

Understanding the relationships between existing Great Salt Lake (GSL) organizations and agreements will be a key element in determining the final role, goals and objectives for the Great Salt Lake Salinity Advisory Committee (SAC). The purpose of this document is to illustrate a “strawman” of how the SAC may fit within existing GSL organizational structures, partnerships and agreements. Ongoing discussions will serve to revise and confirm these relationships.

EXISTING GREAT SALT LAKE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES

The GSL Comprehensive Management Plan provides a great summary of the various state and federal agencies with various responsibilities in managing the resources of GSL (FFSL, 2013). This section summarizes the background and role of a few of the agencies who will likely be directly engaged with the SAC.

GREAT SALT LAKE ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Great Salt Lake Advisory Council (GSLAC) was created to advise the governor, the Utah Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and the Utah Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) on the sustainable use, protection, and development of the Great Salt Lake (GSL) in terms of balancing sustainable use, environmental health, and reasonable access for existing and future development. The GSLAC is to assist the Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands (FFSL), Division of Water Quality (DWQ) and their applicable boards in accomplishing their responsibilities for the GSL. Both FFSL and DWQ coordinate with and provide necessary staff assistance to the GSLAC (UCA 73-29-201). The GSLAC may recommend appointments to the GSL Technical Team (Tech Team), created and utilized by FFSL in 1988, and receive and utilize technical support from the Tech Team (UCA 73-29-201).

UTAH DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, DIVISION OF FORESTRY, FIRE & STATE LANDS

FFSL is the “executive authority for the management of sovereign lands” in Utah, including the sovereign lands, i.e., lakebed, of Great Salt Lake (GSL) (UC 65A-1-4). Among numerous responsibilities FFSL has for GSL (UCA 65A-10-8), FFSL is to:

- Prepare and maintain a comprehensive management plan for GSL
- Initiate studies of the lake and its related resources
- Publish scientific and technical information concerning the lake
- Determine the need for public works and utilities for the lake area
- Implement the comprehensive plan through state and local entities or agencies,
- Coordinate the activities of the various divisions within the DNR with respect to the lake, and
- Retain and encourage the continued activity of the Great Salt Lake Technical Team (Tech Team)

FFSL served in the role of reviewing Union Pacific Railroad’s (UPRR) applications to modify its GSL causeway, finalizing a lease for UPRR’s causeway in GSL, facilitating communications with the GSLAC and Tech Team regarding the proposed modifications, and now in creating and providing oversight to the GSL Salinity Advisory Committee (SAC).

UTAH DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY, DIVISION OF WATER QUALITY

DWQ and the Utah Water Quality Board are charged by law to protect GSL’s beneficial uses – “frequent primary and secondary contact recreation, waterfowl, shorebirds, and other water-oriented wildlife including their necessary food chain” (UAC R317-2-6). This includes setting water quality standards, implementing the Utah Pollution Discharge Elimination System (i.e., discharge permits), monitoring water quality, and developing and implementing other regulations, policies and strategies to protect the beneficial uses of GSL. DWQ served in the role of reviewing UPRR’s applications and providing Section 401 certification of plans to modify its GSL causeway, facilitating communications with the GSLAC, and now in creating and coordinating with the GSL SAC.

GREAT SALT LAKE TECHNICAL TEAM

The Great Salt Lake Technical Team (Tech Team) was originally created in 1988 with a mission to provide FFSL with guidance and recommendations in the monitoring, management and research efforts of the GSL ecosystem and to provide a forum for the interchange of information on ideas, projects and program that affect the activities and natural systems of the GSL (FFSL, 2017). As described above, the GSLAC may recommend appointments to the Tech Team and utilize the Tech Team for technical support. FFSL provides assistance and oversight to the Tech Team in coordination with the GSLAC.

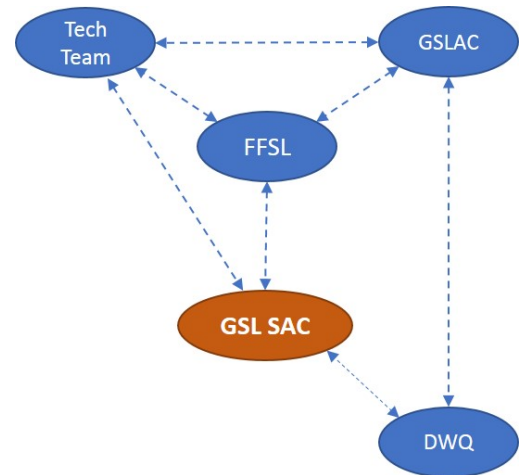


FIGURE 1.
SAC LINKAGES TO EXISTING GSL ORGANIZATIONS

GREAT SALT LAKE SALINITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

FFSL and DWQ are forming the GSL Salinity Advisory Committee (SAC) per their Memorandum of Understanding (dated October 23, 2017) with the goal of guiding the process of developing and, in the end, providing recommendations to FFSL and DWQ on the long-term management of the salinity of GSL and initial purpose of providing guidance and recommendations regarding UPRR's causeway opening. The SAC will report to FFSL and DWQ and coordinate closely with the Tech Team.

UPRR GSL CAUSEWAY AGREEMENTS

There are numerous agreements that revolve around the new UPRR GSL causeway opening (see Figure 2). They include:

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN FFSL AND DWQ

This memorandum of understanding (MOU) documents a commitment by FFSL and DWQ to coordinate the long-term management of UPRR's GSL Causeway bridge, excavated channel, causeway opening, and control berm at the conclusion of the monitoring and compliance requirements contained within the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' (USACE) Permit SPK 2011-00755 and DWQ's Amended 2015 SPK 2011-00755 401 Water Quality Certification for UPRR's causeway modifications listed above.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN DWQ, UPRR AND USACE

This MOU documents a commitment by UPRR, DWQ and USACE to implement Section 3.13.4 Active Long-Term Management Activities of the Updated Final Compensatory Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (CMMP) as required by USACE Permit SPK 2011-00755 and DWQ's Amended 2015 SPK 2011-00755 401 Water Quality Certification for UPRR's causeway modifications listed above.

SPECIAL USE LEASE AGREEMENT BETWEEN FFSL AND UPRR

FFSL issued a Special Use Lease Agreement (SULA), No. 30000055, on September 23, 2016 to UPRR for the Causeway, Causeway Bridge, Excavated Channel, Causeway Opening and Control Berm in GSL.

PUTTING IT TOGETHER

The SAC will serve a critical role in helping FFSL, DWQ and numerous other stakeholders develop a vision and strategy for managing the salinity of GSL and thereby protecting the resources and beneficial uses of the lake into the future. An open, transparent, science-based, and consensus-driven process will be required to enable success. Developing an accurate and thorough understanding of the complex roles, agreements, and commitments that could affect the SAC's work will enable it to start on a solid foundation. Figure 3 provides a draft illustration of these complex relationships.

REFERENCES

FFSL, 2013. Final Great Salt Lake Comprehensive Management Plan and Record of Decision. Final report prepared by SWCA, Inc. for the Utah Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry, Fire & State Lands. March 2013.

FFSL, 2017. Information available on the World Wide Web (State Lands/Great Salt Lake Technical Team), accessed [October 11, 2017], at URL [<https://forestry.utah.gov/index.php/state-lands/great-salt-lake/great-salt-lake-technical-team>].

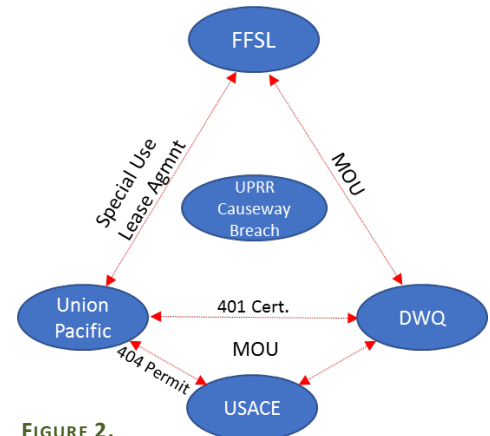


FIGURE 2. EXISTING AGREEMENTS PERTAINING TO THE UPRR CAUSEWAY OPENING

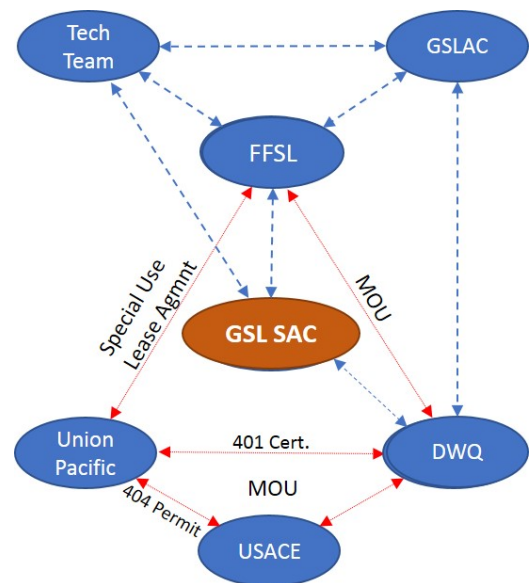


FIGURE 3. PUTTING IT TOGETHER