



June 2025

Utah Reclamation Mitigation and Conservation Commission  
FY2024 ANNUAL REPORT



## ABOUT THE MITIGATION COMMISSION

The Mitigation Commission is to comprise a five-member Commission and twelve staff. Commission members are Utah residents. The President of the United States appoints all members from nominations: one from the U.S. Senate; one from the U.S. House of Representatives; one from the Central Utah Water Conservancy District (the entity primarily responsible for constructing the Central Utah Project, for which mitigation must be completed); and two from the Governor of Utah – one from the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, and one recommended by Utah environmental organizations. Except for the District representative, all members are to have training or experience in wildlife or environmental conservation matters. The Commission is responsible for appointing an Executive Director, who in turn is responsible for hiring staff.

### Commissioners

Brad Barber, Chair (Utah Environmental Organizations)  
Gene Shawcroft (Central Utah Water Conservancy District)  
Robert L. Morgan (U.S. Senate)  
J. Shirley (Utah Division of Wildlife Resources)  
Riley Peck (Utah Division of Wildlife Resources – pending nomination)  
*At publication, the U.S. House of Representatives nomination is pending appointment*

### FY2024 Staff

Michael D. Mills, Executive Director  
Kim Rodgers, Administrative Assistant  
Paul Abate, Project Coordinator  
B. Eric McCulley, Project Coordinator  
Jessica Stegmeier, Project Coordinator  
Paula Trater, Biological Technician  
Isabelle Simmons, Resource Specialist  
Diane Simmons, Public Information Officer  
Channa Vyfvinkel, Financial Officer  
Mata Lolofie, Accounting Technician



Staff technician and volunteer coordinator Paula Trater hosts a table at the Salt Lake County Watershed Symposium

### Office Location

Utah Reclamation Mitigation & Conservation Commission  
230 South 500 East, Suite 230, Salt Lake City, Utah 84102-2045  
Phone: 801-524-3146 | Email: [urmcc@usbr.gov](mailto:urmcc@usbr.gov)



**On the cover:** Utah Valley University students celebrate Science Week in September 2024 by tackling invasive tamarisks and Russian olive trees in the restored Provo River Delta (see page 4). Twenty-five such events were organized during FY2024 with volunteers of all ages contributing 763 hours weeding, planting and cleaning up the area. These were part of the 70+ volunteer events, tours and outreach efforts held throughout the year where an estimated 2,700 community members connected with the Delta.

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Young students photograph a swan at the Provo River Delta

Introduction

Thank you for reading the FY2024 Annual Report of the Utah Reclamation Mitigation and Conservation Commission (Mitigation Commission). The Mitigation Commission was authorized in 1992 through the Central Utah Project Completion Act (CUPCA; Titles II through VI of Public Law 102-575). The Mitigation Commission’s primary responsibility is to plan, coordinate and fund programs to mitigate for adverse effects of the Bonneville Unit of the Central Utah Project and to conserve fish, wildlife and related recreation resources in Utah.

This report highlights our fiscal year 2024 accomplishments and describes the effectiveness of our actions toward meeting CUPCA requirements. It also identifies planned future actions and potential revisions to our Mitigation and Conservation Plan. The current Plan covers the five-year period of FY2021 through FY2025.

The Mitigation Commission’s program relies on partnerships with the larger natural resource community. The Mitigation Commission forms partnerships with natural resource agencies, State and local governments, Indian tribes, universities and non-profit organizations, to carry out its many projects in a coordinated and cooperative manner. Therefore, throughout this report, the term “we” is intended to include the many partners essential to Mitigation Commission projects. Please refer to the back page of this report for a listing of our funding partners.

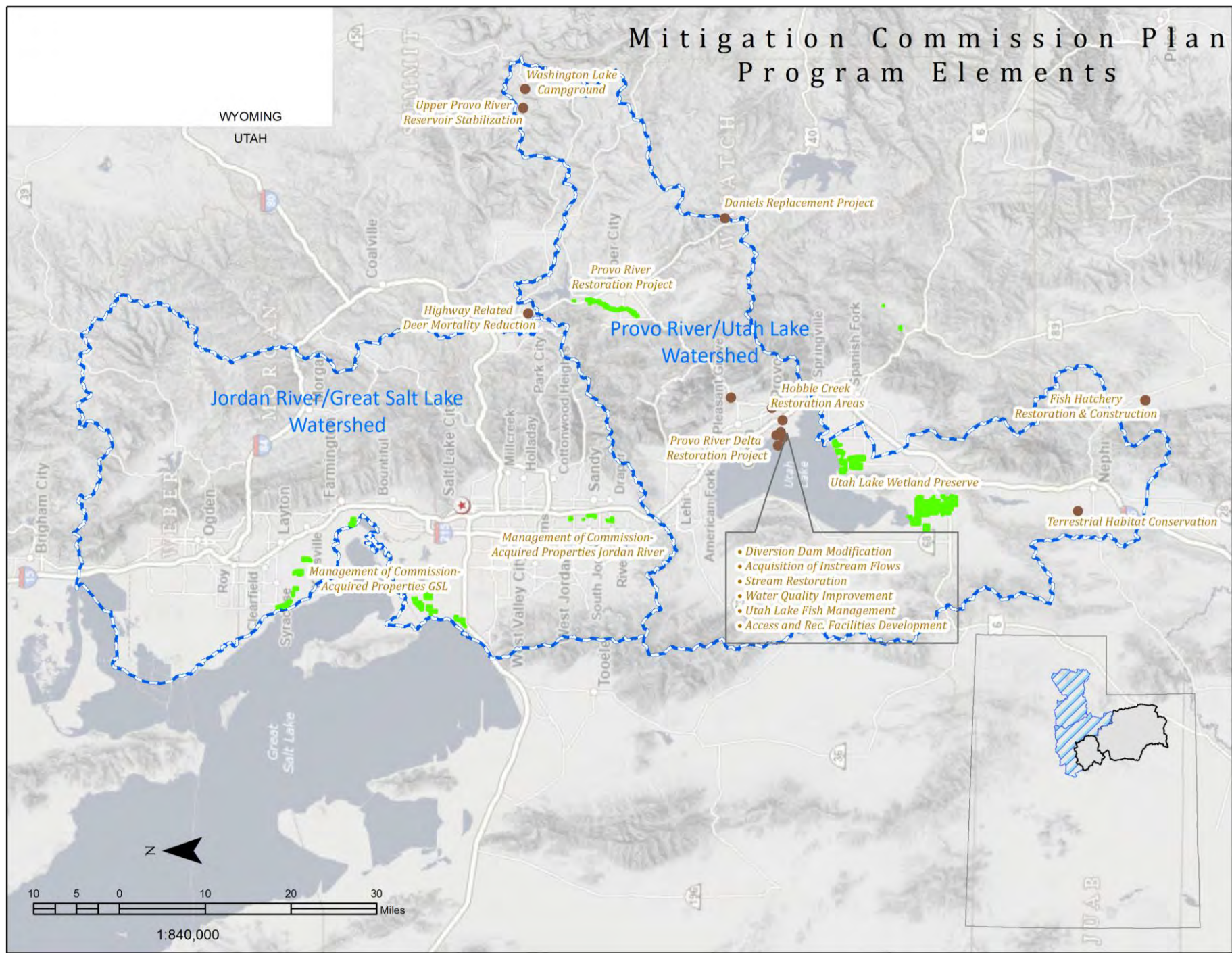
From FY1994 through FY2024, the Mitigation Commission enacted 341 funding agreements with partners in order to carry out its work. During this 30-year period, the Mitigation Commission expended more than \$345 million planning and implementing projects on the ground to fulfill fish and wildlife mitigation requirements and other conservation objectives of CUPCA.

During FY2024, the Mitigation Commission celebrated some significant milestones associated with several projects. Among these accomplishments, the ongoing establishment of the Provo River Delta and increase in wildlife activity, June sucker spawning, and recreational use associated with the delta. We have also made progress on the Middle Strawberry Restoration Project where work will soon start to rehabilitate damage from the Dollar Ridge Fire.

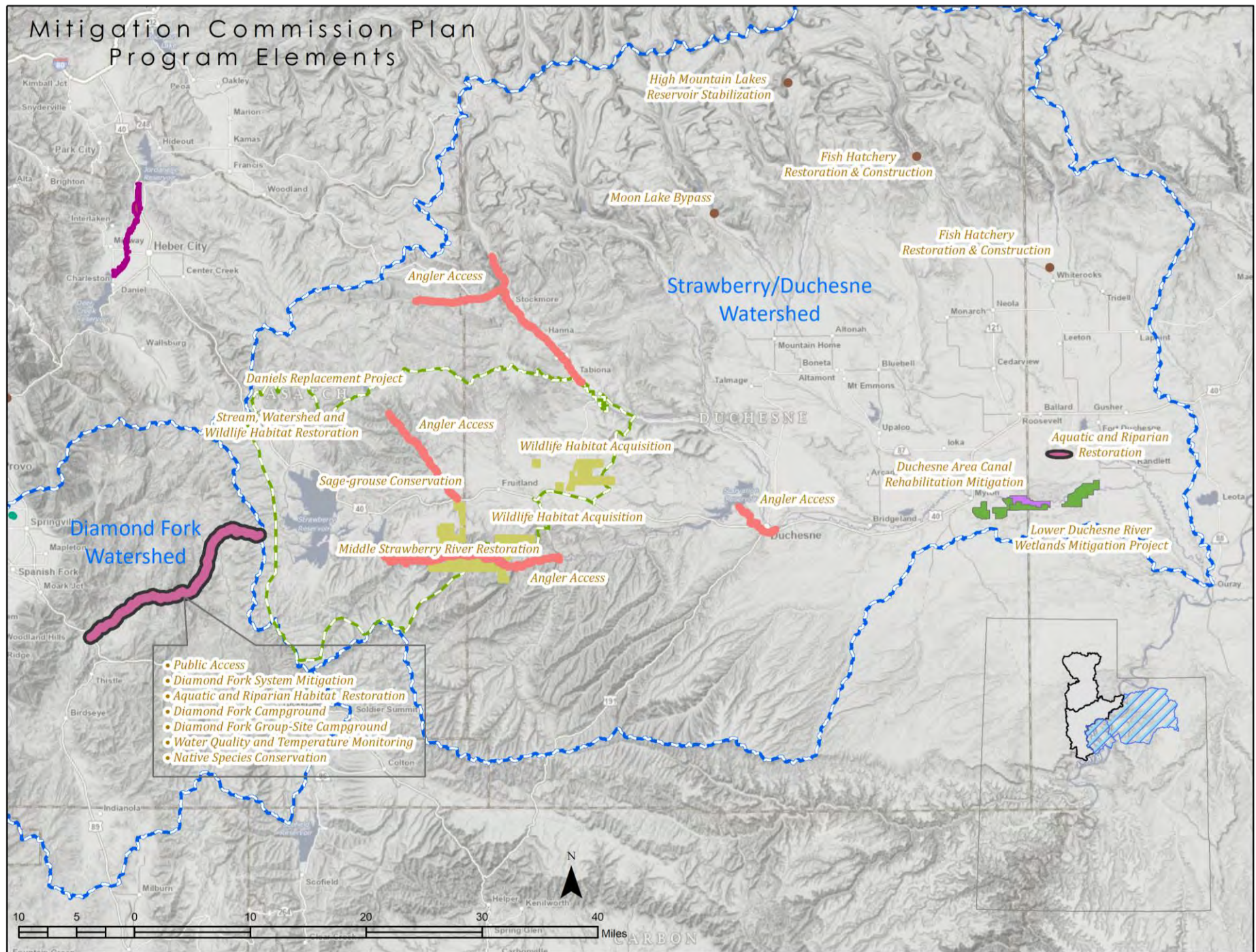
Comments on the Draft FY2024 Annual Report

A draft of this report was made available for a 30-day public and agency review. Positive feedback and editorial comments were received, which were appreciated. Other than these, no further comments were received.











## LOWER PROVO RIVER - UTAH LAKE WATERSHED

### FY2024 Actions and Effectiveness

#### Provo River Delta Restoration Project at Utah Lake

- Made final preparations to open restored Delta to the public.
- Neared completion of Skipper Bay Trailhead and connector trail construction and paving along Delta south berm.
- Completed non-motorized boat ramp at the Skipper Bay Trailhead to provide for research and recreational boat access.
- Neared completion of new wildlife viewing tower construction near the Delta and Utah Lake interface.
- Worked with Provo City Parks to begin construction of the Delta Gateway Park.

#### June Sucker Recovery

- Coordinated with Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR) to monitor the Delta for adult, larval, and juvenile June sucker activity. More than 3,785 tagged adults were observed moving through the Delta into the lower Provo River, representing tens of thousands of spawning June sucker. After spawning, thousands of larvae and small numbers of juveniles were observed using Delta habitat.
- Funded vegetation monitoring to determine recovery of Delta aquatic plants and vegetative species and habitat available to young-of-the-year June sucker.
- Supported development of hatchery-reared larval June sucker, which were incorporated into the June Sucker Recovery Implementation Program's (JSRIP) stocking program for Utah Lake.

#### Lower Provo River Instream Flow Provisions

- Worked with June Sucker Flow Workgroup to help manage instream flows for a successful 2024 June sucker spawning period.
- Supported delivery of summer base flows to help meet the wet year target of 113 cfs to ensure the Provo River and Delta had enough water to keep temperature and oxygen levels healthy for fish and supportive of outdoor recreation.



Delta trails construction and paving



Metal base at wildlife viewing tower site



Skipper Bay Trailhead amenities: vault restroom (left) and non-motorized boat ramp (right)



UDWR biologists conduct juvenile June sucker surveys in the Provo River Delta, Spring 2024



## Utah Lake Wetland Preserve

- Funded management activities including weed control, vegetation management, water management, fencing, and public access.
- Delivered follow up offers to respective landowner for two potential land acquisitions.
- Evaluated bridge, powerline, and roadway easement requests for effects to project lands and need for required permitting.

## Planned Activities

- Complete construction of wildlife viewing tower, Skipper Bay trailhead and Delta trails and open the Delta to the public.
- Complete construction of recreation improvements and channel facilities on original Provo River channel, including installing three public fishing platforms and two non-motorized boat launches. Coordinate with Provo City on Delta Gateway Park construction and public opening.
- Work with UDWR to develop a long-term stewardship and management plan for the Delta; implement weed control, additional revegetation, and other vegetation management activities for Delta habitats.
- Acquire additional water rights to support Lower Provo River instream flows.
- Work with June Sucker Flow Workgroup to assess potential spring runoff for 2025 and utilize JSRIP water rights to optimize and deliver spawning flows and summer instream flows.
- Install PIT (passive integrated transponder) tag antennas in the four Delta outflow channels to monitor June sucker spawning movements.
- Complete assessment of Utah Lake Wetland Preserve private land parcel offers and, if possible, complete land purchases in FY2025.



Utah Division of Wildlife Resources crew performs vegetation management, phragmites control and fence repairs at the Utah Lake Wetland Preserve



Construction of Delta trails, trailhead, viewing tower and recreation amenities was completed very early in FY2025 and the area opened to the public on October 26, 2024.





## MIDDLE PROVO RIVER WATERSHED

### FY2024 Actions and Effectiveness

#### Provo River Restoration Project (PRRP)

- Continued PRRP management activities including integrated weed control, fence and access point maintenance, irrigation turns, field office maintenance, vegetation monitoring, addressing trespass and boundary encroachment issues, dismantling unauthorized structures and makeshift shelters, and managing defensible space at the PRRP field office. Utah Conservation Corps (UCC) crews assisted with many of these tasks.
- Began planning for bank work needed to stabilize a river bend that is approaching the PRRP corridor boundary.
- Addressed beaver dam activity near an angler access site to prevent road flooding while accommodating beaver and frog habitation.
- Worked with Mountainland Association of Governments and Wasatch County to plan for a pedestrian trail adjacent to Heber Valley Railroad crossing in PRRP.
- Hosted eight field trips and outreach events for students ranging from kindergarten to university level students, anglers, and other community members; activities included pulling invasive weeds, planting native vegetation, and harvesting hundreds of willow cuttings for planting at the PRRP and Provo River Delta Project.
- Continued 'Participating Agency' role on planned Heber Valley Corridor Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to examine transportation needs in Heber Valley.
- Coordinated with Wasatch County Open Lands Board regarding open space conservation options and potential effects of roadway alternatives to the Heber Valley 'North Fields' area and adjacent PRRP lands.
- Continued internal and external discussions regarding future ownership and management of PRRP lands.
- Worked with Central Utah Water Conservancy District to achieve water level management criteria in Jordanelle wetland mitigation ponds to benefit Columbia spotted frog.
- Began planning for PRRP office building upgrades and access area restrooms.



PRRP management activities: checking fencelines, fence repair and vegetation management



Checking irrigation splitter for dam debris



Grading angler access parking lot



Bank erosion area planned for repair



Young and old(er) volunteer stewards



Summer camp students search for frogs



Pest management using biocontrol



Monitoring transects for biocontrol treatment



## Planned Activities

- Continue efforts to secure land boundaries to facilitate management needs and complete bank stabilization work.
- Conduct river-bank repair along western PRRP boundary to allow the river continued natural movement.
- Continue discussions regarding PRRP management plan and future ownership.
- Continue public outreach to communicate project purposes and benefits and promote community engagement with local schools.
- Continue participating in the Heber Valley Corridor EIS process and coordinating with Wasatch County Open Lands Board regarding conservation easements.
- Develop license agreement with North Field Irrigation Company to authorize their infrastructure management activities on PRRP lands.



Angler enjoying the Middle Provo River (PRRP) near Deer Creek Reservoir



Univ. of Utah Conservation Biology students admire a boreal chorus frog



Young students learning about native aquatic vegetation



Utah State University sediment class



Teaching 5<sup>th</sup> graders about larval fish habitat



University of Utah Summer Camp Field Trip



Wasatch High School student field trip and willow harvest



## DIAMOND FORK WATERSHED

### FY2024 Actions and Effectiveness

#### Instream Flows

- Continued delivery of water to support minimum instream flow regime on Sixth Water and Diamond Fork Creeks, updated to better support and sustain functional fluvial, geomorphic, and ecological processes in the watershed.

#### Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration

- Provided funding for ongoing water quality monitoring and flow measurement in Sixth Water and Diamond Fork Creeks.
- Evaluated trench-filled riprap bank protection installed in 2023 after record spring runoff created significant bank erosion in two areas on mitigation lands. Installed structures that remained stable after high flows.
- Funded additional Ute ladies'-tresses (a threatened plant) surveys to inform future aquatic and riparian habitat enhancement project designs, methods, and locations.
- Awarded contract for aquatic habitat enhancement project in lower 1.8 miles of Diamond Fork Creek to address damage from Pole Creek fire. Completed collection of baseline data, developed preliminary enhancement plan, and began staging construction materials including large woody debris.

#### Diamond Fork Mitigation Area Maintenance

- Funded UDWR for weed control, fence maintenance, and irrigation system operation at the 177-acre Diamond Fork Mitigation Area.
- Continued working on a plan to assess and potentially improve water delivery and habitat function in the Commission-built wetland system adjacent to lower Diamond Fork River, including developing water level management criteria to benefit Columbia spotted frog habitat. Received an approved water right change to improve flexibility of delivering water to constructed wetlands.
- Repaired Mitigation Area access, which was eroded during high spring flows, by realigning part of the road and installing trench-filled riprap. These techniques preserve aquatic habitat created by the natural flooding process.



From left to right, new culvert on access road, on-site planning meeting and staging of large woody debris in preparation for aquatic habitat enhancement project

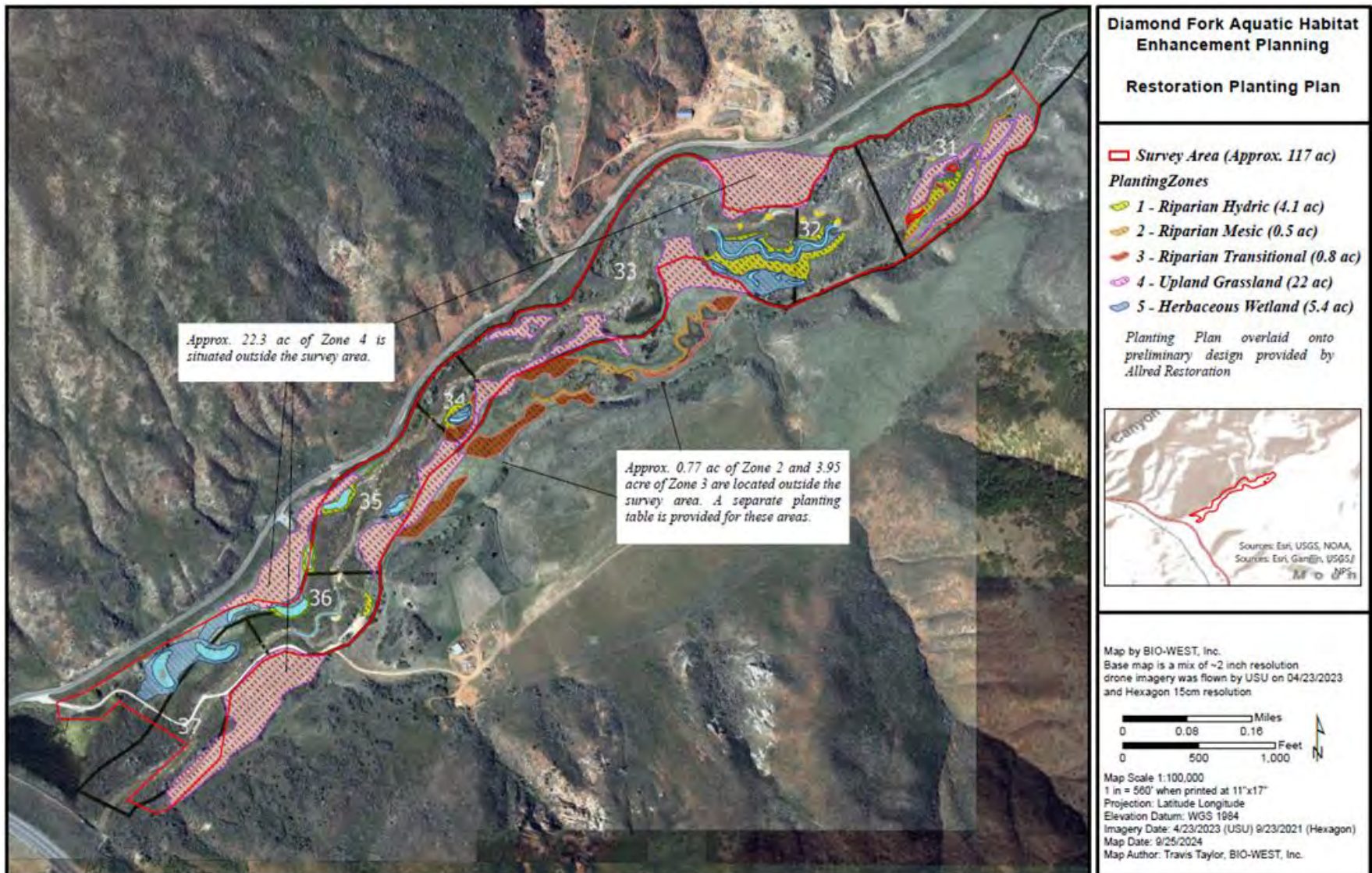


Preliminary design for proposed channel enhancement work includes: adding woody debris to the main channel (yellow), adding boulders to the main channel (pink), rerouting the main channel in an area with eroding banks (light blue), creating check dams (orange) in the abandoned channel to form ponded habitat, and excavating new ponded habitat (green outlines).



## Planned Activities

- Design and implement additional aquatic habitat improvement measures within lower Diamond Fork to offset impacts from the 2018 Pole Creek fire.
- Continue management and maintenance of Diamond Fork Mitigation Area; test and assess habitat benefits and water use resulting from continuous flow delivery to constructed wetlands.
- Continue public and agency outreach regarding instream flows, habitat enhancement projects, and related actions.
- Participate in Nebo Regional Water Project environmental planning process together with Central Utah Water Conservancy District, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, and the U.S. Department of Interior's CUPCA office.





## STRAWBERRY/DUCHESNE WATERSHED

### FY2024 Actions and Effectiveness

Actions in this watershed continue to consist primarily of habitat stabilization planning and implementation to address wildfire impacts.

#### Middle Strawberry River Restoration Project (MSRRP)

Focus is on implementing post-fire restoration actions outlined in the Dollar Ridge Fire Restoration Plan.

- Conducted a kickoff meeting and site visit with the team developing site-specific restoration designs.
- Completed acquisition of updated LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) datasets and orthorectified imagery for the entire area burned by the Dollar Ridge Fire, nearly 70,000 acres.
- Collected baseline data including fish habitat mapping, wetland inventories, elevation surveys, invertebrate surveys, cultural surveys, and installed ground water monitoring wells within the lower three reaches of river to identify priority and out-year areas for restoration actions.
- To address issues created by debris flow following the fire, developed conceptual designs to stabilize river features supporting aquatic habitat and fishing opportunities, to be called the Giles Lake Stabilization Project (Strawberry River Mile 10.3)
- Funded site stewardship and invasive weed control treatments along the river corridor.

#### Lower Duchesne River Wetland Mitigation Project (LDWP)

- Funded site stewardship and management plan implementation including vector control and invasive species treatments.

#### Duchesne River Area Canal Rehabilitation (DRACR)

##### Riverdale North Project Mitigation

- Funded site stewardship and invasive species treatments within the area burned during the 2021 East Myton Fire.

#### Wildlife Conservation and Management

- Approved and supported use of TransWest Express Mitigation funds to acquire or issue conservation easements on parcels with high-value mule deer, elk, and great sage-grouse habitat within the Tabby Mountain, Strawberry River, and Wildcat Wildlife Management Areas.
- Funded greater sage-grouse population monitoring within the Strawberry Valley.



Middle Strawberry River Restoration Project site kick-off meeting



Middle Strawberry River Restoration Project site surveying



## Public Access and Stream Habitat Enhancements

- Continued management of 51 miles of public angler access easements and facilities on the west fork, north fork and main stem of the Duchesne River, the middle and lower Strawberry River, Currant Creek, and Rock Creek.
- Participated on the Interagency Biological Assessment Team (IBAT) to ensure stream flows are maintained to enhance stream habitat and recreation opportunities as part of the Stream Flow Agreement(s).
- Worked with Central Utah Water Conservancy District to manage and monitor high flow release from Soldier Creek Dam.

## Planned Activities

- Continue collecting data to prepare designs, finalize reports and current designs, and develop monitoring plans for the MSRRP using an adaptive management approach. Continue collaboration between partners on the MSRRP approach and designs.
- Complete permitting to initiate Phase 1 of the MSRRP, Giles Lake stabilization project.
- Transfer Federal properties and appurtenant water rights acquired as CUP wildlife mitigation to UDWR, which has been managing the properties on an interim basis since the properties were acquired.
- Continue to partner with UDWR for stewardship and habitat improvement projects on CUP wildlife mitigation lands.
- Continue providing funding to the Ute Tribe for LDWP management.
- Continue to provide funding for invasive weed treatment for future site restoration plans that fulfil DRACR mitigation commitments in the Riverdell North mitigation property. Identify and implement measures to minimize impacts to endangered and rare plants from uncontrolled recreation use on the property.
- Monitor and participate in third-party planning actions (i.e., oil and gas development, utility transmission corridors, roads) to ensure habitat values on mitigation properties are protected.
- Continue supporting greater sage-grouse conservation efforts, sensitive and rare plant conservation initiatives, and the IBAT.
- Support use of TransWest Express Mitigation funds to acquire or issue conservation easements on parcels with high-value mule deer, elk, and great sage-grouse habitat within the Tabby Mountain, Strawberry River, and Wildcat Wildlife Management Areas.



Debris flow that created Giles Lake



"Bathtub ring" indicating water elevation drop in Giles Lake



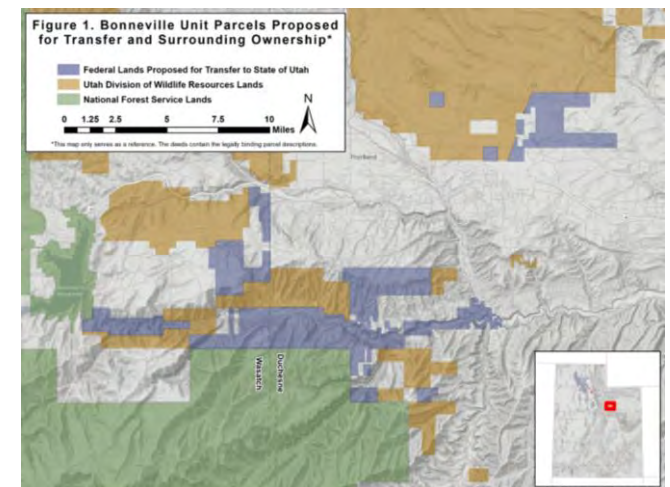
Downcutting and erosion downstream of Giles Lake



Installing groundwater monitoring well



Two male Greater sage grouse on a lek in Strawberry Valley





## GREAT SALT LAKE/JORDAN RIVER & STATEWIDE WATERSHEDS

### FY2024 Actions and Effectiveness

#### Jordan River Wetlands Management

- Continued to build partnerships and stewardship capacity with local schools and stakeholders along the Jordan River.
- Worked with Utah Forestry Fire and State Lands (UFFSL) on phragmites control on and adjacent to the Jordan River Migratory Bird Reserve.
- Planted over 500 native riparian trees, shrubs, and wetland plants along Willow Creek and adjacent ponds.

#### Great Salt Lake Wetlands Management

- Completed the NEPA process to cover the transfer of Mitigation Commission-owned South Shore Preserve lands to National Audubon Society.
- Worked with National Audubon to finalize a land transfer agreement.

#### Statewide

- Continued to provide funding and support to UDWR for native fish conservation efforts, including: genetic analyses of remnant cutthroat trout populations to establish conservation priorities; genetic evaluation of leatherside chub populations to determine species identity and population source; and, restoration of instream flows, habitat protection, habitat restoration.
- Continued to support U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service conservation and recovery related work on Commission-related projects, including classification work for Ute ladies'-tresses.



Watering plants (left) and protecting wetland plugs (right) on the Jordan River Migratory Bird Refuge



Jewish Community Center (JCC) summer camp students learning about wildlife photography (left) and birding (right) along the Jordan River



Students search for aquatic insects (left) and interact at the Jordan River Migratory Bird Refuge outdoor classroom (right)



## Planned Activities

### Jordan River

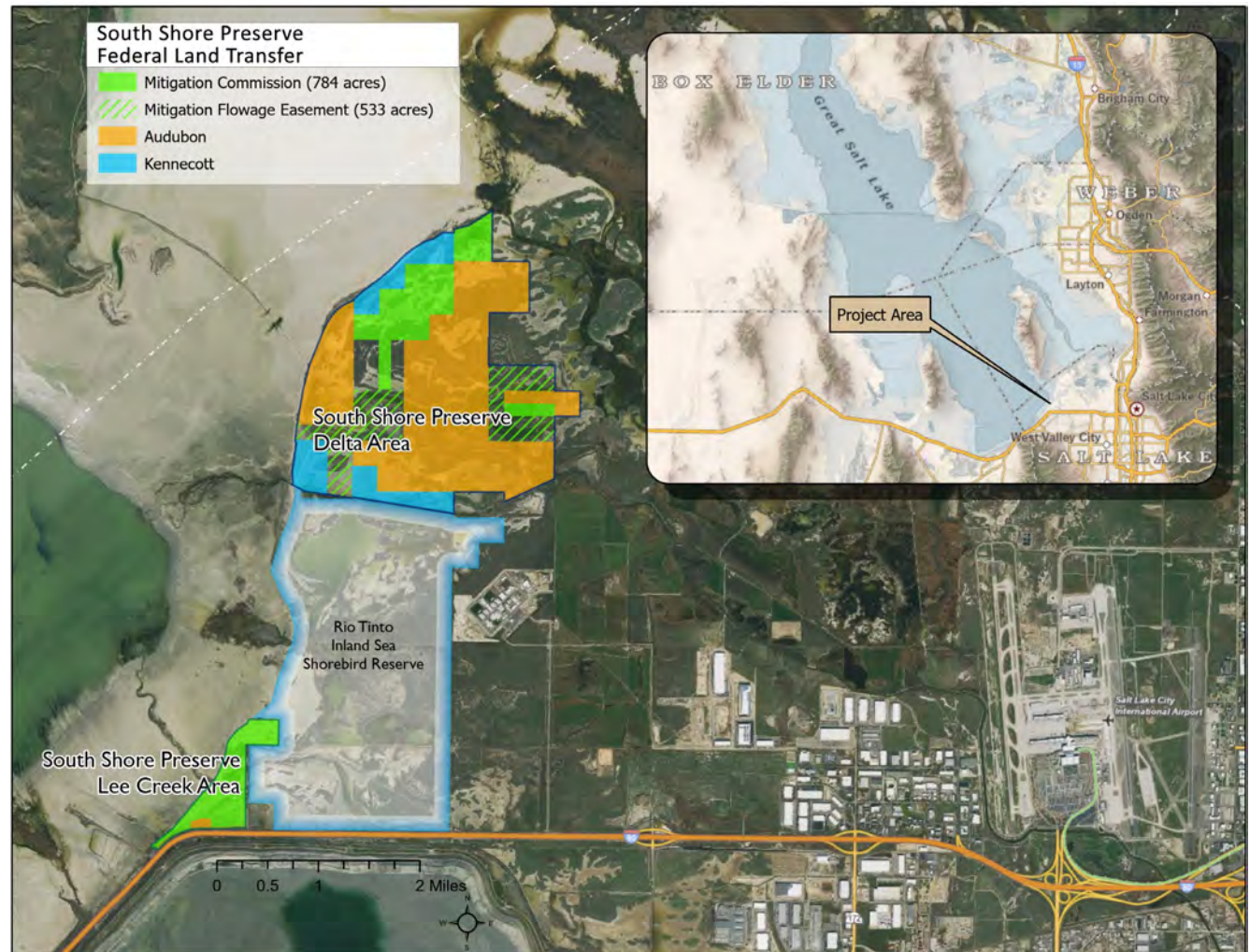
- Continue management of Mitigation Commission-owned Jordan River lands.
- Continue building partnerships to facilitate long-term management and eventual transfer of Mitigation Commission-owned property to suitable entity.

### Great Salt Lake

- Transfer Mitigation Commission-owned lands within the South Shore Preserve and Lee Creek Areas to National Audubon Society.
- Provide input to UFFSL on Great Salt Lake Comprehensive Management Plan.
- Continue to support and provide funding, as necessary, to National Audubon Society and The Nature Conservancy for managing the South Shore and Shorelands Preserves.

### Statewide

- Continue providing funding to UDWR for native cutthroat trout and Southern leatherside chub conservation.
- Continue supporting U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for conservation and recovery related work on Mitigation Commission-related projects.



Bluehead sucker. Photo by courtesy of UDWR



Bonneville cutthroat trout. Photo by courtesy of UDWR



Colorado river cutthroat trout. Photo by courtesy of UDWR



## MITIGATION COMMISSION OFFICE UPDATE

During FY2024, the Mitigation Commission continued implementing projects to pursue its ongoing mission to accomplish the mitigation and conservation projects authorized in CUPCA. Work continued on the Provo River Delta Restoration Project, which is nearing completion. Progress was made in other areas as the Middle Strawberry River Restoration Project was initiated to address damage stemming from the 2018 Dollar Ridge Fire.

Mitigation Commission staff and Commissioners have been fortunate for the past 30 years to have the support and participation of numerous partners from all levels of government, universities, and non-profit organizations. The Mitigation Commission has approved 341 funding agreements with more than 60 partners since 1994. The back cover of this report lists partners with which we have signed agreements. The total number of partners providing us support over the last 30 years is even greater.

Through FY2024, the Mitigation Commission expended over \$345 million dollars in Utah on fish and wildlife mitigation and conservation actions, including related recreational improvements. Details are included in the financial summary on the following page.

While we are proud of the agency's accomplishments and salute the many partners and supporters that have helped us achieve them, our work is far from over. CUPCA legislation authorized over \$171 million (1991 dollars) of mitigation and conservation work for us to complete. With indexing, over \$70 million of that authorization remains. Our ability to mobilize that funding for its intended purpose to the benefit of Utah's residents and natural resources will depend on future appropriations from Congress.



Provo River Delta © Utah By Air



## ANNUAL REPORT FINANCIAL DATA

### As of September 30, 2024

#### FUNDING

Fiscal Year	Annual Title II/III Appropriations	Annual Title IV WAPA/CUWCD*	Annual Title IV Interest	Other	Total
FY 2024	\$4,650,000	\$0	\$3,245,284	\$0	\$7,895,284
FY1994-FY2023	\$167,151,296	\$74,682,374	\$78,255,336	\$40,292,063	\$360,381,069
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$171,801,296</b>	<b>\$74,682,374</b>	<b>\$81,500,620</b>	<b>\$40,292,063</b>	<b>\$368,276,353</b>

#### EXPENDITURE

Fiscal Year	Annual Title II/III Appropriations	Annual Title IV WAPA/CUWCD*	Annual Title IV Interest	Other	Total
FY 2024	\$5,049,650	\$0	\$4,252,775	\$475,059	\$9,777,483
FY1994-FY2023	\$159,826,319	\$74,682,374	\$70,311,404	\$30,802,250	\$335,622,347
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$164,875,969</b>	<b>\$74,682,374</b>	<b>\$74,564,179</b>	<b>\$31,277,309</b>	<b>\$345,399,830</b>

#### End of Year Balance of Title IV Account

Fiscal Year	Account Balance	Interest Due **	Total Net Value
FY 2024	\$128,326,119	\$3,580,498	\$131,906,617

\*WAPA (Western Area Power Administration/CUWCD (Central Utah Water Conservancy District)

\*\*Value of known future interest payments based on distribution from investments in effect as of September 30 of that year.





## OUR PARTNERS

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U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs  
U.S. Bureau of Land Management  
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, Provo Area Office  
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, Upper Colorado  
Regional Office  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
APHIS-Division of Wildlife Services  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
U.S. Forest Service  
U.S. Geological Survey  
U.S. National Park Service  
Ute Indian Tribe  
Utah Department of Transportation  
Utah Department of Natural Resources  
Utah Division of Wildlife Resources  
Utah Division of State Parks  
Utah Division of Forestry, Fire and State  
Lands  
Utah Division of Water Rights  
Utah Division of Water Resources  
Utah Geological Survey  
Utah Division of Outdoor Recreation  
Utah Natural Heritage Program  
Central Utah Water Conservancy District  
Charleston Water Conservancy District  
Duchesne County Water Conservancy District  
Fort Field Irrigation Company  
Island Ditch Irrigation Company  
Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District  
Moon Lake Water Users Association  
Duchesne County  
Tooele County

Salt Lake County  
Uintah County  
Utah County  
Wasatch County  
Mountainland Association of Governments  
Heber City Power and Light  
Provo City  
Salt Lake City  
Sandy City  
South Jordan City  
Springville City  
West Jordan City  
Arizona State University  
Brigham Young University  
Idaho State University  
Montana State University  
University of Nevada-Reno  
University of Utah  
Utah State University  
Utah State University, Utah Conservation Corps  
Utah State University Botanical Center  
Center for Documentary Expression and Art  
Envision Utah  
Great Basin Bird Observatory  
Jordan River Commission  
National Audubon Society  
Great Salt Lake Chapter  
River Management Society  
The Nature Conservancy in Utah  
Trout Unlimited  
Trust for Public Lands  
Utah Lake Authority  
Utah Open Lands