

Goshen Bay Waterfowl Management Area

2026 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Doug Welton

Senate Sponsor: Derrin R. Owens

LONG TITLE

General Description:

This bill addresses creation of a waterfowl management area.

Highlighted Provisions:

This bill:

- provides for the creation of the Goshen Bay Waterfowl Management Area; and
makes technical and conforming amendments.

Money Appropriated in this Bill:

None

Other Special Clauses:

None

Utah Code Sections Affected:

AMENDS:

23A-6-403, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapter 97

23A-12-301, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapter 140

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

Section 1. Section 23A-6-403 is amended to read:

23A-6-403 . State-owned lands authorized for use as wildlife management areas, fishing waters, and for other recreational activities.

(1) The Wildlife Board may use any and all unsurveyed state-owned lands below the 1855 meander line of the Great Salt Lake within the following townships for the creation, operation, maintenance and management of wildlife management areas, fishing waters, and other recreational activities:

- Township 2 South, Range 5 West, S.L.B. and M.; Township 2 South, Range 4 West, S.L.B. and M.; Township 1 South, Range 5 West, S.L.B. and M.; Township 1 South, Range 4

29 West, S.L.B. and M.; Township 1 South, Range 3 West, S.L.B. and M.; Township 1 North,  
 30 Range 3 West, S.L.B. and M.; Township 1 North, Range 2 West, S.L.B. and M.; Township 2  
 31 North, Range 3 West, S.L.B. and M.; Township 2 North, Range 2 West, S.L.B. and M.;  
 32 Township 2 North, Range 1 West, S.L.B. and M.; Township 3 North, Range 3 West, S.L.B.  
 33 and M.; Township 3 North, Range 2 West, S.L.B. and M.; Township 3 North, Range 1 West,  
 34 S.L.B. and M.; Township 4 North, Range 3 West, S.L.B. and M.; Township 4 North, Range 2  
 35 West, S.L.B. and M.; Sections 1, 2, 11, 12, 13, 14, 23, and 24, Township 4 North, Range 4  
 36 West, S.L.B. and M.; Township 5 North, Range 3 West, S.L.B. and M.; Township 5 North,  
 37 Range 4 West, S.L.B. and M.; Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 11, and 12, Township 5 North, Range 5  
 38 West, S.L.B. and M.; Township 6 North, Range 5 West, S.L.B. and M.; Township 6 North,  
 39 Range 4 West, S.L.B. and M.; Township 6 North, Range 3 West, S.L.B. and M.; Township 7  
 40 North, Range 5 West, S.L.B. and M.; Township 7 North, Range 4 West, S.L.B. and M.;  
 41 Township 7 North, Range 3 West, S.L.B. and M.; Township 7 North, Range 2 West, S.L.B.  
 42 and M.; Township 8 North, Range 5 West, S.L.B. and M.; Township 8 North, Range 4 West,  
 43 S.L.B. and M.; Township 8 North, Range 3 West, S.L.B. and M.; Township 8 North, Range 2  
 44 West, S.L.B. and M.; Township 9 North, Range 5 West, S.L.B. and M.; Township 9 North,  
 45 Range 4 West, S.L.B. and M.; Township 11 North, Range 11 West, S.L.B. and M.; Township  
 46 11 North, Range 10 West, S.L.B. and M.; Township 11 North, Range 9 West, S.L.B. and M.;  
 47 Township 11 North, Range 8 West, S.L.B. and M.; North 1/2 of Township 10 North, Range 10  
 48 West, S.L.B. and M.; North 1/2 of Township 10 North, Range 9 West, S.L.B. and M.; North  
 49 1/2 of Township 10 North, Range 8 West, S.L.B. and M.

50 (2)(a) The Wildlife Board shall establish a wildlife management area known as the  
 51 "Willard Spur Waterfowl Management Area" on the unsurveyed state-owned lands  
 52 below the 1855 meander line of the Great Salt Lake in Sections 26, 35, 36 of  
 53 Township 8 North, Range 4 West, S.L.B. and M.; Township 8 North, Range 3 West,  
 54 S.L.B. and M.; Sections 1, 2, 11, 12 of Township 7 North, Range 4 West, S.L.B. and  
 55 M.; Township 7 North, Range 3 West, S.L.B. and M.; Sections 20, 21, 29, 30, 31 of  
 56 Township 8 North, Range 2 West, S.L.B. and M., except for the following:

- 57 (i) lands within the May 14, 2019, boundaries of the Bear River Migratory Bird  
 58 Refuge;
- 59 (ii) lands within the May 14, 2019, boundaries of Harold Crane Waterfowl  
 60 Management Area;
- 61 (iii) lands within the May 14, 2019, boundaries of Willard Bay Reservoir; and
- 62 (iv) lands within the May 14, 2019, boundaries of state mineral leases.

- 63 (b) The division shall execute a memorandum of understanding with the Division of  
64 Forestry, Fire, and State Lands recognizing the division's use of the state-owned  
65 lands described in Subsection (2)(a) as a wildlife management area.
- 66 (c) The division shall manage the state-owned lands described in Subsection (2)(a) as a  
67 wildlife management area and consistent with:  
68 (i) the beneficial purposes identified in Subsection (2)(d); and  
69 (ii) a management plan created consistent with the procedures in this chapter for a  
70 management plan.
- 71 (d) The division shall manage the Willard Spur Waterfowl Management Area for the  
72 following beneficial purposes:  
73 (i) propagating and sustaining waterfowl, upland gamebirds, desirable mammals,  
74 shorebirds, and other migratory and nonmigratory birds that use the Great Salt  
75 Lake ecosystem and the Great Salt Lake ecosystem's surrounding wetlands;  
76 (ii) preserving and enhancing the natural function, vegetation, and water flows under  
77 existing or acquired water rights to provide productive habitat for the species  
78 listed in Subsection (2)(d)(i);  
79 (iii) providing recreational opportunity for traditional marsh-related activities,  
80 including hunting, fishing, trapping, and wildlife viewing; and  
81 (iv) providing public access in the Willard Spur Waterfowl Management Area for  
82 purposes of hunting, fishing, trapping, and wildlife viewing, including access with  
83 airboats and other small watercraft.
- 84 (e) The division shall provide the habitat, recreational opportunities, and public access  
85 described in Subsection (2)(d).
- 86 (f)(i) The division may construct a structure within the Willard Spur Waterfowl  
87 Management Area only after the division forms and meets with an advisory  
88 committee concerning the structure.
- 89 (ii) The advisory committee formed by the division under this Subsection (2)(f) shall  
90 include representatives of users of airboats, users of other small watercraft,  
91 hunters of waterfowl, and other stakeholders in the Willard Spur Waterfowl  
92 Management Area.
- 93 (3)(a) The Wildlife Board shall establish a wildlife management area known as the  
94 "Bear River Bay Waterfowl Management Area" on the unsurveyed state-owned lands  
95 below the 1855 meander line of the Great Salt Lake in Bear River Bay or as mutually  
96 determined by the division and the Division of Forestry, Fire, and State Lands.

- 97 (b) The division shall execute a memorandum of understanding with the Division of  
98 Forestry, Fire, and State Lands recognizing the division's use of the state-owned  
99 lands described in Subsection (3)(a) as a wildlife management area.
- 100 (c) The division shall manage the state-owned lands described in Subsection (3)(a) as a  
101 wildlife management area and consistent with:  
102 (i) the beneficial purposes identified in Subsection (3)(d); and  
103 (ii) a management plan created consistent with the procedures in this chapter for a  
104 management plan.
- 105 (d) The division shall manage the Bear River Bay Waterfowl Management Area for the  
106 following beneficial purposes:  
107 (i) propagating and sustaining waterfowl, upland gamebirds, desirable mammals,  
108 shorebirds, and other migratory and nonmigratory birds that use the Great Salt  
109 Lake ecosystem and the Great Salt Lake ecosystem's surrounding wetlands;  
110 (ii) preserving and enhancing the natural function, vegetation, and water flows under  
111 existing or acquired water rights to provide productive habitat for the species  
112 listed in Subsection (3)(d)(i);  
113 (iii) providing recreational opportunity for traditional marsh-related activities,  
114 including hunting, fishing, trapping, and wildlife viewing; and  
115 (iv) providing public access in the Bear River Bay Waterfowl Management Area for  
116 purposes of hunting, fishing, trapping, and wildlife viewing, including access with  
117 airboats and other small watercraft.
- 118 (e) The division shall provide the habitat, recreational opportunities, and public access  
119 described in Subsection (3)(d).
- 120 (4)(a) The Wildlife Board shall establish a wildlife management area known as the  
121 "Goshen Bay Waterfowl Management Area" on the surveyed and unsurveyed  
122 state-owned lands below the settled boundary lines or otherwise determined line of  
123 Utah Lake in Goshen Bay as mutually determined by the division and the Division of  
124 Forestry, Fire, and State Lands within:  
125 (i) Township 9 South, Range 1 West, Sections 11, 12, 13, 14, 23, 24, S.L.B. and M.;  
126 and  
127 (ii) Township 9 South, Range 1 East, Sections 7, 18, S.L.B. and M.
- 128 (b) The division shall execute a memorandum of understanding with the Division of  
129 Forestry, Fire, and State Lands recognizing the division's use of the state-owned  
130 lands described in Subsection (4)(a) as a wildlife management area.

- 131 (c) The division shall manage the state-owned lands described in Subsection (4)(a) as a  
132 wildlife management area and consistent with:
- 133 (i) the beneficial purposes identified in Subsection (4)(d);  
134 (ii) multiple-use sustained yield principles as described in Section 65A-2-1; and  
135 (iii) a management plan created consistent with the procedures in this chapter for a  
136 management plan.
- 137 (d) The division shall manage the Goshen Bay Waterfowl Management Area for the  
138 following beneficial purposes:
- 139 (i) propagating and sustaining waterfowl, upland gamebirds, desirable mammals,  
140 shorebirds, and other migratory and nonmigratory birds that use the Utah Lake  
141 ecosystem and the Utah Lake ecosystem's surrounding wetlands;
- 142 (ii) preserving and enhancing the natural function, vegetation, and water flows to  
143 provide productive habitat for the species listed in Subsection (4)(d)(i);
- 144 (iii) providing recreational opportunity for traditional marsh-related activities,  
145 including hunting, fishing, trapping, and wildlife viewing; and
- 146 (iv) providing public access in the Goshen Bay Waterfowl Management Area for  
147 purposes of hunting, fishing, trapping, and wildlife viewing, including access with  
148 airboats and other small watercraft.
- 149 (e) The division shall provide the habitat, recreational opportunities, and public access  
150 described in Subsection (4)(d).

151 Section 2. Section **23A-12-301** is amended to read:

152 **23A-12-301 . Definitions.**

- 153 (1) The definitions in Section 23A-4-1201 apply to this part.
- 154 (2)(a) As used in this part, "waterfowl management area" means real property owned or  
155 managed by the division that is:
- 156 (i) primarily used for the conservation, production, or recreational harvest of ducks,  
157 mergansers, geese, brant, swans, and other waterfowl; and
- 158 (ii) designated as a waterfowl management area by the Wildlife Board in accordance  
159 with Section 23A-12-303.
- 160 (b) "Waterfowl management area" includes the following referenced in Section  
161 23A-6-403:
- 162 (i) Willard Spur Waterfowl Management Area;
- 163 (ii) Harold Crane Waterfowl Management Area;[-and]
- 164 (iii) Bear River Bay Waterfowl Management Area[-] ; and

165 (iv) Goshen Bay Waterfowl Management Area.

166 Section 3. **Effective Date.**

167 This bill takes effect on May 6, 2026.