

February 5, 2024

Natural Resources, Agriculture, and  
Environmental Quality Appropriations  
Subcommittee

# Utah's Watershed Restoration Initiative

Tyler Thompson | Watershed Program Director



Utah Department of Natural Resources

[naturalresources.utah.gov](https://naturalresources.utah.gov)

Mill Creek (Wasatch)  
Watershed Restoration  
Project – Salt Lake Co.





# WRI History

- Nearly 20 year old program
  - Hatched out of NRAEQ
- Housed in DNR Administration
  - Heavily supported by DNR agencies, especially DWR
- Program existed through funding only for first @ fifteen years
- 2022 HB131
  - Sponsored by Rep. Bennion, Sen Vickers
  - Codified the WRI program
  - Set policies, objectives, etc.
  - Passed with zero “No” votes





# WRI History

- Ecosystem Values WRI focuses on improving
  - Watershed health and biological diversity
  - Water quality and yield
  - Opportunities for sustainable uses of natural resources
- Program Accomplishments to date
  - Over 2,700 completed projects
  - Over 2.5 million acres, 2,500 stream miles restored
  - Nearly \$380 million invested
  - More than 700 funding partners



# Watershed Program Funding

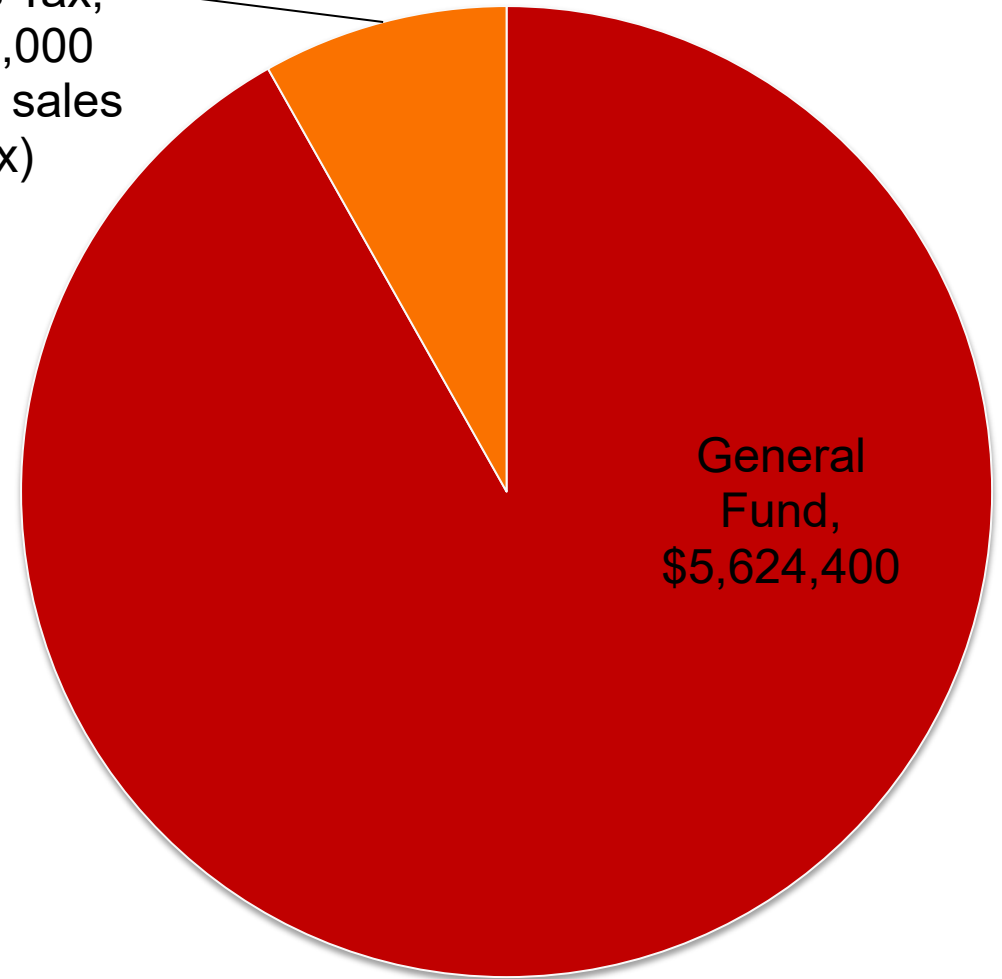
97%

Watershed Funding goes directly towards on-the-ground project work

3%

Used for Administration

Designated Sales Tax,  
\$500,000  
(water sales tax)







# UTAH'S WATERSHED RESTORATION INITIATIVE



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# FY 2023 Accomplishments

- 101 Completed projects
- 86 Different funding partners
- 148,883 Acres completed
  - 31,518 acres fire rehabilitation
  - 117,366 acres proactive restoration
- 262 Miles of stream and riparian areas treated
- 523,120 Pounds of seed applied
- 70,089 Acres of new class III cultural resource inventory
  - 1,265 new sites located/avoided





**FY 2023**  
**Total Acres**  
 - 117,366  
 - 31,518

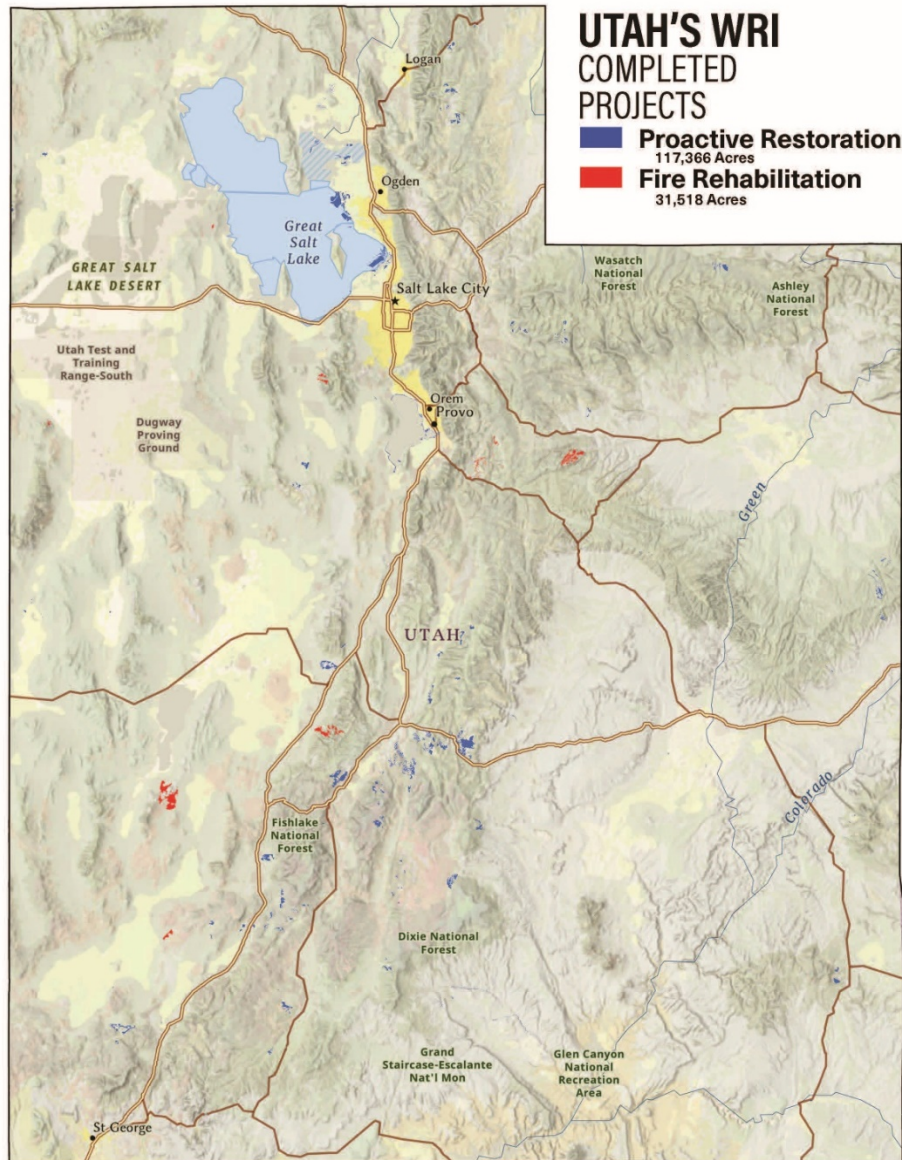
**BLM Acres**  
 - 17,116  
 - 14,475

**State Acres**  
 - 30,689  
 - 3,011

**USFS Acres**  
 - 58,439  
 - 11,876

**Private Acres**  
 - 8,829  
 - 1,707

**Other Acres**  
 - 2,293  
 - 449



COMPLETED ACRES BY COUNTY

Beaver - 5,293	Daggett - 0	Garfield - 7,125	Kane - 1,093	Rich - 187	Sevier - 33,708	Utah - 7,374
Box Elder - 7,041	Davis - 8,498	Grand - 2,396	Millard - 21,199	Salt Lake - 1,907	Summit - 4,160	Wasatch - 4,406
Cache - 5,369	Duchesne - 3,458	Iron - 9,031	Morgan - 67	San Juan - 2,045	Tooele - 4,325	Washington - 187
Carbon - 166	Emery - 499	Juab - 81	Piute - 1,717	Sanpete - 3,883	Uintah - 2,865	Wayne - 4,479
						Weber - 7,883

Greater Fremont Plateau Habitat Restoration Phase III – Garfield, Iron Co.

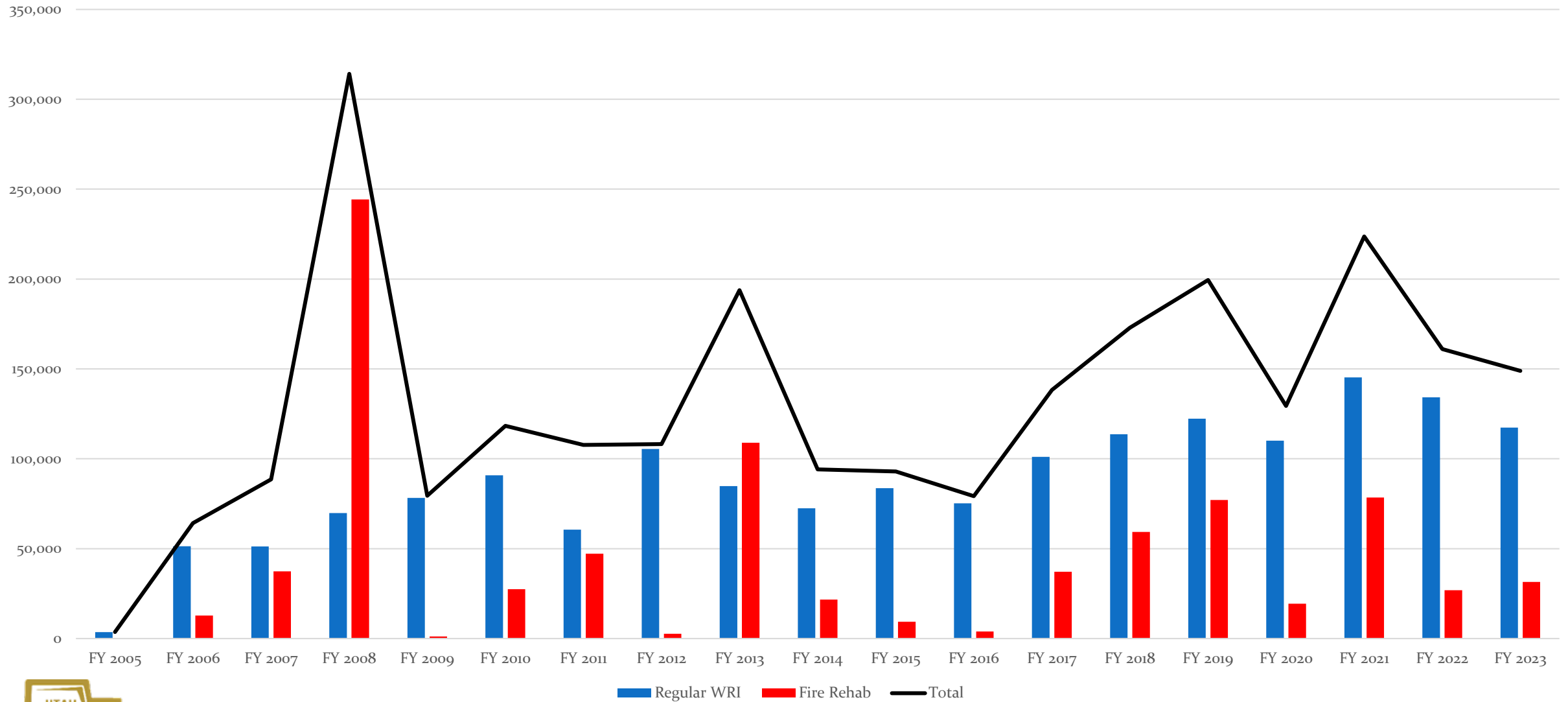


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# WRI Annual Acres Treated



# Performance Measures

Escalante River  
Watershed Riparian  
Invasive Species  
Restoration Phase 14 –  
Garfield, Kane Co.

## Acres Treated

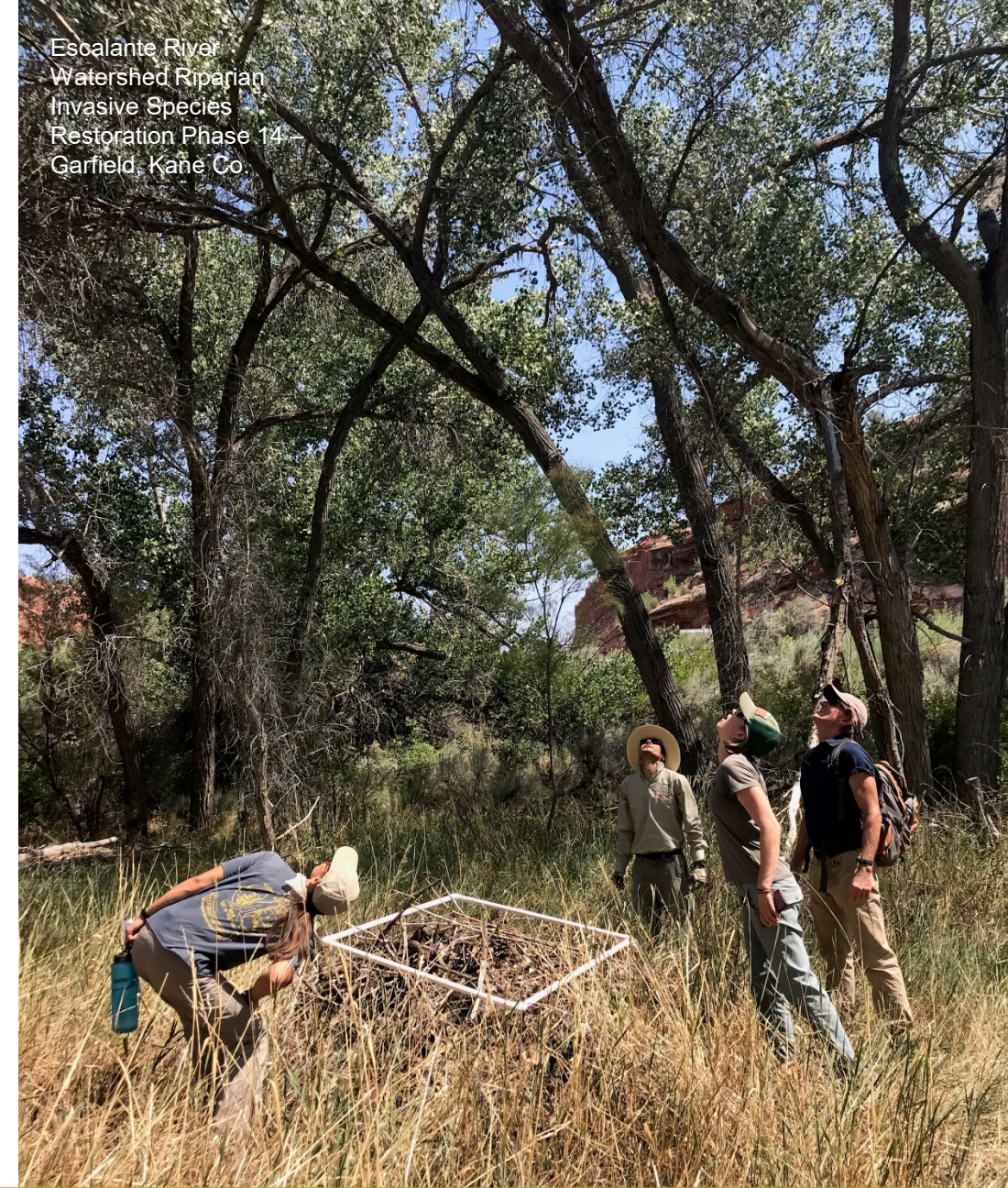
	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
Target	100,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
Actual	145,272	137,148	117,366	

## Stream Miles Improved

	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
Target	175	175	175	175
Actual	223	119	262	

## State Funding Leverage

	FY 2021	FY2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
Target	3	3	3	3
Actual	2.9	2.0	1.9	



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# Statewide Partners Conference

May 31<sup>st</sup>, Richfield, 200+ Attendees



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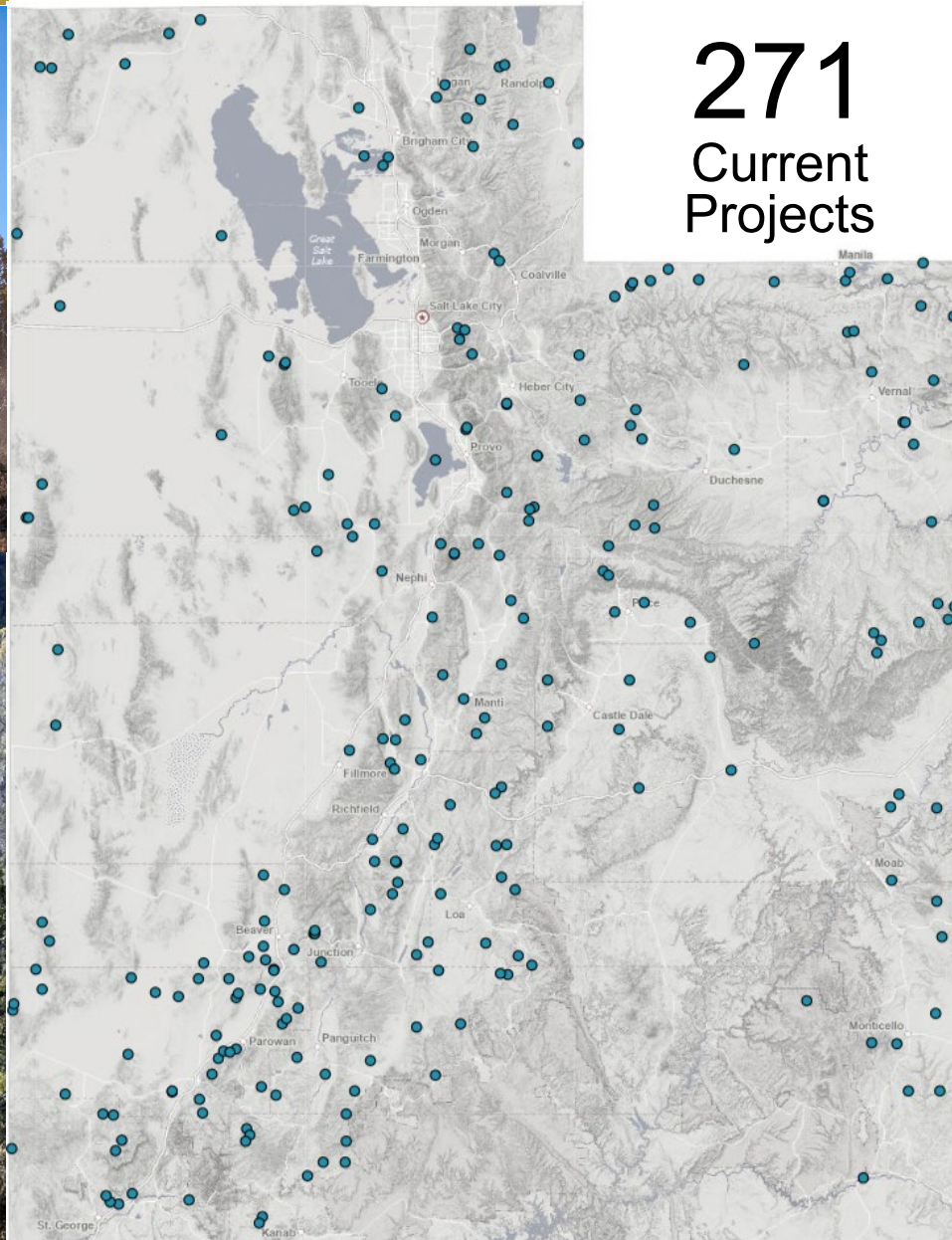
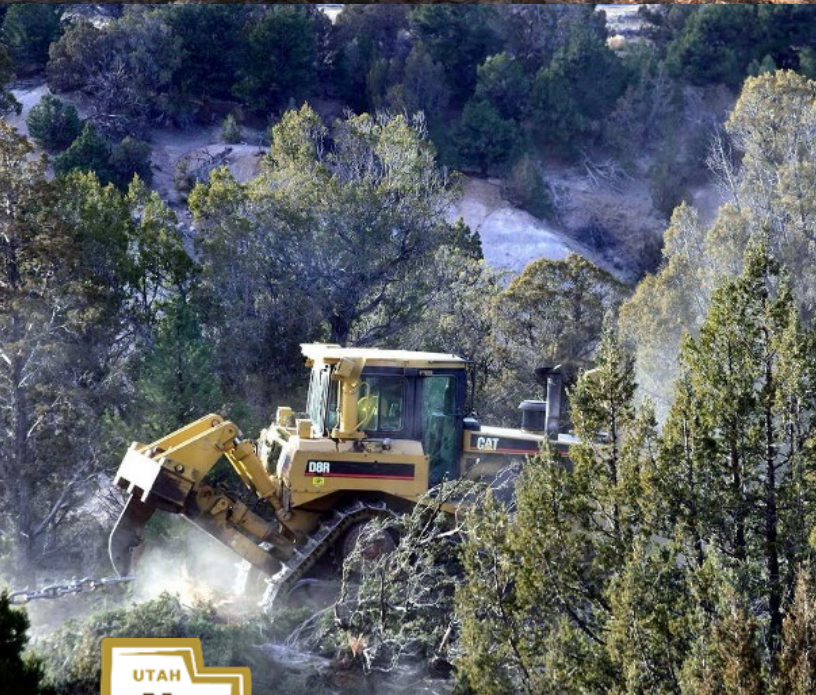
# Regional Field Tours



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271  
Current  
Projects



Markagunt Aspen  
Restoration Phase  
1 – Iron Co.



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# FY 2024 WRI Led Fire Rehabilitation

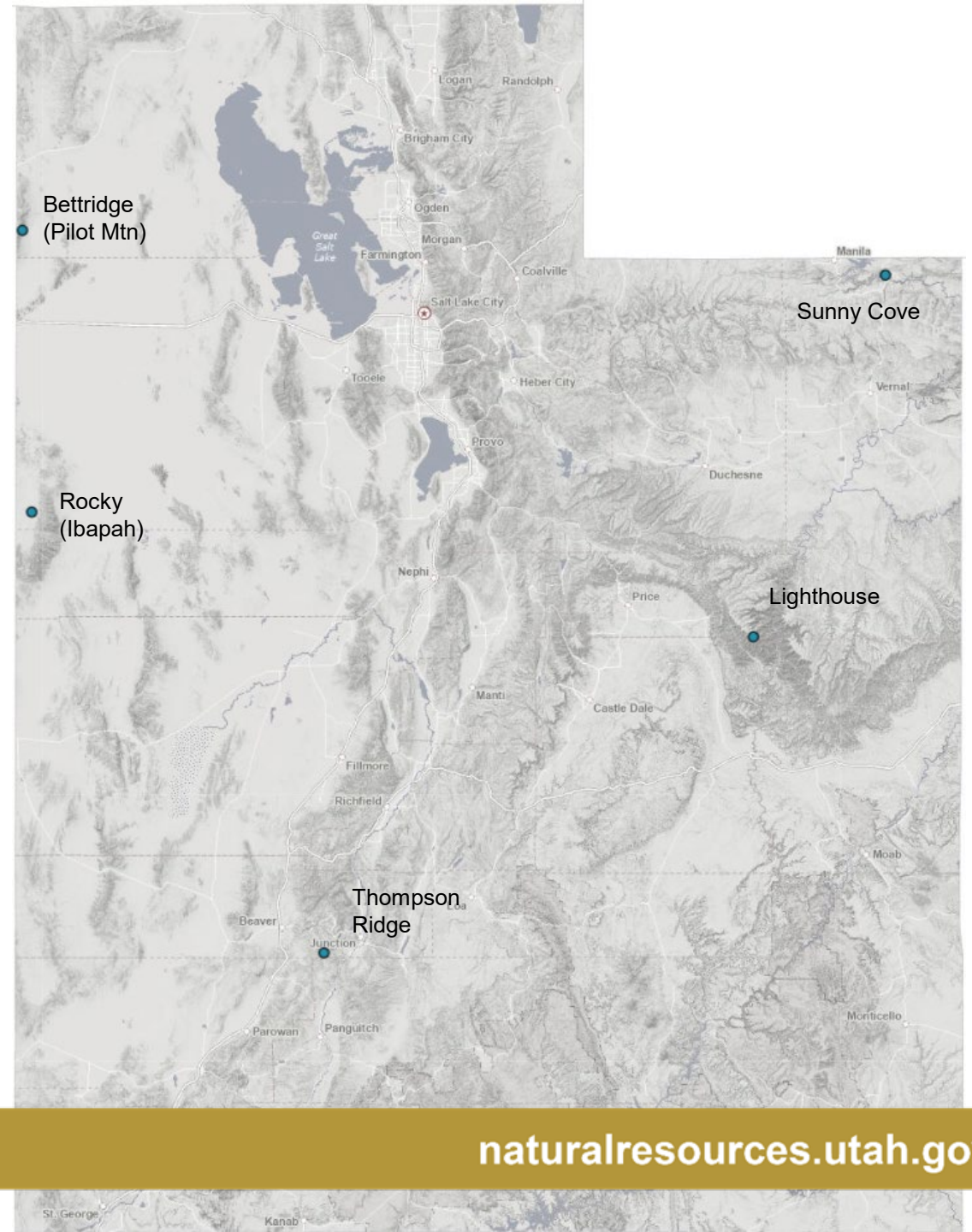
Five New Fires – 6,707 Acres

Fire	Acres
Thompson Ridge	3,954
Rocky	1,300
Lighthouse	809
Bettridge	577
Sunny Cove	67



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# Funding Requests

- \$500,000 FY2024 supplemental request
  - One -Time General Fund request
  - To be used for already completed fire re-seeding, post-fire monitoring/research
- \$500,000 FY2025 request
  - One -Time General Fund request
  - Pre-load fire rehabilitation account in anticipation of summer 2024 fires



Santaquin WMA  
Fire Rehabilitation  
Project – Juab Co.

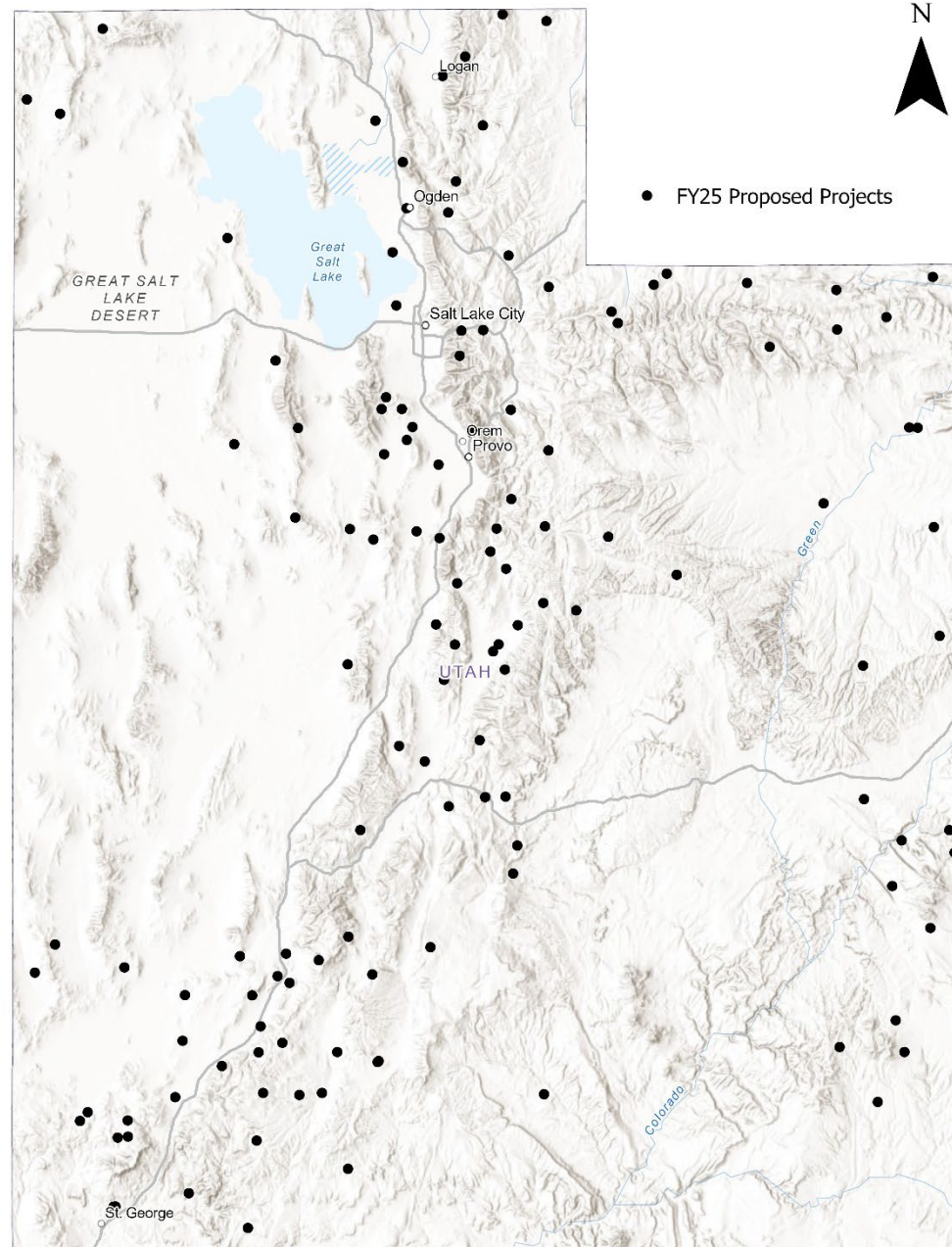


Halfway Hill Fire  
Rehabilitation  
Project – Millard Co.



# FY 2025 Proposals

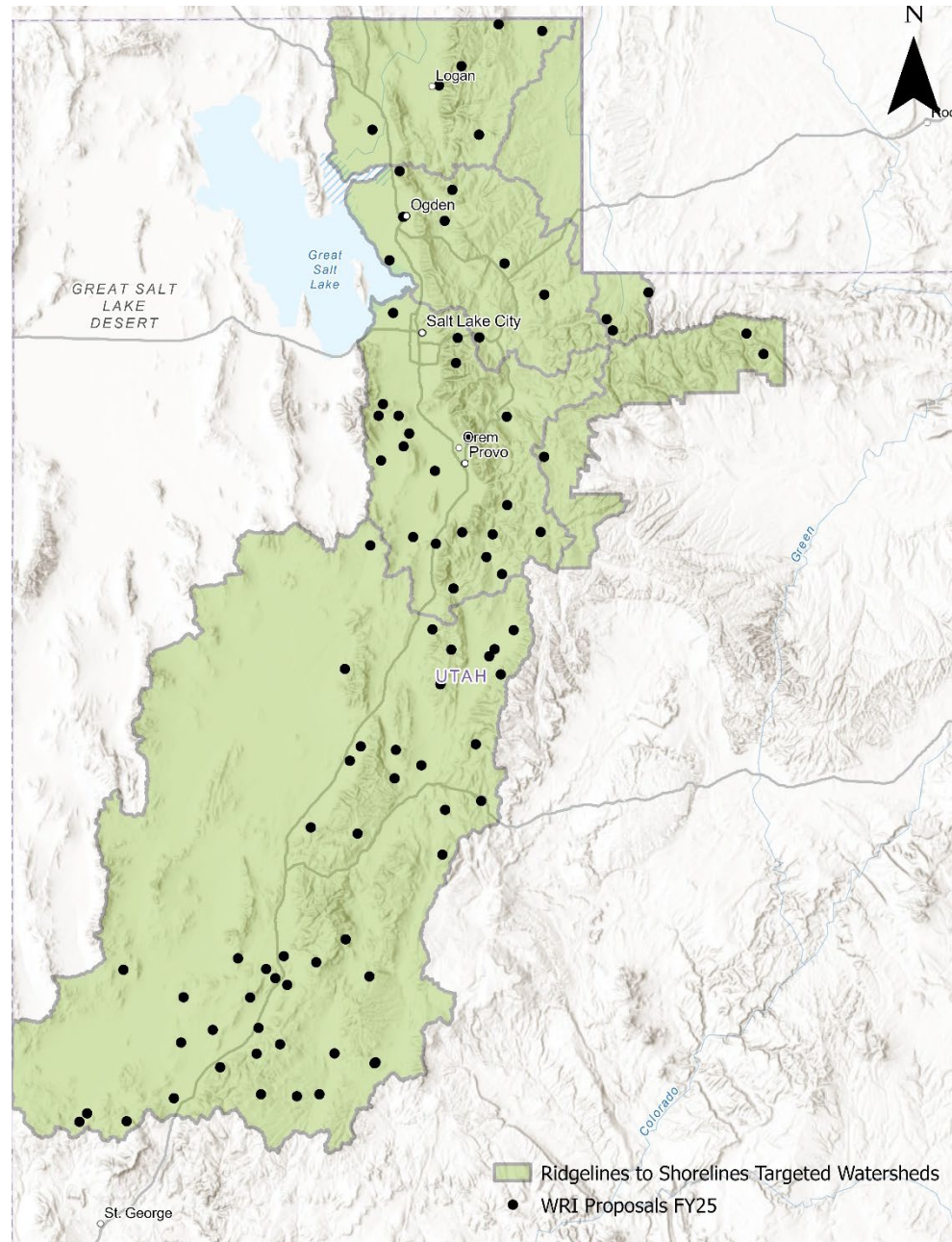
- 142 Proposed Projects
- 229,000 Acres
- \$60 Million total funding
  - \$22 Million Federal Funding
  - \$27 Million requested from State of Utah
- Shovel ready projects





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- 142 Proposed Projects
- 229,000 Acres
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- Shovel ready projects



## Ridgelines to Shorelines Eligible

- 89 Proposed Projects
- 170,730 Acres
- \$40 Million total funding
  - \$14 Million Federal Funding
  - \$21 Million requested from State of Utah







# Thank you.

Tyler Thompson  
Watershed Program Director



UTAH's  
WATERSHED  
RESTORATION  
INITIATIVE

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