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River Restoration Amendments

2026 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Lincoln Fillmore

Sponsor:

2

LONG TITLE

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General Description:

4 This bill addresses provisions related to Jordan River improvement projects.

5 **Highlighted Provisions:**

6 This bill:

7 ▶ modifies how the Division of Forestry, Fire, and State Lands (division) expends money
8 related to a Jordan River improvement project, including:9 • allowing the division to expend money for an activity along the entire length of the
10 Jordan River; and11 • requiring the division to consult with the Jordan River Commission before expending
12 money for an improvement project;13 ▶ creates a matching grant program for counties and municipalities to fund improvement
14 projects that increase access to a recreational activity on the Jordan River;15 ▶ directs funding from the Outdoor Adventure Infrastructure Restricted Account to the
16 matching grant program; and

17 ▶ makes technical and conforming changes.

18 **Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

19 None

20 **Other Special Clauses:**

21 This bill provides a special effective date.

22 **Utah Code Sections Affected:**23 **AMENDS:**24 **51-9-902 (Effective 05/06/26) (Superseded 07/01/26)**, as last amended by Laws of Utah
25 2025, Chapter 49826 **51-9-902 (Effective 07/01/26)**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapter 28527 **65A-2-8 (Effective 05/06/26)**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2022, Chapters 223, 357

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29 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

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31 Section 1. Section **51-9-902** is amended to read:

32 **51-9-902 (Effective 05/06/26) (Superseded 07/01/26). Outdoor Adventure**

33 **Infrastructure Restricted Account.**

34 (1) There is created within the General Fund a restricted account known as the "Outdoor
35 Adventure Infrastructure Restricted Account."

36 (2) The account shall consist of:

37 (a) money deposited into the account under Subsection 59-12-103(15); and
38 (b) interest and earnings on money in the account.

39 (3) Subject to appropriation from the Legislature, money from the account shall be used for:

40 (a) new construction of outdoor recreation infrastructure;
41 (b) upgrades of outdoor recreation infrastructure;
42 (c) the replacement of or structural improvements to outdoor recreation infrastructure;
43 (d) the acquisition of land, a right-of-way, or easement used in relationship to outdoor
44 recreation infrastructure;
45 (e) providing access from state highways, as defined in Section 72-1-102, to outdoor
46 recreation infrastructure;
47 (f) the costs associated with bringing new construction or upgrades of outdoor
48 recreation infrastructure into environmental compliance;
49 (g) strategic planning related to the development of outdoor recreation infrastructure;
50 (h) facilitating avalanche safety forecasting to protect the public in relation to outdoor
51 recreation infrastructure; or
52 (i) clean up or security relating to outdoor recreation infrastructure.

53 (4) For each fiscal year, beginning with fiscal year 2025-2026, the Division of Finance
54 shall, subject to appropriation by the Legislature, distribute money from the Outdoor
55 Adventure Infrastructure Restricted Account as follows:

56 (a) at least 15% to the Department of Natural Resources - Division of State Parks -
57 Capital, to be expended using the department's existing prioritization process for
58 capital projects in state parks described in Subsection (3);
59 (b) at least 22% to the Department of Natural Resources - Division of Outdoor
60 Recreation - Capital, to be expended for competitive Recreation Restoration
61 Infrastructure grants or Outdoor Recreational Infrastructure grants for outdoor
62 recreation capital projects and related maintenance expenses, where maintenance
63 expenses do not exceed 15% of the appropriation;
64 (c) at least 53% to the Department of Natural Resources - Division of Outdoor

65 Recreation - Capital, to be expended for larger outdoor recreation infrastructure
66 projects described in Subsection (3) as recommended to the Legislature by the
67 Outdoor Adventure Commission;[~~and~~]
68 (d) at least ~~[10%]~~ 8% to the Governor's Office of Economic Development - Utah
69 Fairpark Area Investment and Restoration District created in Section 11-70-201, to
70 be expended for the development and operation of the district[.] ; and
71 (e) at least 2% to the Department of Natural Resources - Division of Forestry, Fire, and
72 State Lands, to be expended for Jordan River recreational access grants described in
73 Section 65A-2-8(5)(b)(iii).

74 (5) If the Legislature appropriates money to the Department of Transportation from the
75 account, the Transportation Commission, created in Section 72-1-301, shall prioritize
76 projects and determine funding levels in accordance with Subsection 72-1-303(1)(a)
77 based on recommendations of the Department of Transportation.

78 Section 2. Section **51-9-902** is amended to read:

79 **51-9-902 (Effective 07/01/26). Outdoor Adventure Infrastructure Restricted
80 Account.**

81 (1) There is created within the General Fund a restricted account known as the "Outdoor
82 Adventure Infrastructure Restricted Account."
83 (2) The account shall consist of:
84 (a) money deposited into the account under Subsection 59-12-103(4)(h); and
85 (b) interest and earnings on money in the account.
86 (3) Subject to appropriation from the Legislature, money from the account shall be used for:
87 (a) new construction of outdoor recreation infrastructure;
88 (b) upgrades of outdoor recreation infrastructure;
89 (c) the replacement of or structural improvements to outdoor recreation infrastructure;
90 (d) the acquisition of land, a right-of-way, or easement used in relationship to outdoor
91 recreation infrastructure;
92 (e) providing access from state highways, as defined in Section 72-1-102, to outdoor
93 recreation infrastructure;
94 (f) the costs associated with bringing new construction or upgrades of outdoor
95 recreation infrastructure into environmental compliance;
96 (g) strategic planning related to the development of outdoor recreation infrastructure;
97 (h) facilitating avalanche safety forecasting to protect the public in relation to outdoor
98 recreation infrastructure; or

- (i) clean up or security relating to outdoor recreation infrastructure.
- (4) For each fiscal year, beginning with fiscal year 2025-2026, the Division of Finance shall, subject to appropriation by the Legislature, distribute money from the Outdoor Adventure Infrastructure Restricted Account as follows:
 - (a) at least 15% to the Department of Natural Resources - Division of State Parks - Capital, to be expended using the department's existing prioritization process for capital projects in state parks described in Subsection (3);
 - (b) at least 22% to the Department of Natural Resources - Division of Outdoor Recreation - Capital, to be expended for competitive Recreation Restoration Infrastructure grants or Outdoor Recreational Infrastructure grants for outdoor recreation capital projects and related maintenance expenses, where maintenance expenses do not exceed 15% of the appropriation;
 - (c) at least 53% to the Department of Natural Resources - Division of Outdoor Recreation - Capital, to be expended for larger outdoor recreation infrastructure projects described in Subsection (3) as recommended to the Legislature by the Outdoor Adventure Commission;[and]
 - (d) at least [10%] 8% to the Utah Fairpark Area Investment and Restoration District created in Section 11-70-201 for the development and operation of the district[.] ; and
 - (e) at least 2% to the Division of Forestry, Fire, and State Lands created in Section 65A-1-4 for Jordan River recreational access grants described in Section 65A-2-8(5)(b)(iii).

(5) If the Legislature appropriates money to the Department of Transportation from the account, the Transportation Commission, created in Section 72-1-301, shall prioritize projects and determine funding levels in accordance with Subsection 72-1-303(1)(a) based on recommendations of the Department of Transportation.

Section 3. Section **65A-2-8** is amended to read:

65A-2-8 (Effective 05/06/26). Jordan River improvement projects -- Grants.

[(1) As used in this section:]

- [a] "Commission" means the Jordan River Commission created by interlocal agreement.]
- [b] "Zone" means the Jordan River Recreation Area, the area 250 yards on each side of the Jordan River from the edge of the river between SR-201 and 5400 South.]

[2) The division, subject to applicable federal, state, and local laws and ordinances and Subsections (3) through (5) may.]

[(a) expend money for the following purposes:]

133 [({i}) enhancing safety, recreation, and conservation in the zone;]
134 [({ii}) capital improvements within the zone, including:
135 [({A}) lighting along the Jordan River and within the zone;]
136 [({B}) completing construction of a paved pathway on both sides of the Jordan
137 River within the zone;]
138 [({C}) building a boat launch, picnic pavilion, bench, restroom, or other amenity
139 within the zone; and]
140 [({D}) supporting Tracy Aviary, a nature area, bike or boat rental concessionaire, or
141 other partnerships to enhance recreation in the zone;]
142 [({iii}) funding programs to clean the zone, remove invasive species, and restore
143 riparian habitat;]
144 [({iv}) hiring or contracting for personnel to perform tasks as directed by the
145 commission;]
146 [({v}) partnering or contracting with an urban ranger or conservation corp operated by a
147 state institution of higher education or similar service-oriented organizations or
148 programs:
149 [({A}) to provide trail, river, and parkway maintenance, invasive species removal
150 and revegetation, emergency care, and environmental education for the area
151 250 yards on each side of the Jordan River from the edge of the river for the
152 entire length of the river; and]
153 [({B}) to report to the appropriate public official all health, safety, or law
154 enforcement concerns that the organization encounters, as directed by the
155 commission; and]
156 [({vi}) partnering or contracting with local law enforcement or a certified peace officer
157 to provide patrol, security, and law enforcement for the area 250 yards on each
158 side of the Jordan River from the edge of the river for the entire length of the
159 river; and]
160 [({b}) purchase, lease, sell, or dispose of property or an easement within the zone to
161 achieve the goals in Subsection (2)(a).]
162 [({3})(a) Before engaging in any activity described in Subsections (2)(a)(i) through
163 (2)(a)(iii) or Subsection (2)(b), the division shall receive the approval of:
164 [({i}) the commission;]
165 [({ii}) any relevant governmental entity that owns or is responsible for the maintenance
166 of real property within the zone, including Salt Lake County Flood Control; and]

167 [((iii) the relevant municipality within the zone.)]

168 [(b) Before engaging in any activity described in Subsections (2)(a)(iv) through (2)(a)(vi),
169 the division shall:]

170 [(i) receive the approval of the commission; and]

171 [(ii) consult with:]

172 [(A) any relevant governmental entity that owns or is responsible for the
173 maintenance of real property within the zone; and]

174 [(B) the relevant municipality within the zone.]

175 (1) As used in this section, "commission" means the Jordan River Commission created by
176 interlocal agreement.

177 (2) Subject to applicable federal, state, and local laws and Subsections (3) through (5), the
178 division may expend money for:

179 (a) enhancing safety, recreation, and conservation along the Jordan River;

180 (b) a capital improvement project that increases access to a recreational activity on the
181 Jordan River;

182 (c) a partnership to increase access to a recreational activity on the Jordan River,
183 including a bike or boat rental concessionaire, an animal preserve or sanctuary, or
184 other partnership;

185 (d) hiring or contracting personnel:

186 (i) to provide, for the benefit of the Jordan River:

187 (A) trail, river, and parkway maintenance;

188 (B) invasive species removal and revegetation;

189 (C) emergency care; and

190 (D) environmental education; and

191 (ii) to report to the appropriate public official a health, safety, or law enforcement
192 concern along the Jordan River; and

193 (e) partnering or contracting with local law enforcement or a certified peace officer to
194 provide patrol, security, and law enforcement along the Jordan River.

195 (3) Before expending money for an activity described in Subsection (2), the division shall
196 consult with the commission.

197 (4) The commission shall work with the Department of Transportation, created in Section
198 72-1-201, to:

199 (a) have the Department of Transportation post[by no later than July 1, 2025], as
200 funding allows, consistent and attractive signs where a highway that is designated as

201 a state highway under Title 72, Chapter 4, Designation of State Highways Act, but is
202 not a freeway crosses the Jordan River; and

203 (b) advise in the development of methods to provide access from a state highway to the
204 trails along the Jordan River where the trail can be safely accessed.

205 (5)(a) The [programs] activities described in this section may only be implemented as
206 appropriations from the Legislature allow.

207 (b)(i) Money appropriated to [programs] an activity in this section is managed by the
208 division in accordance with this section and may include the division [dispersing
209 money through] issuing grants.

210 (ii) The division shall:

211 (A) [before December 31, 2022,] issue a five-year grant to a zoo, aviary, nature
212 center, or other educational program located [within the zone] along the Jordan
213 River; and

214 (B) renew the grant described in Subsection (5)(b)(ii)(A) every five years.

215 (iii) The division may issue a matching grant to a county or municipality for an
216 improvement project that increases access to a recreational activity on the Jordan
217 River, if the county or municipality:

218 (A) provides an equal amount of matching funds; and

219 (B) certifies that the county or municipality will spend the grant funds on an
220 improvement project that increases recreational access or improves public
221 safety along the Jordan River.

222 (c) Money that the Legislature appropriates to [programs] an activity or program
223 described in this section is nonlapsing in accordance with Section 63J-1-602.2.

224 Section 4. **Effective Date.**

225 (1) Except as provided in Subsection (2), this bill takes effect May 6, 2026.

226 (2) The actions affecting Section 51-9-902 (Effective 07/01/26) take effect on July 1, 2026.