



UTAH RECLAMATION MITIGATION & CONSERVATION COMMISSION
FY2016-2018 Report



Introduction

Welcome to the FY2016-2018 Report of the Utah Reclamation Mitigation and Conservation Commission (Mitigation Commission). The Mitigation Commission was authorized and established by Congress and the President 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 on fish, wildlife and related recreation resources in Utah.

This report highlights Mitigation Commission accomplishments for fiscal years 2016 through 2018, and describes the effectiveness of those actions toward achieving CUPCA requirements. It also identifies actions planned for the foreseeable future and potential revisions to our Mitigation and Conservation Plan.

By design, 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 moving Mitigation Commission projects forward. Please refer to the back page of this report for a listing of our prior and current partners.

This report was made available for public and agency review for sixty days. One substantive comment was received. The Duchesne County Commission requested we amend text on page 11 regarding the Lower Duchesne River Wetlands Mitigation Project to address the importance of mosquito control and how it will be managed as that project moves to completion. We have added text to respond to this request. A handful of comments were received that acknowledged the good work and progress of the Mitigation Commission. We are appreciative of all comments received.

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On the Cover

Wildlife food plot on the Utah Lake Wetland Preserve, Utah County, Utah. Photo courtesy Dave Lee, Utah Division of Wildlife Resources

Meet the Mitigation Commission

CUPCA mandates the Mitigation Commission be composed of five 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 Mitigation 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 (Senate)

At publication, the House and Utah Division of Wildlife Resources nominations are pending appointment

Staff

Mark Holden, Executive Director

Kim Embley, Administrative Assistant

Maureen Wilson, Project Coordinator

Melissa Stamp, Project Coordinator

Richard Mingo, Planning Coordinator

Channa Vyfvinkel, Financial Officer

Mata Lolofie, Accounting Technician

Diane Simmons, Public Information Officer

Isabelle Simmons, Resource Specialist

Paula Trater, Seasonal Biological Technician



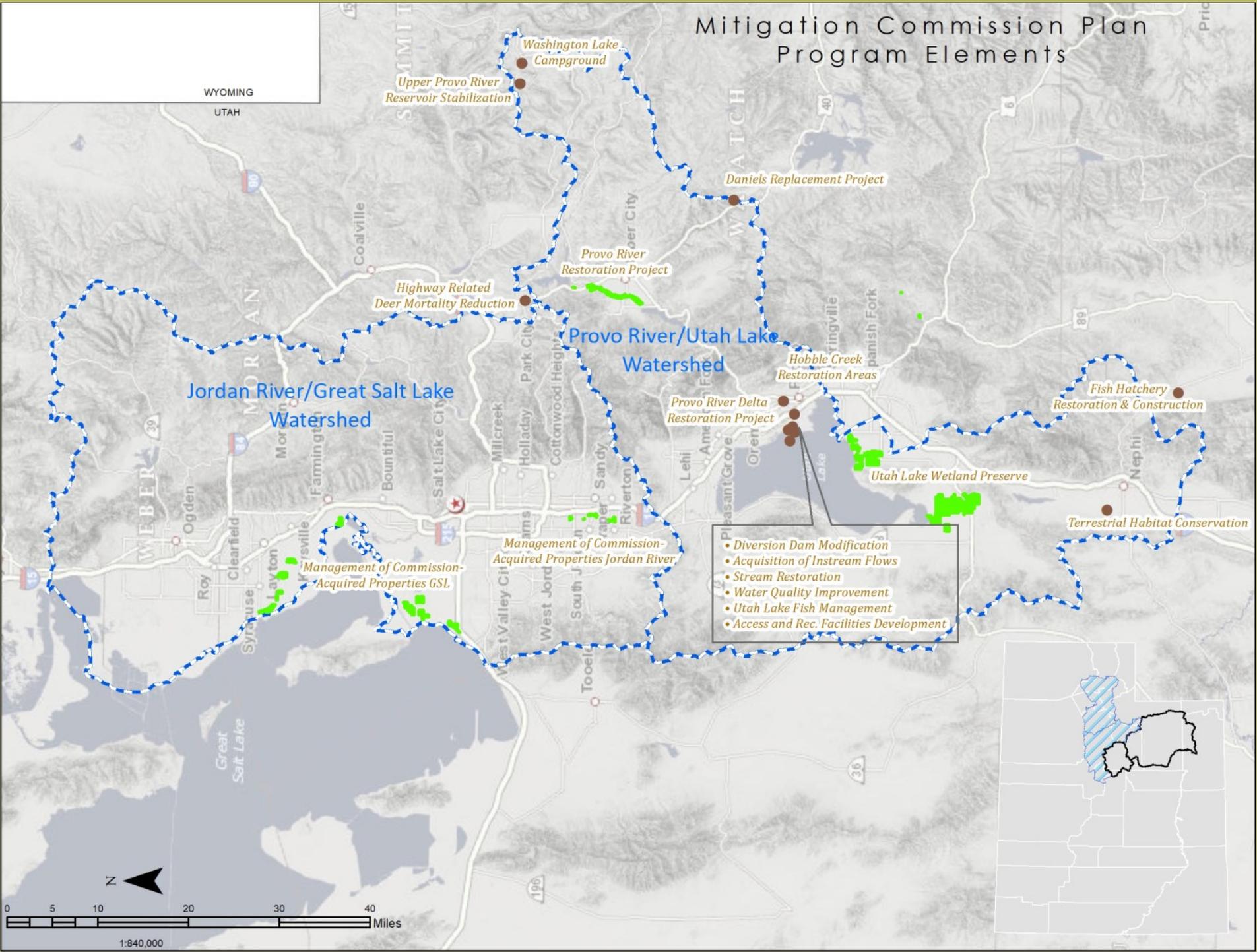
In 1999, the Mitigation Commission began the Provo River Restoration Project between Jordanelle Dam and Deer Creek Reservoir in Wasatch County, Utah. River reconstruction was completed in 2008; monitoring and restoration management continue. River reconstruction entailed moving the straightened river channel into excavated meanders mimicking historic conditions, and reconnecting the river to remnants of historic secondary channels and constructed small side channels and ponds. Existing levees were set back to create a near natural flood plain and to allow the river to change course naturally. An 800 to 2,200-foot-wide public corridor was acquired the continuous length of the middle Provo River and protected for public access and fish and wildlife habitat.

Office Location

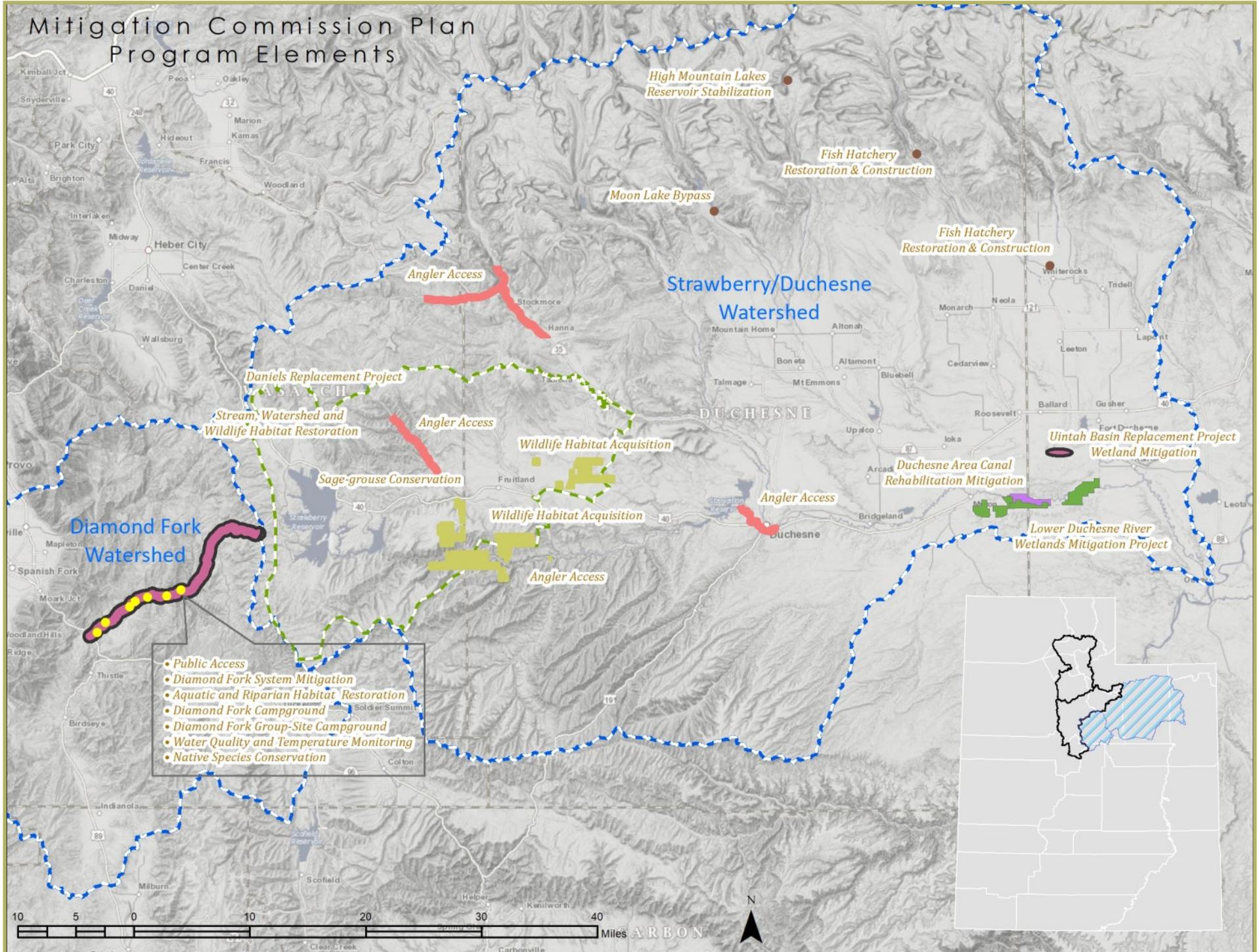
The Utah Reclamation Mitigation and Conservation Commission is headquartered in Salt Lake City, Utah at the following address:

230 South 500 East, Suite 230
Salt Lake City, Utah 84102-2045
Phone: 801-524-3146
Fax: 801-524-3148
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Mitigation Commission Plan Program Elements



Mitigation Commission Plan Program Elements



Lower Provo River/Utah Lake



Highlights FY2016-2018

Utah Lake Wetlands Preserve Acquisitions

- Acquired 125 additional acres for the Utah Lake Wetlands Preserve and provided funding to Utah Division of Wildlife Resources for Preserve management.

East Hobble Creek Restoration Project in Springville City

- Restored half a mile of stream channel and riparian habitat along Hobble Creek in Springville Community Park, and permanently protected 7 acres of open space with conservation easements.
- Organized several community-volunteer days to pull weeds and assist with stewardship activities.

Provo River Delta Restoration Project near Utah Lake

- Initial site preparation for a new trailhead parking area near the Utah Lake State Park entrance began in 2017. The Mitigation Commission has been providing technical and financial support. Phased construction efforts continued through 2018.
- Completed the first year of a bird monitoring and movement study to gather baseline information on avian abundance and movement in and around the project area.
- Prepared draft designs for the new river channel and delta area, including a small dam and a diversion structure to stabilize water levels and provide water to the existing river channel, and a berm that will protect properties to the south of the new delta from river-caused flooding.
- Purchased land from four of five ownerships needed for the project and funded mosquito monitoring and weed control efforts on project properties.
- Community engagement included developing a June sucker/Provo delta-focused “musical habitats” activity for the Utah Lake Commission’s fourth-grade field trips, and hosting a Provo Delta Project booth at the Utah Lake Festival.



Lower Provo River Instream Flow Provisions

- Worked with the June Sucker Flow Workgroup to provide summertime instream flows that ensure the lower Provo River has enough water to keep temperature and oxygen levels healthy for fish; approximately 20,000 acre-feet of water are now provided annually to maintain instream flows.

Effectiveness of Actions

A total of 7,329 acres are now part of the Utah Lake Wetlands Preserve, which, with the adjacent 8,332 acres of public lands, provide significant permanent wetland resource value protection and land management. Native seed collections within the Preserve support the use of plant materials in restoration activities. A portion of seed harvested returns to the Mitigation Commission for its own restoration work.

Valuable partnerships have been established for Provo River Delta trailhead construction with Provo City, Utah County, Utah Lake Commission, and Utah Divisions of Parks and Recreation and Forestry, Fire and State Lands.

In the first year of the Mitigation Commission-funded avian study, over 310,000 individual birds and 135 different species were documented in over 2,200 hours of monitoring at 20 different monitoring sites in and around the Provo River Delta Project area, providing valuable baseline data for documenting bird use and movement in the project area.

Springville City and the local community are actively involved in Hobble Creek stewardship activities, including pulling weeds, cleaning up trash and spreading native grass and wildflower seeds; seven acres of open space in a rapidly growing suburban area are permanently protected by conservation easements.

Hobble Creek restoration, Provo River Delta activities, and lower Provo River instream flow acquisitions are helping to keep important Utah water delivery projects tied to June sucker recovery on track.

Planned Activities

- Continue acquiring properties within the Utah Lake Wetlands Preserve boundaries on a willing seller basis, as funding allows; and, continue to fund Utah Division of Wildlife Resources' management of the Preserve. Prepare a final Preserve management plan to meet the Federal Reserve requirement.
- Complete land purchases needed to construct the Provo River Delta Restoration Project.
- Continue the Provo River Delta bird monitoring and movement survey through and after project construction.
- Support Provo City Parks and Recreation Department in designing a new trailhead and parking area that will serve as a gateway to the Provo River Delta and its recreational amenities.
- Investigate feasibility of removing additional diversion dams on the lower Provo River that block migration of June sucker and other species.
- Acquire additional water rights for instream flows on the Lower Provo River.
- Continue hosting Hobble Creek volunteer days to promote stewardship of the Springville Community Park streamside natural area.



Endangered June sucker at the Living Planet Aquarium in Draper, Utah



Community volunteers at Hobble Creek in Springville, Utah.

Middle and Upper Provo River

Highlights FY2016-2018



Provo River Restoration Project Management

- Relocated a Project parking lot and restroom north of Midway Lane to address management concerns and prevent vandalism and unauthorized activities at the site.
- Met with the Wasatch County Sheriff to discuss and identify areas of trespass into the middle Provo River corridor and enforcement options.
- Continued general management of properties, irrigation and water diversion structures, fencelines, restrooms, dumpsters and parking lots; treated noxious weeds during the spring, summer and fall seasons; and, funded mosquito and weed control efforts on Project properties.
- Hosted several community-volunteer days to pull weeds, plant vegetation, wrap cottonwood trees and assist with stewardship activities.
- Contributed funds to a community-based effort to acquire and conserve 1,300 acres in the Provo River watershed for its wildlife, public recreation, and watershed/water quality values.

Effectiveness of Actions

Mosquito control efforts have enabled us to identify and treat sources of disease carrying mosquitos along the middle Provo River. Integrated noxious weed control efforts also have been effective, especially at reducing the spread of invasive Phragmites, Dalmation toadflax and Russian olive.

Volunteer outreach has engendered public interest in coordinating ongoing stewardship efforts along the middle Provo corridor. Citizen-led volunteer groups and local schools have helped organize and assist with tree plantings, vegetation management, litter cleanup and similar activities.

Planned Activities

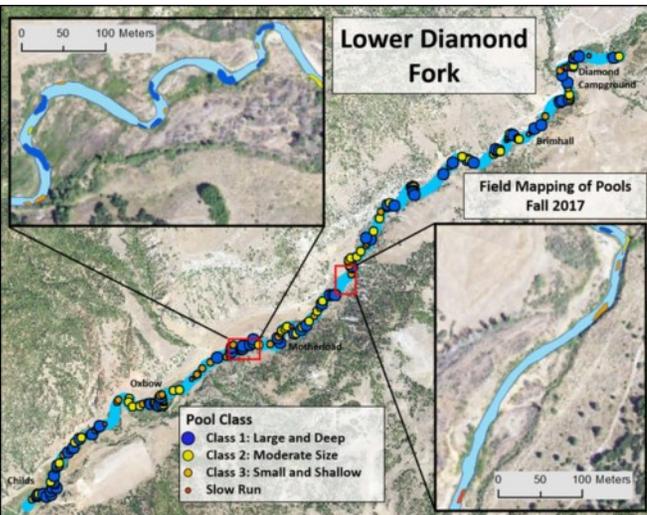
- Continue mosquito and weed control within the middle Provo River corridor; review and adapt methods to changing conditions.
- Meet with Wasatch County Attorney to discuss land access and trespass enforcement direction.
- Develop a long-term management plan for the corridor.
- Maintain communication with Wasatch County through their public lands and weed management committee meetings.



Diamond Fork Watershed



Diamond Fork Canyon. Photo Courtesy Andy Earl



Highlights FY2016-2018

Instream Flow Study

- Utah State University researchers gathered extensive geomorphic, fisheries, aquatic macroinvertebrate, and ecological field data at nine sample sites throughout the Sixth Water Creek and lower Diamond Fork watershed in 2016 and 2017 as part of a 3-year instream flow study.
- Connected with agency and public stakeholders about the instream flow study via website postings, flyers, e-newsletters, emails, conference calls, and meetings.

Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Restoration

- Initiated a study to evaluate existing aquatic habitat complexity and identify opportunities for habitat improvement measures in Diamond Fork River.
- Provided funding for the Central Utah Water Conservancy District's ongoing water quality monitoring and flow measurement in Sixth Water Creek and Diamond Fork River.

Maintenance of Diamond Fork Mitigation Area Property

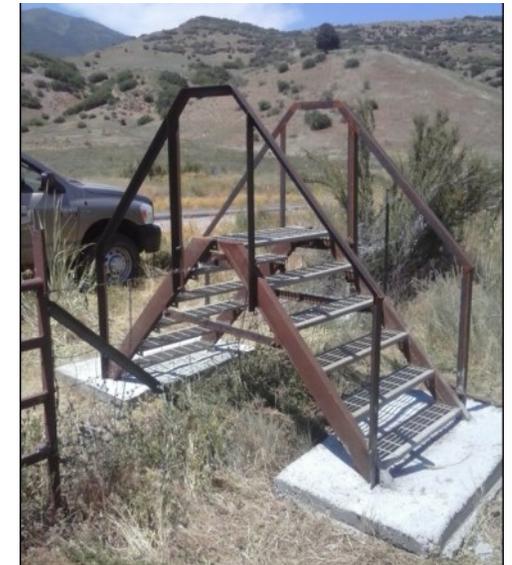
- Funded Utah Division of Wildlife Resources to control weeds, maintain fencing, and operate an irrigation system at the 172-acre Diamond Fork Mitigation Area.

Effectiveness of Actions

The constructed Diamond Fork Mitigation wetland complex provides rare habitat that attracts raptors, songbirds, shorebirds, amphibians, and deer, elk and moose. Since 2012, between 11% and 57% of Columbia spotted frog egg masses detected within Utah Division of Wildlife Resources' Diamond Fork study area were found in restored mitigation ponds.

Log and rock barbs installed on lower Diamond Fork in 2008 appear to have facilitated development of meander bends and pool habitats, which are important habitats for fish. Installation and maintenance of several angler-access structures has improved fishing opportunities in this area.

Ongoing weed control efforts, including introduction of the biocontrol Mecinus beetle that affects Dalmatian toadflax, have been effective at curbing the spread of State-listed noxious weeds on project property.



Planned Activities

- Complete the Instream Flow Study and consider any recommended changes to existing instream flow requirements.
- Complete evaluation of aquatic habitat complexity and consider implementation of recommended habitat improvement measures.
- Continue stakeholder and public outreach.
- Continue management and maintenance of Diamond Fork Mitigation Area.



Electrofishing on the Diamond Fork River



Sixth Water, Diamond Fork Canyon. Photo Courtesy Andy Earl



Aquatic and Riverine Restoration Construction, Diamond Fork River. Photo Courtesy Tyler Allred

Strawberry/Duchesne Watershed



Lower Duchesne River Wetland Mitigation Project



Strawberry River, prior to Dollar Ridge Fire. Photo courtesy Steve Motzkus

Highlights FY2016-2018

Lower Duchesne River Wetland Mitigation Project

- Transferred approximately 1,873 acres of project property to the Ute Indian Tribe to be managed for wetland, riparian and supporting upland habitat.
- Completed wetlands construction on approximately 1,600 acres of the 5,130-acre project area.
- Planted over 125,000 live plants; and seeded with native species approximately 500 acres of land disturbed during project construction.
- Removed non-native plants and provided noxious weed control and mosquito control on approximately 4,875 acres of the project area.

Duchesne River Area Canal Rehabilitation Project Mitigation

- Participated in planning for management and protection of rare plants that occur on lands acquired as mitigation for the Duchesne River Area Canal Rehabilitation (DRACR) Project. Initiated planning to restore the ability to deliver irrigation water to the mitigation site.

Wildlife Conservation and Management

- Participated in initial interagency restoration planning efforts associated with the 70,000-acre Dollar Ridge Fire, which burned approximately 12,600 acres of CUP mitigation land in July and August 2018.
- Continued funding Sage grouse conservation through habitat restoration, management and monitoring in Strawberry Valley.
- Funded Utah Division of Wildlife Resources for weed control and stewardship of approximately 11,400 acres of Mitigation Commission land in and near the Strawberry Wildlife Management Area.

Public Access and Stream Habitat Enhancements

- Continued management of public access 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 as a member of the Interagency Biological Assessment Team (IBAT) to ensure continuous stream flows are maintained and to enhance stream habitat and recreation opportunities on these waters.

Effectiveness of Actions

The Lower Duchesne River Wetland Mitigation Project is about 85% complete. Wetland, riparian and supporting uplands are already providing habitat used by wildlife. The project provides compatible outdoor recreational opportunities for Ute Indian Tribe members.

Sage grouse populations in Strawberry Valley are recovering. Other critical wildlife habitat and migration corridors are being protected through acquisition and habitat improvement.

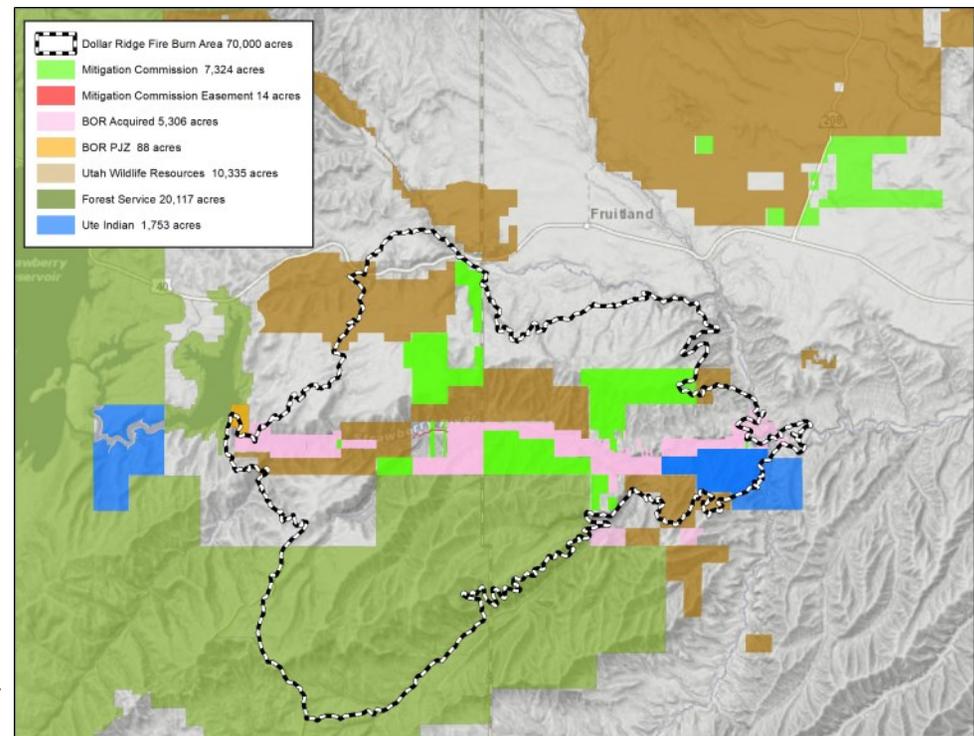
Continuous stream flows are being maintained on the Strawberry River, Currant Creek, West Fork of the Duchesne River and Rock Creek. The public now has access to 51 miles along these streams, which have benefitted from stream and recreation opportunity enhancements.

Planned Activities

- Coordinate with others to plan and implement habitat and river restoration measures on CUP mitigation properties impacted by the Dollar Ridge fire.
- Complete construction and help develop a long-term operation and management plan for the Lower Duchesne River Wetland Mitigation Project. Ensure mosquito and weed control continue.
- Initiate a planning process to ensure mitigation commitments of the DRACR Project are realized. Identify and implement measures to minimize impacts to endangered and rare plants from uncontrolled recreation use on DRACR mitigation property.
- Work with Utah Division of Wildlife Resources to implement habitat improvements on Central Utah Project mitigation properties. Transition ownership of mitigation properties to Utah Division of Wildlife Resources.
- Monitor and participate in third-party planning actions (i.e., oil and gas development and transmission corridors) to ensure habitat values on mitigation properties are protected.
- Consider opportunities to acquire critical wildlife habitat.
- Continue support and participation in Sage grouse recovery efforts, sensitive and rare plant conservation initiatives, and the Interagency Biological Assessment Team (IBAT).



Sage grouse. Photo courtesy Alan Krakauer



Jordan River/Great Salt Lake

Highlights FY2016-2018

Jordan River Wetlands Management

- Leased water from West Crescent Irrigation Company, received a water flow donation from Kennecott Utah Copper LLC, and completed construction of a new Willow Creek Diversion structure to provide water to restored wetlands near 10600 South, along the east side of the Jordan River.
- Transferred 3.86 acres north of Shields Lane near the Sandy City Urban Fish Pond to Sandy City.
- Accepted donation of 14.68 acres from Great Salt Lake Audubon.
- Funded noxious weed control on Mitigation Commission properties. Hired Utah Conservation Corps to irrigate restoration plantings, manage beaver dam water levels and monitor activity.
- Completed an Environment Assessment for habitat restoration, recreational improvements and transfer to West Jordan City of 43-acres of federally owned property at approximately 90th South (the *Big Bend Site*) in West Jordan, Utah.

Great Salt Lake Wetlands Management

- Funded management of Mitigation Commission-owned properties in the Great Salt Lake Shorelands Preserve and the South Shore Reserve by The Nature Conservancy in Utah and National Audubon Society, respectively.
- Participated as a Cooperating Agency on the West Davis Highway Environmental Impact Statement. The project would directly impact 113 acres of habitat within the Great Salt Lake Shorelands Preserve and indirectly impact additional habitat within the Preserve because of its proximity to the new highway. Identified 791 acres of private inholdings within the Great Salt Lake Shorelands Preserve that could provide mitigation for project impacts.



TNC's Great Salt Lake Shorelands Preserve. Photo courtesy Scott Irwin



Utah Division of Wildlife Resources Crew installing pond leveler on Jordan River property to manage beaver dam water levels. Photo courtesy Dave Lee

Effectiveness of Actions



Cottonwood recruitment, Jordan River

National Audubon Society staff manage South Shore Preserve properties using water inundation and drawdown techniques to provide a prey base and unique saline wetland system for shorebirds. Introducing water into the old river channel and distributaries has increased populations of many species, such as nesting Avocet, Cinnamon Teal, Willet and migrating species such as Lesser and Greater Yellowlegs and Wilson's Phalarope. Upland species, such as Long-billed Curlew and Burrowing Owls continue to thrive.

Weed control efforts on Jordan River wetland properties are reducing noxious weeds. New plantings are receiving adequate water and the majority are surviving. New cottonwood and willow recruitment has been observed.

The Environmental Assessment process for the Big Bend Habitat Restoration project provided the opportunity to meet with neighbors, adjacent landowners and other interests to hear public concerns and project suggestions. The proposed action was modified for the final EA to incorporate public comments while still meeting the need for the project.

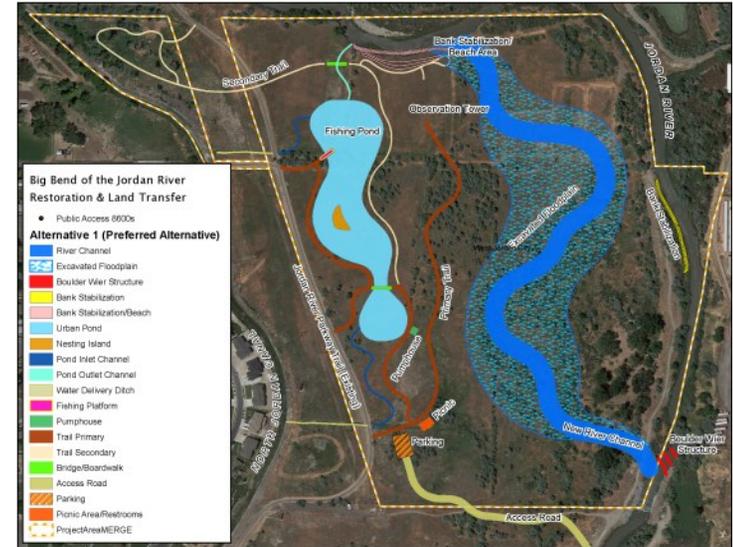
Planned Activities

- Continue close coordination with UDOT on their preparation of a Wildlife Mitigation Plan for the West Davis Highway Project. The Plan is to include a suite of measures - including land acquisition, acquisition of water, and long-term funding - to mitigate for project impacts.
- Secure mitigation commitments with Federal Highways Administration and Utah Department of Transportation, prior to transferring Mitigation Commission properties required for the West Davis Highway Project.



Great Salt Lake, east shore

- Transfer approximately 1,297 acres of Federally-owned property within the Great Salt Lake Shorelands Preserve to The Nature Conservancy in Utah for conservation in perpetuity. Transfer Federally-owned property within the Great Salt Lake South Shore Preserve to the National Audubon Society for conservation in perpetuity.
- Transfer the 43-acre federally owned Jordan River property to West Jordan City, consistent with the Big Bend Habitat Restoration and Federal Land Transfer Project Final EA.
- Continue management (irrigation, weed control, etc.) of Mitigation Commission-owned Jordan River corridor properties.



Jordan River and Willow Creek tributary wetlands near 10600 South

Statewide

Highlights FY2016-2018

Native Fish Conservation

- Provided funding to Utah Division of Wildlife Resources to perform genetic analyses of suspected remnant Bonneville and Colorado River cutthroat trout populations to establish conservation priorities. This was accomplished in support of the 2017 Bonneville and Colorado River Cutthroat Trout Conservation Agreements and Strategies.
- Provided funding to Utah Division of Wildlife Resources to help establish a bluehead sucker broodstock to prevent loss of the Weber River population, in support of the Fish Hatchery Production Plan, which was mandated by the Central Utah Project Completion Act to identify long-term needs and management objectives for hatchery production.



Colorado River Cutthroat trout

Effectiveness of Actions

Twenty-four cutthroat trout populations were genetically evaluated for introgression with rainbow trout. This information is used as the basis for managing these populations.

Bluehead sucker broodstock development has been initiated at the State Fish Hatchery in Springville, Utah.

Planned Activities

- Continue funding Native Cutthroat Trout conservation actions as directed by the appropriate conservation strategy.
- Continue evaluating opportunities for native aquatic species culture support.
- Continue supporting conservation actions for Southern leatherside.



Bluehead sucker. Photos courtesy Utah Division of Wildlife Resources



In our Office

While an enormous amount of work has been completed in the field over the past few years, an equally significant amount of work has occurred in our office.

The process of collaborating, writing, reviewing, executing and overseeing mitigation project agreements with our partners is exhaustive and ongoing (a list of our partners is on the back page). This process requires extensive time and commitment from our Commissioners, as well as staff.

In addition to this routine workload, we've had other administrative projects requiring extra attention by everyone in the office. A large project has been underway to inventory, reclassify and digitize our official records and to prepare them for entering into the Department of the Interior's electronic records management system.

Similarly, we've been developing an online application that will make Mitigation Commission land and water ownership, along with supporting documentation, such as land purchase contracts and deeds, available via an interactive map. We also have been working with the Department of the Interior and Bureau of Reclamation to acquire services for hosting, redesigning and rebuilding our website.

FY2016-2018 FINANCIAL REPORT

As of September 30, 2018

FUNDING

Fiscal Year	Annual Appropriations	Title IV Interest	Total Funding
FY 2016	1,000,000.00	5,318,306.00	6,318,306.00
FY 2017	1,300,000.00	9,479,013.00	10,779,013.00
FY 2018	898,000.00	808,025.00	1,706,025.00

EXPENDITURE

Fiscal Year	Annual Appropriations	Title IV Interest	Total Expenditures
FY 2016	1,058,075.90	4,125,160.97	5,183,236.87
FY 2017	915,375.30	5,536,660.48	6,452,035.78
FY 2018	2,134,347.85	11,274,633.28	13,408,981.13

End of Year Balance of Title IV Account

Fiscal Year	Account Balance	Interest Due *	Total Net Value
FY 2016	153,413,009.98	8,401,681.48	161,814,691.46
FY 2017	140,139,730.47	7,056,762.70	147,196,493.17
FY 2018	153,732,168.84	1,972,369.35	155,704,538.19

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

Our Partners

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 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 Parks and Recreation

Utah Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands

Utah Division of Water Rights

Utah Division of Wildlife Resources

Utah Geological Survey

Utah Governor's Office of Management and Budget

Utah Natural Heritage Program

Central Utah Water Conservancy District

Charleston Water Conservancy District

Duchesne County Water Conservancy District

Fort Field Irrigation Company

Heber Light and Power

Island Ditch Irrigation Company

Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District

Moon Lake Water Users Association

Box Elder County

Davis County

Duchesne County

Salt Lake County

Tooele County

Uintah County

Utah County

Wasatch County

Provo City

Salt Lake City

Sandy City

South Jordan City

West Jordan City

Envision Utah

Great Basin Bird Observatory

Great Salt Lake Chapter, National Audubon Society

National Audubon Society

River Management Society

The Nature Conservancy in Utah

Trust for Public Lands

Utah Lake Commission

Utah Open Lands

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



UTAH RECLAMATION
MITIGATION
AND CONSERVATION
COMMISSION

An Executive Branch Agency of the Federal Government

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