

Improving Utah's Water Quality

Upper Sevier River Watershed



Utah State University
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

MAJOR WATERBODIES

Sevier River
East Fork Sevier River
Mammoth Creek
Piute Reservoir
Asay Creek
Panguitch Creek
Bear Creek

MAJOR CITIES

Panguitch
Antimony
Hatch

MAJOR LAND USES

Agriculture
Livestock production
Recreation
Development

LOCAL WATER QUALITY ISSUES

Total Phosphorus
Sediment
Bank Erosion
Habitat Alteration

LOCAL CONTACT

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Watershed Description:

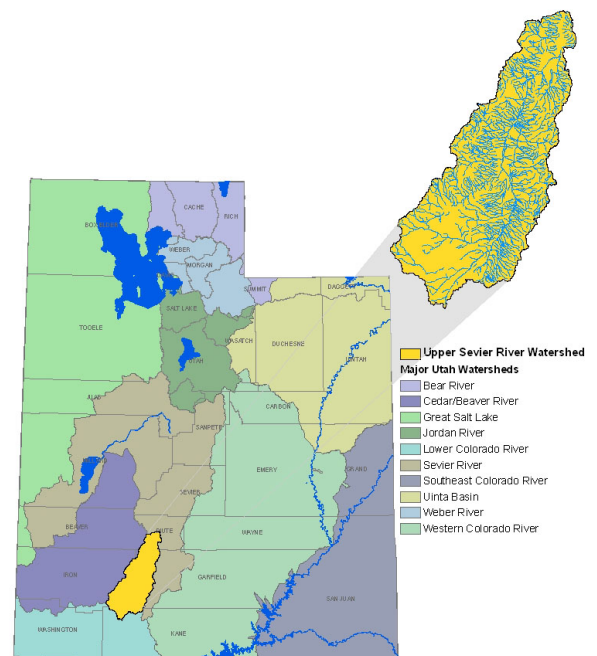
The Upper Sevier River watershed is located in south central Utah, within the borders of Garfield, Kane, Piute, and Iron counties. This watershed encompasses the head-



waters of the Sevier River which are straddled by the mountains of the Markagunt Plateau to the west and the Paunsaugunt Plateau to the east. The watershed covers an area over 831,000 acres and is comprised of: U.S. Forest Service land (425,539 acres), BLM land (188,249 acres), private land (132,136 acres) State land (84,377 acres), and National

Parks land (841 acres). Private lands comprise approximately 16% of the watershed.

The Upper Sevier River watershed is important to local communities in terms of agricultural and livestock production (alfalfa and cattle) and recreational opportunities. Vegetation consists of sparse, desert plants at lower elevations, pinyon pine and junipers at mid level elevations, and aspens and conifers at higher elevations. Over 350 species of wildlife and fish live in the Upper Sevier watershed for all, or a portion, of their lives.



Upper Sevier River Water Quality Improvement

Project Description:

The Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (DWR) began a large stream enhancement project on the Sevier River on September 16, 2008. A private contractor and the DWR heavy equipment crew hauled approximately 4,000 cubic yards of large rock to the project site. Five full logging truck loads of large logs, woody debris, and root wads were purchased and hauled to the project site. Two excavators, a front-end loader, and an articulated off-road dump truck were used to place the rock, logs, and woody debris into the stream as barbs, vanes, j-hook vanes, and cover to stabilize eroding stream banks and provide fish habitat, structure, and diversity. Vertical eroding stream banks were sloped back and shaped, the channel narrowed and deepened in some spots, and floodplains, backwaters, and other features were created. All disturbed areas have been reseeded with native upland or riparian grass mixtures.

In-stream and bank work ended on December 9, 2008 with 2.5 continuous miles of stream enhancements to reduce bank erosion, provide better fish habitat, and improve geomorphologic and hydrologic functions of the stream. Fencing and riparian restoration was completed along 5.5 miles of stream in spring 2009. The project crossed through the property of 12 different private landowners. This is a great example of cooperation, desire, and willingness of private landowners to work with a state government agency to improve the ecological integrity, function, and aesthetics of the river and riparian corridor through their properties.



Partners

Upper Sevier Soil Conservation District
Utah State University Extension
Utah Association of Conservation Districts
Dixie National Forest
U.S. Bureau of Land Management
Utah Division of Wildlife Resources
Utah Department of Environmental Quality
USDA Farm Service

Related Projects

Stream bank restoration
Riparian restoration
Rangeland restoration
Irrigation run-off improvement

Funding \$4.5 million

U.S. Forest Service
EPA
Utah Grazing Network
National Fish and Wildlife Federation
Landowners
Utah Agricultural Experiment Station
Upper Sevier Soil Conservation District
Panguitch City

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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