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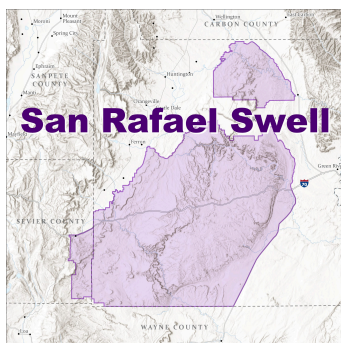
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*Utah residents' quality of life relies on the active management and protection of diverse natural resources. The **From the Field** newsletter by the Department of Natural Resources provides a snapshot of current department initiatives, developments and trends impacting Utah.*

San Rafael Swell Travel Management Plan



In 2008, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) released its Resource Management Plans and associated Travel Management Plans (TMPs) for the six field offices in Utah. The plans were litigated by various environmental special interest groups, and in 2017 a settlement agreement was reached between those groups and BLM. The State of Utah was not a party to the settlement agreement and formally

objected to its terms. The San Rafael Swell Travel Management Plan is the fourth such plan to be released by the BLM. There will be 11 TMPs address in total statewide. To best illustrate why this is problematic, a recent BLM decision for the Labyrinth Rims/Gemini Bridges Travel Management Plan near Moab closed 317 miles of roads, including 114 miles of RS 2477 roads that are subjected to ongoing litigation. The state is litigating the Moab decision.

There are four preliminary alternatives for the San Rafael Swell TMP that vary in how many miles of roads/trails will be closed or restricted, possibly forever, and you can view them [here at the PLPCO website](#). There's also an [interactive map and Comment Letter Generator](#) to help the public share their input with the BLM when the comment period opens.

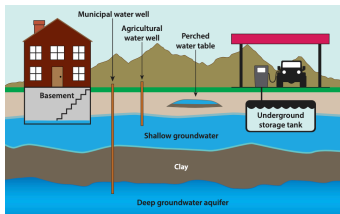
Modifications to Great Salt Lake causeway berm benefiting brine shrimp



Last year, the Utah Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands — in partnership with the Utah Division of Water Resources and Union Pacific Railroad — modified the causeway berm that separates the northern and southern areas of the Great Salt Lake in an effort to address salinity issues as directed in the governor's executive order. The change is already benefiting the lake's brine shrimp!

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Shallow groundwater hazard in Utah



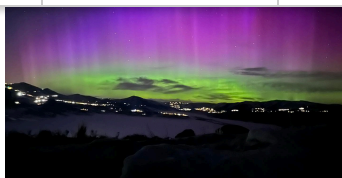
Flooding can occur not only from surface water — such as from rivers and streams — but also through shallow groundwater. In developed areas, problems can occur when groundwater is within approximately 10 feet of the ground surface. Shallow groundwater

can flood basements and other underground and low-lying infrastructure, damage buried utility lines, destabilize excavations and trigger landslides and rockfalls. The Utah Geological Survey creates comprehensive geologic hazard maps including maps showing shallow groundwater susceptibility. These maps show areas that have the potential for shallow groundwater based on soil drainage capacity and the local geology and hydrology.

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12 million people visited Utah state parks in 2023

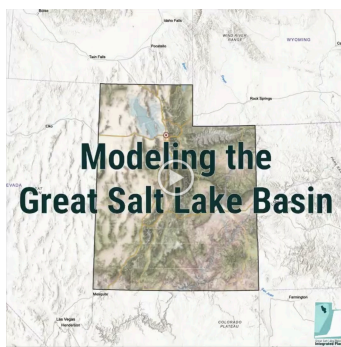
Visitation to Utah's 46 state parks last year reached a little over 12 million people for the first time on record, according to a KSL.com analysis of Utah

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a 4% increase from the previous record of 11.6 million set in 2021. It's also the third time ever that all of Utah's state parks surpassed the state's 'Mighty 5' national parks in total visitation. A little more than 10.6 million visited Utah's five national parks in 2023.

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Modeling the Great Salt Lake Basin



A big component of the [Great Salt Lake Basin Integrated Plan](#) that Utah Division of Water Resources is leading is modeling. A water model helps determine things like water supply, demand, conditions of reservoirs and aquifers, and what would happen if those were to change. Many models within the Great Salt Lake Basin exist (65!), but they were created by an assortment of entities, are stored in different places and don't inform one another. We're working on integrating models to create a powerful, mega-model tool that'll help water managers better plan for scenarios and solutions. We're grateful to be collaborating with our many partners to complete this huge undertaking!

[See the animation & learn more >>](#)

Water conditions update from Division of Water Resources



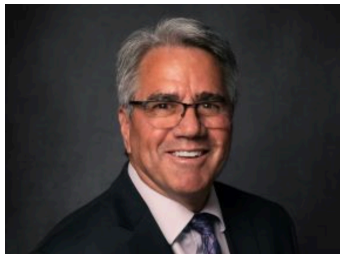
Utah's water outlook for March is marked by encouraging developments and notable records. Alta recently experienced its wettest February on record, showcasing the dynamic nature of our climate and its potential impact on water resources. "Alta's record-breaking February reminds us how much can change in a month," Candice Hasenyager, director of the Division of Water Resources, said. "Our statewide snowpack has been

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Resources Conservation Service in their March 1st Water Supply Report, the state received 157% of our typical amount of snow water equivalent (SWE) for the month, and our statewide SWE percent of normal ended the month at 117%.

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Office of Energy Development director announces retirement



Greg Todd, the Utah Office of Energy Development director, has announced his retirement. Todd will remain in his role while the Utah Department of Natural Resources conducts a nationwide search for his replacement. DNR hopes to have a new OED director in place by May. "It is with equal measures of

gratitude and sadness that we announce Greg's retirement," said Joel Ferry, DNR executive director. "Greg's extensive experience in both energy and public service has been an asset as we've worked to shape the direction of Utah's energy future."

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