July 9, 2026

Utah Division of Forestry, Fire & State Lands

Jordan River Watershed Council Meeting

1. Utah Lake and Great Salt Lake CMP Updates
2. Wildland fire response and hazardous fuels mitigation
3. Quick summary of legislative changes impacting sovereign lands

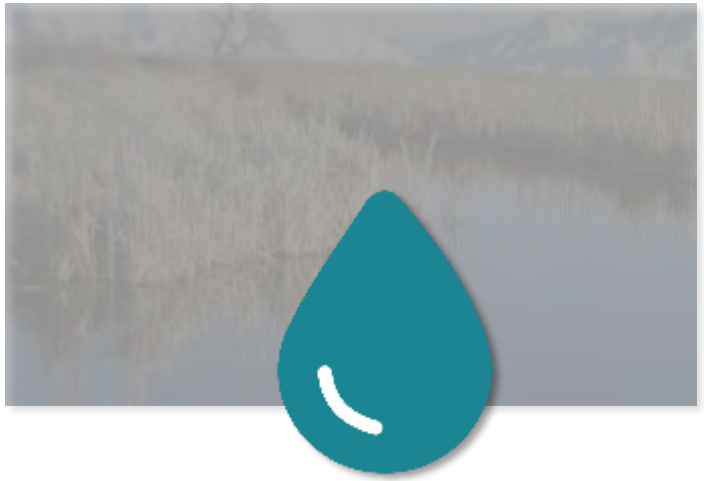
Emma Whitaker, Lands Operations Manager, FFSL

About FFSL

Focused on Utah’s Resources

FORESTY

FIRE

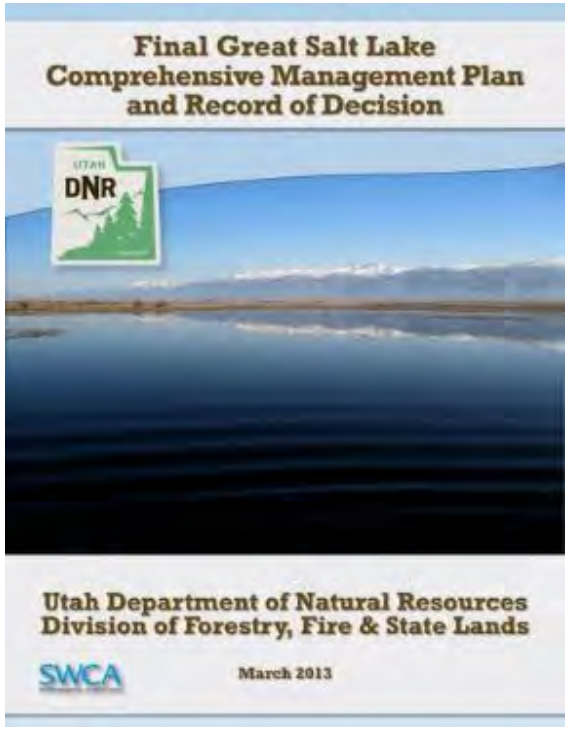


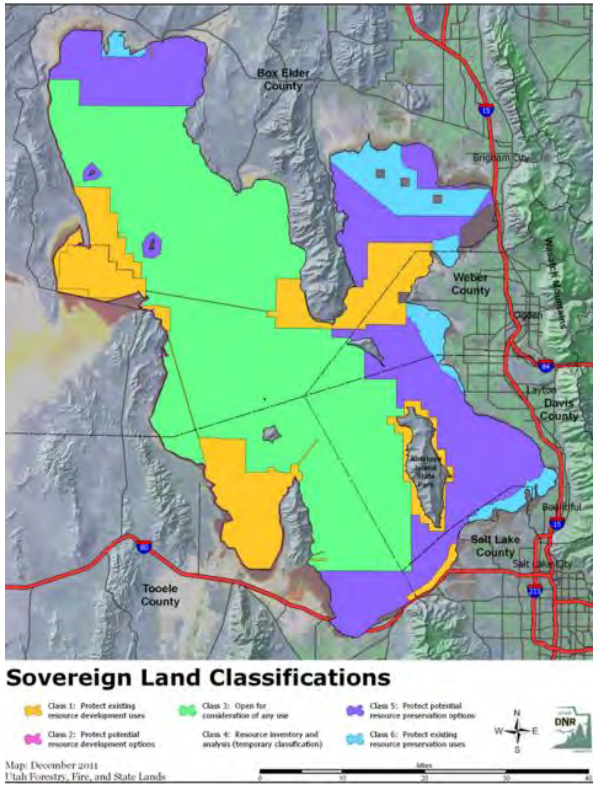
STATE LANDS

About the CMPs

What they do

- ✓ Manage sovereign lands under the principles of the public trust doctrine
- ✓ Management strategies that balance various interests
- ✓ Ensure that resources are managed under multiple-use, sustained-yield principles
- ✓ Clarify allowable uses on sovereign lands



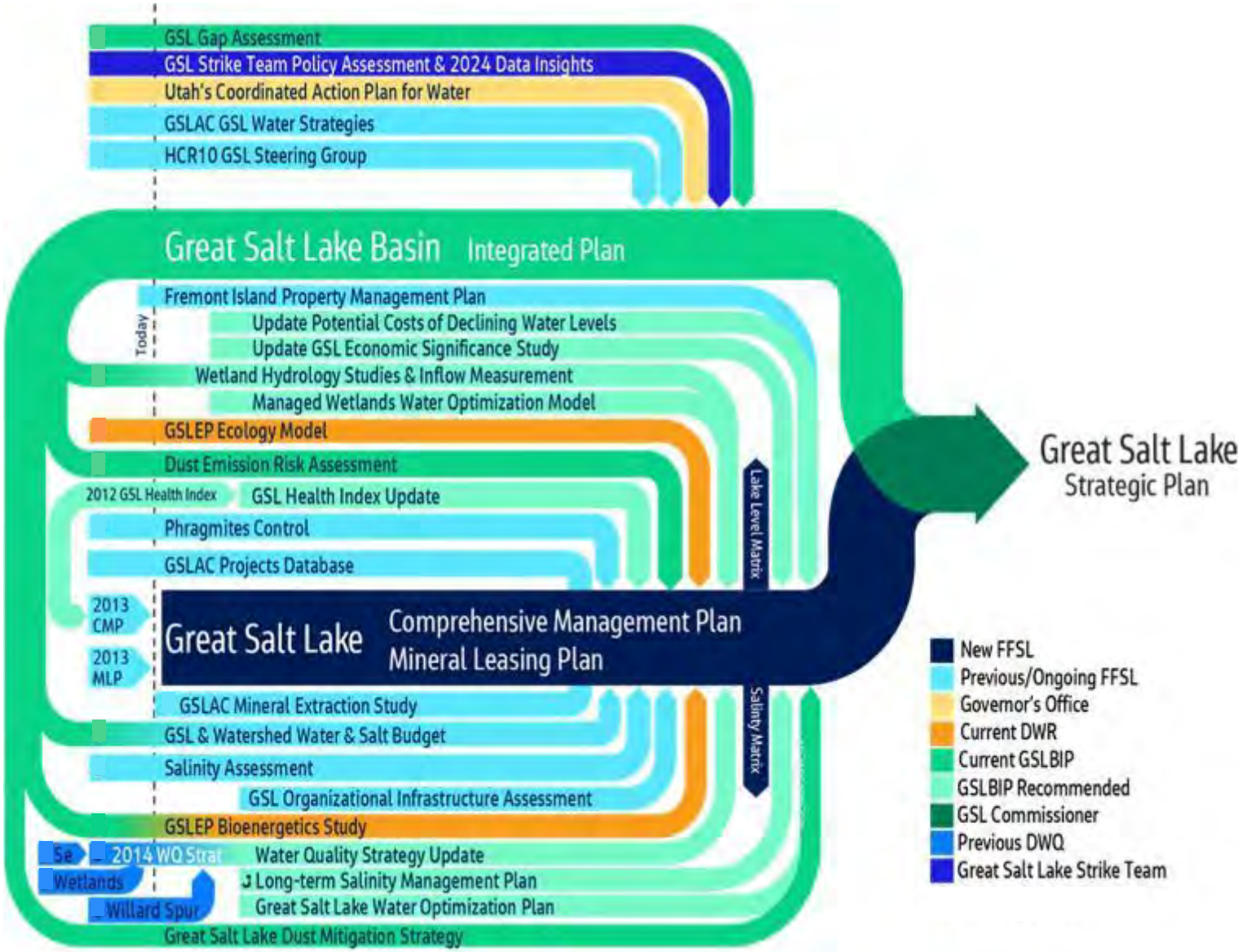


About the CMPs

What they don't *do*

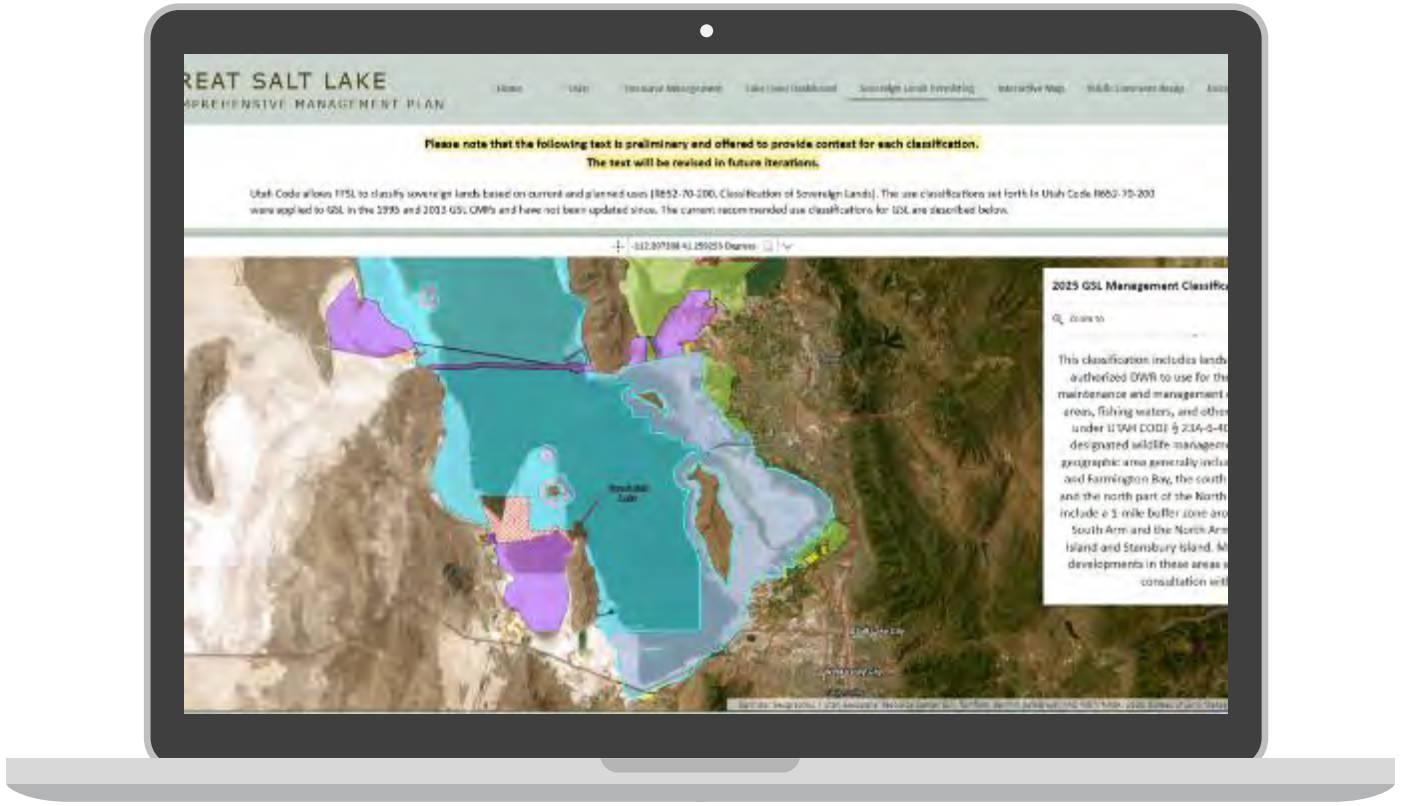
- ✘ Duplicate the work of other agencies
- ✘ Upstream water management
- ✘ Water conservation or supply management decisions
- ✘ Reservoir storage operations
- ✘ Surface or groundwater inflow management decisions

A LOT of Collaboration



A Modern Update – Online Tool

- Visualizes current vulnerabilities based on lake level and salinity
- Links lake-level conditions with corresponding management strategies
- Considers and includes strategies for the “what if?”
- Designed for ongoing updates as conditions and knowledge evolve



UTAH DNR FORESTRY, FIRE & STATE LANDS

Water Overview
Water Quality
Climate
Flooding
High Lake Levels
Lake Hydrology
Salinity
Water Distribution
Water Rights

Water Quality

Information | Management

Resource Trends

Lake-Level Resource Condition

No major impacts from lake level.

Resource Management Actions at Current Lake Level

Participate with DWQ to research water quality implications of high lake levels.

Management Strategies with All Lake Levels

- When considering new permits or permit renewals, coordinate leasing with DWQ-required permits (UPES, general, stormwater, and the associated antidegradation review) where applicable, including research on negative water quality impacts associated with actions.
- Support DWQ to establish numeric criteria for mercury, nutrients, and other contaminants as they are identified and as they have the potential to impact GSL recreation and aquatic life beneficial uses.
- Communicate new project proposals to DWQ to help ensure impacts do not affect compliance with the existing narrative standard and the numeric selenium standard.
- Continue to support DWQ's efforts to assess the water quality condition of the lake and track contaminants of concern.
- Coordinate with DWQ to help ensure compliance with Utah Water Quality Act regulations (UTAH ADMIN. CODE R317).

Forestry, Fire, and State Lands

FFSL does not have jurisdiction over the water quality of Great Salt Lake, but does have a responsibility to coordinate the efforts of other agencies to protect the public trust through multiple-use, sustained yield principles.

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801-538-5418

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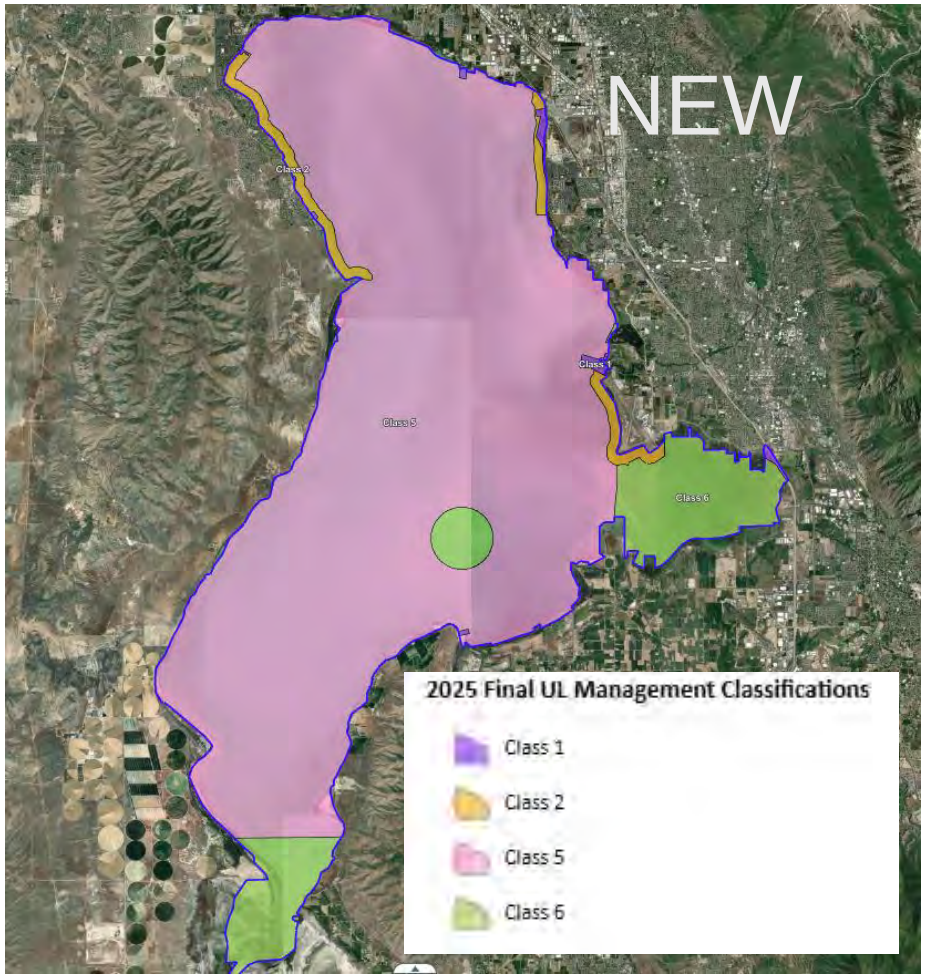
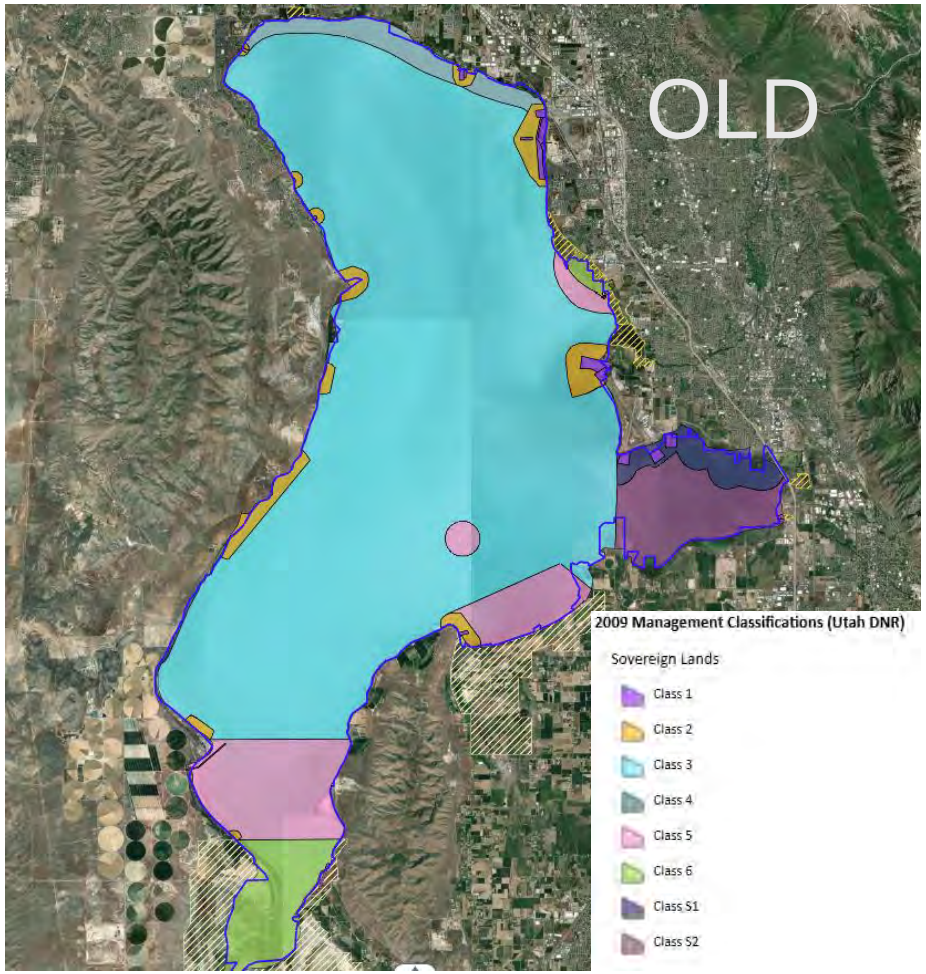
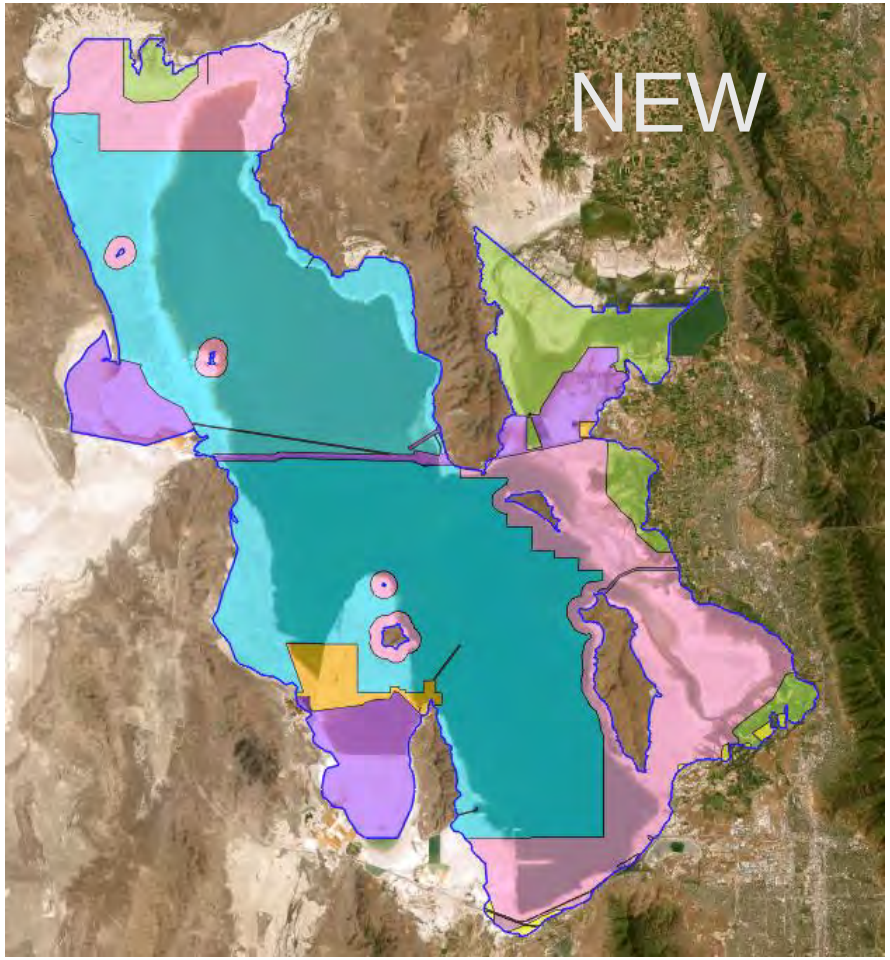
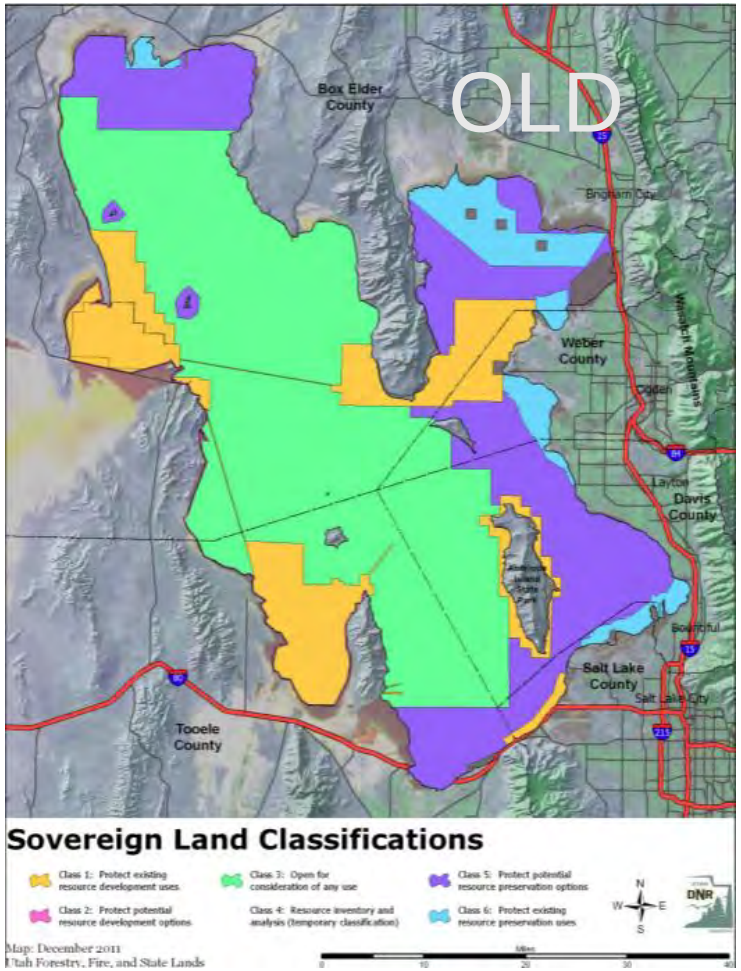
Utah Lake Management Classifications

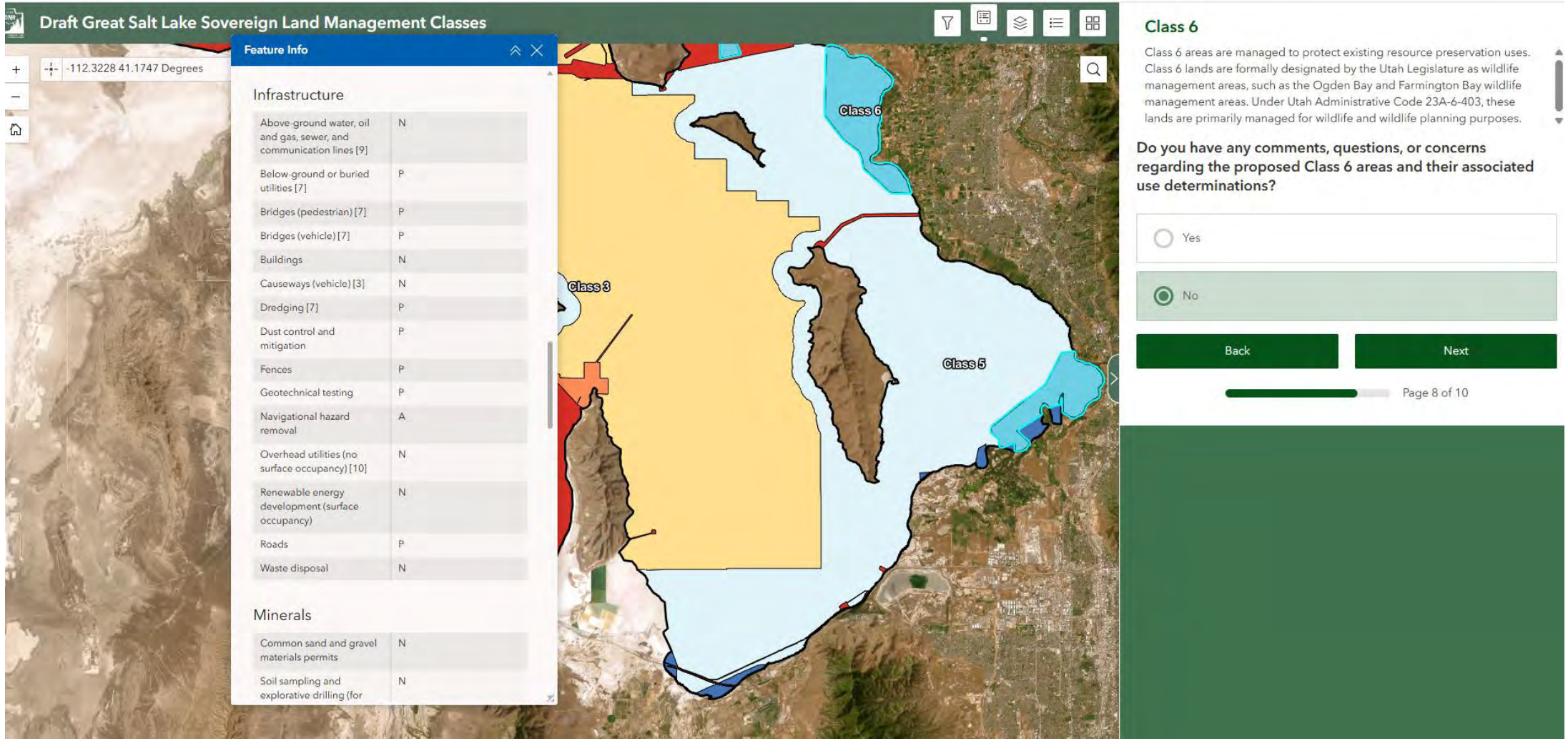




GSL Management Classifications






Draft Great Salt Lake Sovereign Land Management Classes
-112.3228 41.1747 Degrees
Feature Info
Infrastructure
Above-ground water, oil and gas, sewer, and communication lines [9] N
Below-ground or buried utilities [7] P
Bridges (pedestrian) [7] P
Bridges (vehicle) [7] P
Buildings N
Causeways (vehicle) [3] N
Dredging [7] P
Dust control and mitigation P
Fences P
Geotechnical testing P
Navigational hazard removal A
Overhead utilities (no surface occupancy) [10] N
Renewable energy development (surface occupancy) N
Roads P
Waste disposal N
Minerals
Common sand and gravel materials permits N
Soil sampling and explorative drilling (for N
Class 6
Class 3
Class 5
Class 6
Class 6 areas are managed to protect existing resource preservation uses. Class 6 lands are formally designated by the Utah Legislature as wildlife management areas, such as the Ogden Bay and Farmington Bay wildlife management areas. Under Utah Administrative Code 23A-6-403, these lands are primarily managed for wildlife and wildlife planning purposes.
Do you have any comments, questions, or concerns regarding the proposed Class 6 areas and their associated use determinations?
Yes
No
Back
Next
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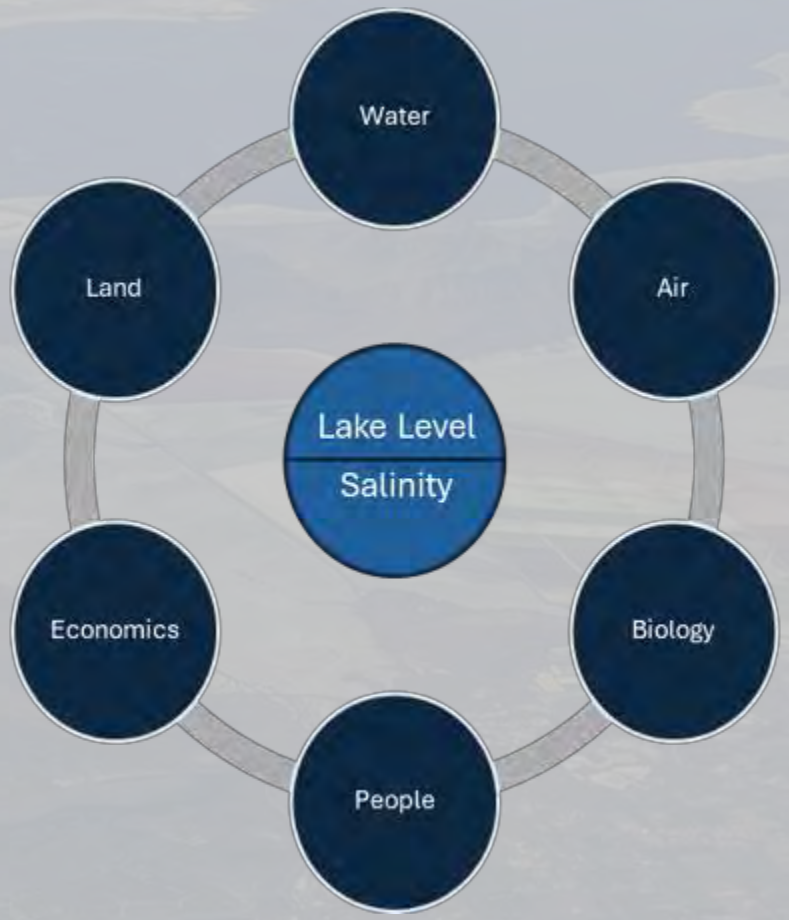
Land Use Surveys

Great Salt Lake Land Use Survey

Utah Lake Land Use Survey

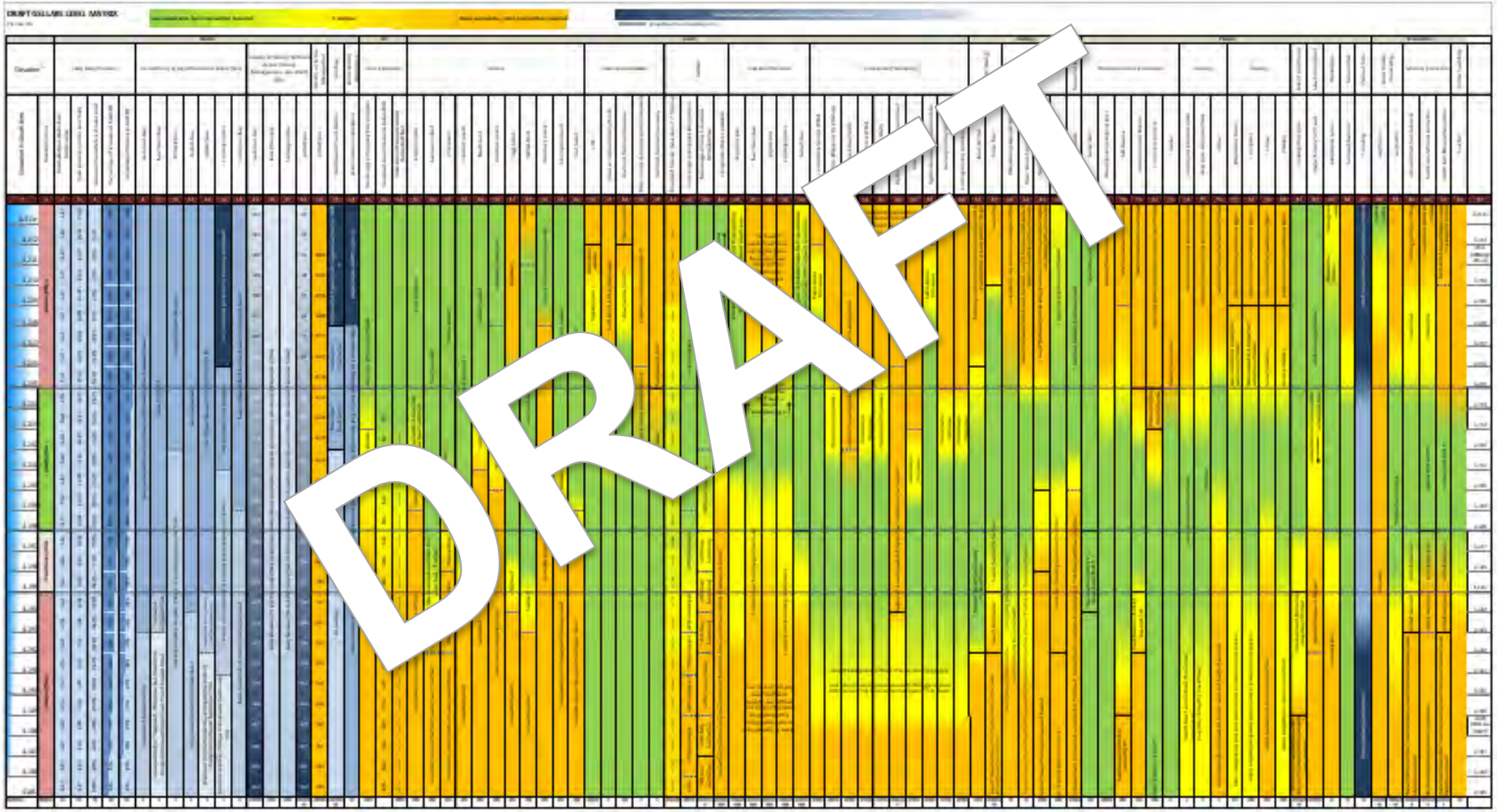
GSL Elevation Matrix

- Not meant to be viewed as a scorecard
- Intended to highlight vulnerabilities, largely based on current elevation and forecasted trends in elevation
- Our goal is to guide management decisions



2026 Draft
Great Salt Lake Elevation Matrix

Provide Your Comments on the Draft Lake Level Elevation Matrix



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Visit Our Websites

Great Salt Lake

Utah Lake

UTAH DNR FORESTRY, FIRE & STATE LANDS

2026 Wildland Fire Response and Fuels Reduction

- Bonneville Fire behind the U: Significant effort was made to keep the fire from approaching City Creek Canyon and impacting the watershed
- Emigration Canyon hazardous fuels mitigation work-
  - Parleys Canyon WRI Fuel Mitigation Project (Adjacent Canyon to Emigration).
  - Freeze Creek Shaded Fuel Break
  - Emigration Chipper Days: Work done by UFA, ongoing for the last 3 to 4 years
  - North Salt Lake WRI Chipping project (mouth of Emigration Canyon)
- Beginning fuels mitigation work with the Cardiff Fork neighborhood in Big Cottonwood

Legislative Updates

- 2022 revisions to Utah Code 73-3-30: allows FFSL to lease and buy water rights for use on sovereign lands
- GSL Preservation Act – Utah Code 65A-17: hugely impactful to management of GSL and its mineral resources

Thank you.

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