

UGS BOARD MEETING
Department of Natural Resources
Utah Geological Survey
1594 West North Temple, Suite 3110, Salt Lake City
Wednesday, January 8, 2020

The meeting of the UGS Board was called to order at 8:30 a.m.

ATTENDANCE

Board members: Marc Eckels – Chair, Elissa Richards, Sam Quigley, Ken Fleck, Tom Faddies, Dave Garbrecht, Rick Chesnut, and Pete Kilbourne

UGS Staff: Bill Keach, Mike Hylland, Jodi Patterson, and Cheryl Gustin

Personnel Changes

Intern Matthew Morriss (University of Oregon PhD student) is in an NSF-funded position to work on remote sensing landslide detection techniques; he has a 6-month position, ending ~March 2020.

Rosemary Fasselin was hired as a Sr. GIS Analyst/Cartographer with Editorial/GIO, replacing Martha Jensen who applied for and received the Data Coordinator position within GIO. Jacqueline DeWolfe was hired as a Graphic/Web Designer with Editorial/GIO replacing Jenny Erickson who took a position in the private sector.

Doug Sprinkel retired after 33+ years with the Utah Geological Survey. Doug worked in the Mapping program. He was a respected author and mapper. His experience and major geologic contributions to the state of Utah will be missed. Amongst his many assignments he also served as Deputy Director under Genevieve Atwood.

FY20 Building Block Update

Martha Jensen, hired in July to fulfil new Data Coordinator position, is doing a great job. Her work is making a positive contribution to the growth of the UGS online presence.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Sam Quigley motioned to approve the minutes of the August 21, 2019, UGS Board meeting. Elissa Richards seconded the motion. The Board voted, and the motion carried.

ACTION ITEM

Although contract proposals for external funding are provisionally approved by the Board by email, they require formal approval at the next Board meeting. The proposals are:

Hydrologic Monitoring of Critical Groundwater-fed Habitat-BLM; funding from the BLM via DNR Watershed Restoration Initiative; new funding to the UGS \$15,500; total project cost \$15,500; started 9/1/2019; estimated end date 8/31/2020.

Sevenmile Canyon Monitoring Well; funding from the National Park Service; new funding to the UGS \$46,575; total project funding \$93,149; estimated start date 10/1/2019; estimated end date 7/30/2020.

Pizzel Aquifer Test Monitoring and Analysis; funding from the Powder Mountain Water and Sewer District; new funding to the UGS \$18,044; total project funding \$36,088; start date 10/1/2019; estimated end date 7/30/20.

Castle Valley Water Quality Monitoring; funding from the Town of Castle Valley; new funding to the UGS \$4,001; total project funding \$8,002; start date 9/1/2019; estimated end date 6/30/2020.

Utah Basin Model: Monthly Estimates of Recharge and Runoff; funding from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation; new funding to the UGS \$118,981; total project funding \$237,962; estimated start date 10/1/2020; estimated end date 9/30/2022.

Data to Support Central Basin Wetland Assessment; funding from the EPA; new funding to the UGS \$52,211; total project funding \$52,211; estimated start date 1/1/2020; estimated end date 9/30/2021.

Manti-LaSal National Forest Landslide Inventory Mapping; funding from the USFS; new funding to the UGS \$58,200; total project funding \$116,400; start date 8/13/2019; estimated end date 7/30/2024.

Zion National Park UAV Investigation; funding from the Zion Forever Project; new funding to the UGS \$2,708; total project funding \$5,416; start date 9/23/2019; end date 10/31/2019.

Utah 2020 StateMap Geologic Mapping; funding from USGS; new funding to the UGS ~ \$160,000; total project funding ~ \$320,000; estimated start date 7/1/2020; estimated end date 6/30/2021.

Pete Kilbourne motioned to formally approve the above proposals. Dave Garbrecht seconded the motion. The Board voted, and the motion carried.

Suggested Dates for FY20-21 Board Meetings

Wednesday April 15th and Wednesday August 12th
Field trip, September 18-20th – location planned for St. George area.

Director's Report:

Recent activities –

Mark Milligan presented a quick update on recent media interest working with State Parks regarding the appearance of mirabilite mounds at the Great Salt Lake.

Looking forward

We are six months into FY20. We continue to see good work from and recognition for contributions by the UGS staff.

Recognition –

Tom Chidsey and Doug Sprinkel received the Landmark Publication award from the AAPG Rocky Mountain Section in September. The award recognized the major contribution of UGA Publication 28 - *Geology of Utah's Parks and Monuments*.

Grant Willis received the 2019 Lehi Hintze Award for his contributions to Utah geology over his 30-plus-year career. In addition to authoring or co-authoring over 50 geologic maps, Grant has managed the Geologic Mapping program for 25 years, and guided the development and advancement of digital geologic mapping at the UGS.

Stephanie Carney was selected by her peers as the 2019 UGS Employee of the Year. Her multiple nominations highlighted her dedication, meticulous work, and positive, respectful attitude in performing her technical review duties, which provide “a level of consistency that helps the entire survey maintain its professionalism and inspires public confidence in our science.”

Ogden Valley Hydrogeology Report:

This comprehensive report on the water resources and budget in Ogden Valley was published in September. In the words of the primary author, Lucy Jordan: “*Many UGS employees shed blood, sweat, and tears to create this comprehensive piece of science. Editorial staff made it even better.*” Following its release presentations have been made to the sponsoring agency and the public. This will a valuable resource to the community grapples with growth for years to come.

Utahraptor Megablock update:

For the past 5 years the Utahraptor megablock has been housed at Thanksgiving Point Institute under an MOU which expires in March. On December 5, 2019, the Thanksgiving Point Institute director notified the UGS the MOU will not be renewed. This is a critical issue that will need immediate attention. Moving forward we need to find a new home for this important fossil block. Its large size and weight, at about 9 tons, mandates some unique requirements for housing and curation. We have already begun discussions internally and externally as to possible locations. Ultimately, we believe the move a positive step enabling the UGS to accelerate curation and increase public access/exposure. We will have a more detailed discussion later in the meeting.

Minerals and Energy –

DOE funded grant - \$9,000,000 to University of Utah, UGS will receive ~\$450,000 over 4 years. The FORGE project continues to provide additional work as that project moves into its third year.

Groundwater/Wetlands projects –

The Groundwater/Wetlands program has the highest level of outside funding within the UGS. Six of the nine contract proposals above are for this program, totaling nearly \$255,000. With increasing demands this program will continue to play a critical role in Utah's future. They often collaborate with the DNR Water Rights and Water Resources divisions, along with many municipal and water district agencies.

Funding and budget

Looking to the future, our top priority is to secure stable funding for the UGS. The budget for FY20 will be tight but is manageable. See comments below on FY21 Building Block requests.

FY21 Building Block Request - Update

FY21 will present significant challenges if we do not find a way to replace decreasing Mineral Lease funds. The UGS has determined that Mineral Lease funds are not a sustainable, reliable funding source for core operating expenses. Instead, the UGS seeks the stability of state General Funds to maintain core services and seeks to use Mineral Lease funds as a mechanism to balance fluctuations in outside funding, while still maintaining the mineral-related objectives tied to Mineral Lease funds. Currently, there is also some reliance on Mineral Lease funds to cover legislative compensation increases. This is a challenge on two fronts: Mineral Lease funds are decreasing while compensation is increasing, and, statutorily, the UGS is limited as to what they can be spent on. For your reference our two requests are as follows:

Ongoing – \$600,000 from General Funds

One-time – \$250,000 from General Funds for catch-up of maintenance and equipment deferred over past 5 years.

The requested new funding will: 1) allow UGS to deliver high quality, relevant and needed information to the public, and 2) avoid delayed or deferred projects, which have negative consequences. Together, the new funding requests will ensure the UGS will continue its important role in Utah's future.

At 10:30 a.m. today, the Governor's Office released their FY21 budget recommendations. The recommendations include a one-time General Fund appropriation to the UGS of \$400,000 and an ongoing General Fund appropriation to the UGS of \$450,000.

Financial Update – Jodi Patterson

Financial documents in the Board packet include the FY20 UGS operating budget summary (through November 2019), the FY20 Mineral Lease revenue summary, and the contracts tracking summary. The UGS is currently forecasting a 2020 fiscal year surplus of \$178k. We started FY20 with a carry-forward from last fiscal year (2019) of \$600,000, so we are currently estimating a net decrease of about \$422k.

November represents 42% of the fiscal year completed. Total percentage of outside revenue billed is about 35%. After December's financials, we will conduct a mid-year, detailed review of project and operating budgets and make forecast adjustments as necessary. In the meantime, I have noted estimates of outstanding projects and their impact on the forecast on the Operating Budget Summary page.

Legislative Update

May 2019 Interim Committee Meeting:

Sunset review of Land Exchange Distribution Account (LEDA) funding for Snake Valley hydrogeologic monitoring in the West Desert. Committee agree continued funding is necessary.

June 2019 Interim Committee Meeting:

Accountable Budget Review Process (i.e., "Zero Base Budget"). Committee approved UGS base budget.

2020 Legislative Session, Bills of Interest:

HB10, Boards and Commissions Amendments (Marc Roberts) – Replaces two Utah Seismic Safety Commission members from House and Senate with two members appointed by director of Division of Emergency Management; adds sunset date (July 1, 2025) for Resource Development Coordinating Committee.

SB19, Land Exchange Distribution Account Amendments (Ralph Okerlund) – Extends repeal date for Snake Valley LEDA funding to July 1, 2030; repeals language related to air quality monitoring in the Snake Valley project.

Miscellaneous

Pete Kilbourne updated his position on the Water Board and requested input from board regarding Coal Mine Water Storage. As part of an effort to boost tourism in Carbon County, Pete is considering writing a geologic guide and asked if the UGS might be interested in providing assistance. Will address it later when there is more information available.

Outside Funding Discussion

How to decide if we are competing unfairly with private sector regarding funding. Hugh Hurlow joined as his proposals have fallen under this concern. Questions that need to be asked before doing proposal: Would work compete with private sector? Can the work be viewed as representing a particular side? Can there be potential litigation to come from work done? Bill

Loughlin joined meeting to bring his concern of UGS competing for proposals that may be just as well done by a private consulting firm. He recommended that projects continue to be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Presentations:

Jim Kirkland presented the status of the Utahraptor megablock and the need to move it to a new location. He mentioned the possibility of moving it to the Core Center slabbing shed, as well as several other offsite locations.