

November 13, 2024

# Public Meeting - Pahvant Valley Groundwater Management Plan

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## Division of Water Rights



Teresa Wilhelmsen | State Engineer  
Jim Reese | Assistant State Engineer  
Terry Monroe | Regional Engineer

# *Agenda*

1. Welcome/Introduction
2. Summary of Groundwater Hydrology Study by UGS Staff
3. Groundwater Management Plan Discussion
4. Policy, Current Work, and Next Steps
5. Questions/Comments

# *Groundwater Management Plans*



# *Groundwater Management Plans*

- Legislation enacted in 2006
- Established Section 73-5-15 of Utah Code
- Tool to help the State Engineer distribute groundwater

# Section 73-5-15

(2)(a) The state engineer may regulate groundwater withdrawals within a specific groundwater basin by adopting a groundwater management plan in accordance with this section for any groundwater basin or aquifer or combination of hydrologically connected groundwater basins or aquifers.

# Section 73-5-15

(1) As used in this section:

(a) “Critical management area” means a groundwater basin in which the groundwater withdrawals consistently exceed the safe yield.

(b) “Safe yield” means the amount of groundwater that can be withdrawn from a groundwater basin over a period of time without exceeding the long-term recharge of the basin or unreasonably affecting the basin’s physical and chemical integrity.

# Section 73-5-15

(2)(b) The objectives of a groundwater management plan are to:

- (i) limit groundwater withdrawals to safe yield;
- (ii) protect physical integrity of the aquifer; and
- (iii) protect water quality

# Safe Yield

- Recharge is a starting point
- May be less than recharge to protect physical integrity of the aquifer and water quality
- Recharge is verified from a water budget
  - $\text{Inflows (recharge)} = \text{Outflows (discharge)} + \text{Change in storage}$



# Section 73-5-15

(3)(b) The state engineer shall base the provisions of a groundwater management plan on the principles of prior appropriation

(4)(c) but may consider voluntary arrangements

# *Implementing A Groundwater Management Plan*

- Requires significant scientific research and reporting
- Requires meetings and notices
- Open to comments and suggestions
- Respect all existing Water Rights and uses
- Subject to judicial review

# *Groundwater Policy*

## *Pahvant Valley*



# *Current Sevier River Basin Groundwater Policy*

## *(Includes Pahvant Valley)*

- Policy was adopted November 5, 1997
- Surface and groundwater are closed to all new consumptive appropriations
- All new water development will be based on the acquisition and changing of existing water rights
- The State Engineer will consider applications which seek to move direct flow or storage water rights to groundwater sources on a case-by-case basis
  - The primary criteria that will be considered for such applications is impairment of other water rights, including that no enlargement of the underlying water right(s) occurs.
  - For permanent changes, other statutory requirements set forth under Title 73, Chapter 3, Sections 3 and 8 of the Utah Code Annotated will be considered.

# *Current Sevier River Basin Policy*

## *(Includes Pahvant Valley) - Cont.*

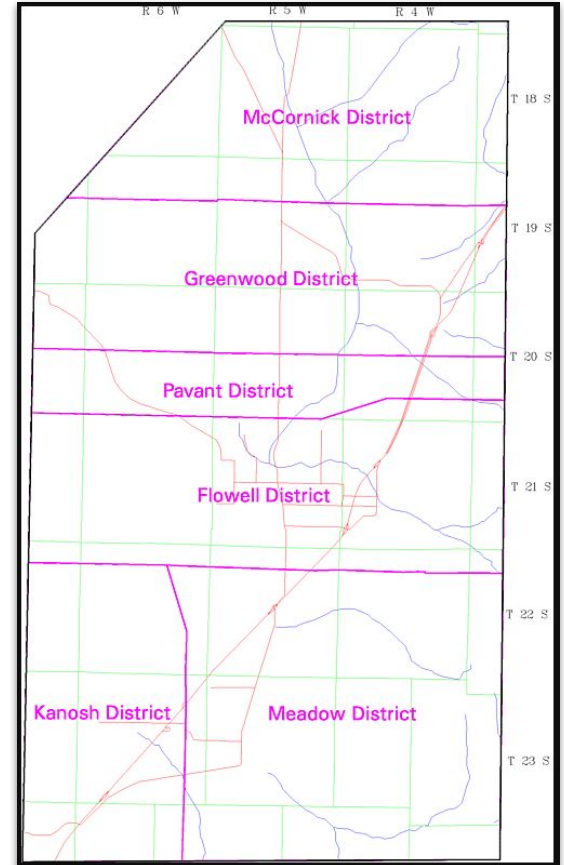
- The State Engineer's policy on Applications for Permanent and Temporary Change of Water within the basin will be flexible.
- Applications for Permanent and Temporary Change of Water which seek to change the period of use that is less than a full year to year-round uses will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Such applications will be critically evaluated to ensure that the diversion pattern of the new uses will not impair other water rights.
- Requests for Reinstatement and Extension of Time will be critically reviewed.
- Applications submitting Proof of Diversion and Use of Water on water rights involving changes from irrigation to other uses will be required to submit data and/or maps showing the lands being taken out of production.

# *Additional Appropriation Policy for Pahvant Valley*

- As of February 20, 2003, Pahvant Valley is closed to all new appropriations of water
- Applications filed prior to the 2003 policy letter will be process under the previous policy, which was:
  - Annual withdrawal cannot exceed 1.0 acre-foot
  - The well must be located outside of the service area of a public or private water supply
  - The beneficial use is restricted to 1 family, irrigation of 0.1 acre, and 5 equivalent livestock units
  - If the application is approved, the applicant will be allowed 5 years in which to submit proof of appropriation.

# Pahvant Groundwater Districts

- Pahvant Valley has been managed based upon six groundwater districts since approximately 1965:
  - McCornick District
  - Greenwood District
  - Pavant District
  - Flowell District
  - Meadow District
  - Kanosh District
- Changes of points of diversions between districts are not allowed.



# *Current Work*

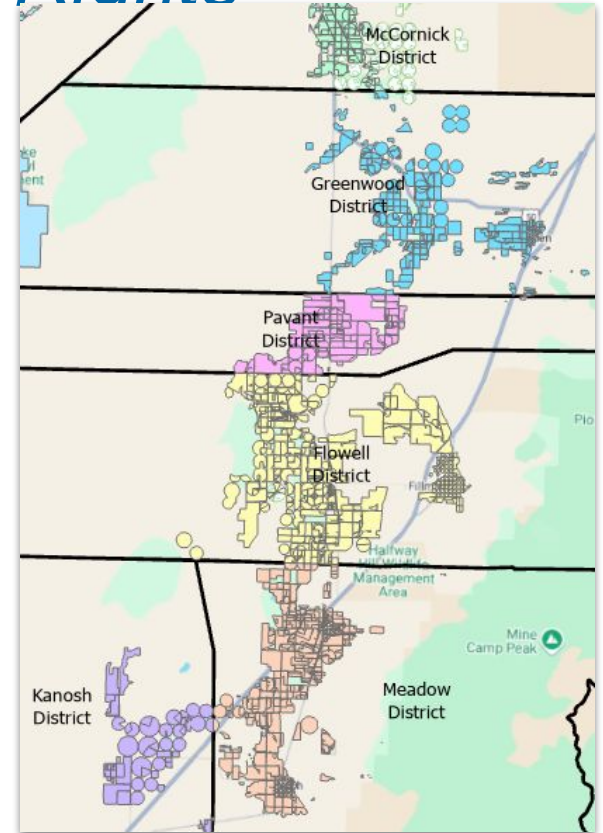
## *Pahvant Valley*





# Current Work - Division of Water Rights

- Audit of all established water rights:
  - Priority
  - Status of water right (certificate, underground water claims, approved, unapproved, etc.)
  - Verify sole supply vs supplemental
  - Verify beneficial use - irrigation acreage
- Summarize findings of audit



# Next Steps

## **Division of Water Rights:**

1. Determine safe yield
2. Complete water right audit
3. Determine measurement needs
4. Update diversion/depletion estimates
5. Review public comments
6. Hold additional meetings

## **Water Users:**

1. Submit comments
2. Form committee
3. Meter
4. Participate in the process

# Questions/Comments

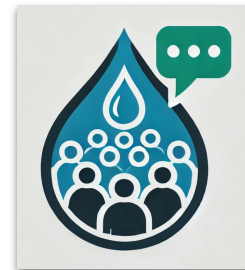
**Please send us your comments!**

**Email:**

waterrights@utah.gov

Subject: Public Comment Regarding Pahvant  
GWMP

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