



January 30, 2026

Utah Division of Water Rights

Teresa Wilhelmsen, P.E.
Division Director and State Engineer



State Engineer

*"The State Engineer shall be responsible for the general administrative supervision of the waters of the state and the **measurement, appropriation, apportionment, and distribution** of those waters."*

- Utah Code § 73-2-1(3)(a)

- Serves a **four-year term**, is appointed by the **governor**, and confirmed by the **senate**.
- Serves **without a board** or other advisory or decision-making body.
- Agency decisions are issued in the name of the State Engineer. Decisions are not subject to superior agency review, but may be brought before state district court for de novo review.



Division of Water Rights

Agency within the DNR that administers the measurement, appropriation, apportionment, and distribution of the State's valuable water resources under the direction of the State Engineer

Seven regional offices throughout the state

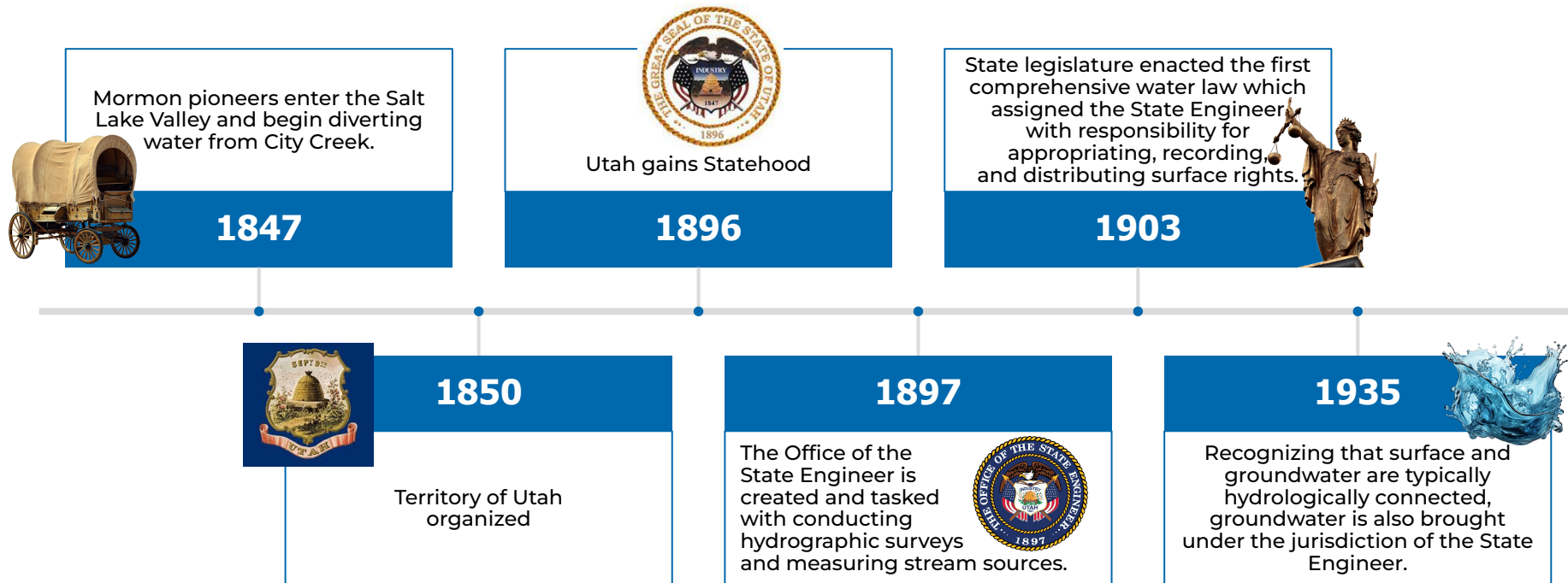
Logan, Weber, UL/JR, Vernal, Price, Richfield, Cedar City

Six main sections

1. **Applications & Records**, title and certificates
2. **Adjudication**
3. **Field Services** (distribution, enforcement)
4. **Technical Services** (groundwater studies, well drilling, geothermal, modeling)
5. **Dam Safety** (inspections, stream alterations)
6. **Data Services** (Water Right Network, water data, water use reporting)



Evolution of Utah Water Law



Water Rights in Utah:

Reflecting on 2025, Looking forward to 2026



Measurement & Telemetry



Data Clarity & Transparency



Process Improvements



Groundwater & Geothermal



Unprecedented Collaboration



Utah Division of Water Rights

waterrights.utah.gov

Performance Measures

Timely Processing of **Uncontested Applications**

🎯 Target: 80 → **FY25: 83.4**

Average Number of **Unique Web Users** to the Water Rights Website

🎯 Target: 1,000 → **FY25: 3,343**

Parties That Have Been Noticed in Comprehensive Adjudication

🎯 Target: 2,000 → **FY25: 46,193**

Percent of **Systems** in the State that are Fully Telemetered

🎯 Target: 25% → **FY25: 27.5%**

Bear River Adjudication Percent Complete

🎯 Target: 100% by 2030 → **FY25: 65%**

Number of **Telemetry Devices** on the Great Salt Lake Reporting Data

🎯 Target: 100% → **FY25: 100%**

Number of **Cooperative Agreements** Entered Into

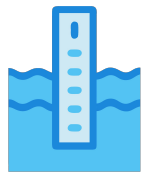
🎯 Target: 3 → **FY25: 2**



Measurement & Telemetry



Funding earmarked for the Colorado River Basin, Great Salt Lake Basin, and Sevier River.



346 total measurement & telemetry devices throughout the state.



Process Improvements: *Applications & Records*



Launched an Application & Payment Portal to streamline work



Added application tracking tools for transparency



Launched online payment option for Distribution System Assessments



Processed over 16,000 applications and actions



File an Application Online

Application Filing and Payment Portal →

Upload a completed application form PDF document and pay the requisite filing fee.

The following application types are currently supported:

- Application to Appropriate
- Change Application
- Exchange Application
- Report of Conveyance
- Segregation Request
- Consolidation Request

Proof Extensions →

(and Reinstatement Requests, if applicable)

Complete a web form and pay the filing fee.

Protests →

Complete a web form and pay the filing fee.

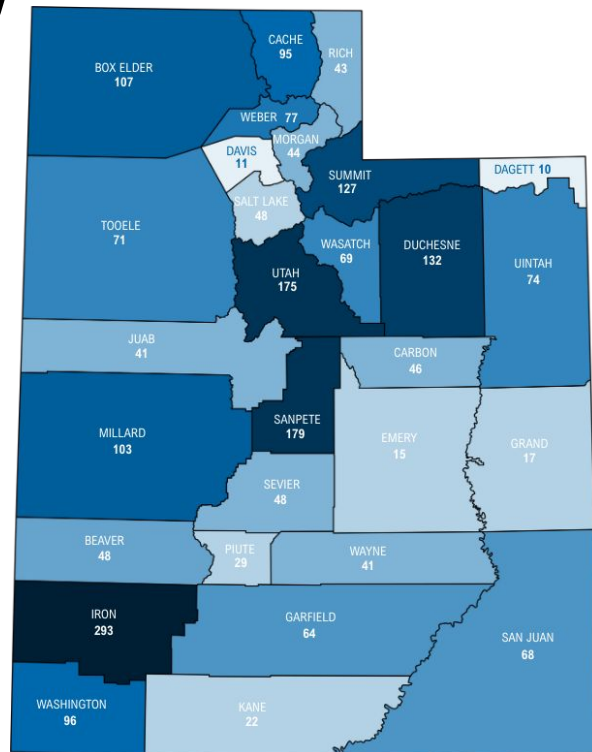
Stream Alterations →

Upload a completed Joint Permit Application form for submittal and pay the requisite filing fee.

Applications Filed by County

(Calendar Year 2025)

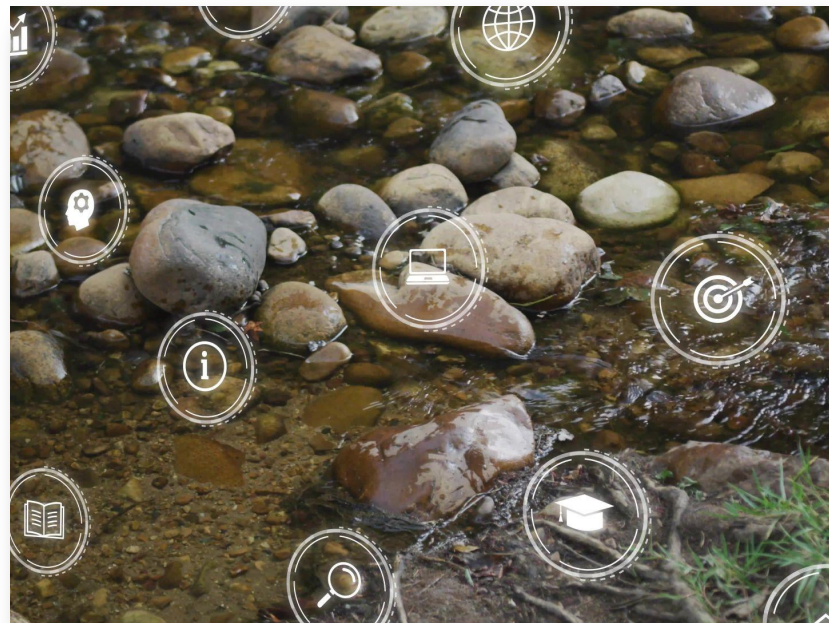
Iron: 293	Uintah: 74	Rich: 43
Sanpete: 179	Tooele: 71	Juab: 41
Utah: 175	Wasatch: 69	Wayne: 41
Duchesne: 132	San Juan: 68	Piute: 29
Summit: 127	Garfield: 64	Kane: 22
Box Elder: 107	Beaver: 48	Grand: 17
Millard: 103	Salt Lake: 48	Emery: 15
Washington: 96	Sevier: 48	Davis: 11
Cache: 95	Carbon: 46	Daggett: 10
Weber: 77	Morgan: 44	



Modernization for Data Clarity & Transparency

Field Data Collection - Using mobile and GPS-enabled tools for dam safety & adjudication field work

Leveraging GIS platforms for real-time field data collection and timely reports



How Modernization Shows Up in Our Work

Adjudication

- 4** signed Interlocutory Decrees
- 2** Published Proposed Determinations
- 1** Published List of Unclaimed Rights
- 4** Newly Created Areas
- 3** Newly Commenced Areas

Dam Safety

- 322** Dam Inspections
- 38** Dam Approvals



Groundwater & Geothermal

Consolidated groundwater-related operations (i.e., groundwater studies, geothermal, well drilling) to strengthen purpose-driven expertise.

Studies Underway

- Sanpete Valley
- Cache Valley
- Milford

Groundwater Management Plans in Development

- Pahvant
- Sand Hollow



Well Logs by County

Beaver	23	9
Box Elder	53	6
Cache	52	43
Carbon	1	1
Daggett	1	0
Davis	4	3
Duchesne	45	20
Emery	1	10
Garfield	46	24
Grand	7	19
Iron	62	4
Juab	8	2
Kane	7	50
Millard	23	2
Morgan	11	9

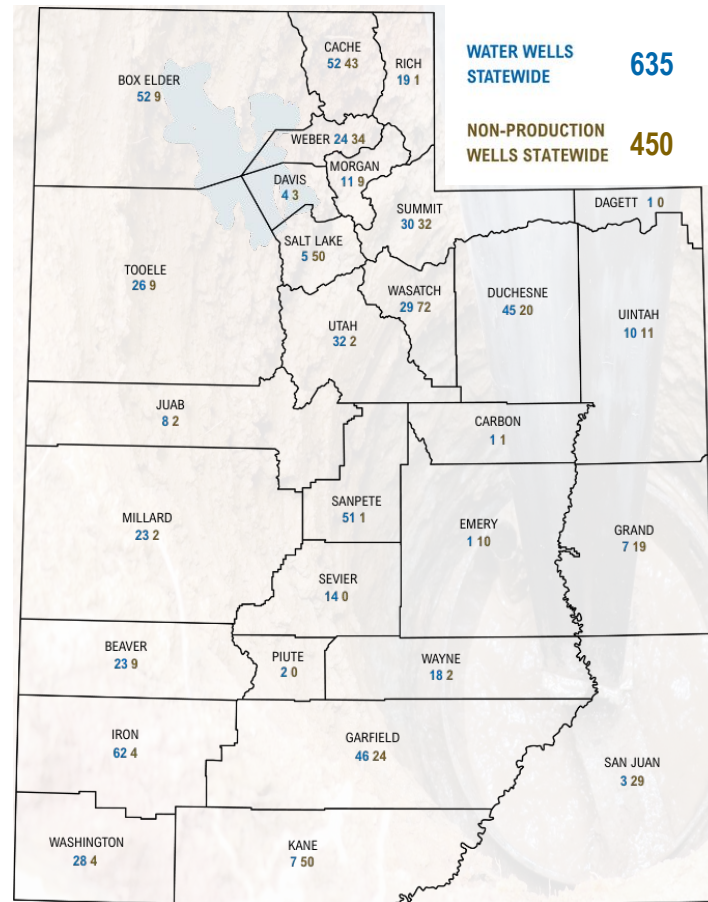


WATER WELLS



NON-PRODUCTION
WELLS

Piute	2	0
Rich	19	1
Salt Lake	5	50
San Juan	3	29
Sanpete	51	1
Sevier	14	0
Summit	30	32
Tooele	26	9
Uintah	10	11
Utah	32	3
Wasatch	29	72
Washington	28	4
Wayne	18	2
Weber	24	34



Utah Division of Water Rights

waterrights.utah.gov

Improving measurement, appropriation, apportionment & distribution

Streamflow Measurement Studies

(Task Orders 1, 10, 12)

- ✓ Great Salt Lake Gap Analysis, Stream Gains & Losses, Inflow Analysis, Distribution Accounting Identification
- ✓ Bear River Stream Gaging and Measurement Studies
- ✓ Sevier River Measurement Gap Analysis

Data & Technology Infrastructure

(Task Orders 2, 6, 8)

- ✓ Modernization plan for data collection, management, usability, transparency
- ✓ Flow measurement device accuracy and best practices
- ✓ Hydroinformatics advancements, data systems and tools
- ✓ Technology gap analysis and roadmap for modernization

Agricultural Water Management

(Task Orders 3, 5, 13)

- ✓ Quantifying irrigation water depletion statewide
- ✓ Validating OpenET evapotranspiration data accuracy
- ✓ Updating maps using climate data, crop patterns, etc.

Groundwater Studies

(Task Order 9)

- ✓ Comprehensive groundwater study of Cache Valley, examining aquifer characteristics, recharge sources, interactions and sustainable yield.

Division of Water Rights 2026 Budget

\$2,623,000 (one-time)

*Data Management
Improvements*

\$400,000 (ongoing)

*GSL Water Rights
Network Team*

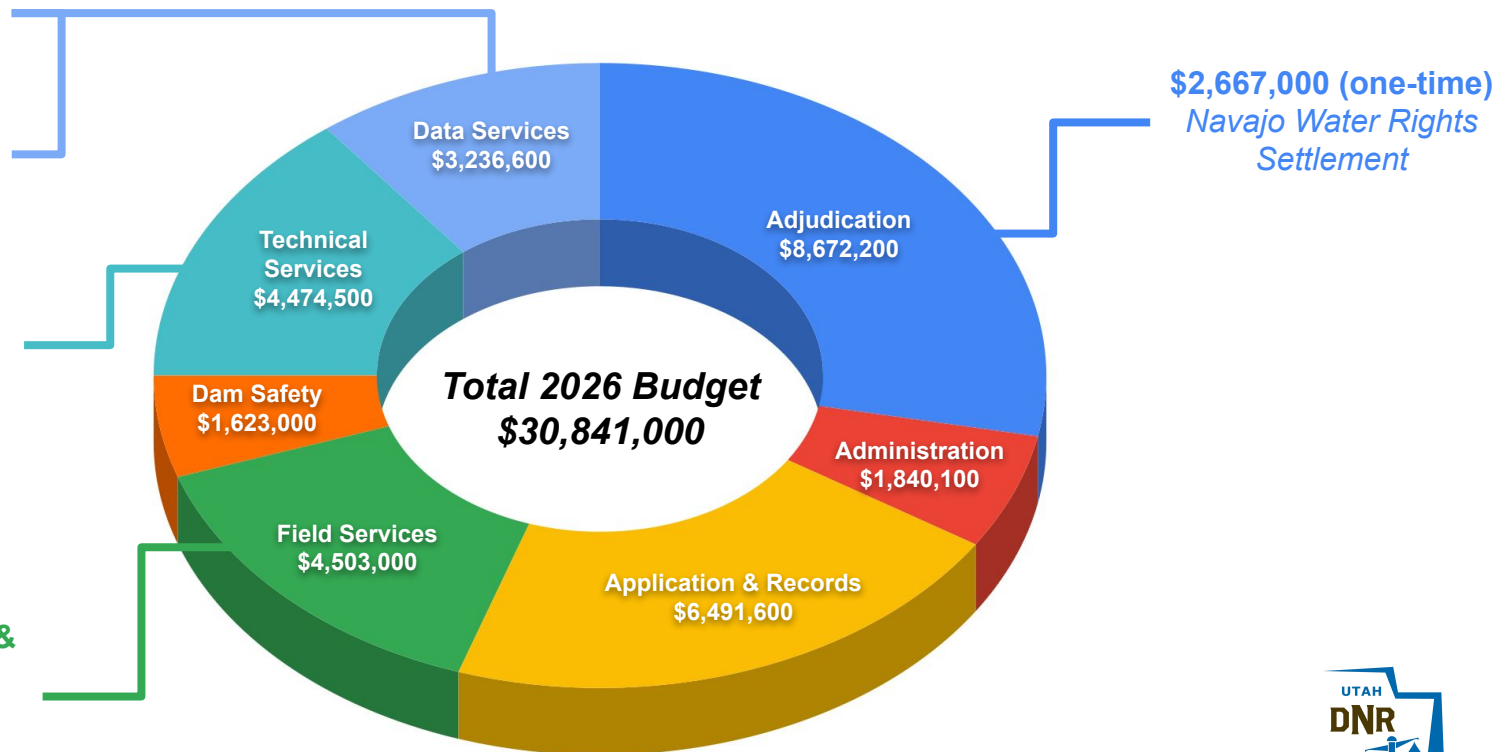
\$4,465,000 (one-time)

*Water Rights
Measurement and Data
Enhancement*

\$1,000,000 (one-time) &

\$1,000,000 (ongoing)

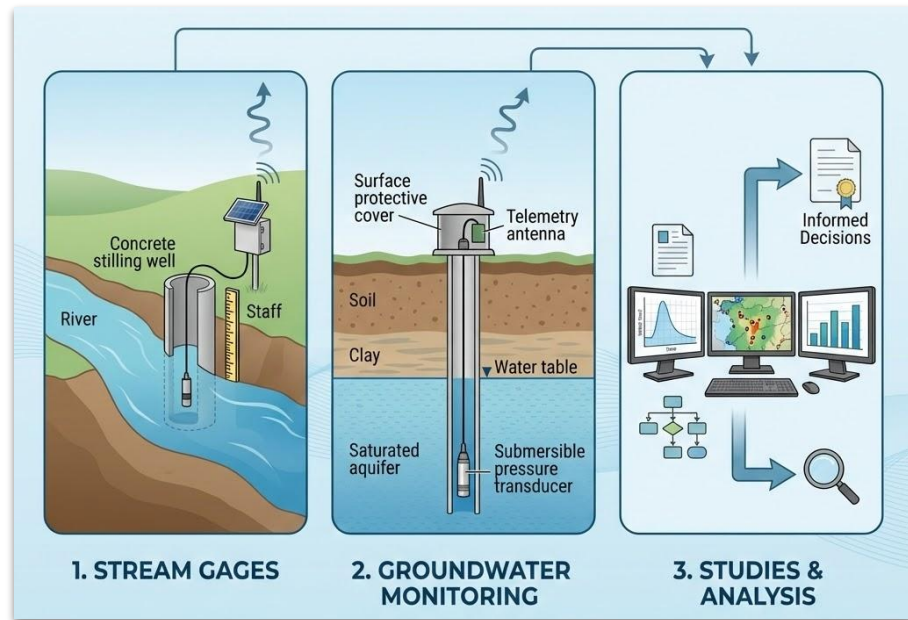
*GSL Measurement
Infrastructure*



Building Block Request

Hydrologic Monitoring, Studies, and GIS Software

- \$310,000 ongoing (Water Rights Restricted Account).
- Cover increased costs associated with existing stream gages, groundwater monitoring, GIS Software.
- Cooperative groundwater studies (UGS, USGS, USU).



Unprecedented Collaborations



NATURAL RESOURCES



GEOLOGICAL SURVEY



WILDLIFE



STATE PARKS



FORESTRY



WATER RESOURCES



OIL, GAS & MINING



RECREATION



LAW ENFORCEMENT



UTAH
PUBLIC
LANDS



—UTAH OFFICE OF—
ENERGY
DEVELOPMENT



UTAH DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY



UDAF



Great Salt Lake
COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE



USGS
science for a changing world



**THE COLORADO
RIVER AUTHORITY**
OF UTAH



Utah Division of Water Rights

waterrights.utah.gov



Thank you.

Utah Division of Water Rights
waterrights.utah.gov

1594 W North Temple
Suite 220
Salt Lake City, UT 84114-6201
(801) 538-7240

