

January 30, 2017

Hello! We want to set up a meeting for folks interested in Utah's wetlands and also provide you with an update of what the Utah Geological Survey's wetland program has been up to. It has been a while since we have had a meeting with Utah's wetland working group - an informal association of stakeholders interested in all matters related to Utah's wetlands. We would like to set up a meeting for March; for those interested in attending, please indicate your availability in the Doodle Poll: <http://doodle.com/poll/arh9gr7hakkzi22c>

Specific topics that will be addressed include:

- A summary of our efforts so far to develop wetland functional assessment checklists.
- Discussion of upcoming wetland projects for the Utah Geological Survey and Utah Division of Water Quality, including how stakeholders can participate.
- Identification by stakeholders of additional needs and program recommendations.

Read below for a summary of our work in the past year.

Wetland Condition Field Assessments

Summer of 2016 was a busy year for the wetland field assessment crew! We finished up the second year of a two year project in the Jordan/Utah Lake watershed, surveying over 100 wetlands to better understand baseline condition and common stressors. As part of this, we evaluated wetland functioning related to water quality improvement and habitat provisioning for sensitive amphibian species. We also participated in data collection for a nationwide study of wetland health being conducted by the U.S. EPA. A final report for the Jordan project should come out sometime in late 2017; see the EPA's National Wetland Condition Assessment webpage (<https://www.epa.gov/national-aquatic-resource-surveys/nwca>) for more information on the nationwide project.

Research on Sensitive Amphibians

We have been conducting research on sensitive amphibian species for the last two years, including the boreal toad (*Anaxyrus boreas*) and the Columbia spotted frog (*Rana luteiventris*). We added habitat assessments to our field protocol so we could collect data on the availability and condition of habitat for these two species in our project areas. Habitat results for the Jordan/Utah Lake watershed will be included in the final watershed report. We have also done some focused research on the boreal toad, which has a T&E listing decision expected in August. We initially compared habitat characteristics between occupied and unoccupied breeding locations in northeastern Utah in 2015 and then, in 2016, expanded habitat data collection statewide with the help of the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources. A draft report has been delivered to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to assist with their Species Status Assessment; the final report will be posted to the Utah Geological Survey's wetland publications webpage.

Wetland Mapping

The wetland mapping group has been busy! They have finished mapping wetlands in the upper Bear River watershed and around Mills and Mona. Both products are in review by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service before incorporation in the National Wetland Inventory, though preliminary data is available upon request. Mapping of wetlands in Salt Lake County is almost complete and mapping of Great Salt Lake's wetlands is ongoing. The mapping group has also been working on a revised wetland classification that takes the complex National Wetland Inventory classes and simplifies them into more easily understood types and subtypes, such as emergent marsh and playa. The final classification will be described in a Utah Geological Survey publication, currently under review. A webmap is also under development. We plan to send out links to the report, map, and GIS data through the AGRC before the meeting.

New Reports

Check out reports recently posted to the Utah Geological Survey webpage! There is a new publication on wetland condition on the north slope of the Uintas and several new technical reports for projects including the Weber watershed wetland assessment, the 2015 boreal toad study, and development of a watershed stress model for wetlands and other aquatic resources. Follow the link to find these and other wetland publications: <http://geology.utah.gov/resources/wetlands/wetlands-publications/>