

## UTAH DIVISION OF WATER RIGHTS

# TOOELE VALLEY GROUND-WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN

EFFECTIVE FEBRUARY 27, 1996

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### TOOELE VALLEY GROUND-WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN

February 27, 1996

This document sets forth the State Engineer's policy for the management and administration of ground-water in Tooele Valley. The objectives of this policy are to provide a frame work for future ground-water development, be a guide for action on water right applications, to prevent over utilization of the resource, to maintain water quality and to protect prior water rights.

The boundaries of the Tooele Valley area for the purposes of this document are the Tooele/Salt Lake County line on the east, the drainage divide between Rush Valley and Tooele Valley on the south, the crest of the Stansbury Mountains on the west, and Great Salt Lake on the north. This region contains about 113,000 acres.

Ground-water recharge to the area originates primarily in the Oquirrh and Stansbury Mountains. A small amount of subsurface flow from Rush Valley is water in Tooele Valley. Discharge from the ground-water system occurs as evapotranspiration by phreatophytes, discharge from wells and springs, and flow to Great Salt Lake. Estimates of average annual recharge and discharge indicate that they are approximately equal and area about 60,000 acre-feet each.

A review of ground-water rights for this area indicates that potential withdrawals under perfected water rights and approved applications to appropriate water total about 62,000 acre-feet per year. However, actual withdrawals from wells are estimated at about 30,000 acre-feet per year. The discrepancy between these numbers could be due to several factors such as not all water rights being used to their fullest possible extent every year and actual irrigation diversions may be less than the 4.0 acre-feet per acre used in estimating potential withdrawals for irrigation water rights.

To better define the characteristics of the ground-water system, Tooele County, Tooele City, Grantsville City, Department of Defense and the Division of Water Rights have contracted with the U.S. Geological Survey to study the ground-water resources of Tooele Valley. The primary objectives of this study are to develop a three-dimensional ground-water flow model of the aquifer(s) and to develop a solute-transport model of selected portions of Tooele Valley. This study is scheduled to be complete in July 1997. The study should refine our understanding of the ground-water system and help in the determination of the safe annual yield. After this study is completed, all available data and information will be analyzed and used in reviewing the policies of the State Engineer in Tooele Valley.

A primary purpose of the policies of the State Engineer is to ensure that actual well withdrawals do not exceed the long-term safe yield of the ground -water system. If the situation arises in which withdrawals exceed the safe yield of the aquifer, water rights will be distributed on the basis of priority. Due to the number and quantity of perfected and approved appropriations for ground-water in Tooele Valley and the uncertainty of whether any additional water remains to be appropriated, the State Engineer is closing Tooele Valley to all new appropriations effective February 27, 1996.

The prior policy of the State Engineer has allowed appropriations for small domestic uses. Such applications which were filed prior to February 27, 1996, will be processed and action taken. All applications to appropriate filed after this date will be held until such time as a determination is made as to the availability of unappropriated ground-water. This policy does not apply to applications to appropriate shallow ground-water (less than 10 feet from the ground surface) or surface water which would otherwise flow to Great Salt Lake.

The State Engineer will evaluate future change applications which are filed on their own individual merits and for effects on other wells and the ground-water system. Change applications will be critically reviewed if they seek to move the point of diversion a large distance or to convert a surface water right to ground-water.

Requests for extension of time to place water to beneficial use for pending applications will be critically reviewed as per Section 73-3-12 of the Utah Code. If the State Engineer finds unjustified delays or a lack of due diligence, the request may be granted in part, the priority of the application reduced or the request may be denied entirely.

The State Engineer encourages all water users to protect and conserve this valuable ground-water resource. We have a limited amount of ground-water available in Tooele Valley and it is imperative that it be used wisely. Comments or suggestions are welcome on methods to optimize its use.

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Proposed amendment: Change applications seeking to move water rights into the shaded area on the map shown below and drill new wells will not be approved. This is an area which would include parts of: SE ¼ Section 1, Section 12 and N ½ Section 13, T3S, R5W, SLB&M, Section 7, SW ¼ Section 8, W ¼ Section 17, Section 18, Section 19, and NW ¼ Section 20, T3S, R4W, SLB&M. This policy may be revised if at a future date it is determined to be safe and not detrimental to the removal of contaminants from the ground water.

