

Utah's Great Outdoors Open Space Project

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The goal of the Open Space Project is to develop strategies and actions for addressing open space needs in each planning district in Utah. The focus is on protecting lands that are critical for providing amenity (e.g., parks, recreation, and aesthetics) and ecological service (e.g., wetlands and wildlife habitat and corridors) values. The results are based on the opinions of key informants such as local and regional officials, land management and planning professionals, and other residents who are experienced or interested in open space issues or projects. These results should be used to complement other critical land initiatives such as agricultural land protection and biophysical studies of critical lands and wildlife habitat.

The project was implemented in three phases. Phase 1 was the Utah's Great Outdoors Conference, during which breakout meetings addressed the most pressing open space needs for regions and communities across Utah. Phase 2 was a statewide key informant mail survey, to further identify needs and begin articulating open space protection tools from a wider stakeholder audience. Phase 3 was a series of public meetings in all of the planning districts, to communicate findings from the first two phases, as well as soliciting feedback.

Despite the targeted audience used for data collection in this study, we have a high degree of confidence in the validity and value of the results for several reasons: the use of multiple methods, widespread coverage of the state, the similarity of findings from all three phases, and our extensive efforts to provide external review of both the methods and results of each phase. While the sampling

methods were not necessarily representative of all state and planning district residents, we feel the results are a good reflection of the attitudes of key stakeholders who have professional or personal interests in open space issues throughout the state. The executive summary is a thorough synopsis of the central ideas that emerged from all three study phases, and a brief comparison of our results with other studies conducted in Utah in recent years.

Reports

- [Conclusions and Recommendations](#)
- [Executive Summary](#)
- [Summary Results: Phase 1](#)
- [Summary Results: Phase 2](#)
- [Summary Results: Phase 3](#)

Fact Sheets

- [The Economic Benefits of Open Space in Utah](#)
- [Mechanisms for Protecting Open Space in Utah](#)
- [Utah's Great Outdoors Open Space Project](#)