

Improving Utah's Water Quality

Otter Creek Watershed



Revised November 2012

MAJOR WATERBODIES

Otter Creek
Otter Creek Reservoir
Boobe Hole Reservoir
Koosharem Reservoir

MAJOR CITIES

Koosharem

MAJOR LAND USES

Rangeland
Forestry
Agriculture

LOCAL WATER QUALITY ISSUES

Sediment
Nutrients
Bank Erosion
Coliform bacteria
Turbidity

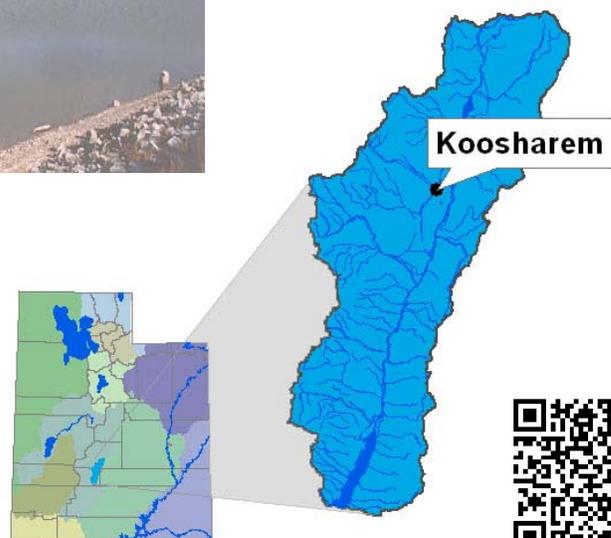
LOCAL CONTACT:

Piute Conservation District
Watershed Coordinator
340 North 600 East,
Richfield, Utah 84701
(435) 896 6441 ext. 104

Watershed Description:

The Otter Creek Watershed encompasses 240,000 acres (375 sq mi) of rangeland, forest, irrigated pasture, irrigated cropland, meadow pasture, and small urban areas within Piute and Sevier counties. The watershed is about 39 miles long and 12 miles wide, and drains from north to south into Otter Creek Reservoir. Elevations range from 6,270 feet at Otter Creek Reservoir to over 11,600 feet above sea level at Mount Marvine. There are two other reservoirs located in the watershed; Boobe Hole and Koosharem. Climate in the watershed is temperate. Precipitation ranges from an average of 9.6 inches per year in the cropland areas to over 20 inches per year in the mountains.

There are approximately 240,000 acres the watershed; Forest Service 84,000 acres (35%), Bureau of Land Management 119,000 acres (50%), State of Utah 12,000 acres (5%), Tribal 778 acres (0.3%), private 24,000 acres (10%), of which 8,900 acres of private are irrigated land that includes alfalfa, small grains and pasture. Irrigated pastures are used for livestock grazing and the production of grass hay. Cattle, sheep, and horses are the major livestock produced in the watershed and are the major source of income.



Otter Creek Water Quality Improvement

Project Description:

In 1993, work began on the Otter Creek watershed restoration project. Improvement in range land, along with the installment of other management techniques has resulted in a less erosion, improved riparian plant condition, and improved water quality. A highlight of this project was the manner in which the partners effectively applied conservation and best management practices. Working with the local landowners, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Fishlake National Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, and the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, we were able to implement brush management, range seeding, fencing, livestock water development, pipelines, watering troughs, stream bank and stream channel stabilization, irrigation water management, and more. These practices resulted in a decrease in nutrients and sediments which were previously entering the stream.



Partners

Piute Conservation District
Fremont River Conservation District
Local Landowners
Piute County
Utah Division of Water Quality
Utah Division of Wildlife Resources
Utah State University Extension
Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Forest Service
Bureau of Land Management
Utah Association of Conservation Districts
Environmental Protection Agency

Related Projects

Stream restoration
Range and pasture planting
Irrigation systems efficiency
Aquifer classification
Water quality monitoring programs

Funding

Total \$2.1 million

For funding opportunities in the Otter Creek Watershed, contact the Piute Conservation District.

To learn how you can participate or lend your support to Utah community water quality projects, please contact your local conservation district or county agent.

Produced by USU Water Quality Extension, Utah Watershed Coordinating Council, Utah Association of Conservation Districts, and Utah Division of Water Quality.

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