



Current Events

December 2020

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IMPORTANT NOTICE:

WATERPRO'S OFFICE REMAINS CLOSED TO WALK-IN TRAFFIC. Telephone service and by-appointment times only. Call 801-571-2232.

Office closures:

Our office will be closed entirely (no telephone service) on the following dates and times:

- Friday, December 18 from 11:30 a.m. to end of day for a company function
- Thursday and Friday, December 24 & 25 – closed all day
- Thursday, December 31 noon-end of day; Friday, January 1 – closed all day

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- Annual Shareholder Meeting Will Be Delayed

Who Cares about the Great Salt Lake?

Many people who grew up in the Salt Lake basin have a love-hate relationship – sometimes without the love! – with our shallow inland sea. Maybe you have not-so-fond memories of childhood camping trips to Antelope Island plagued by brine flies. Or maybe your only interaction with the lake is the not-so-pleasant smell that comes our way when the wind is just right (or wrong).

Of course, there are many others who love the lake and all its attractions, from the Spiral Jetty and Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge at the north to the marina at the southern tip.

The Great Salt Lake is in trouble

However you feel about the Great Salt Lake, the fact is that like other salt lakes all over the world, it is shrinking. And even if you dislike the lake and never want to go near it, a shrinking lake can cause problems for residents

throughout the entire Salt Lake basin.

Since the first permanent settlers arrived in 1847, the water level of the lake has dropped by 11 feet and the volume of water is 48% lower.

While there is always some natural variation in lake level due to rain and drought cycles, most of the shrinkage over the years is the result of people diverting and using water that would otherwise flow into the lake. And the proposed Bear River development project would divert another 220,000 acre feet a year from the lake.

What a shrinking lake means

Unless you own a sailboat moored at the marina, a shrinking lake may seem like a non-problem. However, the Great Salt Lake has huge effects on our state and beyond:

- Between the brine shrimp industry, mineral extraction, and tourism, the lake contributes over \$1.3 billion in economic activity per year, including some 6,500 jobs!

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Annual Shareholder Meeting will Be Delayed

Due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and the likelihood that it will continue through the spring, WaterPro has decided to delay our annual shareholders' meeting, normally held in March.

Current plans call for holding the meeting in September, although this may change depending on the course of the pandemic.

If you are interested in nominating yourself or someone else for our Board of Directors election held in conjunction with the shareholders' meeting, we will provide more information about how to do that as the date for the meeting approaches.

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- The lake provides an essential nesting and refuge area for millions of migratory birds.

As more of the lakebed is laid bare due to shrinkage, the amount of windblown dust increases, which impacts our health and air quality throughout the basin.

The Great Salt Lake isn't the only inland salt lake that's suffering; most others throughout the world are also shrinking as demand for water increases and water is diverted from these "terminal lakes." As the Dead Sea bordering the West Bank, Israel, and Jordan shrinks, thousands of sinkholes have appeared, swallowing roads and infrastructure. While this hasn't happened in Utah, it's obvious that a shrinking Great Salt Lake will have an impact on all of us.

What can be done?

Conservation is the key to saving the Great Salt Lake. A

recent Conservation Impacts Study suggests that if each Utah resident reduced water use by 50 gallons per day, we could postpone the Bear River Project as much as 45 years, allowing more water to replenish the lake.

Is it possible to cut water usage by that amount? Currently, each Utah resident uses about 252 gallons per day, one of the highest per capita uses in the country. Measures such as metering secondary irrigation services (as WaterPro is doing now) will save water. Other relatively easy measures including using WaterSmart appliances and redesigning landscaping to use less water. Check out the Conservation link on our website for more ideas.

Remember what's at stake: air quality, health, millions of birds, millions of dollars, and thousands of jobs!

