

Jordan River Commission Jordan River Watershed Council Meeting

March 5, 2026 | 10:00 a.m.

Meeting Location

Education Center at Conservation Garden Park
Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District
8275 South 1300 West, West Jordan, UT 84088

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
Councilmember Mackey Smith, Bluffdale
Commissioner John Crofts, Davis County
Councilmember Bryn Johnson, Draper
Betty Naylor, Gardner Heritage Farm
Craig Thaxton, Jordan River Foundation
Shazelle Terry, Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District
Councilmember Emily Lockhart, Lehi
Todd Munger, Lehi City (Alternate)
Mayor Dustin Gettel, Midvale
Councilmember Silvia Catten, Past Chair, Millcreek
Bruce Holyoak, Murray (Alternate)
Councilmember Ted Knowlton, North Salt Lake
Councilmember Brad Parry, Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation
Councilmember Alexander Johnson, Riverton
Brad Knoles, Rocky Mountain Power
Lisa Hartman, Salt Lake County Mayor (Alternate)
Councilmember Aaron Dekeyser, Sandy
Gina Grandpre, Saratoga Springs (Alternate)
Councilmember Don Shelton, South Jordan
Tim Brown, Tracy Aviary
Commissioner Skyler Beltran, Utah County
Benn Buys, Utah Fairpark Area Investment & Restoration (UFAIR) District
Liz Larsen, Utah's Hogle Zoo
Nichol Bourdeaux, Utah Transit Authority
Cory Fralick, West Jordan (Alternate)

Watershed Council Advisors

Laura Haskell, Utah Division of Water Resources
Aspen Johnston, Utah Division of Water Resources
Stephanie McGinnis, Utah Division of Water Resources
Carly Payne, Utah Division of Water Resources
Laura Vernon, Utah Division of Water Resources
Candice Hasenyager, Utah Division of Water Quality
Sandy Wingert, Utah Division of Water Quality
Ajla Hadzialijagic, Utah Governor's Office
Commission Staff

Soren Simonsen, Executive Director & Secretary
Rachel Turk, Communications & Outreach Manager
Caroline Johnston, Volunteer & Event Coordinator
Macall Clapham, Volunteer Program Intern

Visitors and Guests

David Jellen, Saratoga Springs
Dallen Webster, Barr Engineering
Steve Jones, Hansen, Allen & Luce
Easton Hopkins
Zach Shepherd, Office of Congresswoman Celeste Maloy
Marisa Weinberg, Great Salt Lake Sentinel Landscape
Cody Lutz, Envision Utah

Meeting Minutes

Laura Briefer, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:02 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. Snow & Precipitation Levels, Drought Contingency, and Conservation Planning Updates & Discussion (00:05:58 on audio recording)

Laura Haskell, with the Division of Water Resources, Shazelle Terry, with the Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District, and Laura Briefer, with the Salt Lake City Department of Public Utilities, presented state and local updates on drought contingency planning and conservation strategies. The discussion highlighted concerns about low winter snowpack levels and their impact on water storage, resource availability, Utah Lake, and Great Salt Lake.

Laura noted the Salt Lake Public Utility water service area extends well beyond Salt Lake City municipal boundaries to include several east side communities of the Salt Lake Valley. She highlighted that the water sources differ substantially from Jordan Valley's, relying heavily on surface water from Wasatch Mountain streams, which are highly dependent on snowpack.

b. State Water Plan Update and Discussion (00:24:02 on audio recording)

Stephanie McGinnis shared an update on the State Water Plan. As the State Water Plan Manager with the Utah Division of Water Resources, she is gathering feedback and input from Watershed Council members on the plan.

Soren Simonsen noted that while agriculture may not be the primary focus for the Jordan River watershed, other watershed councils have emphasized this important use of water resources, and recommended considering it within broader watershed planning. Stephanie McGinnis noted that there will be an entire chapter on agriculture in the plan.

Laura Briefer raised the idea of highlighting cities that have adopted waterwise landscaping ordinances. There was a general agreement among the members of the Watershed Council about moving forward with this idea.

Additional State Water Plan information can be found at <https://water.utah.gov/state-water-plan>.

c. Great Salt Lake Basin Integrated Plan Update (00:42:35 on audio recording)

Laura Vernon, Great Salt Lake Basin Planner with the Utah Division of Water Resources, provided an update on the Great Salt Lake Basin Integrated Plan and solicited input and feedback from the Watershed Council.

Cody Lutz from Envision Utah shared information about upcoming public outreach and engagement. Laura Breifer suggested that a major part of the next Watershed Council meeting be dedicated to this outreach effort.

Additional information about the Basin Integrated Plan and Envision Utah's public engagement efforts can be found at <https://water.utah.gov/gsl-basin-integrated-plan>.

d. Municipal & Industrial (M&I) Water Conservation Opportunities Report & Discussion (00:57:20 on audio recording)

Steve Jones, PE, CEO, and Easton Hopkins, PE, Staff Engineer, with Hansen Allen & Luce, presented a summary of the Municipal & Industrial Water Conservation Opportunities report prepared last September. They discussed the findings and recommendations in connection with the Great Salt Lake Basin Integrated Plan.

Candice Hasenyager added that there is a similar report focused on agriculture that could be valuable to discuss.

Laura Briefer noted the complexities involved in implementing the policies outlined in these reports. She inquired about the most appropriate point of contact for understanding how the report's conceptual ideas translate into practical action. Laura Vernon offered to serve as the contact person for anyone seeking further information.

A copy of the full report is available at https://water.utah.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/MI-Water-Conservation-Opportunities-Report-09_02_2025.pdf.

e. Jordan River Commission Staff Reports (01:24:51 on audio recording)

Rachel Lyn and Caroline Johnston from the Jordan River Commission provided staff reports that were postponed from the previous Governing Board meeting, covering a period from October through December 2025.

Rachel Lyn discussed a variety of projects including education programs, social media updates, the new Jordan River Commission website, the My Jordan River App, and Earth Day programming.

Caroline Johnston provided a summary of the volunteer events and activities over the past several months.

Soren Simonsen added an update regarding activities surrounding the America 250 celebration and the 25th Anniversary of 9/11.

f. Utah Legislature General Session Update (01:44:46 on audio recording)

Soren Simonsen provided an update on legislation, appropriations, and other matters related to the 2026 General Session of the Utah Legislature.

Laura Breifer discussed adding more time to Watershed Council meetings to discuss legislation in the future.

4. Watershed Council Business

- a) Adopt December 4, 2025, Watershed Council Meeting Minutes (00:54:00 on audio recording)

Mayor Dustin Gettel moved to adopt the December 4, 2025, Watershed Council Meeting Minutes. Councilmember Don Shelton seconded the motion.

There was no further discussion of the motion.

The motion was unanimously approved by Watershed Council Members present.

- b) Watershed Council Announcements & Information from Members and Advisors (01:54:54 on audio recording)

Emily Andrea was introduced as the new Program Manager for the Utah Lake and Jordan River at the Utah Division of Forestry, Fire & State Lands (FFSL).

- c) Upcoming Meetings (01:57:20 on audio recording)

The next upcoming meetings were discussed. The Governing Board will hold a meeting for the Commission Budget Hearing & Adoption on Thursday, April 2, 2026, at 10:00 AM.

A Watershed Council Meeting is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, May 7, 2026, at 10:00 AM. This meeting may change due to a conflict with the Great Salt Lake Issues Forum.

A Commission & Watershed Council Field Trip is planned for Thursday, May 21, 2026, with the time and location to be announced.

5. Adjourn

Mayor Dustin Gettel moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilmember Silvia Catten seconded the motion.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:05 PM.

A meeting recording, presentation, handout materials, and meeting minutes are available at <https://www.utah.gov/pmn/sitemap/notice/1047961.html>.

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