

Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands



Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Environmental Quality
Appropriations Subcommittee

January 26, 2022

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OVERVIEW OF TODAY'S PRESENTATION

- What we do at **Forestry, Fire and State Lands**
- 2021 wildfire statistics
- Division Budget
- Funding Priorities



Utah's Sovereign Lands



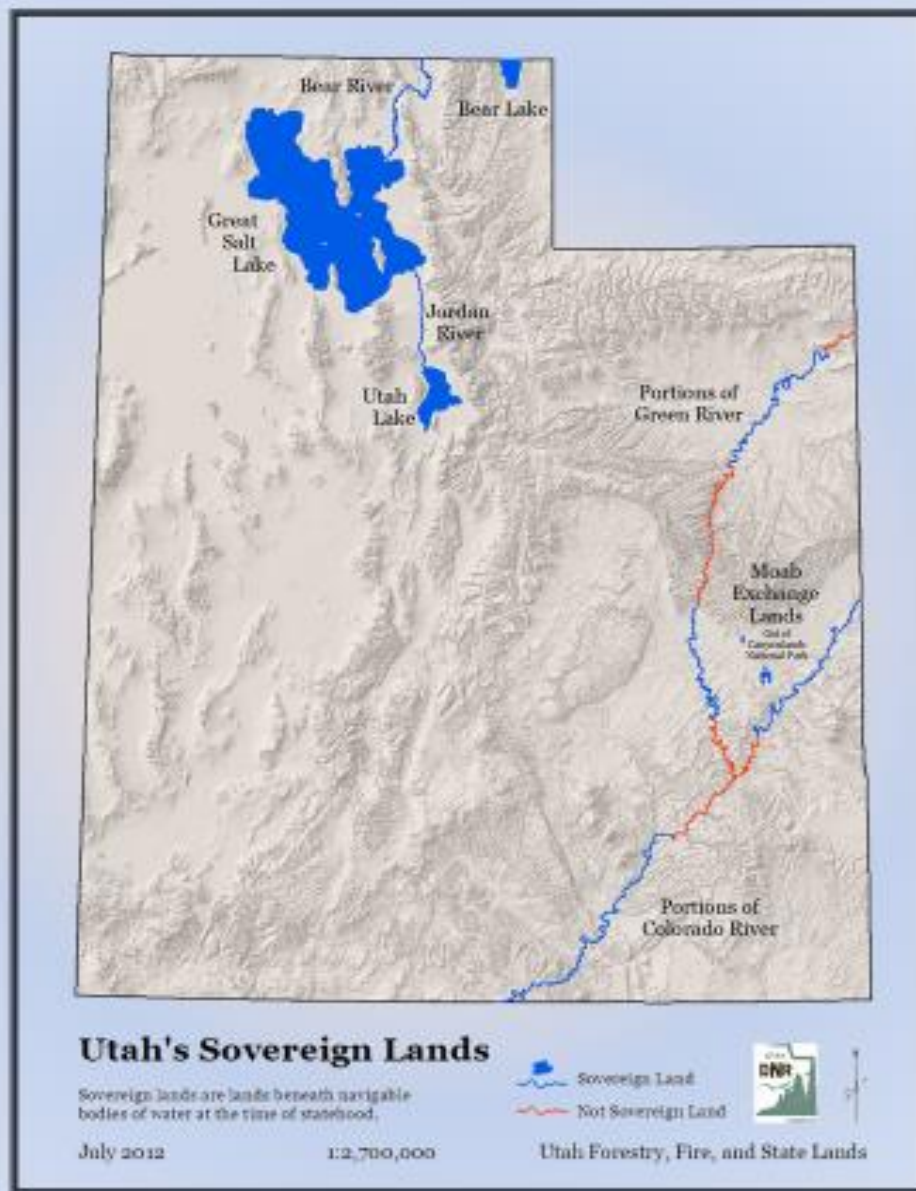
What are Sovereign Lands?

- Lakebeds and riverbeds of waters considered navigable at time of statehood (1896).
- Boundary is generally considered below the ordinary high water mark.
- ~1.5 million acres of lake and river bed.
- ~2,200 miles of shoreline.
- Managed under the Public Trust Doctrine.
- Average Annual Revenue of \$5-11 Million.



Bear River
 Bear Lake
 Great Salt Lake
 Jordan River
 Utah Lake
 Green River
 (portions)
 Colorado River
 (portions)

 Moab Exchange
 Lands



Management

FFSL's Balancing Act

- **Public economic benefits vs. public preservation benefits**

protection of navigation, fish and wildlife habitat, aquatic beauty, public recreation, and water quality will be given due consideration and balanced against the navigational or economic necessity or justification for, or benefit to be derived from, any proposed use.

- **Public Trust defined by case law**

Multiple Use & Sustained Yield

- **Multiple Use:**

Management of various surface and subsurface resources in a manner that will best meet the present and future needs of the people of this state.

- **Sustained Yield:**

Achievement and maintenance of high level annual or periodic output of the various renewable resources of land without impairment of the productivity of the land 65A-1-1



What did we accomplish:

Utah Lake

- FY 22 funding of \$9.8 million
 - \$3.4 million marina enhancements
 - \$800,000 shoreline restoration
 - \$1 million to HAB
 - \$5.4 committed to Walkara way
- Contribute matching funds for ISM and WRI projects that have reduced overall Phragmites cover around the shoreline by approximately 70%, while targeting a variety of noxious weeds.
- Active role with Utah Lake Commission
- HAB funding and coordination with DEQ and TSSD
- Provide technical expertise and coordination for the resource



What did we accomplish cnt'd

Bear Lake

- Finalizing the updated Comprehensive Management Plan
- Invasive species detection, monitoring and control (Phragmites and Eurasian Watermilfoil)
- Collaborate with UDOT, DFCM, and other agencies to re-design and renovate the Bear Lake rest area.
- Boundary settlements



What did we accomplish cnt'd

Great Salt Lake

- Treated over 8,000 acres of invasive Phragmites while partnering with numerous stakeholders to treat an additional 16,000 acres.
 - Coordinate research efforts and contracts to guide and inform ongoing Phragmites projects
- Leading ongoing facilitation for the Great Salt Lake Advisory Council, Tech Team, and Salinity Advisory Committee
- Serves as a liaison between Department of Natural Resources and Department of Environmental Quality on all issues pertaining to Great Salt Lake
- Currently addressing the salt balance between the north and south arms
- Annually collects an average of \$8-10 million in royalties



What did we accomplish cnt'd

Jordan River

- Used legislative appropriations to enhance public safety, preservation, active transportation, and recreation along the Jordan River and adjacent lands.
- Active role with the Jordan River Commission and associated advisory committees.
- Partnerships/contracts with 10 law enforcement agencies along the river to perform patrols along the River.
- Provide bank stabilization grant opportunities along with project expertise and funding for vegetation control.



What did we accomplish cnt'd

Bear River

- Collaborating with Cache and Box Elder Counties, along with other entities to improve access along the River (i.e. Trenton Boat Ramp)
- Formed partnerships with the Counties and upland land owners to mitigate invasive species in the river channel and adjacent upland areas.

Green and Colorado Rivers

- Leveraged habitat conservation budget by over 400% through grant funding.
- Implementation of the CMP completed in 2020
- Administers nearly 100 commercial recreation permits and currently working to manage a substantial increase in private recreation.
- Partnerships with local, state, and federal agencies to mitigate invasive species, provide law enforcement, improve access, and education surrounding the rivers.



FORESTRY

Guided by 4 goals in the 2020 Utah Forest Action Plan

- Restore healthy and resilient trees and forests across Utah
- Reduce wildfire risk to communities, watersheds & natural resources
- Increase collaborative landscape scale forest restoration activities
- Build capacity among partners, stakeholders and communities

Partnership activities with the USDA Forest Service

- Utah Forest Action Plan integrated with Shared Stewardship
- Cooperative Forestry Programs
 - Forest Stewardship
 - Forest Legacy
 - Forest Health
 - Urban & Community Forestry
 - Conservation Education
 - Landscape Scale Restoration



Why Forestry Matters

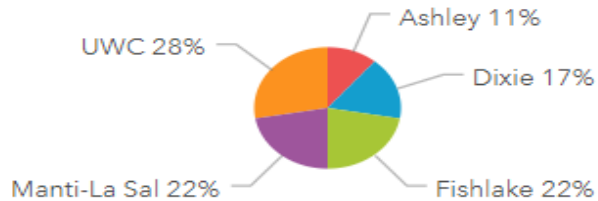
The Utah Forest Action Plan has established goals and strategies to address the major threats to Utah's forests and communities. These threats are well documented and have raised growing public concern in recent years.

1. Declining forest health
2. Increasing wildfires
3. Effects of climate
4. Growth and development
5. Limited capacity for forest management



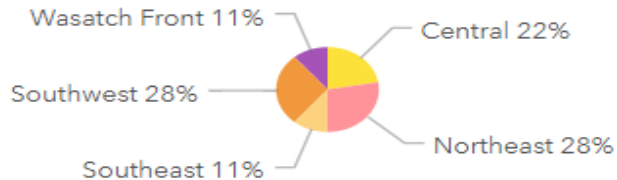
Utah Shared Stewardship

Projects by National Forest

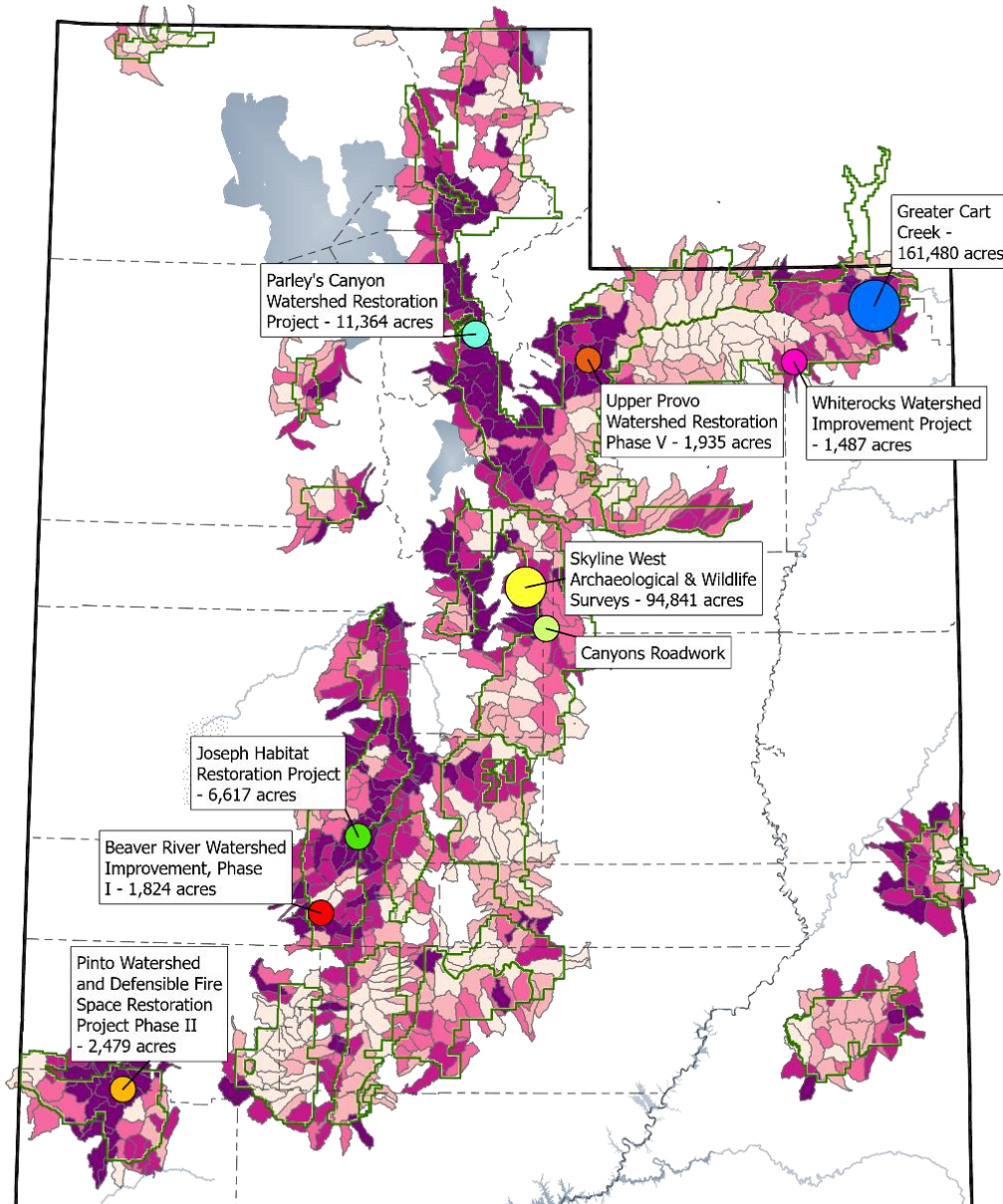


- **Joint Prioritization and Shared Decision Making, with an emphasis toward collaborative implantation.**
- **~\$20 million in Shared Stewardship projects 2019- current 609.7k project acres**
- **Jointly developed key performance indicators (KPIs)**
- **Convening stakeholders statewide to leverage interests and resources to improve forest conditions**

Projects by FFSL Management Area



Shared Stewardship Projects



- Beaver River, Phase I
- Upper Provo, Phase V
- Pinto, Phase II
- Greater Cart Creek
- Skyline West
- Joseph
- Canyons - Roadwork
- Parley's Canyon
- Whiterocks



Utah Shared Stewardship



- The Shared Stewardship program is fully integrated into the state's Forest Action Plan.
- This is key to leveraging funds, developing new funding mechanisms, and prioritizing work throughout the state.
- The shared commitments in the agreement remain the guidance for integration into other forestry programs, outreach to stakeholders, and combating the wildfire crisis.

Forestry Accomplishments

- Completed new 10-year Utah Forest Action Plan and integrated it with Shared Stewardship
- Established Wood Utilization & Business Development Program with Shared Stewardship
- Strengthened Forest Legacy Program and completed 4,886-acre Soldier Summit conservation easement
- FFSL was awarded two competitive federal grants for Landscape Scale Restoration projects
- Urban & Community Forestry partnered with Utah communities to plant 1,370 trees and 4,050 seedlings, generating significant social and economic benefits.



FIRE

Coordinate wildland fire management on state & private lands in cooperation with local government and federal land management agencies.

*Fire management is a cooperative effort-
no one agency can do it alone*



What fire management means

- Wildfire incident management and suppression
- Cooperative Wildfire System to incentivize prevention and preparedness actions by local government
- Utah Wildfire Risk Assessment Portal (UWRAP)
- Catastrophic Wildfire Reduction Strategy (“CatFire”)
- Community Wildfire Preparedness Plans & Firewise USA
- Wildland firefighter training & certification
- Fire Department Assistance grants to local FDs
- Federal Excess Property Program (e.g., fire trucks for local FDs)



Mitigating Catastrophic Wildfire in Utah

Shared
Stewardship
with USFS

Cooperative Wildfire
System
(CWS)
with local government



Catastrophic
Wildfire
Reduction
Strategy
(CatFire)

Utah Wildfire
Risk Assessment Portal
(UWRAP)

Watershed
Restoration
Initiative
(WRI)

True Cost of Wildfire

- Suppression costs
- Public & firefighter safety
- Loss of life
- Loss of property, homes and infrastructure
- Infrastructure shutdowns (e.g., highways & airports)
- Lost revenues to business (e.g., tourism)
- Air and water quality impacts
- Wildlife and habitat loss
- Post-fire rehabilitation costs
- Flooding and erosion
- Healthcare costs (e.g., respiratory)
- Evacuation costs



UTAH'S 2021 FIRE SEASON

Late spring- early summer

- Extreme drought lurking throughout the state
- Started seeing large fires in May
- By June we had 5 large fires and temps were “hot” (Crazy!)

Largest 5 Fires of 2021

- Flatt 14,366 Acres (Iron/Washington Co.)
- Bear 12,174 Acres (Carbon Co.)
- Pack Creek 8,952 Acres (Grand/San Juan Co.)
- Bennion Crk 8,313 Acres (Utah Co.)
- Little Pass 2,186.0 Acres (Tooele Co.)

• We were still seeing unprecedented hot and dry conditions-
DROUGHT!-

• Statewide restrictions were implemented- not the norm!

But then.....



FIRE SENSE

- **Began in April 2021**
- **Strategic Approach**
- **Targeted Key Audiences**
- **Reframed Messaging**
 - **Went from restrictive and fussy to common sense**
 - **Focused on best practices**
 - **Equipment, debris, campfires, firearms & fireworks**



**FIRE
SENSE**



**MOST UTAH
WILDFIRES
ARE
PREVENTABLE.
USE YOUR
FIRE SENSE.
USE FIREWORKS
RESPONSIBLY.**

UtahFireSense.org



**UNATTENDED
CAMPFIRES
ARE NOT COOL
UNTIL THEY'RE
COOL TO THE
TOUCH.**



UtahFireSense.org



**AFTER
CHECKOUT,
CHECK YOUR
TRAILER
CHAINS.**



UtahFireSense.org



**#1 Ranked Public Relations
Campaign in State**



The Return:

- Reduction in human-caused wildfires
 - » 62% reduction in human caused fires
 - » 900 wildfires that didn't happen
- Dollars spent on campaign equivalent to 1 day of aviation costs on a large wildfire
- Overall, we spent far less on wildfire suppression in 2021

2021 FIRE SEASON NUMBERS

- 1,131 Fires Reported
- 570 of those human caused vs. 1,492 in 2020
- 63,792 total acres burned
- 36% of acres burned were human caused (23,146 acres)
- 64% of acres were lightning caused (40,646 acres)



2021 FIRE SEASON SUPPRESSION FUNDING

- State, local and federal agencies est. cost
~\$50 million (calendar year)
- State's actual fire expense and rehab approx.
~\$27 million (fiscal year)
- Approx. ~\$31 million left for fire
suppression costs

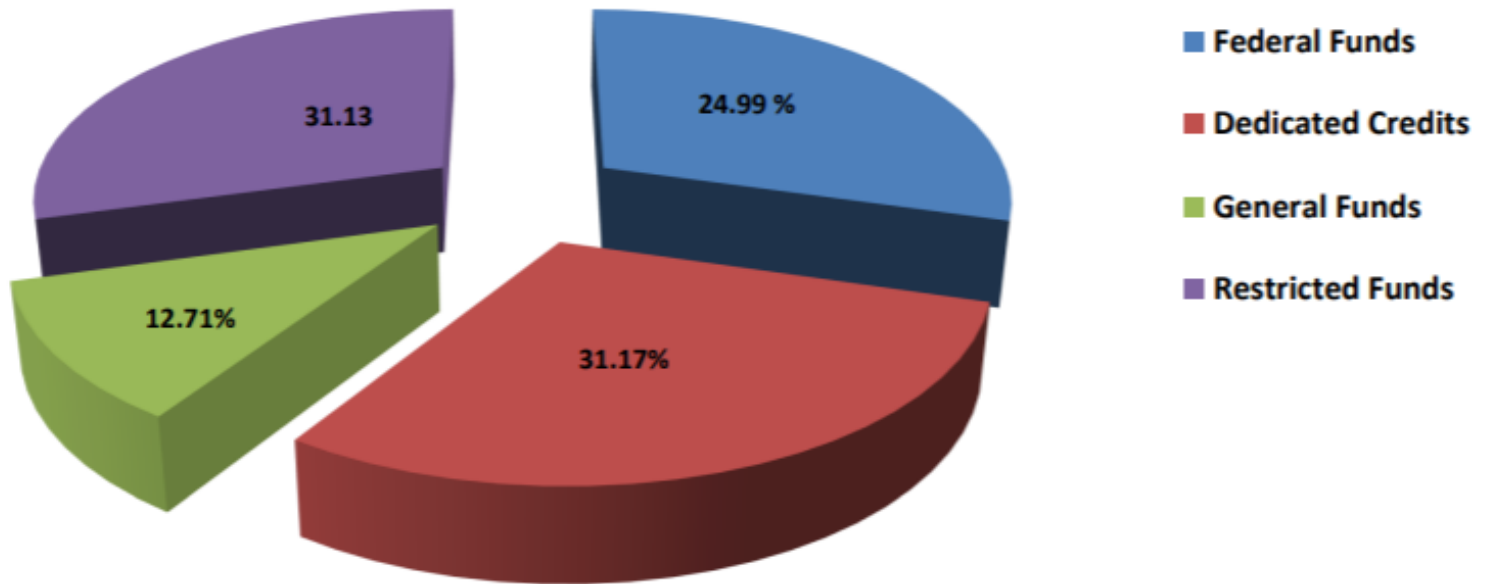


Success

- 93% of all fires caught at 10 acres or less
- Statewide and localized restrictions reduced start numbers
- Reduction in human-caused wildfires
 - » Attorney General Collections \$500,000 thus far
- Safety was top priority- no major incidents
- Fire Sense campaign
- Lone Peak Resources contracted to others

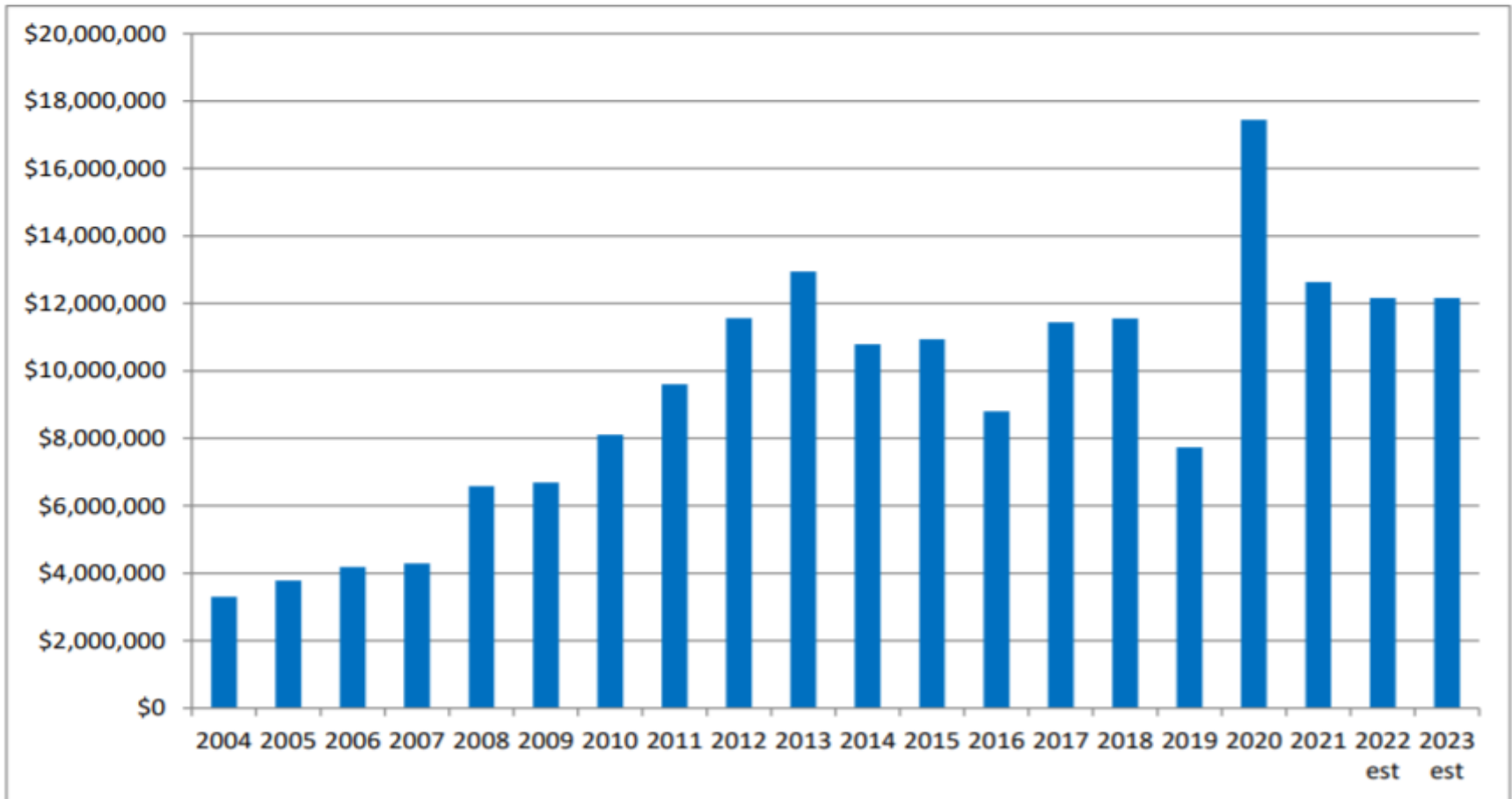


FY2023 BASE BUDGET REQUEST = \$27,022,400



SOVEREIGN LANDS MANAGEMENT RESTRICTED ACCOUNT

Revenue Projection for FY23 ~\$12.0M



FY23 Funding Requests

- Targeted Salary Increases
- Shared Stewardship
- Cat-Fire
- Great Salt Lake
- Lone Peak Fire Building (SLC Valley)
- Richfield Fire Cache

