

Jordan River Commission Jordan River Watershed Council Meeting

May 22, 2025 | 10:00 a.m.

Meeting Location

Dry Creek Community Meeting Room
Lehi Civic Center
131 North 100 East
Lehi, Utah

And remotely via Zoom

Meeting Attendees

Watershed Council Members

Laura Briefer, Chair, Salt Lake City Department of Public Utilities
Heidi Hoven, Vice Chair, National Audubon Society
Jennifer Jastremsky, Draper (Alternate)
Craig Thaxton, Jordan River Foundation
Amanda Covington, Larry H. Miller Company
Councilmember Emily Lockhart, Lehi
Todd Munger, Lehi City (Alternate)
Councilmember Silvia Catten, Past Chair, Millcreek
Councilmember Ted Knowlton, North Salt Lake
Councilmember Brad Parry, Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation
Mayor Tish Buroker, Riverton (Alternate)
Lisa Hartman, Salt Lake County Mayor (Alternate)
Councilmember Robert Taylor, Saratoga Springs
David Jellen, Saratoga Springs (Alternate)
Matt Meyers, South Davis Sewer District
Lanese Hendrickson, South Davis Sewer District (Alternate)
Councilmember Don Shelton, South Jordan
Councilmember Ray deWolfe, South Salt Lake
Mayor Kristie Overson, Taylorsville
Derek Shumway, Utah County (Alternate)
Benn Buys, Utah Fairpark Area Investment & Restoration (UFAIR) District
Liz Larsen, Utah's Hogle Zoo
Cory Fralick, West Jordan (Alternate)

Watershed Council Advisors

Nathan Lee, Utah Department of Transportation
Emily Andrea, Utah Division of Forestry, Fire & State Lands
Emma Whitaker, Utah Division of Forestry, Fire & State Lands
Laura Haskell, Utah Division of Water Resources
Laura Vernon, Utah Division of Water Resources
Jodi Gardberg, Utah Division of Water Quality
Sam Taylor, Utah Division of Water Quality
Sandy Wingert, Utah Division of Water Quality
Victor Hollenbach, Utah Governor's Office
Senator Lincoln Fillmore, Utah Legislature
Paul Abate, Utah Reclamation, Mitigation & Conservation Commission

Commission Staff

Soren Simonsen, Executive Director & Secretary
Rachel Lyn, Communications & Outreach Manager
Caroline Johnston, Volunteer & Event Coordinator
Frances Schneider, Education Programs Intern
Audrey Zietz, Communications Intern

Visitors and Guests

Jason Brown, Envision Utah
Emma Clinton, Envision Utah
Eric McCulley, McCulley Watershed Consulting Services
Sindy Morales, West Jordan
Andrea Nelson, Office of Congressman Burgess Owens

Meeting Minutes

Laura Briefer, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:05 AM.

1. Welcome & Introductions

Laura Briefer welcomed Watershed Council members and other meeting participants, and invited participants to note their attendance on the attendance form.

2. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

3. Presentations & Discussion

- a) Great Salt Lake Basin Integrated Plan Public Engagement Presentation, Discussion & Input (00:05:45 on audio recording)

Laura Vernon, Great Salt Lake Basin Planner with the Utah Division of Water Resources, and Jason Brown, CEO of Envision Utah, led a public engagement presentation and discussion. Watershed Council meeting participants gave input for planning scenarios to guide current and future efforts to address the declining water level trend of Great Salt Lake, and inform the continued development of the Great Salt Lake Basin Integrated Plan to restore a healthier lake. Envision Utah is currently working with all of the Great Salt Lake related watershed councils to help gather input from community leaders, stakeholders, and the public.

Laura (lauravernon@utah.gov) and Jason (jbrown@envisionutah.org) provided their contact information, and invited anyone to reach out with questions.

Additional information about the Great Salt Lake Basin Integrated Plan is at <https://water.utah.gov/gsl-basin-integrated-plan>.

- b) Jordan River 2026 e.Coli TMDL Addendum Update (00:52:25 on audio recording)

Sam Taylor, Watershed Scientist, and Sandy Wingert, Provo and Jordan River Coordinator, with the Utah Division of Water Quality, provided an update of the Jordan River 2026 e.Coli Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Addendum regarding clean water impairments, with recommendations to address long term river and watershed implications and health. This Addendum addresses the Bingham Creek and City Creek sub-basins, both tributaries to the Jordan River. This TMDL Addendum is currently open for public review and comment until June 16, 2026.

Soren Simonsen asked about the Dry Creek Waste Ditch in Lehi, which has similar attributes and stormwater inputs as many impaired tributaries in Salt Lake County, and noting its role as a tributary to the Jordan River. He asked whether it has been evaluated under the various TMDL programs. Sam responded that this ditch is outside the scope of the areas he has reviewed. Sandy Wingert added that monitoring has not yet been conducted on the specific canals and areas referenced in Utah County. She explained that while other tributaries are currently prioritized, this could be discussed as a future opportunity for monitoring.

Additional information on the Addendum is available at
<https://lf-public.deq.utah.gov/WebLink/ElectronicFile.aspx?docid=697410&eqdocs=DWQ-2026-002870>.

Public comments can be provided at
<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdWAvVnvtbZiN81l7pEDUJujog4ODKjSYYLqE-XTt5QgXEWOA/viewform>,

c) Watershed Health & Challenges Roundtable Discussion : (01:22:38 on audio recording)

Heidi Hoven, PhD, Watershed Council Vice Chair, and manager of the Gillmor Sanctuary with Audubon Rockies, led a roundtable discussion on watershed health and challenges to help guide strategic initiatives, activities and areas of focus for the Jordan River Watershed Council. Heidi also asked members of the Watershed Council questions regarding what actions they can take to support the watershed and overall watershed health.

Watershed Council members shared and discussed several ideas.

Laura Briefer noted that Governor Spencer Cox has just announced a statewide State of Emergency due to extreme drought conditions.

Heidi Hoven discussed upstream invasive species infestations, including phragmites, as well as Russian Olive and tamarisk, all of which compromise watershed resources and watershed health.

Tish Buroker noted trails in Riverton that are located around waterways. Getting people out onto trails is vital to understanding and appreciating natural systems.

Silvia Catten discussed the pride that people take in their homes and gardens, but often overlook the impacts of stormwater systems on natural systems. We can all do a better job of educating the public.

Laura Haskell lives near the Jordan River Parkway in Murray. She noted that Murray removed invasive trees as part of riparian improvements, but some residents didn't understand why those trees were being removed. Public education is important to accompany restoration efforts.

Soren Simonsen noted that with the addition of river access and new recreation opportunities in the river, people are also noticing the impacts of stormwater systems on the river. He suggested that Watershed Council members consider upcoming opportunities for community service, highlighting events such as the America 250 celebration, 9/11 Day of Service, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, and Earth Day.

Laura Briefer noted wildfire risks in the upper watershed areas due to the extreme drought conditions this year.

Heidi asked if there are programs to help residents and constituents to become more educated and engaged in water conservation and water quality.

Emily Lockhart shared a "Waterwise Yard of the Month" program that Lehi is encouraging water conservation. She also highlighted an evaluation of parking requirements.

Silvia noted a developer in West Millcreek where they used a development agreement to redevelop a site near a creek, and would like to have done even more to preserve this riparian area.

Soren invited Watershed Council members who serve on city and county councils and commissions to have the Jordan River Commission staff come and share information and ideas.

Todd Munger shared some work of Lehi City staff to take a bigger role in managing storm systems and riparian restoration.

Laura Briefer reminded Watershed Council members to provide feedback on the State Water Plan.

d) Utah Legislature & Interim Study Review

This item was not discussed due to time constraints. Commission staff provided materials for review in the meeting packet.

e) Drought Contingency and Planning Updates

This item was not discussed due to time constraints.

f) State Water Plan Update

This item was not discussed due to time constraints.

4. Watershed Council Business

a) Watershed Council Announcements & Information from Members and Advisors

There were no Watershed Council announcements.

b) Adopt the March 5, 2026 Watershed Council Meeting Minutes

This item was postponed.

c) Upcoming Meetings (01:50:10 on audio recording)

Laura Briefer discussed holding a Watershed Council meeting in July to address some items of interest before the next regular meeting scheduled in September. Commission staff will follow up by email to explore possible dates.

5. Adjourn

Silvia Catten moved to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:57 AM.

A meeting recording, presentation, handout materials, and meeting minutes are available at <https://www.utah.gov/pmn/sitemap/notice/1047963.html>.

Meeting minutes prepared by Amelia Miller and Soren Simonsen, Secretary.