12,500 per year. Given the widespread appreciation for these mountains and the desire to identify with them, there is good reason to believe we could exceed the 500-plate threshold fairly easily. The Youth Council could assist with canvassing efforts to secure the initial sales.

To further boost interest, we could open a call for entries, inviting local artists to submit their interpretations of the Central Wasatch for consideration as the plate's design.