

# **RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT COORDINATING COMMITTEE MEETING**

Public Lands Policy Coordination Office

**August 7, 2025**

## **MINUTES**

### **Attendees:**

#### **Members:**

Chris Merritt, SHPO, *Chair*  
Rachel Shilton, DWRe, *Vice-Chair*  
Jan Morse, OGM  
Jodi Gardberg DWQ  
Conner Peterson, UDAF  
Heather Merritt, UDOT  
Daniel Olson, DWR  
Sarah Ward, DEQ  
Sheila Vance, DAQ  
Steven Bowman, UGS  
Kate Novak, FFSL  
Wesley Sandlin, for David Allison, DERR  
Reed Soper, SITLA  
Brian Speer, DWMRC  
Devan Chavez, State Parks

#### **Invited Federal Agencies:**

Jason Gipson, USACE  
Quincy Bahr, BLM

#### **Guests**

Evan Curtis, GOV OPB Planning Coordination  
Jake Garfield, OED  
Camille Johnson, GOV Tourism  
Lacey Moore, Office of Legislative Fiscal Analyst  
Jay Olsen, UDAF  
Ben Marett, DWRe

#### **Staff:**

Sindy Smith, PLPCO

## Welcome and Introductions

Chris Merritt, *Chair*, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. After introductions, Chris welcomed everyone.

## Approval of Minutes

Representatives unanimously approved the draft minutes from the meeting held on May 1, 2025.

## DEQ Database

Sarah Ward, *Environmental Planning Consultant, DEQ*, presented DEQ's public database for reporting environmental incidents and spills. Key points of the presentation include:

- The database, which has been in use for the last year, replaced an older system and includes historical records dating back to the 1980s.
- The public website provides information for reporting incidents, which are managed by a duty officer available 24/7.
- The database is searchable by responsive party, chemical, material, city, or county.
- Detailed information for each incident is available as a downloadable PDF.
- A user guide is available to help the public navigate the database.
- The database reduces the need for public records requests by making the information readily accessible.
- The database tracks various incidents, including spills and other environmental issues, but excludes public water system issues, which are in a separate database.
- Sarah noted that there are no current plans for a mobile application.

Sarah addressed questions and comments.

Below are the three resources DEQ provides regarding Environmental Incidents.

[Report an Environmental Incident to DEQ](#)  
[DEQ Environmental Incident Public Database](#)  
[Environmental Incident Database User Guide](#)

## Agency Reports

- Christopher Merritt reported the following from the Utah State Historical Preservation Office (SHPO):
  - SHPO's federal funding, which had been frozen, has been received. SHPO is working with the Governor's office to prioritize shifting the 11 staff members from federal to state funding.
  - SHPO is streamlining an agreement with the Army Corps of Engineers for cultural resource permitting.
- Kate Novak reported the following from the Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands (FFSL):
  - Kate Novak, who is new to FFSL, introduced herself.

- FFSL continues the work on several planning efforts, including the comprehensive management plans for Utah Lake and the Great Salt Lake, a mineral leasing plan, and assistance with the state water plan.
- FFSL is in the process of hiring a new archaeologist.
- Jan Morse reported the following from the Division of Oil, Gas and Mining (OGM):
  - OGM has two new abandoned mine closure projects in the Kane Creek area and Hard scrabble Canyon.
  - The federal "Good Samaritan" law for non-coal mine cleanups, officially known as the Good Samaritan Remediation of Abandoned Hardrock Mines Act of 2024, allows entities like the nonprofit group Trout Unlimited to voluntarily clean up abandoned hardrock mines without inheriting the liability for the original pollution.
  - OGM is currently in the process of applying for primacy, or primary enforcement authority, from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for Class VI carbon sequestration wells. Primacy would allow Utah to oversee the permitting and regulation of carbon storage wells within the state, which is currently managed directly by the EPA.
- Brian Speer reported the following from the Division of Waste Management and Radiation Control (DWMRC):
  - DWMRC has implemented online permitting and developed permit application checklists to streamline the process for public and private entities.
  - DWMRC received federal funding for a waste characterization study to assess what materials are going into landfills and potential recycling opportunities.
  - DWMRC is investigating a fire in Washington County near the Purgatory Landfill due to reports of chemical odors.
- Jason Gipson reported the following from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE):
  - USACE authorized a permit for the Utah Golden Spike State Monument.
  - USACE reauthorized General Permit 10 for stream alterations and the creation of a new general permit for emergency energy development projects.
  - USACE has a new online "Regulatory Request System (RRS)" portal for permit applications.
  - USACE's office will be relocating to Layton on the 25th.
- Quincy Bahr reported the following from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM):
  - BLM approved the environmental assessment for the Velvet Wood uranium mine and coal loadout.
  - Regarding the Skyline Coal and the Lisbon Valley copper mine EISs, work on both has advanced significantly.
  - BLM has conducted recent emergency wild horse gathers in Emery and Iron counties in Utah due to severe drought and overpopulation. In 2025, gathers took place in the Muddy Creek Herd Management Area (HMA) in Emery County and the North Hills Joint Management Area (JMA) in Iron and Washington counties.
  - The Sage Grouse planning effort is moving towards finalization in late September.

- Rachel Shilton reported the following from the Division of Water Resources (DWRe):
  - Stephanie McInness, DWRe, State Water Plan Manager, is in the midst of holding local scoping meetings for the state water plan.
  - The Great Salt Lake Basin Integrated Plan is progressing, with federal funding now released, allowing the Bureau of Reclamation's modeling efforts to begin.
  - The Watershed Councils are gaining ground and are interested in promoting proactive management of federal lands.

### **Other Business**

The next RDCC meeting will be held on November 6, 2025.

### **Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:50 a.m.