

2023 Legislation



2023's legislation built upon 2022's landmark efforts to protect and preserve the Great Salt Lake. Water conservation appropriations in 2022 and 2023 totaled nearly \$1 billion. Additional bills addressed critical area beyond water conservation too, highlighting the lake's importance to all.

HB 349 prohibited most water reuse projects in the Great Salt Lake Basin and added investigation of water reuse impacts to the Great Salt Lake Basin Integrated Plan

SB 277 appropriated \$200 million to expand the agricultural optimization program and created a means for saved water to be quantified with a change application

HB 307 created a new nonprofit, statewide partnership to optimize water use

HB 137 designates brine shrimp as the state crustacean

HB 491 created the Office of the Great Salt Lake Commissioner to coordinate agencies and interests in protecting and preserving the lake

HB 450 requires homeowners' associations to use waterwise landscape materials and prohibits them from requiring more than 50% non-waterwise plant coverage

SB 118 provided additional funds to the statewide landscape conversion incentive program

HB 513 set an emergency trigger to halt mineral extraction and manage the railroad causeway berm when salinity gets too high

HB 220 tasked the Utah Division of Air Quality with conducting a study in counties surrounding the Great Salt Lake to create a pollution reduction plan

SB 92 created a Great Salt Lake license plate to help fund the Sovereign Lands Management Account

HC R7 encourages the Utah Department of Veterans and Military Affairs and partners to apply to establish the Great Salt Lake Sentinel Landscape

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HB 137: State crustacean designation

- Designates brine shrimp as the state crustacean, highlighting the Great Salt Lake's importance.

HB 220: Emissions reduction amendments

- Tasked the [Utah Division of Air Quality](#) with conducting an emission inventory in the counties surrounding the Great Salt Lake. This inventory will become the basis for recommended halogen emission standards and an air pollutant reduction plan. Halogens contribute to wintertime inversion conditions and negatively impact the respiratory system.

HB 307: Utah Water Ways

- Created a new nonprofit, statewide partnership to optimize water use. Provided \$2 million onetime and \$1 million ongoing to establish and run the nonprofit.

HB 349: Water reuse project amendments

- Prohibits water reuse projects after Nov. 1, 2023 unless a project is owned by the federal government, supplies water to the Great Salt Lake or is subject to a water replacement plan (delivers an equivalent amount to the lake). Adds investigation of water reuse impacts to the [Great Salt Lake Basin Integrated Plan](#).

HB 450: Landscaping requirements

- Requires homeowners' associations to use waterwise landscape materials,. Probits them from requiring more than 50% non-waterwise plant coverage.

HB 491: Amendments related to the Great Salt Lake (Great Salt Lake Commissioner)

- Created the [Office of the Great Salt Lake Commissioner](#). The commissioner developed a [strategic plan](#) and coordinates the [agencies and interests](#) aligned with the lake. The commissioner annually informs the governor, the president of the Senate, and the speaker of the House about the status and implementation of the strategic plan.
- State agencies shall cooperate with the commissioner, including providing information to the extent not prohibited by federal or state law, at the commissioner's request.
- The [Great Salt Lake Advisory Council](#) advises the commissioner.
- The commissioner may also require a state agency to act or refrain from acting to protect the Great Salt Lake, as is consistent with the strategic plan.

HB 513: Great Salt Lake amendments

- Sets an emergency trigger (when low lake levels require immediate action to protect the ecology of the lake and other lake-derived values), allowing state regulators to halt mineral extraction and manage the railroad causeway berm when salinity hits a certain concentration.
- Incentivizes non-depletive methods of mineral extraction by modifying severance tax and royalty requirements for lithium. Water-saving technologies and a reduction of depletions are encouraged. Also, the bill ensures value derived from extraction is available to protect the resource.

SB 92: Special license plate designation

- Created a [Great Salt Lake license plate](#). Funds will go to the Sovereign Lands Management Account to conserve the lake's watershed and ecosystem.

SB 118: Water efficient landscaping incentives

- Provided additional funds to the statewide [landscape conversion incentive program](#). Outdoor water use makes up about 60% of Utah's municipal and industrial water use. To conserve, we need to plant grass in areas where it's actively used, not treat grass as the default ground cover.

SB 277: Agricultural water optimization

- Appropriated \$200 million to expand the [existing program](#) in the Department of Agriculture and Food, which provides matching grants for irrigation efficiency projects.
- [Change applications](#) can be filed to quantify water saved with the Division of Water Rights.

HC R7: Concurrent resolution supporting the creation of the Great Salt Lake Sentinel Landscape

- Encourages the [Utah Department of Veterans and Military Affairs](#) and partners to apply to establish the Great Salt Lake [Sentinel Landscape](#).