

**Utah Board of Water Resources**  
**Board Meeting**  
August 21, 2025  
1:00 PM  
Department of Natural Resources Auditorium  
1594 W. North Temple, Salt Lake City, UT 84114

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

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

DANA VAN HORN moved to approve the June 26, 2025 meeting minutes. BRIAN STEED seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

<b><u>Project #</u></b>	<b><u>Applicant</u></b>	<b><u>County</u></b>	<b><u>Project Manager</u></b>
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**FEASIBILITY REPORTS:**

<b>RE499 Lake Creek Irrigation Company</b>	<b>Wasatch</b>	<b>Ben Marett</b>
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BEN MARETT presented the report.

BLAINE IPSON moved the board authorize 85% of the project cost, up to \$8,645,000, and that the project be purchased at 1.26% interest over 30 years with annual payments of approximately \$347,800. DANA VAN HORN seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

**COMMITTAL OF FUNDS:**

<b>RE472 Davis &amp; Weber Counties Canal Company</b>	<b>Davis</b>	<b>Tom Cox</b>
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TOM COX presented the report.

WILLIAM MERKLEY moved the board commit 85% of the project cost, up to \$999,000, and that the project be purchased at 0% interest over 20 years, with annual payments of approximately \$50,000. BLAINE IPSON seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

**RE495 Co-op Farm Irrigation Company****Weber****Ethan Stayner**

ETHAN STAYNER presented the report.

DANA VAN HORN moved the board commit 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. DANA VAN HORN, WILLIAM MERKLEY AND BLAINE IPSON voted in favor, JULIETTE TENNERT and BRIAN STEED opposed. The motion passed.

**RE496 Huntsville South Bench Canal Company****Weber****Bradley Caldwell**

BRADLEY CALDWELL presented the report.

WILLIAM MERKLEY moved the board commit 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. BLAINE IPSON seconded the motion. DANA VAN HORN, WILLIAM MERKLEY AND BLAINE IPSON voted in favor, BRIAN STEED and JULIETTE TENNERT opposed. The motion passed.

**NEW APPLICATIONS:** for information only, no presentation or action taken.

RE500 Smithfield Irrigation Company

Cache

Ann Baynard

RE501 Cache Highline Water Association

Cache

Bradley Caldwell

**SECONDARY METER ARPA GRANT RETURNED FUNDS:**

SHALAINE DEBERNARDI presented the report.

SPENCER JONES joined the meeting online at 1:33.

BRIAN STEED moved the Board set a fifth application period of September 8, 2025 through October 10, 2025, and that the Board state that only applicants who meet all the Board, State and Federal requirements to receive ARPA grant funds, at the time of application, are eligible in this round. SPENCER JONES seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

**LAKE POWELL PIPELINE UPDATE AND CONTRACT AMENDMENT REQUESTS:**

ERIC DIXON presented the report.

SPENCER JONES moved the Board amend the contract with Stantec for two additional years, until December 31, 2027, to continue the work approved in 2020. No additional funds will be provided for this amendment. . DANA VAN HORN seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

DANA VAN HORN moved the Board amend the contract with the Bureau of Reclamation for two additional years, until September 30, 2027, to continue the work in the Task Order. No additional funds will be provided for this amendment. WILLIAM MERKLEY seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

**GREEN RIVER BLOCK WATER RIGHT CONTRACT:**

Sarah Shechter presented the report.

WILLIAM MERKLEY stated that because the water conservancy district that he represents is party to the contract that he will need to recuse himself from the vote. He wanted to publicly thank Sarah and her team for all of the work that they have done to answer questions that have been lingering for a number of years.

BRIAN STEED moved the Board approve the Third Party Contract for the payment to the Bureau of Reclamation of fees associated with the Green River Block water rights as to form, and to allow the Board officers to enter third party contracts as the obligation arises. BLAINE IPSON seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

CANDICE HASENYAGER this week is interim week and we have had a number of legislative meetings. Our board member Brian Steed gave multiple presentations. I was able to Present at the Legislative Water Development Commission about turf and waterwise landscaping. Kelly Cope from USU joined me talking about the benefits of lawn and grasses, and the importance of the research they are doing. I feel like we're in alignment, and it's important to note that we do not want gravelscapes. The state does require plant cover to receive incentives for replacing turf with waterwise landscapes. We submitted two budget requests, one of which was for Dam Safety, as this is an ongoing need, and the other for potential incentives for waterwise landscaping for new construction.

As you are likely aware, 100% of the state is currently experiencing drought, with a significant portion under severe and extreme drought. This is certainly not the outcome any of us hoped

for. We have just experienced another hot and exceptionally dry summer, which contributed to the severity of the dry conditions.

From June 1 to August 1, our reservoir storage levels dropped by approximately 19%. This is significantly higher than the typical 8% drop we usually observe during this period.

This increased reduction in storage can be attributed to several factors, including the hot, dry conditions that led to increased demand, as well as a less-than-ideal runoff season. As a result, the reservoirs were not replenished as they normally would be while we were drawing them down. Consequently, our soil moisture and reservoir conditions heading into this fall are similar to those in 2020. We are optimistic, however, as the forecast for next week shows some rain.

We are in the throes of the State Water Plan, which is due at the end of 2026. We will be hosting public scoping meetings, which we're calling "Water Talks," starting very soon. The first meeting is next week, on August 28th in Monticello. These meetings will run through October. I plan to attend as many as possible, though I may not make it to all of them. We will send a link to the Water Talks schedule shortly. We welcome you to participate in any and all of these meetings, especially those relevant to your area of interest. We are actively collaborating with our agency partners to assign sections and develop initial drafts. We remain on target for the agency partner review on January 1, and we would greatly appreciate the board's review at that time as well. Following this, we will update the draft with any necessary edits before it proceeds to public review next summer. This timeline should allow us to finalize everything by December 31.

Update on conservation, during fiscal year 2025, state funding and programs facilitated the replacement of approximately 3.2 million square feet of grass. This achievement would not have been possible without the dedication of our district partners and the division staff who manage these programs, and we are incredibly grateful for their efforts. We are also continuing our Waterwise Landscaping series, as I mentioned at our last board meeting. There is one more session scheduled for next week, August 27th, titled "Winning the War on Weeds." All sessions are recorded and available for viewing.

Regarding our water conservation plans, drafts for 39 systems were due in July, and Josh from our team is currently reviewing them and providing feedback. We are also continuing to update our weekly lawn watering guide every Friday. We have several outreach events scheduled, including: Manti Education on September 2nd & 3rd, Conservation Garden Park Birthday on September 20th, as well as Sego Lily Fall Fair. We will be hosting three Localscapes classes in Smithfield, Richfield, and Brigham City.

Cloud seeding is a big push and ongoing. Our meteorologist started sending out a Monday forecast. I'll ask him to add you to the distribution list so you can receive it as well. One of the

big things going on is the "Snowscape Research" project, a deep dive into cloud seeding, is progressing. This collaboration with University of Utah, Utah State University and the National Center for Atmospheric Research, aims to determine how much additional precipitation from cloud seeding translates to runoff. We are also planning fieldwork for an environmental study to assess the environmental impacts of cloud seeding. There have been studies done in other states, but it is important to us to do one in Utah. Utah will conduct a study next year to assess environmental considerations related to seeded snow, stream flow, lake water, and lake bed sediment. Our operational program starts November 1st. We're expanding the Bear River Basin program and Idaho is looking to partner with us on that. The state received \$3 million this legislative session for a larger Bear River Basin effort and new technology testing. We will have Jonathan Jennings, our meteorologist, come and present at our October board meeting.

The Great Salt Lake Basin Integrated Plan is on track for completion by 2027, as mandated by legislation. The work plan is finished, and we are hiring a planning consultant to develop scenarios and public outreach. We're also collaborating with the bureau to secure a modeling consultant. Several projects are already contracted and underway, with some nearing completion or already done. A draft report on the Great Salt Lake evaporative loss study is expected later this year.

The Unified Water Infrastructure Plan is due by March of next year. We're excited to work with the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget and R6, an AOG, to utilize their new Utah Project Portal for the Unified Water Infrastructure Plan. This portal will allow entities to log in, track, and update their projects, providing a centralized way for us to collect project information. We saw a demo yesterday, and it looks really exciting. We are also working on the prioritization process through the Water Development Coordinating Council. We are currently reviewing that information, and the next stage of this prioritization process involves developing rules, which will then be presented to the public to solicit participation and feedback. We have scheduled four public meetings, one in each of the northern, central, southern and rural parts of the state. The target cities are Brigham City, Duchesne, Provo, and Cedar City. We will send out the specific dates for these meetings soon.

We have a Bear River Commission tour this Friday. The commission's meeting is not until November.

Intense negotiations are currently underway between the seven basin states and the federal government regarding the Colorado River, as the 2007 interim guidelines are set to expire at the end of 2026. The Secretary of Interior has mandated that an agreement in principle be reached by the states by November 11th, in order for the seven basin states alternative to be included in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process. To achieve this, the basin states are meeting

frequently, often weekly or bi-weekly, and recently convened in Salt Lake City. Difficult decisions confront all parties involved, making this a challenging period for resolution. In addition to the November deadline, the Secretary has also indicated that the states need a finalized formal agreement by February 14th. The Bureau has stated that if the basin states fail to reach an agreement, the federal government will come up with an alternative, which may not be in the best interests of the upper or lower division states.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

WILLIAM MERKLEY moved to adjourn the meeting at 2:02 PM.