



## **Memorandum**

**To:** Executive Appropriations Committee

**From:** Senator Scott D. Sandall, Senate Chair  
Representative Stewart E. Barlow, House Chair  
Representative Scott H. Chew, House Vice Chair  
Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Environmental Quality Appropriations  
Subcommittee

**Date:** December 9, 2024

**Re: Accountable Budget Process Actions**

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During the 2024 interim, our subcommittee reviewed the Division of State Parks, Division of Outdoor Recreation, Public Lands Policy Coordinating Office, and the School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration. Our committee approved adjustments to the FY 2026 base budget, which will be presented during your meeting today. The committee also approved several recommendations to both the Legislature and to the agencies we reviewed, some of which would require a change in statute. The recommendations which impact budget and efficiency of the agencies but are not a standard budget adjustment are listed below for your consideration:

### **State Parks**

- The Legislature should eliminate outdated sections referring to the parks board, discontinue the Riverway enhancement grants, remove the provisions allowing State Parks to access Boating Account funds, and correct any typographical errors.
- The Legislature should change the name of the "Annual Repository Agreement, Annual Agreement Fee, Fee Collection, Return Checks, and Duplicate Document (per storage unit)." fee to "Repository and Annual Agreement Fee."
- The division should ensure all information on their website is accurate and reviewed regularly.
- The division should establish guidelines for the maximum number of boats allowed at each boating park based on the water levels.
- The division should continue to work with LFA and GOPB to align its performance metrics with its defined objectives.
- The division should comply with statutory fee requirements and provide to the Office of the Legislative Fiscal Analyst by November 15, 2024, a detailed report of all fee revenues received in FY 2024, including each fee's name, amount, the park



where it was collected, the date of collection, and an explanation of what is included in the fee.

- The division should provide a comprehensive price comparison and a proposal for boating slips and storage rates.
- The division should revise its current methodology for calculating the costs to administer each fee, work with the Division of Finance to enable separate tracking of revenue and expenses for each fee, and report its progress during the 2025 General Session.

## **Outdoor Recreation**

- The Legislature should review and reconcile the statutes governing the use of the Boating Account and consider eliminating the Utah Children's Outdoor Recreation and Education Fund.
- The division should revise its current methodology for calculating the costs to administer each fee, work with the Division of Finance to enable separate tracking of revenue and expenses for each fee, and report its progress during the 2025 General Session.
- The division should include the specific registration fees for each type of off-highway vehicle as outlined in statute 41-22-8 in their fee proposal for the 2025 General Session. The proposed fees should not exceed the amounts specified in the statute.

## **Public Lands Policy Coordinating Office**

- The Legislature should open a bill file which clarifies that the director of the Public Lands Policy Office reports to the executive director of the Department of Natural Resources.
- The Legislature should consider removing or amending UCA 63A-16-507 since the committee does not function as intended.
- The Legislature should consider a different oversight policy for R.S. 2477 litigation and road adjudication, as the current format is not being implemented as designed.
- The Office should work with the Governor's Office and the Legislature to improve line item performance measures based on the 2024 strategic plan that demonstrate the Office's value to the state and provide accountability.
- The Office should reallocate funding within the existing operating and capital budget to hire a full-time finance manager.
- Include PLPCO in the regularly occurring internal audits conducted by the Department of Natural Resources.

## **School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration**

- For clarity and consistency, the Legislature should standardize that SITLA's fee schedule is either fully subject to or fully exempt from the budgetary procedures act.



## Office of the Legislative Fiscal Analyst

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- The Executive Appropriations Committee should consider having all parts of the Land Trust report to the Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Environmental Quality Appropriations Subcommittee.
- The Legislature should establish performance measures for the School and Institutional Trust Fund Office (SITFO) based on industry standards.
- SITLA should develop a performance measure based on individual transactions that demonstrates they are maximizing revenue for the Permanent Trust, also considering the needs of local counties, cities, towns and adjacent state lands.

If you have any questions about these recommendations, reach out to the subcommittee staff (Ivan Djambov and Lacey Moore).