

Recreation on Utah Trust Lands

Challenges & Opportunities



National Association of State Trust Lands
2024 Summer Conference
Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

Outdoor Recreation In Utah

Recreation Industry Growth

- \$8.1 billion in economic output; up 32.79% from 2021-2022
- 3% of Utah's GDP
- 71,677 jobs and \$3.6 billion in wages
- Top industries: Snow activities (\$602M); RV-ing (\$538M); boating/fishing (\$438M); hunting/shooting (\$245M); OHV/ATV-ing (\$136M)

Population Growth

- Utah was the fastest growing state from 2010-2020
- More net migration than natural increase – recent phenomenon





Challenges

- People are looking for new places to go
- Infrastructure can't keep up with demand
- Perception of trust lands as multiple-use public lands
- "Social Ownership"
- Limited staff / lots of land to cover
- Resource damage, trash, trespass, vandalism, route proliferation, wildfire, etc, etc
- Recreation is not our focus and not our expertise
- Funding

Opportunities

- Revenue generation
- Land exchanges/sales
- Education
- Partnerships

Recreation Management

1994 – Present: Evolving Strategy

- For a long time it was “anything goes” on Utah’s trust lands
- Realized that you can’t ignore problems and expect them to go away
- Recognized need for a land stewardship focus along with revenue generation
- Sought budget allocations and other funding sources
- Began to engage with user groups, state/federal agencies, other stakeholders

- Planning

Internal land planning and working with partner agencies on planning efforts

- Education

Informing stakeholders through social media and other mediums

- Partnerships

Participating in various committees/workgroups to represent the Trust’s interests

- Revenue Generation

Monetize recreational use of trust lands where possible



Funding Sources



Stewardship Budget

- Line-item in TLA's budget
- Appropriated by legislature
- \$852,000 per year
- Unspent funds go to permanent fund
- Used for rehabilitation and restoration of trust lands
- Law enforcement, wildfire rehabilitation, cleanups, stewardship projects



OHV Registration Surcharge

- Legislation passed in 2004
- \$1.50 per OHV registration
- \$350,000 - \$400,000 annually
- \$350,000 carry-over allowed
- Improve motorized recreational opportunities on trust lands
- Mitigate damage associated with OHV use
- Not beneficiary funds



Grants, Outside Funding

- Several grant programs instituted over the past few years for recreation infrastructure
- Millions of dollars allocated by legislature
- TLA can stretch its stewardship & OHV fund dollars through obtaining various grants



Planning Efforts

- Travel management planning on large blocks
 - La Sal Mountains, Tabby Mountain Blocks
 - Engage user groups, local government, other stakeholders
 - Self-sustaining route systems
- Federal land/travel management plans
 - Participate as cooperating agency
 - Attend meetings, route evaluations, etc.
 - Submit comments
- Land characterization
 - Identify areas that may be more appropriate for recreation uses

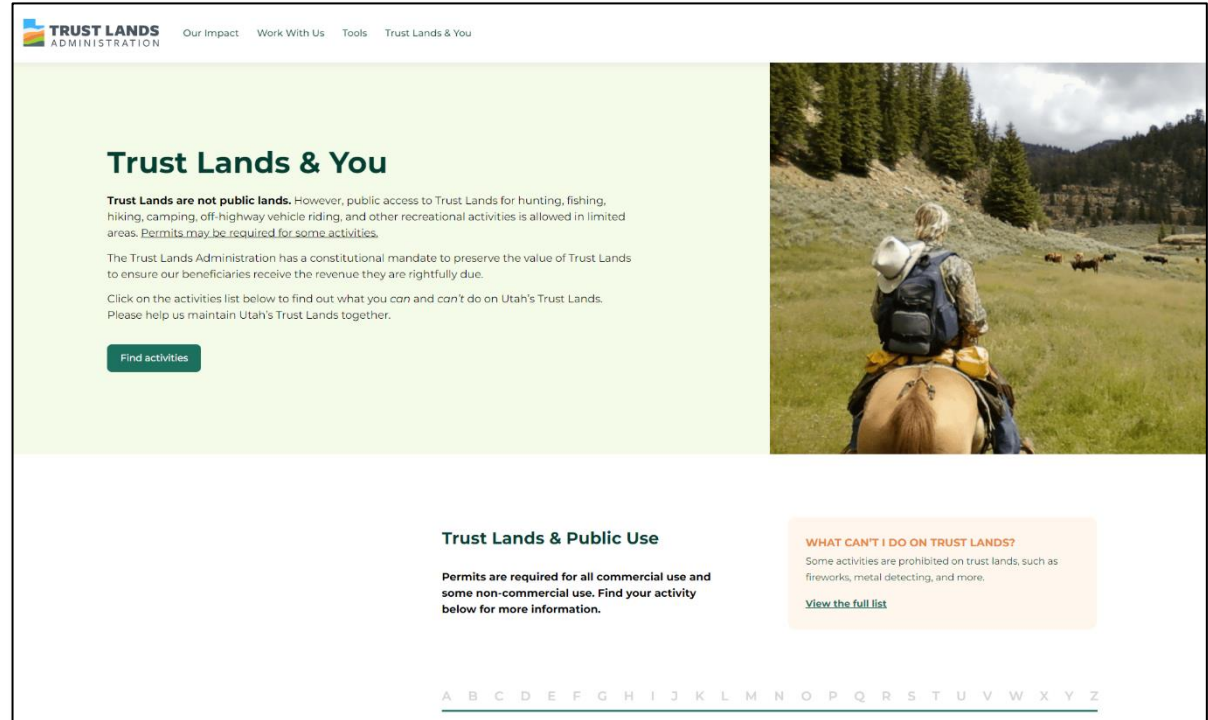
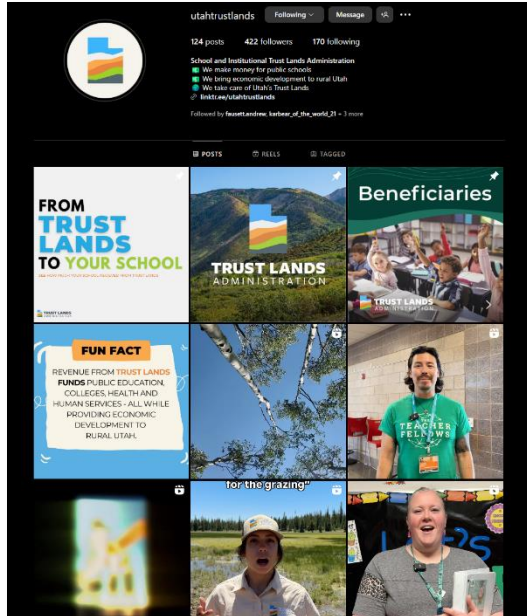
Education Efforts



utahtrustlands



UtahSITLA



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Partnerships

- Bureau of Land Management
- US Forest Service
- Division of Recreation
- Division of State Parks
- Division of Wildlife Resources
- Outdoor Adventure Commission
- OHV Advisory Council
- Regional/County Working Groups

Recreation Management

Revenue Generation Strategies

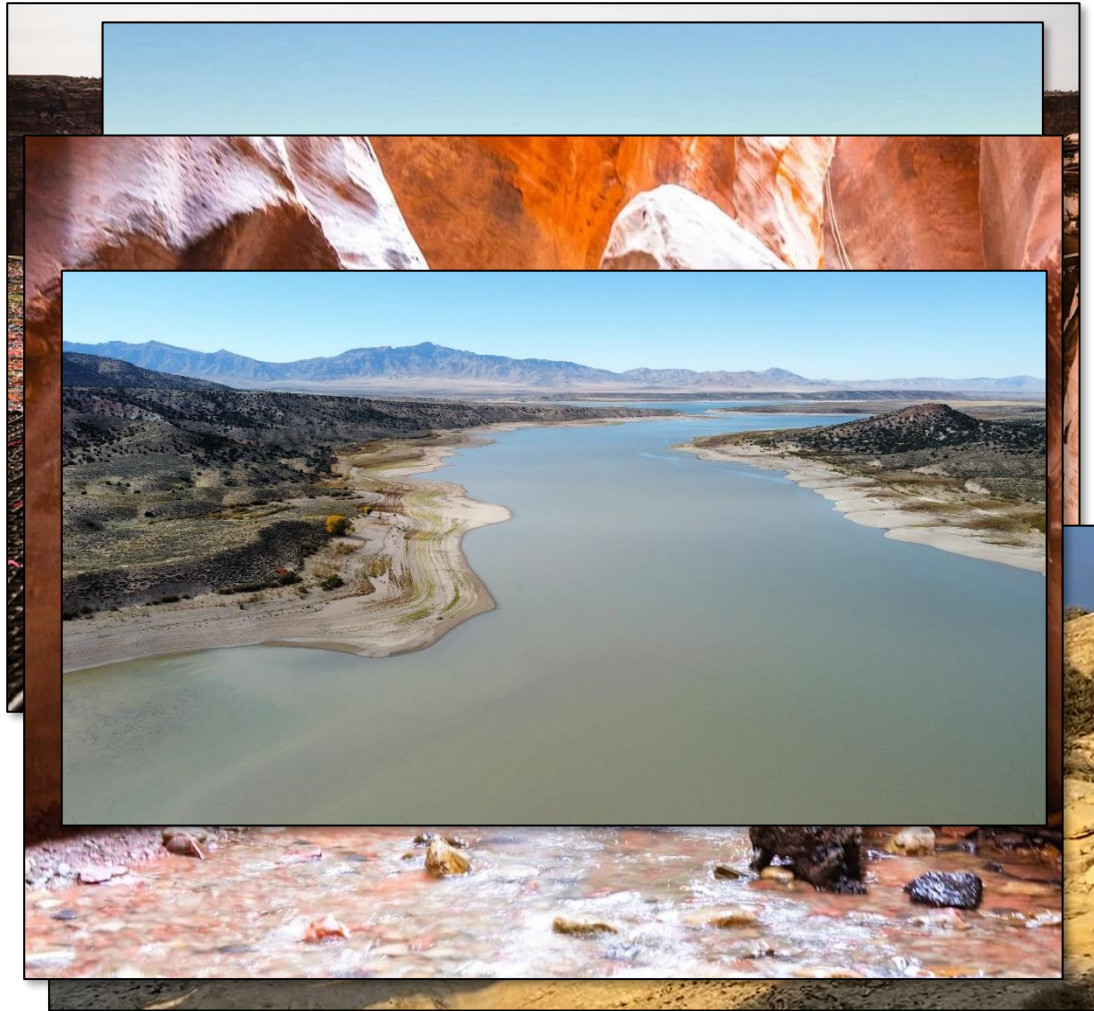
- Generating revenue from recreational use of trust lands has been a challenge
- Strategic Plan Goal – Identify lands suitable for recreational use leases and market to appropriate entities
- Always looking for creative methods to monetize recreational use of trust lands



- **Special Use Leases**
Lessee manages recreational use, pays rentals to TLA
- **Cooperative Agreements/MOUs**
Cooperative management arrangements with partner agencies
- **Land Sales**
Convey popular recreation areas to agencies who can better manage them
- **Land Exchanges**
Acquire more profitable lands in exchange for recreation/conservation lands

Special Use Leases

- Recreational use managed by those with expertise
- OHV funds can be used to offset rental payments
- Examples:
 - Fruit Bowl Highline Area (BLM)
 - Doc's Beach OHV Area (Uintah County)
 - Sand Mountain OHV Area (State Parks)
 - Kanarraville Falls (Kanarraville City)
 - Gunnison City OHV Area (Gunnison City)
 - Yuba Lake Recreation Area (State Parks)





Cooperative Agreements/MOUs

Hunter Access Agreement – Division of Wildlife Resources

- Grants public access for hunting, trapping, fishing and wildlife viewing
- Trust Lands Administration will not:
 - Convey hunting, trapping, fishing or wildlife viewing rights to any other party
 - Participate in a CWMU or big game landowner association
- Agreement term 2017-2032
- DWR pays \$1.8 million initial payment with escalating annual payments thereafter

Utahraptor State Park



Land Sales

Conservation/Recreation Transactions

Recent examples:

- Utahrapator State Park
 - Popular area for camping and OHV riding
 - Paleontological and cultural resources
 - 3,270 acres north of Moab, UT
 - Sold in 2021 to Division of State Parks
 - Sale Price: \$6,377,000
- Cinnamon Creek Block
 - Popular area for hunting, camping, OHV & snowmobile use
 - 8,100 acres in northern Utah
 - Sold in 2021 to Division of Wildlife Resources
 - Sale Price: \$20,000,013
- Future Opportunities – HB 262

Cinnamon Creek





Land Exchanges

Trade out of lands with recreation/conservation values

Acquire less-sensitive lands with better revenue potential

- Grand Staircase-Escalante/Inholdings (1996-1998)
- West Desert Exchange (2000)
- Recreational Lands Exchange (2009-2014)
- Utah Test and Training Range Exchange (2016-2021)
- John D. Dingell Act (2019-2024)

Thanks For Your Time

Questions?

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