

Utah's Coordinated Action Plan for Water

November 2022

A collaborative effort from:

Governor's Office of Planning & Budget
Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity
Department of Agriculture and Food
Department of Environmental Quality
Department of Natural Resources
Colorado River Authority of Utah



Utah's Water Commitments & Priority Actions



1

Utah is committed to increasing the resiliency of our water supply and quality by maintaining and improving our current **water infrastructure**, improving data collection, and by investigating opportunities for new water supply and storage.

1. Create a framework to assist local governments and agricultural water providers in data collection and analysis, prioritization of needs, access to funding, and asset management planning.
2. Develop a series of needs assessments for local-scale water systems across the state, including both municipal and agricultural systems.
3. Continue to be a matching partner in funding the state's water infrastructure needs as the state grows, and assess the evaluation criteria to ensure these state grant and loan programs are advancing the state's priorities, including conservation.
4. Streamline project approvals, rules, and regulations to encourage innovation in Utah's water management such as aquifer storage and recovery (ASR), water reuse, desalinization, green infrastructure, new storage, and public-private partnerships.
5. Invest in research, data collection, and operator training to ensure the state's water infrastructure benefits from the most accurate information and best practices.



2

Utah is committed to using our existing water supply as wisely as possible, by reducing the amount of water consumed through **conservation**, ensuring access to safe and reliable drinking water, and improving the quality of water as it leaves our communities.

1. Determine and quantify the contributions that increasing water use efficiencies and conservation, including water rates, can make to future water supplies.
2. Continue to expand secondary metering throughout the state, along with education for Utah residents on the importance of water conservation.
3. Initiate and facilitate ongoing conversations to link economic growth strategies with improved and reduced water usage.
4. Assist local governments with the development of plans, ordinances, policies, regulations, and programs to link land use and water planning, encourage conservation, improve water quality, and protect drinking water.
5. Assist local governments with the implementation of low-impact development and stormwater treatment systems to reduce pollution from development and increase conservation.
6. Look for opportunities for water initiatives to serve multiple goals and priorities for communities, including water quality, outdoor recreation access, and wildlife management.



3

Utah is committed to optimizing the use and management of our finite water supplies in order to preserve the state's **agricultural economy** and ensure a sustainable and prosperous future.

1. Continue to execute and invest in agricultural infrastructure, including water optimization program projects, irrigation system automation, metering, and data storage and dissemination.
2. Deploy strategies such as water banking, split season leases, and in-stream flows to create water use flexibility and protect critical habitats.
3. Continue to invest in water quality programs related to agriculture.
4. Educate and engage producers and the public to improve understanding of water rights, and their role in maintaining water quality and conservation.
5. Invest in agricultural research and data collection to ensure decisions and investments are based on the most accurate information and best practices.



4

Utah is committed to maintaining and improving the **health of our waters and watershed**—with emphasis on our forests, Great Salt Lake, Bear Lake, and Utah Lake—to support their continued multiple uses.

1. Maintain and improve efforts to collaborate with relevant agencies, policy makers, and land and water managers at the watershed scale to affect watershed health.
2. Develop and enhance communications strategies and educational tools to assist the public in water conservation and help them understand their role in maintaining healthy watersheds.
3. Improve our understanding of the critical thresholds impacting the Great Salt Lake and its tributaries, the Colorado River, and forest health, and develop management strategies to preserve and augment water supplies.
4. Prioritize and target land conservation and restoration in riparian corridors, floodplains, and other areas with high values for watershed health, wildlife habitat, and public access and recreation.
5. Control invasive plant and animal species to minimize water loss and restore natural ecosystems.

Inter-agency Coordination and Collaboration

The development of this Coordinated Action Plan for Water piloted a process for inter-agency collaboration that brought together six different agencies to identify common goals and solutions. The process facilitated both vertical and horizontal agency coordination.

This same process could be utilized for all new water-related project undertakings and initiatives. Proactive and intentional coordination ensures that Utah's state agencies are working together towards strategic goals, public resources are allocated as effectively as possible, and potential conflicts are resolved along the way.

Horizontal Coordination



Governor's Office of
Economic Opportunity

Vertical Coordination

Technical Committee

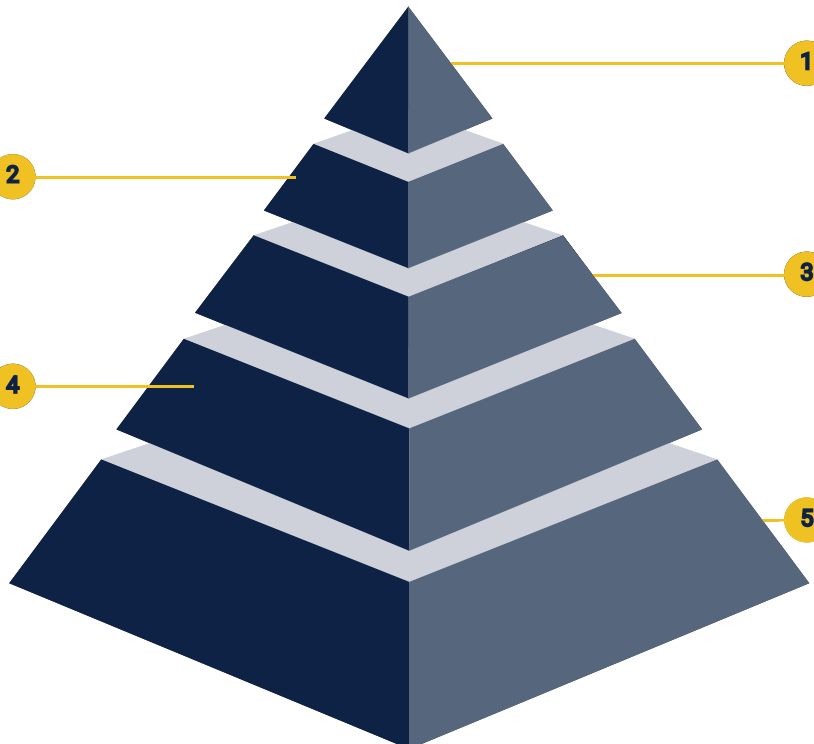
Key staff from each Division assigned to be technical experts

2

Project Champions

Key staff from one or more Divisions assigned to manage implementation of specific action items

4



Policy Committee

Directors from each Department and Division to drive plan content

Chapter Committees

Select subject matter experts from Technical Committee by topic

Stakeholders

Coordination with other stakeholders as needed to implement specific actions