

2005 Washington County Flood

Background

Flooding hazards have caused significant damage to structures and property, resulting in at least 101 fatalities in Utah since 1847, with 80% of deaths from floods and flash floods, 15% from debris flows, and 5% from dam and water conveyance structure failures.

Sixteen major flood events since 1923 have caused over \$1.3 trillion in damage, and to date, flooding is Utah's most costly geologic hazard to the economy.

Legislative Proposal

The primary purposes of HB 243 are to:

- recognize the public and private value of healthy natural water ways
 - reduce risks from natural disasters
- enhance agriculture, community and economic development opportunities, recreation, and wildlife habitat, and
- provide statewide technical support and resource maps

HB 243 – Healthy Water Ways

- What's ***IN*** the Bill
 - 5-year funded Department of Natural Resource employee to provide technical expertise and support to local governments
 - One-time funding for coordination and consolidation of a statewide riparian resource map
 - Optional *recommendations* for a municipality to include a riparian element in its general plan or to adopt riparian planning tools
 - ▶ Counties are already required to address “riparian areas” as part of their Natural Resource Plan — the Bill adds definitions and clarifying language
 - Annual “Healthy Water Ways” recognition

HB 243 – Healthy Water Ways

- What's **NOT** in the Bill
 - A 'one-size fits all' approach
 - A *requirement* to update general plans, adopt new code, or conduct costly restoration work
 - Specific or detailed state mandates or regulations
 - ▶ All implementation is determined at the local level
 - Prohibition of economic activity or development within riparian areas
 - ▶ Recommends development tools that respect private property rights and increase public and private *value* and reduce risks
 - Control of invasive species, noxious weed and fire suppression activities