



Utah Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands

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NRAEQ Appropriations Subcommittee

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FFSL Mission

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



Utah Forest Action Plan

- Developed in 2020 and will guide the Forestry program through 2030
- FFSL collaborates with federal, state, and local partners to advance the UFAP
- Establishes 4 goals to improve forest health and resiliency

1. Restore healthy and resilient trees and forests across Utah.
2. Reduce wildfire risk to communities, water resources, and other natural resource values.
3. Increase collaborative landscape-scale forest restoration activities.
4. Build capacity among partners, stakeholders and communities to engage in forest restoration activities across Utah.



Forestry Program Accomplishments



Awarded funding for multiple projects through the USDA Forest Service:

- \$582,000 to strengthen Forestry Program capacity
- \$600,000 for three Landscape-scale Restoration Projects
- \$750,000 for the Urban & Community Forestry Program to go toward disadvantaged communities

Hired two shared NRCS-FFSL Forestry positions to engage private forest landowners.

Forest Legacy Program

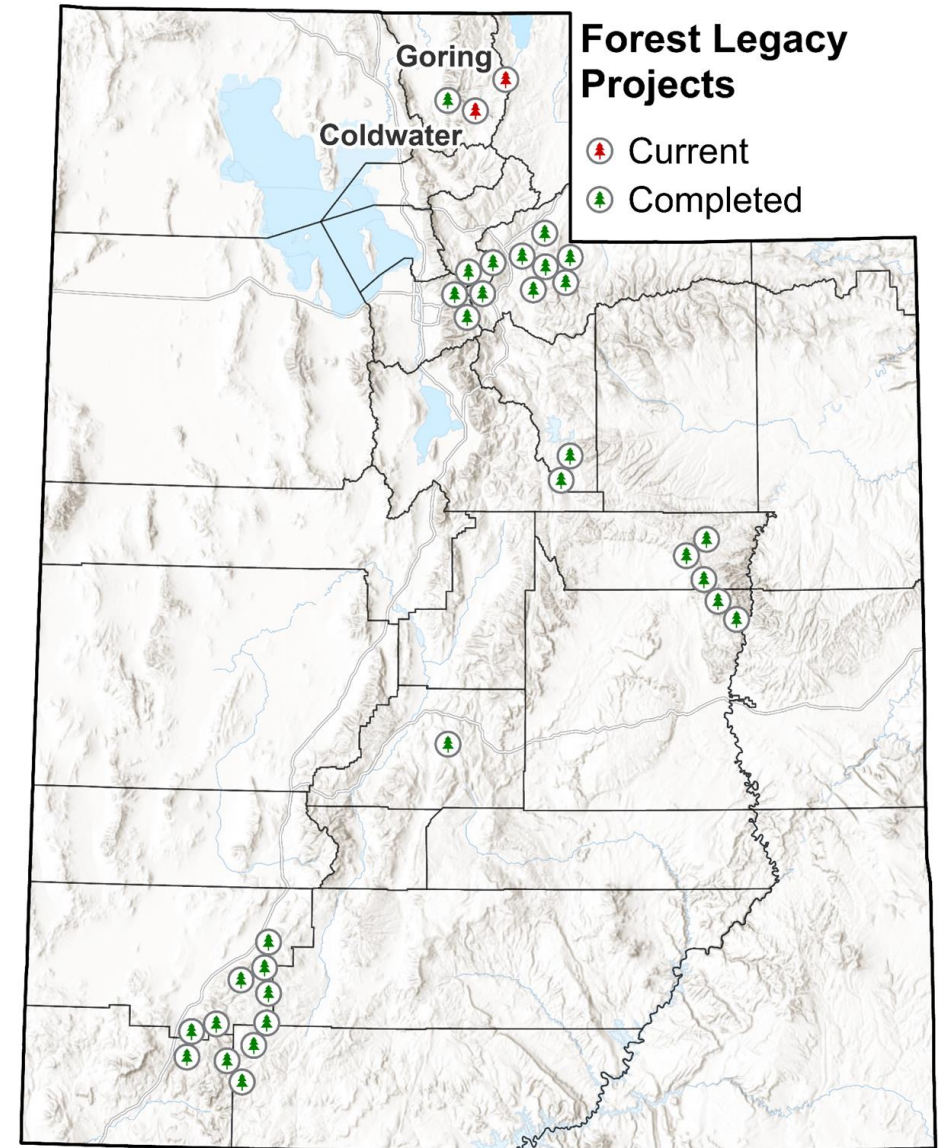


- Protects private forest lands at risk of conversion to non-forest uses.
- State-held and USDA Forest Service-funded conservation easements are used to protect forests.
- Landowners retain their property rights and the program encourages working forests and ranches to support local and rural economies.



Forest Legacy Program

- 31 Forest Legacy projects completed since 1999, protecting 84,000+ acres
- In 2023, awarded \$14.4 million to purchase conservation easements on two properties in Cache and Rich Counties:
 - Coldwater property - \$10,545,000 / 15,623 acres
 - Goring property - \$3,935,000 / 2,725 acres



Shared Stewardship



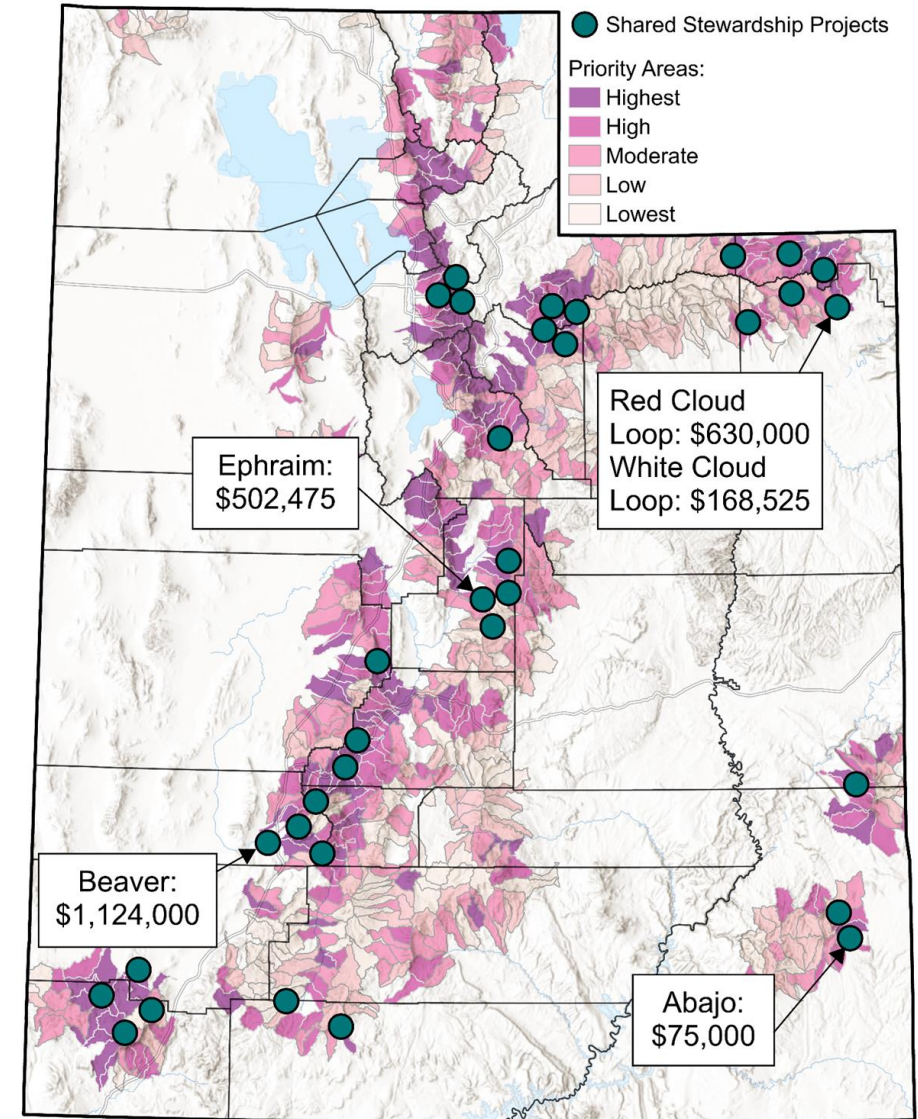
A Federal-State partnership initiative to plan forest health and fuels reduction projects

- USDA Forest Service, NRCS, FFSL, DNR, PLPCO
- \$2 million appropriations in FY 2023
- Forest Products & Business Coordinator assisted local companies in obtaining grant funding:
 - Paul Young Construction - \$596,825
 - Last Chance Lumber - \$300,000
 - University of Utah - \$175,000



Shared Stewardship

- **Ephraim:** 1,000 acres Rx fire, fuels treatments, future Rx fire
- **Beaver:** Textbook example of shared stewardship objectives, scale, partnerships/collaboration, and cross-boundary work
- **Abajo:** Key to connecting previous and planned treatments in the area into a series of linked projects that collectively address almost 11,000 acres around Monticello
- **Red/White Cloud:** Red and White Cloud projects are part of a larger, 10,000 acre+ Vernal Municipal Watershed project, partially funded by CUWCD



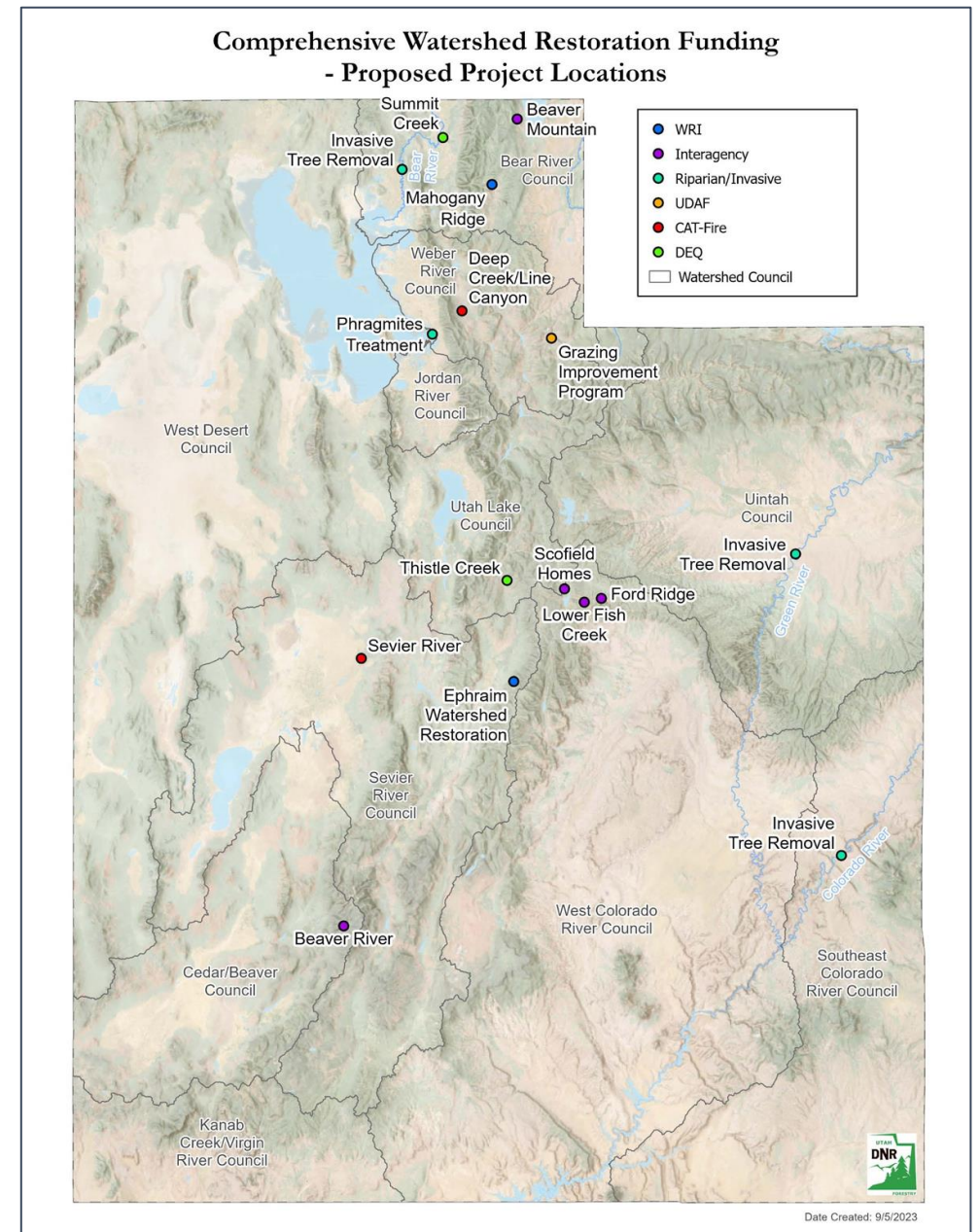
Comprehensive Watershed Restoration Initiative

Collaborated with multiple partners to prioritize projects and allocate \$3.25 million of state funds



Targeted high-priority project areas throughout the state focusing on:

- Forest health
- Watershed restoration
- Fuels reduction
- Fire burn scar rehabilitation
- Invasive species eradication
- Prescribed fire
- Other natural resource concerns



Community Wildfire Defense Grant (CWDG) Program

- CWDG is a 5-year program funded through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and administered by the USDA Forest Service in partnership with state forestry agencies.
- \$5 billion has been allocated over 5 years to help communities at risk of wildfires fund projects that support the three goals in the National Cohesive Strategy:
 1. Restoring and maintaining landscapes
 2. Creating fire-adapted communities
 3. Improving wildfire response



CWDG - Round 1

Utah was awarded over \$5m in 2023 to fund 2 projects:

\$4.7m to FFSL's Central Area

- Fire education and awareness
- Community Fire Hazard Mitigation Methodologies
- Hazardous fuel removal around structures

\$380,000 to North Tooele Fire District

- Promote Firewise and Utah Fire Sense
- Raise general wildfire awareness through public demonstrations
- Increase social media coverage
- Installed Fire Danger signage
- Code improvements



Wildland Urban Interface Preparedness, Prevention, and Mitigation (WUIPPM) Fund



- Funds to reduce wildfire hazard across the state, as sanctioned through House Bill 261, in 2023.
- \$2M was appropriated in FY24.



WUIPPM Supported Projects

<u>Area</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Project Name</u>	<u>Project Type</u>	<u>SB 56</u> <u>Goal(s)</u>	<u>Output</u>	<u>Funds</u> <u>Requested</u>
Bear River	Weber	Weber Fire District Uintah/Highlands Rapid Assessment	Outreach/Education	Fire Adapted	450 lot assess	\$32,130
Bear River	Rich	Garden City	Fuel Reduction	Wildfire Response	50 acres	\$59,000
Wasatch Front	Salt Lake	Big Cottonwood Canyon Phase II	Fuel Reduction	Fire Adapted	40 acres	\$157,000
Wasatch Front	Salt Lake	High Country Estates I Phase II	Fuel Reduction	Fire Adapted	15 acres	\$116,000
Wasatch Front	Davis	Farmington Canyon Road	Fuel Reduction	Wildfire Response	7 acres	\$59,800
Southwest	Iron, Kane, Washington	Cedar Mountain Aspen Restoration	Fuel Reduction	Resilient Landscapes	130 acres	\$280,000
Southeast	Carbon	East Carbon Fuel Break	Fuel Reduction	Fire Adapted	38 acres	\$83,000
Southeast	San Juan	Wray Mesa Mitigation	Fuel Reduction	Fire Adapted	40 acres	\$110,700
Forestry	Summit, Weber	Weber River Basin	Watershed Restoration/Forest Resilience	Resilient Landscapes	75 acres	\$75,000



2023 Fire Summary



808 total fire starts

- 18,061 total acres burned

339 human-caused starts

- 2020 - 1492
- 2021 - 570
- 2022 - 489

367 natural caused starts

102 undetermined starts



Top-3 Human-Caused Starts



#1

Motor Vehicles
69 Starts

120.8/year
(5-year Average)



#2

Ag/Debris Burning
48 Starts

110/year
(5-year Average)



#3

Campfires
28 Starts

76.8/year
(5-year Average)



2023 Fire Summary (cont.)



Thanks to our staff and cooperators, the state had a 96% catch rate

- 10 fires exceeded 10 acres

Helicopter contract continues to pay dividends

- Flew for 250.2 hours in 2023
- Deployed 699,644 gallons of water in fire suppression efforts.





Fire prevention efforts are working:

- Since 2021, the state has invested \$2.4 million
- In 2023, 42% of wildfires were human-caused
 - Nationally 89% are human-caused (2022)
- Fire Sense received national recognition with the bronze-level Smokey Bear Award for its success at preventing human-caused wildfires



Fire Suppression Cost

- State, local, & federal estimated cost of fire suppression \$18.2 million (2023 calendar year)

Reimbursement in calendar year 2023

Dollar Ridge - \$10,905,529.83

Canal - \$819,026.45

Knolls - \$153,577.91

Veyo West - \$149,117.96

Ether Hollow - \$155,761.76

Mammoth - \$233,088.91

Pack Creek - \$467,390.59

Parley's Canyon - \$324,621.18

Total for Calendar year 2023 \$13,208,114.59

Projected Amounts in Calendar year 2024

Canal - \$5,039,442.37

Knolls - \$502,899.63

Veyo West - \$399,734.79

Ether Hollow - \$23,649.64 (Received \$85,683.24 1/11/24)

Mammoth - \$1,033,388.18

Pack Creek - \$1,857,484.52

Parley's Canyon - \$14,748.16

***Projected 2024 \$9,084,961.28**



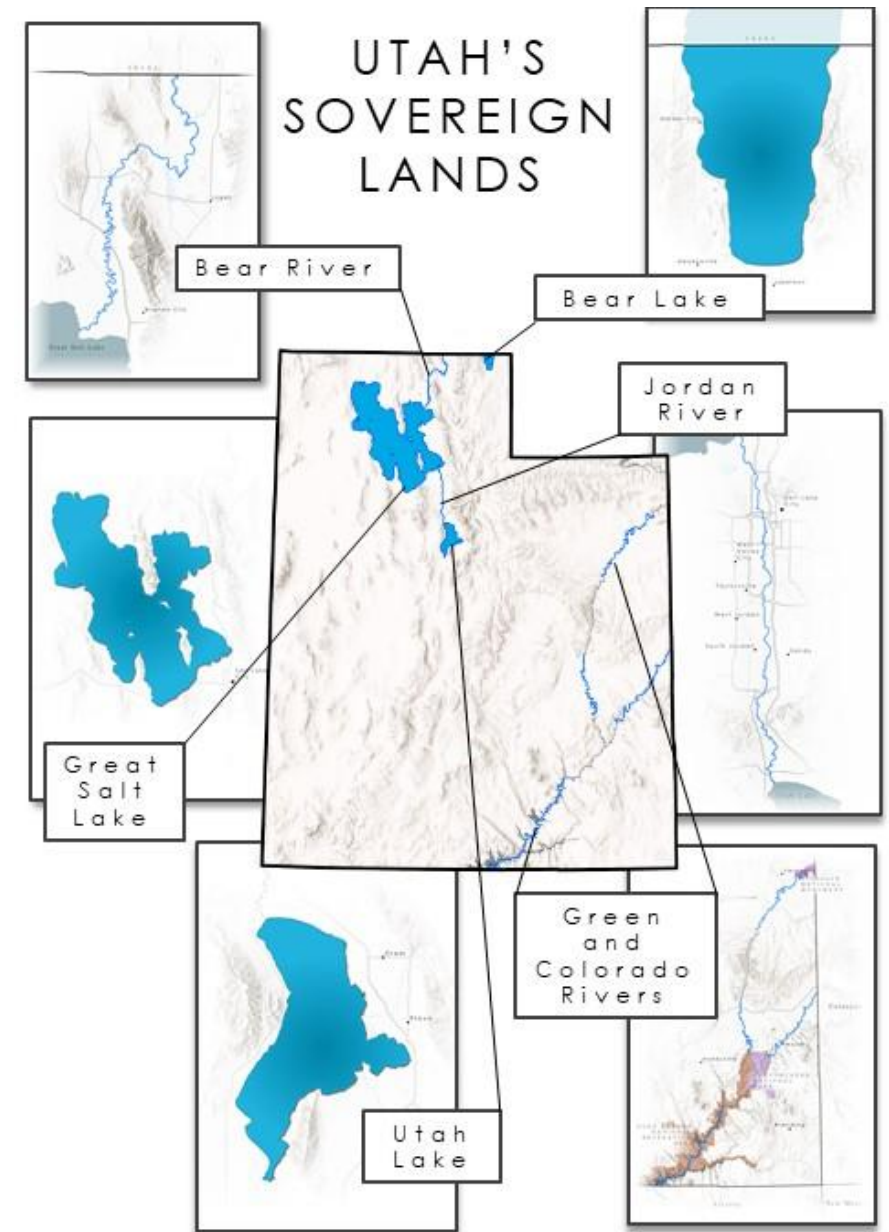
Sovereign Lands

Bear Lake	Jordan River
Great Salt Lake	Green River
Utah Lake	Colorado River

- Over 1.5 million acres of lakebed and riverbed
- Over 2,200 miles of shoreline

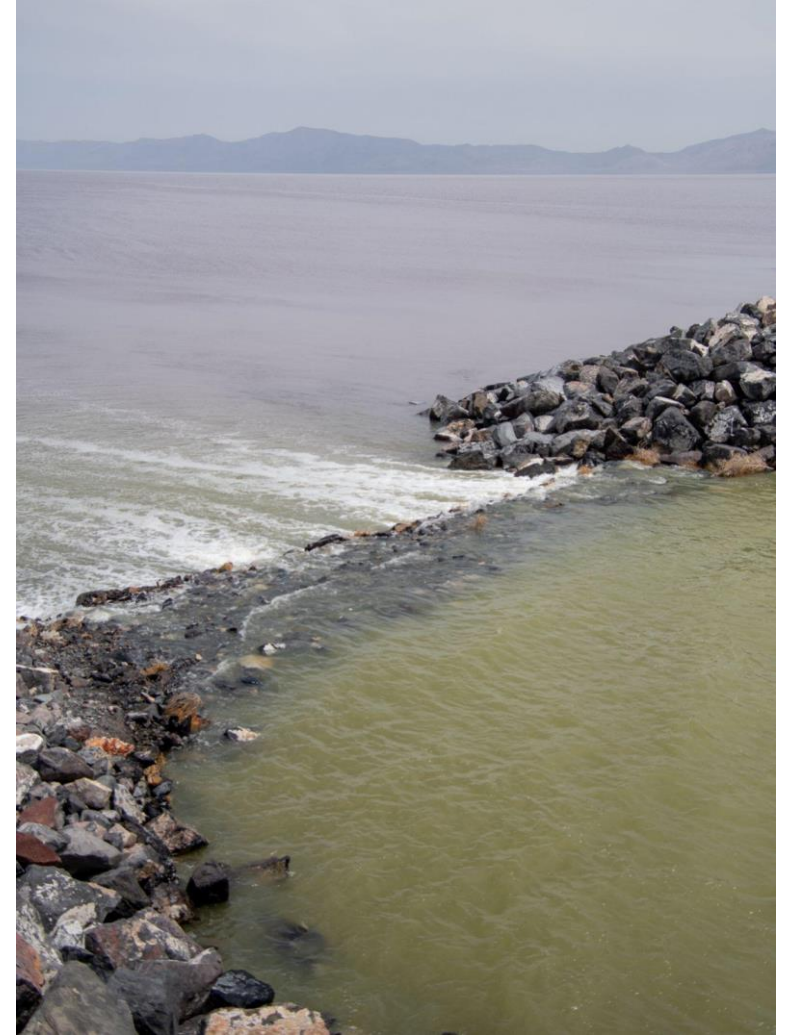
Additional Lands managed as Sovereign Lands include:

- Moab Exchange Lands (Prairie Dog Haven and Utahrapator State Park)
- Several upland parcels abutting sovereign lands



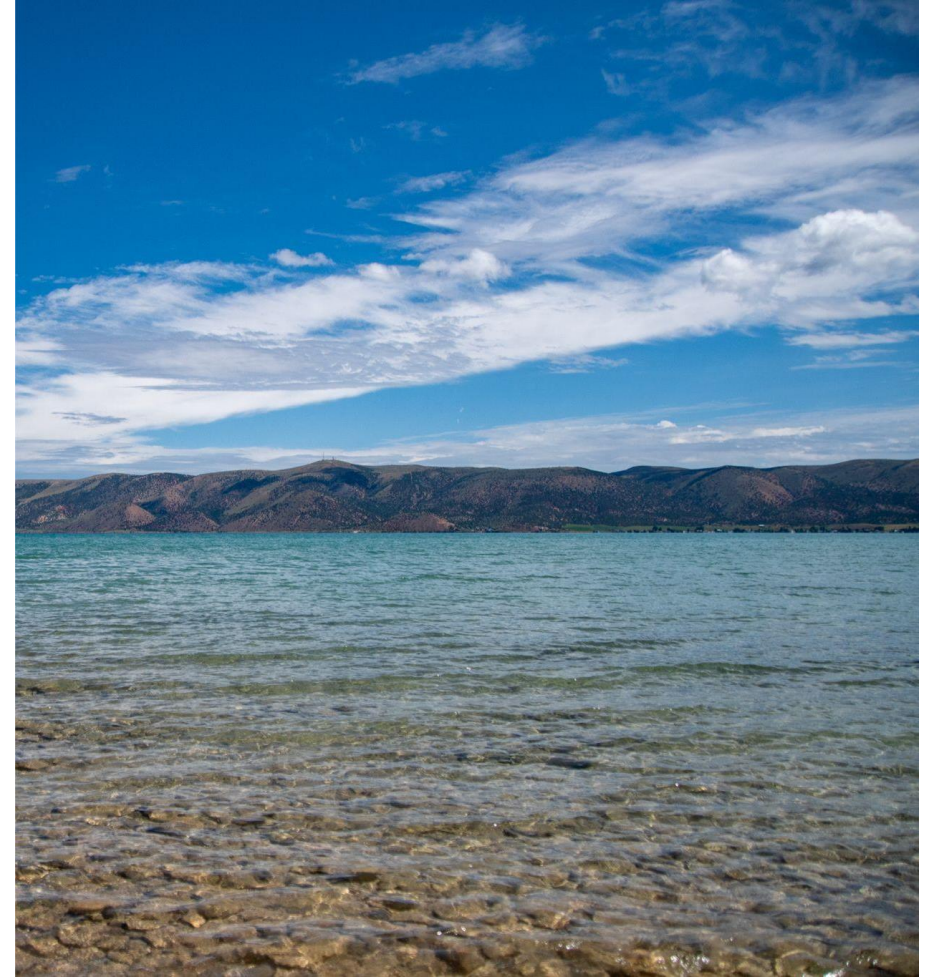
Sovereign Lands Projects

- Modified the Union Pacific Causeway Berm on GSL to prevent ecological collapse of the South Arm due to high salinity concentrations
 - This action coupled with above average snowpack reduced salinity by 45 g/L
- Began the process of updating the Utah Lake and Great Salt Lake Comprehensive Management Plans
- Awarded over \$600,000 in research grants during FY 24 targeting knowledge gaps that will directly inform management of sovereign lands



Sovereign Lands Projects Cnt'd

- Awarded over \$5 million dollars in grants for recreational improvements, shoreline restoration, marina enhancements, and ecological restoration during FY24
- Collaborated with the GSL Watershed Enhancement Trust to acquire water rights and preserve and enhance GSL Wetlands.
- Increased field staff to focus on collaborative efforts to protect and restore sovereign lands



Sovereign Lands Projects Cnt'd



- FFSL conducted over 4,700 hours of project work, education and outreach on the Green and Colorado Rivers over the past year
- Nearly 12,000 acres of phragmites were treated on sovereign lands last year by FFSL and its partners (Division of Wildlife Resources, Utah County, Utah Lake Authority)
- Thousands of additional acres treated by our partners on adjacent lands.
 - Approximately 74% reduction in phragmites coverage on Utah Lake



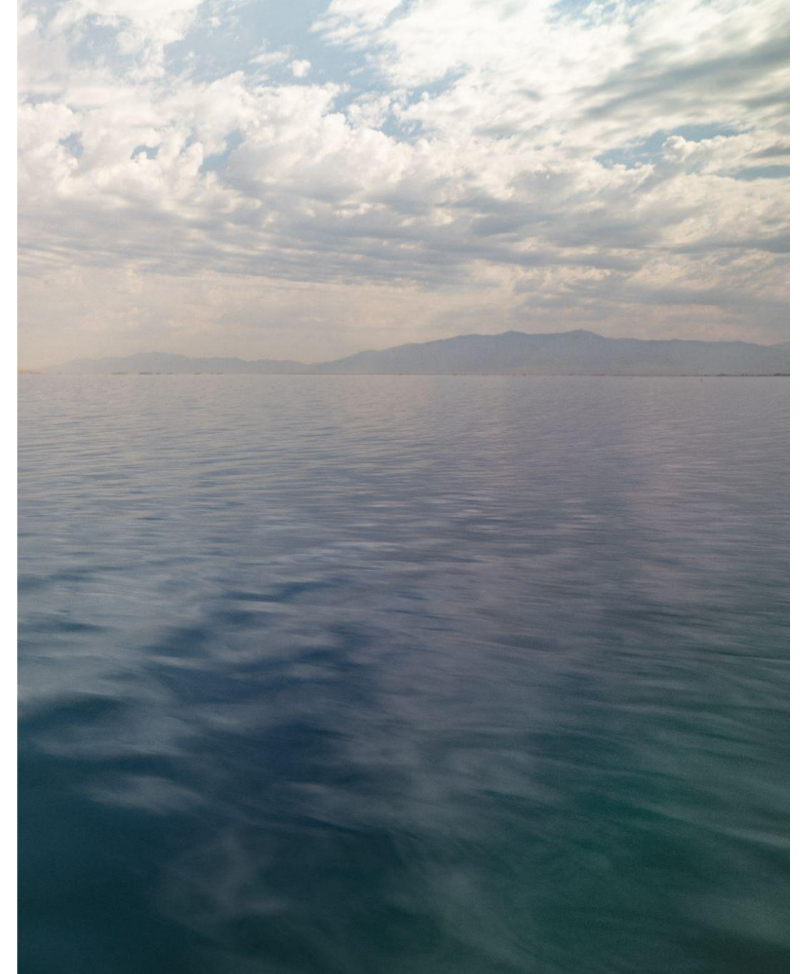
Sovereign Lands Projects Cnt'd

- Reducing coverage and developing best management practices for invasive species on sovereign lands including: phragmites, tamarisk, Russian olive, Eurasian watermilfoil, and more
- Partnered with the Janet Quinney Lawson Institute for Land, Water and Air at Utah State University to perform a needs assessment of Bear Lake to identify opportunities to improve collaboration and management of the Lake
- Hosted and participated in several volunteer events focused on trash clean up, tree planting, and invasive species removal

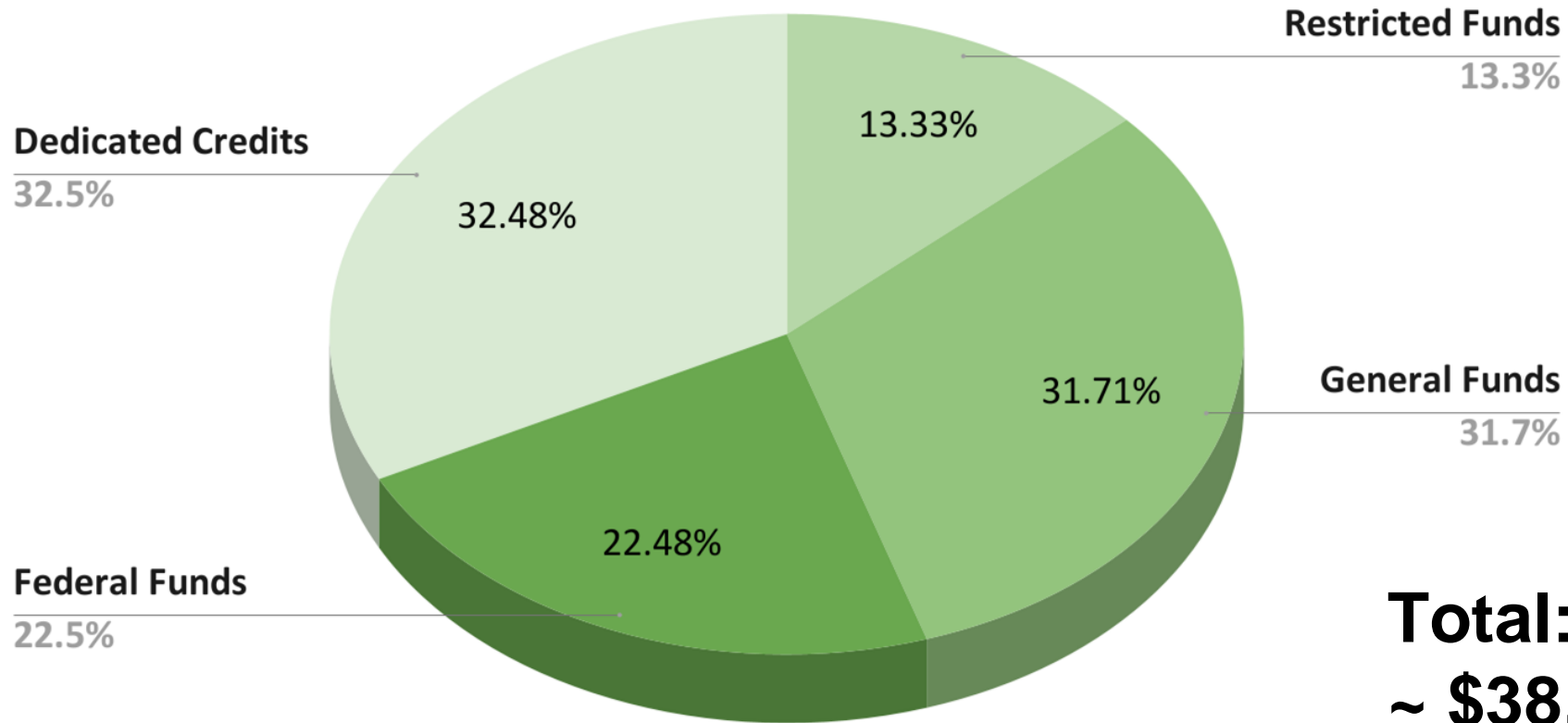


Sovereign Lands Projects Cnt'd

- Increased law enforcement presence through the hiring of an additional FTE LEO and partnerships with other agencies
- Conducted extensive outreach through the informal rule making process to develop rules related to lithium extraction on GSL
 - FFSL intends to submit the rules for formal rulemaking shortly after the 2024 legislative session



FY2025 Base Budget Request



Funding Requests for FY25

- Fire Sense Campaign
- Great Salt Lake Phragmites Eradication
- Shared Stewardship
- Sovereign Lands Management
- Increase Wildland Fire Capacity

