



Lower Bear River Restoration Project.

The Lower Bear River Restoration Project is an effort to conserve and restore natural ecosystem features and water resources along the Lower Bear River corridor under the management of Utah Forestry Fire and State Lands. This project focuses on approximately sixty-five river miles of the Lower Bear River from where it flows out of Cutler Dam, through Box Elder County, to the discharge into the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge.

The goals of the project are to reduce erosion and maintain riverbanks, maximize river function by restoring floodplain areas, improve habitat along the riparian corridor by addressing invasive plants, and develop a better understanding of the river system overall. Supplementary goals include improvements in public access, aesthetics, recreational value, and benefits to stakeholders. This project also holds the opportunity to educate managers about the river, restoration tactics, and expectations on future work.

There will be three distinct phases of this project. First, assessing baseline conditions, second, creating action plans addressing each goal by priority, and third, implementing realistic sub-projects that align with overall goals. The large scale of this undertaking will necessitate prioritization of focus areas, efficiency in funding allocation, and the ability of managers and stakeholders to learn from the management strategies taken. These three phases are intended to create a pilot program that will propel future efforts on the Bear River and other systems throughout the state.

Other linked benefits are expected while the project is performed. Some of these benefits are improved networking and collaboration between stakeholders, and improved data collection/resource monitoring along the river.

With the scale of this project and the large focus on water resources surrounding the Great Salt Lake, this project will make an effective improvement in the Lower Bear River and will help managers understand future endeavors to care for Utah's water resources and ecosystems.