



# FORESTRY, FIRE, AND STATE LANDS

NATURAL RESOURCES, AGRICULTURE, & ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE  
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ISSUE BRIEF

## Summary

This document summarizes the budget requests for the Division of Forestry, Fire, and State Lands, including:

- New funding
- Funding Reallocations
- Legislative Intent Language
- Account Balances, and
- Fee Changes

## New Funding

The Analyst recommends the Legislature appropriate funding from the Sovereign Lands Management Restricted Account for the following requests:

### 1. Access to Bear Lake \$250,000 – One Time

The division is in collaboration with Bear Lake Regional Commission, Bear River Association of Governments, GOED, National Park Service, and the Division of Parks and Recreation to improve Bear Lake's infrastructure and enhance the recreational opportunities, as well as the public access and safety. This funding request is to be matched with other sources and be used for projects that will improve the parking, enhance the lighting at boat ramps, and provide more permanent restroom facilities around the lake.

### 2. Bear Lake Law Enforcement \$65,000 – Ongoing

The majority of the goals of the Bear Lake Comprehensive Management Plan deal with public safety and the protection of the environmental resources. Currently, the law enforcement is contracted through the Rich County Sheriff's Office for peak summer season only. To meet the increased demand for recreational access, and recent legislation and policies related to the beach launching, quagga mussel prevention, and restrictions on using motorized vehicles on the beaches, the division is requesting additional appropriation of \$65,000 ongoing to provide full-time law enforcement at Bear Lake through Rich County's Sheriff's Office.

### 3. Bear River Comprehensive Management Plan \$100,000 – One Time

The Bear River is used for recreation, agriculture, and industry. These multiple uses will continue to increase as the population along the Wasatch Front continues to expand and move northward into communities along the river. The division is requesting funding for phase one of a comprehensive management plan for the area. The comprehensive management plan sets the framework for the management of sovereign lands under multiple-use, sustained-yield principles. The funding is to aid staff with expertise provided by consultants for certain aspects of the process, as well as for materials for the public meetings.

### 4. Jordan River Commission \$30,000 – Ongoing

The Jordan River Commission was created by an inter-local cooperation agreement in 2010, with the purpose to facilitate regional implementation of the Blueprint Jordan River, to serve as a technical resource to local communities, and to provide a forum for coordination of planning, restoration, and responsible development along the Jordan River corridor. The cities and counties that participate provide funding, and the Division of Water Quality provides office space.

Currently, the Division of Forestry, Fire, and State Lands does not provide financial contributions to the Jordan River Commission. The request is for \$30,000 ongoing to assist the commission to hire a full-time staff, who is to focus on research, grant writing, and project-specific work.

**5. Jordan River Stream Bank Stabilization \$50,000 – Ongoing**

The division has received numerous requests from local municipalities to help plan, implement, and fund stream bank stabilization projects along the Jordan River. In many cases the continual erosion and degradation of stream banks present serious threats to structures, land, and wildlife habitat along the Jordan River. The division is requesting \$50,000 to provide matching funds for local projects that will protect the integrity and stability of the Jordan River, while also enhancing the ecological and aesthetic value of sovereign lands.

**6. Vehicles \$65,000 – One Time and 9,600 – Ongoing**

This request is for two new vehicles for the sovereign lands staff in Logan (Bear River Area Office) and Moab (South East Area Office). The staff travel out in the field doing sovereign lands related work, hazardous fuels reduction work, and other forestry type field labor. The division is requesting \$65,000 one time for the purchase of the two vehicles and \$9,600 for the ongoing vehicles operation costs.

**7. Storage \$56,000 – Ongoing**

The division has a need to store engines, vehicles, boats, etc. during the off-season. In the past, they have used warehouse space (80,000 sq. ft.) at the old Freeport Center in Clearfield, which was transferred to DFCM by the federal government. Some upgrades have been made to the facility since the transfer. DFCM is now requesting payments from the division for the annual operations and maintenance costs for the facility.

**8. Catastrophic Wildfire Reduction Strategy Implementation \$2.5 million – Ongoing**

The Catastrophic Wildfire Reduction Strategy provides a systematic approach to reducing the risk of wildfire. If addressed collectively, the strategy's three goals of 1) Landscape Resilience, 2) Community Preparedness, and 3) Wildfire Response & Management will likely reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire, as well as reduce both suppression and total costs of wildfire over time. The division is requesting \$2.5 million to implement pre-suppression actions of wildfire prevention (targeted outreach to change behaviors and reduce the number of human-caused fires), preparedness (community planning, evacuation planning, egress issues, firefighter training and qualifications, fire department equipment, etc.), and mitigation (hazardous fuels reduction work, defensible space, etc.).

**9. Navigational Hazard Removal \$150,000 – One Time**

The State of Utah faces liability by continuing to allow navigational hazards to remain on waterways throughout the state. The division is responsible to provide safe navigation on sovereign lands. Staff has been working with local stakeholders to mitigate and remove navigational hazards on sovereign lands. The division is requesting funds to partner with local municipalities and agencies to prioritize the removal of navigational hazards on sovereign lands, including: abandoned pipelines, concrete bridge pilasters, fences, abandoned railroad trestles, etc.

**10. Sovereign Lands Asset and Agreement Tracking System Maintenance and Hosting \$40,000 – Ongoing**

The division is nearing completion of the development of the new Sovereign Lands Asset and Agreement Tracking System. There will be ongoing costs for software maintenance of \$25,000 and for DTS hosting and support of \$15,000.

**11. Northern Utah Sovereign Lands LiDAR \$250,000 – One Time**

The division will partner with contributions from FEMA, the Utah Geological Survey, Division of Emergency Management, and other parties for LiDAR data acquisition for the shoreline and beaches of Bear Lake, the Bear River where claimed as sovereign, and as much of the Great Salt Lake shoreline and beaches as possible. LiDAR data will help staff manage the beds of sovereign lands. The data can also be used for vegetation modeling and mapping.

## Reallocations

The Analyst recommends the Legislature authorize the division to redirect restricted funds that are already appropriated to the Division of Forestry, Fire, and State Lands, in order to meet new priorities: one for the \$50,000 ongoing and the other for \$50,000 one time:

- a. \$50,000 **ongoing** originally appropriated in FY 2006 for Utah Lake Litigation to be used in the future for:
  - water quality sampling on the Great Salt Lake,
  - toilet pumping, and
  - other ongoing sovereign lands management needs.
- b. \$50,000 **one time** originally appropriated in FY 2007 for Lands Maintenance to be used in the future to:
  - improve camping facilities at Dalton Wells and
  - begin the Green River Baseline Study.

## Legislative Intent Language

The Analyst recommends the Legislature approve the following pieces of intent language:

### 1. Nonlapsing: \$2,634,000

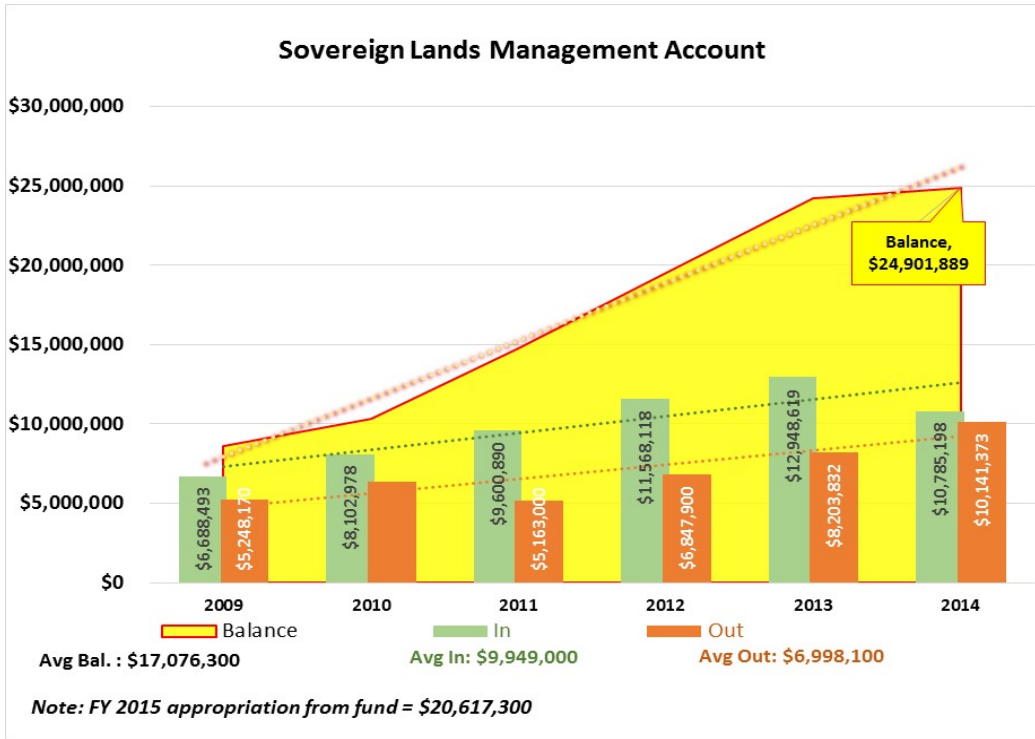
*Under the terms of 63J-1-603 of the Utah Code, the Legislature intends that appropriations provided for the Division of Forestry, Fire, and State Lands in Item 5, Chapter 5, Laws of Utah 2014, shall not lapse at the close of FY 2015. Expenditures of these funds are limited to: Sovereign Lands Projects \$1,210,000; Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge Dispute \$100,000; Little Willow Water Line \$32,000; Navigational Hazards Removal \$20,000; Lands Maintenance \$50,000; Information Database \$110,000; Jordan River Assessment \$27,000; Bear River Baseline \$35,000; Bear Lake Public Access \$50,000, Cedar City Office Building \$1,000,000.*

### 2. Other Intent

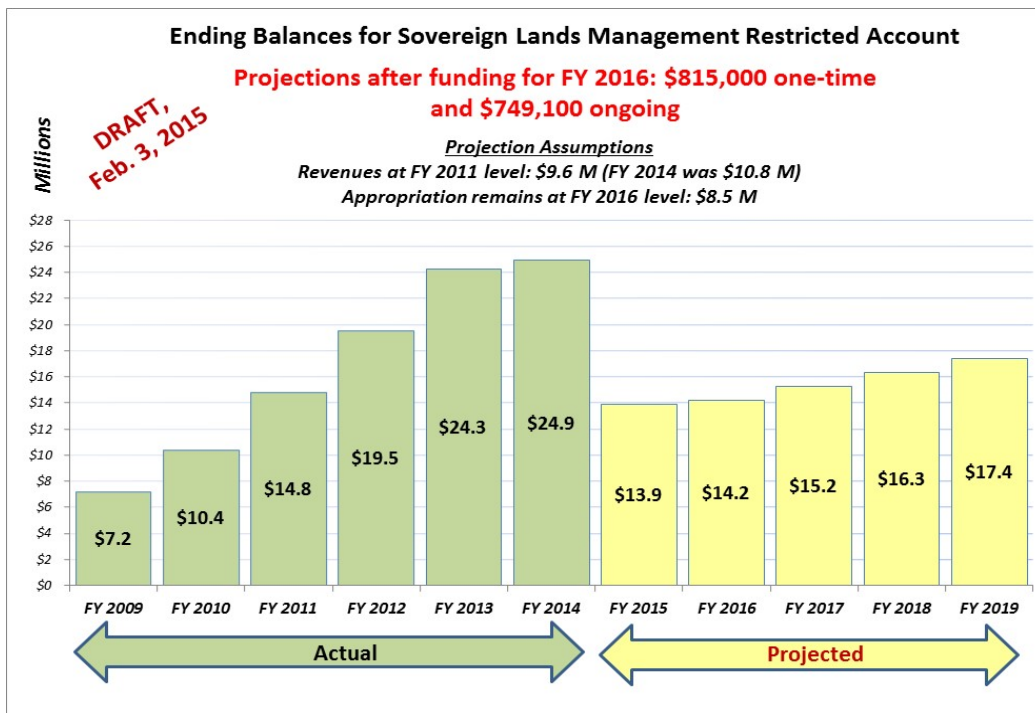
- a. *The Legislature intends that Division of Forestry, Fire, and State Lands purchase two new vehicles in FY 2015 through the Division of Fleet Operations.*
- b. *The Legislature intends that the \$250,000 for Bear Lake Access be contingent upon at least a 50% match from other state and/or local sources.*
- c. *The Legislature intends that the \$50,000 for Jordan River bank stabilization be contingent upon a one-to-one match from non-state sources.*
- d. *The Legislature intends that the \$250,000 for LiDAR for Northern Utah be contingent upon a one-to-one match from other state, federal, and/or local sources.*

Fund Balances

The figure below shows the activities of the Sovereign Lands Management Restricted Account over time, the appropriated amount for the current fiscal year, as well as the average revenues, expenditures, and balances.



The following figure shows the account balances with projections based on certain assumptions and include the Analyst's recommendations.



### **Federal Funds**

The Federal Fund requests for the Division of Forestry, Fire, and State Lands can be found on page 3 of “Agencies’ Requests for Federal Funds” (<http://le.utah.gov/interim/2015/pdf/00000824.pdf>).

### **Fees**

The fee schedule for the division can be found in COBI under the “Financials” tab ([http://le.utah.gov/lfa/reports/cobi2015/LI\\_RDA.htm#financialsTab](http://le.utah.gov/lfa/reports/cobi2015/LI_RDA.htm#financialsTab)). They are not requesting any fee changes.