

Outdoor Recreation Amendments

2025 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Paul A. Cutler

Senate Sponsor: Scott D. Sandall

LONG TITLE

General Description:

This bill addresses the Division of Outdoor Recreation.

Highlighted Provisions:

This bill:

- modifies the lands that the governor may keep open and operational during a fiscal emergency;
- changes the reporting subcommittee for the Division of Outdoor Recreation report on recreation restoration infrastructure grants; and
- makes technical and conforming changes.

Money Appropriated in this Bill:

None

Other Special Clauses:

None

Utah Code Sections Affected:

AMENDS:

79-7-602 (Effective 05/07/25) (Repealed 07/01/29), as renumbered and amended by Laws of Utah 2024, Chapter 88

79-8-203 (Effective 05/07/25), as renumbered and amended by Laws of Utah 2021, Chapter 280

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:

Section 1. Section **79-7-602** is amended to read:

79-7-602 (Effective 05/07/25) (Repealed 07/01/29). Governor's duties -- Priority of federal property.

(1) During a fiscal emergency, the governor shall:

(a) if financially practicable, work with the federal government to open and maintain the operation of one or more national parks, national monuments, national forests, ~~[and]~~ national recreation areas, and lands managed by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service in the state, in the order established under this section; and

(b) report to the speaker of the House of Representatives and the president of the Senate on the need, if any, for additional appropriations to assist the division in opening and operating one or more national parks, national monuments, national forests, ~~[and]~~ national recreation areas, and lands managed by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service in the state.

(2) ~~[The]~~ In accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act, the director of the Division of Outdoor Recreation, in consultation with the executive director of the Department of Natural Resources, shall ~~[determine, by rule,]~~ make rules to determine the priority of national parks, national monuments, national forests, ~~[and]~~ national recreation areas, and lands managed by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service in the state.

(3) In determining the priority described in Subsection (2), the director of the Division of Outdoor Recreation shall consider the:

(a) economic impact of the national park, national monument, national forest, ~~[or]~~ national recreation area, and lands managed by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service in the state; and

(b) recreational value offered by the national park, national monument, national forest, ~~[or]~~ national recreation area, and lands managed by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

(4) The director of the Division of Outdoor Recreation shall annually review the priority set under Subsection (2) to determine whether the priority list should be amended.

Section 2. Section **79-8-203** is amended to read:

79-8-203 (Effective 05/07/25). Award of recreation restoration infrastructure grants.

(1) In determining the award of a recreation restoration infrastructure grant, the advisory committee shall prioritize projects that the advisory committee considers to be high demand outdoor recreation amenities or high priority trails.

(2) The division may give special consideration to ~~[projects from qualified applicants]~~ a project from a qualified applicant within rural counties to ensure geographic parity of the awarded money.

- 63 (3)(a) An applicant shall use a recreation restoration infrastructure grant to leverage
64 private and other nonstate public money~~[-and the division may give priority to~~
65 ~~projects that exceed a 50% match from the applicant]~~ , including cash, resources,
66 goods, or services necessary to complete a project.
- 67 (b) The division may give priority to a project from an applicant that contributes a 50%
68 or greater financial match from the applicant or other private and nonstate public
69 money.
- 70 ~~[(b) Leverage includes cash, resources, goods, or services necessary to complete a~~
71 ~~project.]~~
- 72 (c) The division shall apply money from a cooperative agreement entered into with the
73 United States Department of Agriculture or the United States Department of the
74 Interior as a portion of the applicant's match.
- 75 (4) A recreation restoration infrastructure grant may only be awarded by the executive
76 director after consultation with the director and the advisory committee.
- 77 (5) A recreation restoration infrastructure grant is available for rehabilitation or restoration
78 projects for high demand outdoor recreation amenities and high priority trails that relate
79 directly to the visitor including:
- 80 (a) a trail, trail head infrastructure, signage, and crossing infrastructure, for both
81 nonmotorized and motorized recreation;
- 82 (b) a campground or picnic area;
- 83 (c) water recreation infrastructure, including a pier, dock, or boat ramp; and
84 (d) recreation facilities that are accessible to visitors with disabilities.
- 85 (6) The following are not eligible for a recreation restoration infrastructure grant:
- 86 (a) general facility operations and administrative costs;
- 87 (b) land acquisitions;
- 88 (c) visitor facilities, as defined by the division by rule made in accordance with Title
89 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act;
- 90 (d) water and utility systems; and
91 (e) employee housing.
- 92 (7) The division shall compile data and report to the ~~[Business, Economic Development,~~
93 ~~and Labor Appropriations Subcommittee]~~ Natural Resources, Agriculture, and
94 Environmental Quality Appropriations Subcommittee on the:
- 95 (a) effectiveness of the grant program in addressing the deferred maintenance and repair
96 backlog of trails, campgrounds, and other recreation amenities on public lands;

- 97 (b) estimated value of the rehabilitation or restoration projects;
- 98 (c) number of miles of trails that are rehabilitated or restored; and
- 99 (d) leverage of state money to federal and private money and in-kind services such as
- 100 volunteer labor.

101 Section 3. **Effective Date.**

102 This bill takes effect on May 7, 2025.