

# Improving Utah's Water Quality

## Otter Creek Watershed



### 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

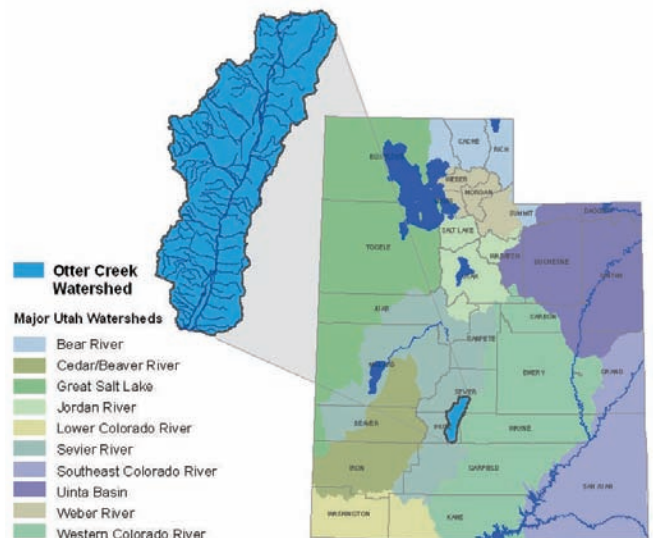
### Watershed Description:

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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