

June 7, 2019

Hello! Hope you are all enjoying the very wet spring. I'm excited to get out and see how all this water is affecting our wetlands. Check out the information below for a summary of recently completed projects and learn about ways you can participate in some upcoming opportunities. If you ever have information you would like to share with the wetland working group, please pass it along to me and I will send it out in the next wetland newsletter (which comes out approximately twice per year in the spring and fall).

New Spatial Data for Great Salt Lake's Wetlands

The Utah Geological Survey recently completed a wetland mapping project for Locomotive Springs Wildlife Management Area and the eastern half of Great Salt Lake. The spatial data were created using heads-up digitization following the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) mapping and classification standards and has replaced the older NWI data. The data are available both on the Utah Geological Survey [wetland mapping application](#) and through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's [Wetland Mapper](#).

In an unrelated project, the Utah Division of Forestry, Fire, and State Lands had a group of graduate students at the University of Utah utilize lidar data from Great Salt Lake to create a model of approximate shorelines for the lake at varying water elevations. Check out the [animation](#) and contact Buck Ehler (buckehler@utah.gov) or Justin Johnson (jjohnson2@utah.gov) if you are interested in learning more about this project or obtaining the associated GIS data.

New Reports of Investigation

The Utah Geological Survey recently completed two Reports of Investigation evaluating rapid assessment methods for assessing wetland condition and potential function. Field work for these projects was completed in 2017 with help from many colleagues outside the Survey. [RI-277](#) presents the results of an evaluation of the reliability and efficiency of three different methods of collecting wetland vegetation data—a progressive timed meander, four 100-m² plots, and line point-intercept—and looked at which vegetation metrics were stable despite observer and seasonal variability. [RI-278](#) presents the results of an evaluation of metrics used to assess wetland condition, sensitive amphibian habitat, wildlife habitat in general, and water quality improvement.

Help Document Monarch Butterflies and Their Habitat

The western Monarch butterfly population is currently down 99% since counts started in the 1980s. In order to help them persist and thrive, the Utah Department of Natural Resources is trying to find out exactly where they nectar and breed in Utah and how that supports the western population as a whole. Please help document milkweed locations as well as any monarchs you may see by reporting your data in a free mobile app designed for this purpose. The app has been constructed using Survey 123 and allows anyone to record Monarch and milkweed information (download at <https://arcg.is/1jDbDi>) on their smartphone or tablet. We encourage you to download this app and help gather critical data for the State of Utah. You have two options: 1) opportunistically document and report Monarch and milkweed sightings anytime, anywhere in Utah and/or 2) take part in a larger effort to assist in validating and refining a western Monarch habitat model. More information on the app and this critical data collection effort can be found at the website [Monarch Butterfly Conservation in Utah](#).

Upcoming Springs Inventory and Assessment Workshop in Salt Lake City

The Springs Stewardship Institute (SSI), in collaboration with the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), is hosting a spring inventory and assessment workshop in Salt Lake City in mid-July. The workshop will include two days of classroom instruction focused on the USFS's Groundwater-Dependent Ecosystems Protocol with additional discussion of other widely used protocols and data management in SSI's Springs Online database. The classroom instruction will be followed by five days of optional hands-on field training near Logan. Find more information and register [online](#).

Update from the Division of Water Quality's Wetland Program

The UDWQ is currently preparing for the 2019 field season, which will involve high frequency monitoring in impounded wetlands and a 40-site probabilistic survey of impounded wetlands. We'll be updating our sampling and analysis plan for that project, which will be posted [online](#) when it is updated. If anyone wants to follow up on the results of the Conservation Action Planning meetings that were held last spring for Great Salt Lake, the final report as well as all the materials covered in that meeting are also [online](#). Contact Rebekah Downard at UDWQ if you have any questions or want more information: rdownard@utah.gov.

Upcoming Wetland Projects for the Utah Geological Survey

The Utah Geological Survey is currently finishing up a wetland and riparian mapping project in a portion of the Uinta Basin near Vernal, with a final map product expected in early 2020, and we will conduct initial field work to kick off a mapping project in Cache Valley this summer. The Utah

Geological Survey will also be conducting rapid assessment surveys to evaluate the condition and potential function of wetlands in the Central Basin and Range over the next two summers.

Fall Meeting Reminder

The Utah Geological Survey will be hosting a wetland working group meeting at 1 pm on November 20th. Join us to hear from a variety of speakers discussing wetland-related projects happening here in Utah and to take part in general discussion with the group. The planned speakers for the meeting include Ann Neville from The Nature Conservancy discussing progress on development of a new in-lieu fee program, the Bureau of Land Management discussing the new BLM lentic monitoring protocol, Theron Miller from the Wasatch Front Water Quality Council discussing water quality research around Great Salt Lake, and John Proctor discussing fen mapping and how it is being used for management.