

Utah Department of Natural Resources Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands



MISSION

The Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands manages, sustains and strengthens Utah forests, rangelands, sovereign lands and watersheds for its citizens and visitors.

The Division accomplishes its mission by:

- ♦ Providing forestry assistance to private landowners, communities, and other state agencies;
- ♦ Coordinating wildland fire protection for all state and private lands in cooperation with local government and fire departments as well as other land management agencies; and,
- ♦ Optimizing, enhancing, and managing the long-term benefits of sovereign land resources held in the Public Trust.

PRIMARY CUSTOMERS

- ♦ Citizens of and visitors to Utah
- ♦ Private landowners
- ♦ Lease-holders on sovereign lands
- ♦ Resource users
- ♦ County and local governments
- ♦ Elected officials
- ♦ Federal land management agency partners
- ♦ Non-governmental organizations

2017 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Forestry

- ♦ Sixteen new forest stewardship plans were completed (a new record!) covering 56,850 acres, bringing the state total to 100 current stewardship plans covering nearly 300,000 acres.
- ♦ One new Tree City USA community was approved, bringing our statewide total to 87 Tree City USA communities covering more than 67% of Utah's population.
- ♦ Thirteen Notices of Intent were filed for forestry practices on private land. This is more than twice the 5-year average for NOIs, signifying a notable increase in active forest management.

Fire

- ♦ Though certainly not an accomplishment, it is important to note that the 2017 wildfire season was the most expensive in state history, largely due to the catastrophic Brian Head Fire, which was the most expensive state-managed fire ever and fourth largest fire by acreage.
- ♦ Approximately 2,300 high-risk and priority acres were treated to reduce the risk of wildfire and protect communities in the wildland-urban interface.
- ♦ The Lone Peak (LP) Conservation Center logged nearly 131,000 personnel-hours on fire assignments. LP crews also completed nearly 15,000 hours of natural resource projects, including wildfire mitigation and fuels reduction, for state and federal agencies across Utah.
- ♦ Division fire staff certified 2,805 state and local wildland firefighters statewide.

State/Sovereign Lands

- ♦ Completed the first-ever Bear River Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP), and began the initial planning for the first-ever Green and Colorado Rivers CMP.
- ♦ The Jordan River Parkway Trail was fully completed from Utah Lake to Great Salt Lake.
- ♦ Great Salt Lake marina dredging completed and Utah Lake marina dredging is underway. (*dredging projects overseen by State Parks*)



Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands



- ◆ Continued to actively address invasive species control on sovereign lands, focusing our efforts on Phragmites control at Utah and Great Salt lakes, and increasing our work on Tamarisk, Russian olive and other noxious weeds along the Green and Colorado rivers.

MAJOR POLICY ISSUES and CHALLENGES

- ◆ Watershed protection and forest health.
- ◆ Increase and control of invasive species and noxious weeds, including phragmites.
- ◆ Impacts to urban and community forests.
- ◆ Wildland urban interface growth and associated wildfire risk.
- ◆ Forecast for larger and more intense wildfires with unprecedented erratic fire behavior.
- ◆ Paying for wildfire risk reduction (prevention, preparedness and mitigation), suppression and rehabilitation costs.
- ◆ Utilization of woody biomass to offset the cost of fuels reduction & fire mitigation work.
- ◆ Federal budgets and impacts to federally funded forestry and fire programs.
- ◆ Increasing complexity and demand of sovereign lands management, including near-record low water levels for Great Salt Lake and Utah Lake.
- ◆ Increasing litigation and resulting responsibilities, such as the Weber River access lawsuit.

PLAN of ACTION

Emphasize Governor Herbert's SUCCESS initiative through:

- ◆ Increased use of *technology and GIS* in all aspects of the Division's work, including increasing the number of *mobile applications* developed for use by staff and the public;
- ◆ Full operation of the Division's new state-of-the-art, automated *Fire Business System*;
- ◆ Full operation of the Division's new sovereign lands *land lease database*;

We will also:

- ◆ Continue to implement the updated *Utah Forest Action Plan*, including sage grouse prioritization, and streamlined *forest stewardship planning* process;
- ◆ Emphasize *Tree City USA* status for Utah communities and continue our comprehensive *statewide urban tree inventory* data collection using our new digital inventory app;
- ◆ Continue implementation of the State's new *wildland fire management system* as created by SB 122 during the 2016 Legislative session (the new "fire policy");
- ◆ Emphasize *wildfire prevention, preparedness and mitigation*, and continue to lead the efficient implementation of the Governor's *Catastrophic Wildfire Reduction Strategy*;
- ◆ Seek *commercial and market-based solutions* for the increasing cost of fuels reduction work through the efforts of our Wood Utilization & Business Development Coordinator;
- ◆ Continue the planning for the first-ever *Green and Colorado Rivers Comprehensive Management Plan* and associated *Mineral Lease Plan* update;
- ◆ Work with industry, government and NGO partners to proactively address the ecological, economic and social impacts of *reduced water levels* at Bear, Utah and Great Salt lakes.
- ◆ Update and actively implement resource management projects according to the *Sovereign Lands Strategic Plan* and *Sovereign Lands Invasive Species Guidance Document*.

DIVISION LEADERSHIP

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