

# Bear Lake State Park



**Resource Management Plan  
October 2005**



**STATE OF UTAH**  
**NATURAL RESOURCES**  
**Division of Parks & Recreation**

# Utah State Parks & Bear Lake Resource Management Plan

Legend:

- ▲ Utah State Park Locations
- ★ Resource Management Plan Study Locality



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# **Acknowledgements**

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# Executive Summary

In October 2004, representatives from the Utah Division of State Parks and Recreation met with community stakeholders from the Bear Lake area to initiate a resource planning effort for Bear Lake State Park. The planning process was based on public input and involvement. The Bear Lake State Park Resource Management Planning Team - a citizen-based team representing community leaders, interested users, local residents and agency representatives – was at the core of the process. The recommendations contained in this document represent several months of work by the team as well as direct public input.

The plan provides recommendations founded upon nine primary vision elements that will guide future management of Bear Lake State Park. These elements focus on the following:

- Developing, maintaining and enhancing facilities that offer safe and suitable water and land-based recreation opportunities for visitors.
- Providing access to the shoreline and lake for users at all water levels.
- Providing management that preserves traditional recreational experiences, while being open to appropriate new activities.
- Being a positive factor for local and state economic stability and development.
- Planning and cooperating with residents, civic groups, businesses and agencies to supply a network of recreation sites and communities in the Bear Lake area.
- Protecting and preserving park resources and the greater Bear Lake environment by exercising good stewardship practices.
- Offering interpretive and educational programs that provide visitors the opportunity to develop an appreciation of the Park and its ecological, cultural and heritage resources.

- Ensuring the Park has adequate funding, staff, equipment and support.
- Continuing to support the Division of State Parks and Recreation's statewide boating and off-highway vehicle programs.

These objectives are geared towards improving and expanding the Park's recreational opportunities, protecting its resources and providing the visitor with a safe, enjoyable experience. Achievement of these vision elements will require the continued support of users, legislative and community leaders, and the Division of State Parks and Recreation.

The planning team issued a number of specific recommendations in support of the plan's vision elements. Five issue areas form the basis of the team's recommendations. Each issue area with its accompanying recommendations is outlined as follows:

## **Facilities Development**

- Improve boating access and opportunities, including new deep-water marina boat launch facilities.
- Enhance opportunities and facilities for day-use, camping and lodging in the Park:
  - Improve facilities at the eastside areas to protect resources and enhance visitor experiences.
  - Upgrade opportunities and infrastructure at Rendezvous Beach.
  - Increase parking and day-use amenities at the Marina, and consider types of development at the Southwest (SW) Undeveloped area.
- Develop trails within the Park, and connections to existing and planned trails in the surrounding area.
- Expand access and opportunities for disabled visitors throughout the Park.

### **Staffing, Funding and Operations**

- Address the need for more staffing and funding for the current operation by developing a business plan, with budget and staffing analysis. Fund and staff the Park accordingly.
- Consider changes in the Park's fee structure to increase revenue and meet management challenges.
- Ensure that on-going operational funding is included with any new development.

### **Natural Resource Management**

- Protect against overuse or misuse of park areas by developing landscape plans for all areas, designing a specific plan to replace and maintain the trees in the Big Creek campground, and control types of use in some areas.
- Guard against pollution and protect water quality by developing a hazardous spill response plan for the Marina, revamping the sewage pump-out at the Marina to be more effective, and investigating opportunities to have a municipality provide culinary water to the park facilities and private residences on the Rendezvous Beach water system.

### **Economic and Community Impact**

- Implement strategies to attract and/or extend the stay of visitors such as:
  - Providing ATV trailheads and access.
  - Developing park informational exhibit for area visitor center.
  - Encouraging concessionaire to keep cabins at Rendezvous Beach open year round.
  - Considering non-traditional, but appropriate, activities at the Park.
- Explore concession opportunities at the park by encouraging or partnering with concessionaire to supply more camping cabins, and other potential activities.

### **Interpretation and Education**

- Create a comprehensive interpretive plan for the Park.
- Construct nature trails with interpretive signing and/or brochures.
- Continue to provide interpretive programs in area schools.
- Develop a nature center in the historic cabin at Rendezvous Beach.
- Provide exhibits to interpret other resources such as the lake and its uses.
- Partner with the community to develop and maintain an area website.

Implementing many of these recommendations will be dependent upon acquiring new funding sources. The funding requests arising from this plan may compete against other projects within the Division and other agencies in state government.

The plan's success is dependent upon the continued support of park stakeholders. Efforts must be made to preserve park resources, interact with local communities, and strive to meet the expectations of park visitors. The recommendations contained within this plan were based upon an open and collaborative process. It is imperative that this collaborative spirit continues as the plan's components are implemented.

# Mission and Vision Statements

## Mission Statement

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of Bear Lake State Park is to provide a variety of desirable water and land-based recreation opportunities and increase community vitality, while protecting and enhancing park resources

A mission statement tells why a park exists. With this in mind Team Members developed a mission statement that recognizes the Park is part of a network of recreation providers in the Bear Lake area (Rich and Cache Counties, Utah and Bear Lake County, Idaho), and as such, is an important part of the local community and economy. Accordingly, the Park should partner with the community and other agencies where possible, to enhance community vitality. The team also realized that the Park should offer a wide variety of recreation opportunities, while ensuring that park resources are preserved for future enjoyment.

## Vision Statement

A vision statement is similar to a compass; it charts a destination, sets the team and Park on the correct course of action, and provides the means to determine how closely team recommendations will follow that charted course.

Utilizing the basic principles developed in the mission statement, the team developed a vision to guide the development of the plan's recommendations and park management for the next few years. The vision statement provides the foundation for recommendations that balance recreational demands with preservation of the Park's

natural and cultural resources, offer new and varied opportunities, and encourage community involvement.

### **Vision Statement**

Bear Lake State Park will accomplish its mission by:

- ↪ Developing, maintaining and enhancing facilities that offer safe and suitable water and land-based recreation opportunities for visitors
- ↪ Providing access to the shoreline and lake for users at all water levels
- ↪ Providing management that preserves traditional recreational experiences, while being open to appropriate new activities
- ↪ Being a positive factor for local and state economic stability and development
- ↪ Planning and cooperating with residents, civic groups, businesses and agencies to supply a network of recreation sites and communities in the Bear Lake area
- ↪ Protecting and preserving park resources and the greater Bear Lake environment by exercising good stewardship practices
- ↪ Offering interpretive and educational programs that provide visitors the opportunity to develop an appreciation of the Park and its ecological, cultural and heritage resources
- ↪ Ensuring the Park has adequate funding, staff, equipment and support
- ↪ Continuing to support the Division of State Parks and Recreation's statewide boating and off-highway vehicle programs

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# Resource Management Plan Purpose and Process

## Purpose of the Plan

This Resource Management Plan is intended to help guide the Utah Division of State Parks and Recreation's stewardship obligations for Bear Lake State Park. Planning for the Park is essential, given the rapid increase in visitation to the Park in the past ten years and the increase in demand for the recreational opportunities provided by the Park.

Bear Lake State Park offers a variety of water and land-based activities and is a very popular recreation site for the population centers of northern Utah. The Park also draws substantial numbers of visitors from Wyoming, Idaho and elsewhere in Utah. Annual visitation to the Park tripled between 1994 and 2002, rising from 105,655 visitors in 1994 to 310,175 in 2002.

The Park's campgrounds are some of the busiest in the Utah State Parks System. The Rendezvous Beach management area accounts for more camping reservations than any other single state park in Utah, and has an 80-100 percent occupancy rate throughout its recreation season.

The Park's eight management areas are situated along the west, south and east shores of Bear Lake. The increased visitation, dispersed nature of these areas, and the diversity of facilities and activities they offer, provide the park staff with many operational and management challenges.

In recent years, drought conditions caused the water level in Bear Lake to drop to a level that limited public access at existing boat launches. The low water level also restricted the use of the state park Marina to smaller craft, causing a loss of revenue in slip rentals. Visitors and local community

leaders have expressed a need for a deep-water marina to maintain boating access to the lake regardless of the lake's water level.

The eastside management areas have only rudimentary facilities that do not meet current visitor demand and do not promote protection of park resources.

Some park areas are experiencing overuse that is damaging resources. Undersized and aging facilities and utility infrastructure are becoming problems.

The planning process will assist in the wise use of available funding, and will increase the likelihood of obtaining additional development, renovation and operational funding to complete team recommendations.

A number of issues ranging from facilities development to natural resource management were identified by various sources including input from planning team members and the public at large through public meetings and a visitor survey. Team members aggregated nine major issues into five distinct categories addressing: facilities development; staffing, funding and operations; natural resource management; economic and community impact; and interpretation and education. This plan and its recommendations address each of the issue areas. It will provide flexible guidelines for the management and development of the Park over the next five to 10 years. More importantly, it will provide this direction on a foundation of public input and consensus of key stakeholders, rather than by the unilateral direction of the Division of State Parks and Recreation.

## **The Planning Process**

Planning for an outstanding recreational resource such as Bear Lake State Park is required for the protection of this unique area and to ensure the efficient and effective expenditure of state and private funds. It is necessary for the long-term protection and public enjoyment of Bear Lake's many opportunities and resources. This Resource Management Plan (RMP) is required by the Utah State Legislature and the Board of the Utah Division of State Parks and Recreation to guide short and long-term site management and capital development.

The Utah Division of State Parks and Recreation's long-range strategic plan, Vision 2010, outlines the required planning actions needed to effectively meet customer recreational and leisure needs for the next five to 10 years. Vision 2010 identifies resource management planning as essential to the effective administration and operation of all parks in the agency's system. Under the guidance of Vision 2010, each RMP is developed around one core concept: meeting the needs and expectations of customers, visitors, and the citizens of the state of Utah, while protecting each park's unique resource base. In short, the process is "customer driven and resource-based."

The planning process recommends limits of acceptable change or modification and a future vision for the Park. Specifically, the process: (1) recognizes impacts will result from use and enjoyment of the site; (2) defines how much and what types of impacts may be accommodated while providing reasonable protection of the resources for future visitors; (3) incorporates values of resource sustainability, quality facilities, education and interpretation for visitors; and (4) seeks to determine the conditions under which this can be attained.

In October 2004, Division representatives met with community stakeholders to familiarize them with the planning process and the need for creating a RMP for Bear Lake State Park. During this meeting, the Division solicited the names of community members and various users with an interest and expertise in the Park to serve as members of a Resource Management Planning Team. Team members were selected for a variety of reasons ranging from technical expertise to interest in the Park. All team members participated on a voluntary basis and expressed a willingness to sacrifice a significant portion of their time and expertise to the process. Ten individuals were selected to serve on the planning team and three representatives from the Division served as staff to the team.



*Marina Entrance Station and Visitor Center*

The team participated in two public meetings (Salt Lake City and Garden City) that were facilitated by Division planners. These meetings were an opportunity for the public to provide input for the planning team to consider as they developed issues and recommendations for the Park. The team met five times between December 2004 and June 2005 to develop issues and recommendations for the Park.

# About the Park

## Park History

The Bear Lake area has been used for recreation since the late 1800s, when residents of the Wasatch Front area traveled to the Lake to fish, boat, swim and enjoy the cooler summer temperatures. In the middle to late 1900s, the area's recreational popularity began to increase dramatically, with development of Bear Lake's resorts, public beaches, and summer homes. Revenue generated from recreation has helped to diversify Rich County's economy.



Marina Boat Ramp 1963

Bear Lake State Park was established in 1962. Since that time, the Park has been attracting ever-increasing numbers of visitors. The state park lands remain the only public facilities on the Utah portion of the lake. The Park has eight separate management areas (see Figure 3 and Map 2). The Marina on the west side of the lake opened in 1962. Rendezvous Beach, on the south side of the Lake, was purchased in 1978 and opened in 1981. The five park areas on the eastside of the lake (First Point, South Eden, Cisco Beach, Rainbow Cove and North Eden) were obtained through a

number of transactions from 1962 through 1987. An undeveloped site on the southwest corner of the lake was also obtained in 1962.

## Physical Setting and Facilities

Bear Lake is located 122 road miles north of Salt Lake City and 40 miles east of Logan, Utah. The lake was formed some 28,000 years ago by earthquake activity. Its unique aqua-blue color is the result of calcium carbonates suspended in the lake. Its elevation is 5,923 feet; Bear Lake is 20 miles long, 8 miles wide, 208' deep, and covers 112 square miles. Favorite recreation activities on the lake include water skiing, swimming, scuba diving, sailing, and fishing. Groomed snowmobile trails (200+ miles) connect Utah and Idaho in one of the nation's first interstate snowmobile trail complexes.

Bear Lake is near the mid-point of the Bear River. Historically, the Bear River did not naturally flow into Bear Lake (though it may have in prehistoric times). It did charge the wetland at the north end of the lake, which in turn supplied water to the lake. In 1902 a predecessor of Utah Power and Light constructed inlet and outlet canals in an effort to divert Bear River water into the lake for later release during the agricultural growing season. River modifications have created an active storage capacity of 1,452,000 acre-feet in Bear Lake and the ability to control the flow of the river.

The Marina facilities include a sheltered harbor, 7-lane concrete boat ramp, 355 seasonal and 21 daily boat slips, boat pump-out facility, modern restrooms, hot showers, group use pavilion and visitor center.

The sandy, 1.25-mile long, Rendezvous Beach provides excellent camping, picnicking and small watercraft activities.

Rendezvous' four campgrounds, Willow, Birch, Cottonwood and Big Creek, contain a total of 178 campsites. Each campground has modern restrooms with hot showers. Boat launching is available during high water years. The beach is named for the famous rendezvous of fur trappers and Native Americans held in the summers of 1827 and 1828.

The Park has five areas on the Lake's east side. These include North Eden, Rainbow Cove, Cisco Beach, South Eden and First Point. They are primitive areas located approximately 10 miles north of Laketown. The terrain is rocky and the water depth drops off quickly to 208 feet. Activities include boating, year-round fishing, camping and scuba diving. There are three concrete boat ramps. Cisco Beach is famous for its midwinter fishing with dip nets for the seven-inch Bonneville Cisco, a member of the whitefish family. For a week to ten days each January, swarms of the fish come close to the rocky shore to spawn. They are easily scooped up by hardy fishermen wading waist-deep in the icy water or through holes in the ice if the lake is frozen. Cisco Beach is also known for its excellent inland scuba diving opportunities. The rock bottom and the steep drop off close to shore make this location a favorite of divers.

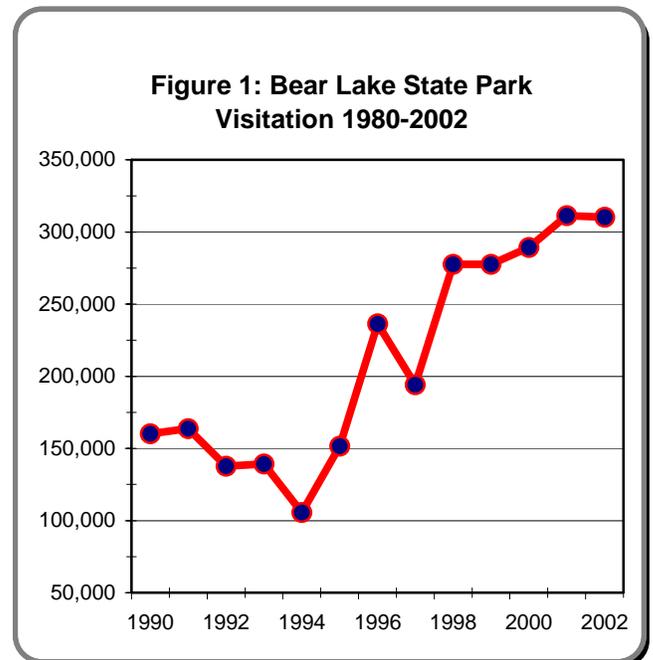
## Climate

Bear Lake is located in a high valley located between the Wasatch Mountains to the west and the Bear Lake Plateau to the east. Due to its elevation (5,920 feet at the lake surface), the Bear Lake Valley has relatively cool temperatures. Maximum temperatures at the Bear Lake State Park Marina range from an average of 84 degrees in July to 34 degrees in January. Average minimum temperatures vary from 49 degrees in July to 15 degrees in February. The Bear Lake Valley has a

semi-arid climate with an average total precipitation of 16.5 inches at the Park. The average annual snowfall is about 42 inches with the majority occurring December through February.

## Park Visitation

Bear Lake State Park's annual visitation has been trending upwards since 1990, despite dips in visitation in 1994 and 1997. Visitation increased 94% from 160,205 visitors in 1990 to 310,175 in 2002.

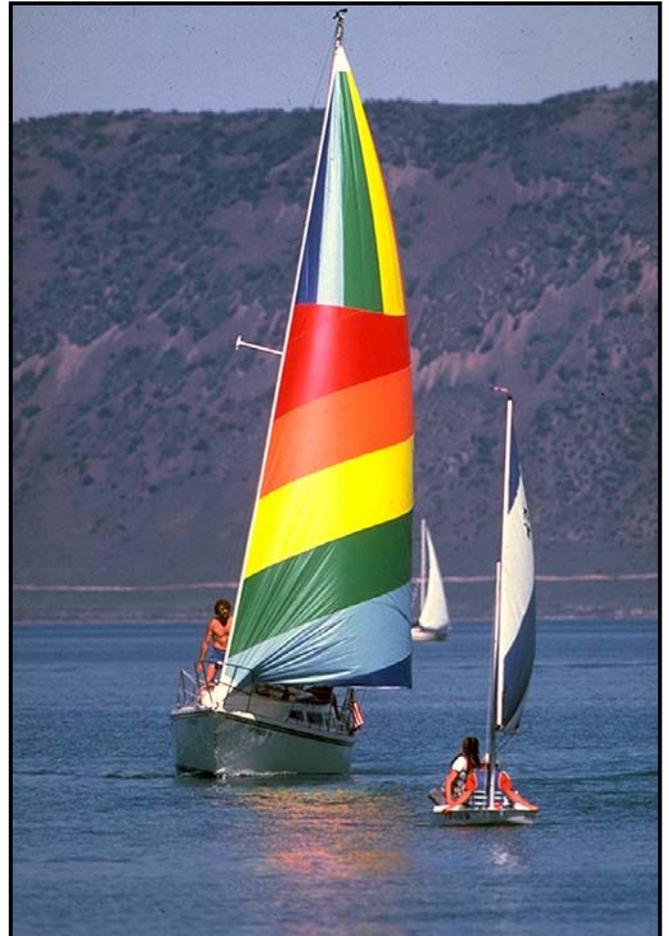
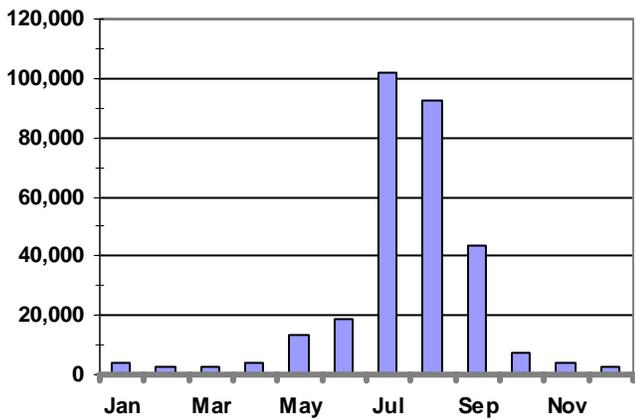


Most visits to Bear Lake State Park occur between July and September (80 percent of the total visitation). July, with an average 101,876 visitors, is the busiest month, accounting for 34 percent of the yearly total visitation. August is the second busiest month with 92,515 visitors. September is next with 43,661.

The number of visits to the Park drops off sharply due to cooler weather October through April. In fact, these seven months

account for only nine percent of average annual visitation. Visits begin to increase in May and June as the weather improves, but increase dramatically in the peak month of July.

**Figure 2: Average Monthly Visitation  
1999-2002**



*Sailing on Bear Lake*

**Figure 3:**  
**Bear Lake State Park Management Areas**

- ↩ **Marina:** Located on the west side of the lake, offers new (in 2004) visitor center/office/concessions building, entrance station, parking lot, and restroom. Provides a large boat ramp with courtesy dock and 376 rental boat slips. A concession operator offers boat and personal watercraft rentals, marine fuel, and food and drinks.
- ↩ **Rendezvous Beach:** Located at the southern end of the lake, offers campers 178 total campsites in four separate campgrounds (Birch, Willow, Cottonwood, and Big Creek). Rendezvous has three group campsites with pavilions, which if not reserved, can be used for up to 30 individual campsites. A concessionaire offers five rental cabins. A large day-use parking lot will accommodate 120 vehicles. The area has a total of nine restrooms, all with showers. The concessionaire offers boat rentals, fuel, groceries and snacks, as well as the cabins. A wide, sandy beach provides excellent camping, picnicking and small watercraft activity. Rendezvous Beach is a popular area for groups and family reunions and the site of the annual Mountain Man Rendezvous.
- ↩ **First Point:** Is found on the southeast shore of Bear Lake, offers primitive dispersed camping, a vault toilet, and a small boat ramp.
- ↩ **South Eden:** On the east side of the lake, has drinking water, 25 primitive campsites, two group pavilions, and two vault toilets.
- ↩ **Cisco Beach:** Also on the east side of the lake, has a low-water boat ramp (boat ramp is underwater at a lake level of 5,914); dispersed, primitive camping; dispersed day-use sites; three pavilions; eight vault toilets; and entrance station. Cisco Beach is famous for its scuba diving and the mid-January fishing with dip nets for the Bonneville Cisco.
- ↩ **Rainbow Cove:** On the east side is primarily used for primitive, dispersed camping. Has a boat ramp, three vault toilets, and dispersed campsites with fire pits with grills.
- ↩ **North Eden:** Use at this east side location is mostly primitive, dispersed camping. Has two group pavilions, two vault toilets, tables, and fire pits with grills.
  - \***Note:** All eastside management areas are popular for fishing from shore.
- ↩ **Southwest Undeveloped Area:** Located on the southwest corner of the lake. These areas are currently unused by the park, but could be used for a variety of activities in the future.

## **Relationship to the Community and Surrounding Area**

Bear Lake straddles the Utah/Idaho border. Portions of the Lake are in Rich County, Utah and Bear Lake County, Idaho. People have inhabited southern Idaho and northern Utah for 14,000 years or more. Until about 8,000 years ago the prehistoric cultures were primarily big game hunters. Around 8,000 years ago, these prehistoric cultures shifted from big game hunting to a hunter and gatherer lifestyle. Historically the Bear Lake area was utilized by traveling bands of Shoshone, Ute, and Bannock people. These groups traveled through the Bear Lake area on hunting trips, primarily during the summer. The Bannock and Shoshone were still using the area when the first Anglos entered the region in the early 1800s.

Donald Mackenzie, expedition leader for the Northwest Fur Company, reached the shores of the lake in 1819. He and his party were probably the first non-native Americans to see the lake. The area around the Bear River became a favorite spot for trappers. Trappers' rendezvous were held on the south shore of Bear Lake in 1827 and 1828. The Oregon Trail, over which thousands of immigrants to the Northwest traveled, cut through the area. The first Anglo settler in the area, Thomas L. "Peg Leg" Smith, operated a cattle business, trading post, and horse exchange on the Bear River near present Dingle, Idaho. Brigham Young unsuccessfully attempted to purchase his business in 1848, and Smith remained in the area until 1863.

When Congress passed the Homestead Act of 1862, Brigham Young became anxious to obtain control of the land. In August 1863 he directed Charles C. Rich to lead an exploring party into the Bear Lake Valley to select a site for settlement. The first settlement, known as North Twin Creek and

later Paris Creek, was made near present day Paris, Idaho. Since Bannock and Shoshone Indians also used the valley, Rich obtained their permission to settle there in order to minimize conflicts. Other settlements included Round Valley in 1863; Kennedyville (Garden City) and Laketown, 1864; Woodruff, 1865; Randolph, 1870; and Argyle, 1875.

Even though much of Rich County is highland, it also has fertile lowlands that can support productive farms and livestock production. Farming and livestock production have provided county residents with their livelihoods from the mid-1800s to current times. Three fourths of the county's land is used for agriculture and grazing. Livestock and livestock products account for the greater part of the county's income.

**Figure 4:**  
**Cities and Towns near Bear Lake State Park**

<b><u>Utah</u></b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Location</b>
Garden City	357	West side of Lake
Laketown	188	South side of Lake
Randolph	478	30 miles SE from Garden City
Woodruff	192	40 Miles SE from Garden City
Logan	45,626	West through Wasatch Mts 40 miles from Garden City
<b><u>Idaho</u></b>		
Bloomington	251	North of Lake
Paris	576	North of Lake
Montpelier	2,785	North of Lake

## **Demographic and Socioeconomic Information**

As of the census of 2000, there were 1,961 people, 645 households, and 521 families residing in Rich County. The population density is 2 persons per square mile. There were 2,590 housing units in 2002 at an average density of 2 units per square mile.

Many of the housing units at Bear Lake are vacation properties owned by non-county residents.

The Rich County School District is the county's single largest employer followed by Ideal Beach Association, the Lodge at Bear Lake, Majestic Ranch Academy, and Rich County Corporation. A number of the retail establishments in the Bear Lake area, including gas station/convenience stores, are also major employers in the county (as is Bear Lake State Park). Most of these establishments rely on spending by the visitors to the area. Bear Lake State Park may account for as much as 29 percent of the total spending by visitors.

In 1999, the Utah State Parks Planning Section developed a basic community impact model to estimate the impact that Bear Lake State Park may have on the economies of nearby Laketown and Garden City, Utah.

Park visitation data and estimated visitor spending patterns from existing recreational studies were utilized. Economic data from Rich County was gathered to develop estimates about the economic profile of Laketown and Garden City. As is shown in Figure 5, it was estimated that the 186,003 day-use visitors would spend approximately \$25.70 per day (note that this figure is based on data from a similar recreation study in California and is most likely conservative as anecdotal research shows that Bear Lake visitors would probably spend more). Similarly, it was estimated that there were approximately 91,613 overnight users who, because they are typically "self-contained," spent a lower amount of \$14.44 per day.

As Figure 5 shows, multiplying visitation by expenditures per day yields total (annual) spending: about \$4.8 million for day-use

<b>Figure 5: Bear Lake State Park Annual Visitors and Estimated Visitor Spending</b>		
	<b>Day</b>	<b>Overnight</b>
Visitors (1998)	186,003	91,613
Spending per Visitor	\$25.70	\$14.44
<b>Spending by Item</b>		
Eating & Drinking	\$1,242,872	\$464,800
Lodging	\$1,242,872	\$0
Transportation	\$1,147,267	\$429,046
Entertainment	\$334,619	\$125,138
Retail Purchases	\$812,647	\$303,908
<b>Total Spending</b>	<b>\$4,780,277</b>	<b>\$1,322,892</b>
<b>% of Local Spending</b>		
Eating & Drinking	30%	10%
Lodging	50%	0%
Transportation	20%	20%
Entertainment	60%	60%
Retail Purchases	10%	10%
<b>Total Local Spending</b>	<b>\$1,505,787</b>	<b>\$237,763</b>

visitors and \$1.3 million for overnight visitors. The majority of visitor spending is divided between five categories: Eating and Drinking, Lodging, Transportation, Entertainment and Retail Purchases. Clearly, visitors spend a portion of their travel monies in their hometown (gasoline, supplies, food, etc.), another portion in transit, and the final portion at their destination point. It is the visitors' spending at the final destination point (Laketown/Garden City) that is of most interest. Based on estimates of how spending is distributed through the local economies, it was estimated that approximately \$1.5 million was injected into the economies of Laketown/Garden City by day-users and \$237,736 by overnight visitors from Bear Lake State Park. This is approximately 29 percent of total visitor spending.

# PARK RESOURCES

One of the Bear Lake Planning Team's primary vision elements is to preserve the Park's resources by protecting the geological, historical, biological, and cultural attributes. To do this, the planning process calls for an inventory and analysis of park resources. It is essential that management decisions affecting the Park's natural environment be based on reliable scientific information. This section provides an analysis of Bear Lake's geological, biological, and cultural resources. A natural hazards analysis is also included.

## **Geological Resources**

The Bear Lake Valley is a structurally complex region. Approximately 10 million years ago, the Bear Lake Basin was formed through the crustal extension process and subsequent faulting of the area. The largest of these faults is the East Bear Lake fault that roughly parallels the east edge of Bear Lake. It is a high-angle normal fault with mostly vertical slip, where a mountain block moves upward relative to an adjacent downward-moving valley block. This fault is the dominant geologic feature that created the scenery and topography of the area. The down dropped (west) side of the fault is expressed as the deep sediment-filled basin that contains Bear Lake. The up thrown (east) side of the fault is expressed as a steep, linear mountain front of exposed bedrock. The east-shore study areas are perched along this still active fault, between the lake and mountain front. The highly fractured rock of the steep mountain front erodes and is deposited on the narrow, rocky beaches of Bear Lake's eastern shore.

At the Cisco Beach scuba diving area, the East Bear Lake fault veers offshore and acts as a conduit through which deep ground water emerges into the lake. Dissolved calcium carbonate from the ground water

precipitates in the lake to form interesting bulbous tufa (a type of limestone) formations.

## **Biological Resources**

The Park supports an assortment of plants and animals in a variety of habitats, including aquatic habitats that are important to a number of sensitive fish species.

### **Flora**

Bear Lake State Park contains four major terrestrial plant communities, and several micro-communities. At the Southwest Undeveloped and eastside management areas, the sagebrush steppe community is predominant at lower elevations. The sagebrush steppe community is dominated by shrubs such as sagebrush and rabbit brush mixed with various species of grasses. The juniper community is found at higher elevations. Depending on lake levels, there are micro-communities at the shoreline and exposed springs.

Rendezvous Beach and the Marina are wetland meadows and agricultural upland, with the native communities displaced by past agricultural use and development. There are riparian and wetland communities along and adjacent to Big Creek Creek at Rendezvous Beach. The riparian community is dominated by narrow leaf cottonwoods, water birch, thin leaf alder and willows, with an under story of shrubs, forbs and sedges.

There are no known plant species of special concern located within the Park.

## **Fauna**

The Park's eastside management areas share similar terrestrial habitat, and, therefore, are home to similar types of land-based wildlife.

The upland areas of these sites may provide habitat for cottontail and pygmy rabbits, Uinta Mountain ground squirrels, chipmunks, and mule deer. Reptiles may include the wandering garter snake, valley garter snake, Great Basin rattlesnake, and northern sagebrush lizard. Birds that may visit or inhabit all park areas include bald and golden eagles, osprey, gulls, and magpies. Seasonally many different species of waterfowl, passerine and neo-tropical birds migrate through the park and adjacent lake/riparian areas.

The North Eden area's sandy, littoral zone lacks rock and gravel substrate, so the area provides limited habitat for Bear Lake's fish species.

The Rainbow Cove, Cisco Beach and South Eden complex provides valuable habitat for aquatic wildlife. Bonneville cisco, Bear Lake whitefish, and Bear Lake sculpin (all on the Utah sensitive species list) use the rocky lake bottom in this area. Bonneville whitefish (also on the sensitive species list) use this area for spawning, as do the Utah sucker, speckled dace, reidsided shiner, and Utah chub. At normal water levels, Rainbow Cove contains a small wetland that supports a number of wetland species. During the spring and fall migration, birds such as common loons, terns, mergansers, goldeneye, and others frequent this area to feed on fish congregations.

At normal water levels, the rocky First and Second Point management areas provide aquatic habitat similar to that of the Rainbow Cove/Cisco Beach/South Eden

complex. During low water, the majority of rock is dewatered.

Rendezvous Beach receives intensive recreational use during the summer limiting its wildlife value during that time. When visitors leave, the area is repopulated with many bird species including owls, raptors, and cavity nesting birds attracted to the old growth cottonwoods. The sandy beach area provides little habitat for fish, but Big Creek that flows through the area, provides spawning and rearing habitat for Bear Lake cutthroat trout (a sensitive species), Utah sucker, red-sided shiners, yellow perch, long nose dace, green sunfish, and carp. It also harbors a number of freshwater mussel species, and hosts a myriad of terrestrial animals (beaver, raccoon, skinks, red fox, coyote), birds, waterfowl, amphibians, and reptiles. Agricultural use has caused bank erosion along Big Creek. Utah Wildlife Resources, the Park and adjacent landowners are working to remedy this problem.



*Bonneville Cutthroat Trout*

*Photo Courtesy of Utah Division of Wildlife Resources*

The Bear Lake State Park Marina provides a unique aquatic habitat. The Marina's rip rapped exterior provides much the same habitat and function as that of the Cisco Beach area. The Marina functions as a protected pond, providing cover and rearing habitat for cutthroat trout, Utah chub, yellow perch and carp. It also provides spawning habitat for Utah suckers. This assemblage of fish provides food for western grebes, white pelicans, ospreys, and gulls.

There are no known animal species of special concern found in the Park. There is, however, potential habitat in the upland portions of the eastside management areas for the pygmy rabbit and the greater sage-grouse. These two animals are listed as wildlife species of concern on the state of Utah's Sensitive Species list because loss of habitat has reduced their populations.

The waters of Bear Lake are home to a number of sensitive species. The Bear Lake sculpin, Bear Lake whitefish, and Bonneville cisco are listed because they occur only in Bear Lake. The Bonneville cutthroat trout is listed due to loss or alteration of habitat, predation by and competition with nonnative fishes, and hybridization with nonnative fishes, such as the rainbow trout. This fish species is being managed under a conservation agreement to preclude the need for federal listing. The California floater is a mussel that has historically been found in the Bear Lake area. It is also a species of concern due to reductions in population and range. No live specimens have been found in the area for many years. It is thought that if this mussel was ever found in Bear Lake (there is some question of this), this population has been extirpated. Another mussel that historically was found in small streams in the Bear Lake area is the western pearlshell. It is also a

species of concern, and it is unclear if it still exists in the area. The affect on these species must be examined when considering potential development.

### **Cultural Resources**

There are no known cultural resources within the Park. The Utah Division of State History conducted a file search of records for past cultural resource project surveys conducted within the Park and in a one-mile buffer around the parklands. There had been one project survey completed within the park boundary. Within the one-mile buffer, there had been seven project surveys. Four cultural resource sites were located as a result of these survey projects. None of these sites were in the Park.

### **Natural Hazards Analysis**

The Utah Division of Emergency Services and Homeland Security conducted a natural hazards analysis during the fall of 2004. This study discussed the risks associated with flooding, earthquake activity, landslides, wildfire, severe weather, and drought.

The risk of flooding to park facilities by Bear Lake is minimal because the lake level is controlled. Debris related flooding is possible along Big Creek in the eastern portion of Rendezvous Beach. The Park needs to monitor the stream flow and clear debris from culverts along the creek. It also needs to post warnings during flood events. Rock slides caused by severe thunderstorms or spontaneous spring snowmelt could impact access to park areas along the eastern side of the lake.

The East Bear Lake fault zone, that either runs through or adjacent to the Park's eastside areas, is geologically active and has experienced a larger magnitude (approximately 6.3) earthquake as recently as 1884. Earthquakes along this fault could cause rock falls along the eastern shore, fault rupture could cause surface and ground water flooding, liquefaction in sandy areas, and lakeshore flooding caused by a seiche. The park staff needs to implement the recommendations listed in the hazard analysis to minimize impacts from earthquakes.

Potential exists for landslides or debris flow to impact park facilities at North and South Eden. Park paths, trails, campsites, and other facilities should be kept out of the path of potential rock and landslides. Warning signs should be placed in areas of potential rock fall.

The potential for impact to park facilities by wildfire is minimal, except at South Eden and First Point, where the risk is extreme during hot, dryer months. Moderate risk for wildfire exists at North Eden and Cisco Beach. Park managers should discuss the possibility of controlled burns or thinning of wildfire fuels where fire potential is elevated. Fire restrictions should be posted and enforced during times of high fire danger.

Severe weather could close transportation routes, affecting the use of park facilities. Drought and associated lower water levels in the lake could impact recreation use at the Park.

Natural hazards can create safety concerns for visitors and staff, damage park facilities, and have detrimental effects on the economy of the Park and area, by interrupting access to, and use of, the Park.

# VISITOR SURVEY

## Summary of Results

The Division of State Parks and Recreation administered a visitor survey during the peak visitor months of 2002. The survey was conducted to better understand park users, their concerns, satisfaction with existing facilities and services, and visitor conflicts while visiting the Park. Survey results were incorporated into the planning process in the development of recommendations. It is important to note that the survey results reflect visitor use patterns during the study period only (e.g., peak visitation period between May and September). Moreover, several factors contributed to a lower than normal response rate. Consequently, one must be careful in using the results to draw generalized conclusions about the population of users who visited Bear Lake during the study period. With these limitations in mind, respondents noted several items of interest that are summarized below. This information provides important insight about visitor use patterns, activities, needs, and concerns.

### **BEAR LAKE IS A “DESTINATION” PARK**

Nearly 70 percent of survey respondents indicated that Bear Lake State Park was the only destination of their trip. Of the remaining respondents, 21 percent planned a trip to Bear Lake along with other destinations.

### **THE MARINA IS THE MOST VISITED LOCATION**

Seventy-two percent of those responding visited the Marina area of the Park. The next most visited area was Rendezvous Beach (35 percent), followed by Cisco Beach (15 percent), Rainbow Cove (10 percent), and the other areas of the Park in lesser amounts.

### **BEAR LAKE IS A MULTI-DAY DESTINATION**

Most respondents (67.5 percent) indicated that they stayed more than one full day at the Park. Twenty-seven percent said they stayed three days or more. Only 31.1 percent stayed one full day or less.

### **GROUPS ARE AN IMPORTANT VISITATION COMPONENT**

Many respondents indicated that they were part of a larger group. Nearly 35% of respondents listed a group size of 10 or larger. Fifty-nine percent were part of a group with six or more.

### **GROUPS ARE MADE UP OF FAMILY AND FRIENDS**

Family and friends accounted for 92.7 percent of respondents. Family members accounted for 54.4 percent, 33.3 percent were a combination of family and friends, and five percent were friends only.

### **SWIMMING, BOATING, SUNBATHING, WATERSKIING, CAMPING AND PICNICKING ARE TOP RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES**

Respondents indicated that swimming (59 %), boating (57 %), sunbathing (55 %), waterskiing (46 %), camping (37 %) and picnicking (35 %) were the most popular recreational activities.

### **MOST RESPONDENTS ARE SATISFIED WITH FACILITIES AT MARINA AND RENDEZVOUS BEACH**

Bear Lake Marina and Rendezvous Beach had the most opinions expressed possibly due to the popularity of those two areas. The majority of respondents at Bear Lake Marina and Rendezvous Beach were

satisfied with these facilities. No assumptions can be made about the sites on the east side of Bear Lake, due to the lack of opinions expressed by respondents.

**MOST RESPONDENTS ARE FROM UTAH**

The majority of respondents, 80 percent, were from Utah. Idaho was next with eight percent.



*Marina Boat Ramp*

# ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A number of issues ranging from facility development needs, to natural resource management, to land and property limitations were addressed in the plan. Also addressed were issues relating to staffing, funding and operations; economic and community impact; and interpretation and education. Each of these issues was identified by various means including input from planning team members, the public-at-large through public meetings, and by a visitor survey. Team members and the public identified nine major issues that were aggregated into five distinct categories. An analytical technique used to determine the Park's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and future threats (known as a "SWOT" analysis) helped in the development of these issues. A specific description or statement summarizing each issue was constructed to clearly identify and articulate each problem.

A number of constraints (e.g. available funding, sufficiency of staff, facility location and design, and federal regulations, etc.) will need to be addressed prior to issue resolution. Team members, planning staff, and division experts identified some of the limiting factors that may hinder implementation of a specific team recommendation.

The planning team developed specific recommendations for the identified issues. The team's recommendations were arrived at by consensus of opinion. The team also emphasized that recommendations be consistent with the mission and vision statements.

The five issue areas forming the basis of the team's recommendations include: (1) facility development; (2) staffing, funding and operations; (3) natural resource management; (4) economic and community impact; (5) interpretation and education.

Facility development proved to be of major concern to the team. Facility development recommendations identified by the team include a deep-water expansion of the current state park Marina, and development of the eastside management areas to improve visitor opportunities and protect park resources.

The team made a point to include a recommendation that full operational funding should be included with any future development. The recommended facility development is discussed in two phases, however the order of actual development is subject to change based on available funding. Multiple sources of funding are available for different portions of the overall project, but timing of funds availability is not predictable. In order to expedite development and maximize fiscal efficiency, the Planning, Facilities and Construction Section will be responsible for implementing the recommendations in a manner that balances the listed prioritization while utilizing available funding opportunities.

## **Facilities Development**

At the onset of the planning process, team members set a goal to develop facilities that enhance visitor opportunities and enjoyment, while protecting the natural resources and aesthetic character of the Park's various management areas. The team developed specific recommendations for each management area that are consistent with this goal. These recommendations fit into the following broad categories (issues):

- Improvements to existing, and development of new, boating facilities.
- Improvements to day-use, camping and lodging facilities.
- Establishment of trails and trail connections.

## Issue Area: Facilities Development

### Key Issues:

- ↪ Improvements to boater access and opportunities.
  - Deep-water addition to Marina for mooring and launching.
  - Need to improve access to boat ramp at Rainbow Cove.
  - Consider a floating day marina with possible concession on eastside.
- ↪ Day-use, camping and lodging facilities and opportunities need to be upgraded and expanded.
  - Accessibility throughout the park for those with disabilities.
  - Site plans for eastside areas with recommended development to improve visitor experience and protect resources.
  - More day-use facilities and parking in the Marina area.
  - Redesign Big Creek Campground, and other needed improvements to Rendezvous Beach.
  - Safe access to lake from Rainbow Cove campsites.
- ↪ Trails and Trail Connections
  - ATV trailhead at Rendezvous to link to other lands and trails.
  - Plan for regional "Bear Trail" connections.
  - Big Creek nature trail.
  - Eastside viewpoint trails.

The team's facility development recommendations will increase park accessibility, provide more parking and opportunities for day-use visitors, supply more boat slips, and launching opportunities at all water levels, and enhance camping facilities.

These recommendations address the broad goals listed in the team mission and vision

statements, and represent the issues identified by public input through public meetings and visitor surveys.

A number of criteria – feasibility, costs, available funding, availability of staff, etc. – will need to be considered in the planning, development, and implementation of each recommendation. Many of the team recommendations are conceptual in nature. The Division's Planning, Facilities and Construction Section will take these recommendations and work with a designated architectural/engineering firm to develop a formal design and construction program when funding becomes available. During the transition from concept to design, modification of original concepts may be required to feasibly implement specific recommendations.

### ***Issue: Improve Existing, and Develop Additional, Boating Facilities***

The park provides the only public access and facilities on the Utah portion of the lake. This includes boating access and facilities. The demand for boating facilities has been increasing for many years, as the visitation to the area increases. The demand for these facilities can far outweigh the supply. Recent low water conditions have added to this problem, reducing access to the water at boat ramps and in the Marina. Many of the Park's boat ramps are crowded during the season, and with the low water in recent times, they have been unusable. There is a need to improve and increase access through improved and additional boat ramps and marina boat slips. Improvements should be made compatible with low water conditions where possible.

### **Recommendations**

The team and public listed additional marina facilities and low water boat access as top priorities. The team considered marina

locations on the eastside of the lake, but rejected that idea because of habitat concerns with sensitive fish species, construction costs, and operational efficiency and costs. The team recommends that a second marina should be built immediately adjacent to the existing marina. The new marina would share the south arm of the existing marina, saving some cost, and should be deep enough to be used during low water periods. The team did suggest studying the feasibility of constructing a floating marina somewhere on the Lake's eastside to provide safe storm shelter, another destination on the lake, and possible concession opportunities. Also suggested, were improvements to the eastside boat launch areas.

### *Phase I Recommendations*

**1. Marina Area – Complete a feasibility study for expanding the current marina by placing a deeper expansion adjacent to the existing marina. Seek funding and build the expansion if the Division deems it feasible. An engineering firm has completed a conceptual plan for the marina addition (Appendix B).**

- A. The expansion would be built just south of the current marina and would share the south arm of the existing marina
- B. The marina expansion would have 250-300 boat slips with utilities, restrooms, and a sewage pump-out.
- C. The expansion would be built deep enough to allow use during low water levels.
- D. A boat ramp that could be used in high or low water would be included in the expansion.
- E. Fill material would be added along the shoreline, and arms of the existing marina to provide additional vehicle and trailer parking, and improved traffic control.

- F. Develop more overflow parking in the parking and dry storage area above and west of the Marina to service the users of the new marina. This may mean re-contouring some of the area and developing some means to control the parking configuration. Consider some rental, covered boat storage in this area.



*Marina Entrance*

- 2. Rainbow Cove Area – Increase the radius of the turn in the approach road to the boat ramp to allow better access for vehicles with boat trailers.**
- A. This improvement should make it possible for vehicles pulling boats to have better access to the boat ramp area.

### *Phase II Recommendations*

- 1. Eastside Areas – Widen Boat Ramps as necessary and improve boat trailer parking.**
- A. Monitor use and crowding at ramps and widen if use dictates.
  - B. Enlarge and define parking for boat trailers near eastside ramps.

**2. Eastside Management Areas – Investigate the feasibility of building a floating marina somewhere on eastside of lake.**

- A. A floating marina would not affect sensitive species habitat.
- B. It would provide safe storm shelter for vessels, a destination attraction for boaters and others, and offer potential concession opportunities.

**3. Eastside Management Areas – Courtesy docks at boat ramps**

- A. Study the feasibility of providing courtesy docks at eastside boat ramps.

**4. Rendezvous Beach – Develop a single width boat ramp adjacent to the concession fuel facility for concessionaire to launch and retrieve rental craft.**

- B. This ramp would be more convenient for the concessionaire, and would reduce congestion at the regular boat ramp.
- C. The concessionaire has indicated that he may fund and maintain this ramp.

***Issue: Improved Opportunities and Facilities for Day-use, Camping and Lodging***

The Park's various management areas have a number of problems and needs that these types of improvements can remedy. The Marina area is lacking in day-use facilities and parking, though many visitors are attracted to its location. These factors limit visitor use at the Marina. Rendezvous Beach has overuse and overcrowding problems that are impacting resources and visitor experiences. The eastside areas suffer from a lack of facilities and dispersed use. The eastside areas do not have defined day-use and camping sites. This leads to indiscriminant, dispersed use that damages the natural resources of the area.

Improvements at the eastside should be a high priority. The concessionaire at Rendezvous Beach has four camper cabins that have a high occupancy rate throughout the recreation season. Demand would seem to indicate that additional cabins would enhance visitor opportunities and park revenue.

**Recommendations**

The team identified a number of shortcomings in the types of land-based facilities and opportunities offered at the Park. Their recommendations, if completed, will help to alleviate these shortcomings.

***Phase I Recommendations***

**1. All Management Areas – Improve ADA-type accessibility.**

- A. Make some sites in all campgrounds accessible to those with disabilities.
- B. Provide access to picnic sites, restrooms and other appropriate buildings, beaches, lake, and concession operations as outlined in the Park's ADA transition plan.

**2. Eastside Management Areas – Complete development site plans for all eastside management areas, and proceed with development, as funds are available.**

- A. As much as possible, maintain primitive feeling of experiences offered at the eastside areas, while delineating and defining individual and group day-use and camping sites to stop indiscriminate dispersed use and resource damage. Segregate day-use and camping areas where possible.
- B. Improve roads and parking using a balance of gravel and pavement as appropriate. Consider additional parking on eastside of paved road.
- C. Landscape plans should be a component of site plans. Consider

planting vegetation to provide shade and privacy. Develop water systems where possible to irrigate vegetation.

- D. Where possible provide water and electricity for restrooms with showers.
- E. Provide shade shelters at day-use and camping sites. Lack of shade was an issue at the eastside areas.
- F. Design and develop multiple group sites with pavilions, water, electric and restrooms with showers at North Eden.
- G. Provide at least one RV sanitary-dump station on the eastside.

**3. Marina – Develop day-use facilities at the Marina.**

- A. Develop picnic sites near the Marina office/visitor center and concession operation, and on the Marina arms. These sites should have picnic tables, shade shelters and/or trees.
- B. Develop picnic sites with shade shelters and tables along the edge of the hillside near the dry storage area, above and west of the Marina.
- C. Widen both arms of the Marina to provide more day-use parking, and consider designating some of the existing parking as non-boating parking.

**4. Rendezvous Beach – Redesign the Big Creek Campground.**

- A. Redesign should protect and preserve vegetation, improve the privacy at each site, upgrade the utility infrastructure (this should be done throughout Rendezvous Beach as needed), provide some ATV compatible campsites, and be compatible to large recreational vehicles. A group campsite should also be added to this location.

**6. Rendezvous Beach – Develop clusters**

**of camping cabins throughout Rendezvous Beach.**

- A. The concessionaire has four camping cabins near the Big Creek Campground. These cabins have a high occupancy rate throughout the recreation season. The Division should work with the concessionaire to place clusters of cabins in various places at Rendezvous Beach. The concessionaire or Division may build and/or manage additional cabins.

**6. Rendezvous Beach – Develop a maintenance/storage facility.**

- A. There is currently no maintenance facility at Rendezvous Beach. Consequently, there is no secure place to store equipment and supplies, and no place for staff to work indoors. Also, the area currently used to store building and grounds materials is an open field, clearly visible and accessible from the Big Creek Campground.
- B. The recommended facility would include a maintenance building with a fenced and screened yard.
- C. This facility would serve both Rendezvous and the eastside areas.

*Phase II Recommendations*

**1. Eastside Management Areas – Water and electricity in restrooms.**

- A. Wherever possible, provide water and electricity in restrooms.

**2. SW Undeveloped Area – Complete a development site plan, and make suggested improvements as funds become available.**

- A. Plan should consider individual and group camp and day-use sites, and the possibility of providing long-term (season-long) camping for snowbird type users. Bring water, sewer and electricity to the area.

B. Provide parking for lake and beach access in this area.

3. **Rendezvous Beach – Complete a boundary survey.**
4. **Rendezvous Beach – Investigate day-use opportunities along south side of parking lot near the concession/beach area.**
  - A. Consider both individual and groups sites in this area.
5. **Rendezvous Beach – Develop an amphitheater and overflow parking in the Cottonwood Campground.**
  - A. These facilities would be located on the south side of the road opposite of the campsites.
6. **Rendezvous Beach – Consider another amphitheater and more overflow parking where appropriate.**
  - A. The team thought, because of the size of the Rendezvous area, that a second amphitheater may be necessary to serve potential demand.
  - B. There is a need for overflow parking for extra vehicles and utility trailers in all campgrounds at Rendezvous.
7. **Rainbow Cove – Improve lake access from campsites.**
  - A. Construct stairways to provide access to beach and lake from campsites on elevated bench.

### ***Issue: Trails and Trail Connections***

Trails and their use are becoming a very important part of Utah’s recreation estate. In fact, walking for pleasure is the most popular recreation activity in the United States. Communities are beginning to understand that trails can enhance their economies, and can help provide safe recreation and transportation routes that

enhance real estate and business values. The Bear Lake area communities are planning and developing trails for these reasons. Several of these trails will provide, or potentially provide, connections between the various park management areas, other recreation sites, communities, and businesses. There are all-terrain vehicle (ATV) riding opportunities on the lands surrounding Bear Lake, in particular, the National Forest lands. The Shoshone Trail, a major ATV trail, runs through the area just south of Rendezvous Beach. The team recommended that a trailhead be developed at Rendezvous Beach to provide access to the Shoshone Trail. There are a number of trail needs within the Park.

### **Recommendations**

The team suggested several recommendations to provide trail opportunities in and around the Park.

#### ***Phase I Recommendations***

1. **Rendezvous Beach - Develop an ATV trailhead at Big Creek to link the Park to nearby public lands and the existing Shoshone Trail.**
  - A. This trailhead would most likely be built at the eastern edge of Rendezvous Beach, adjacent to the Big Creek Campground. This location would allow the trailhead to also be used as parking for a proposed Big Creek wetlands nature trail.
2. **Rendezvous Beach – Plan for impact of the “Bear Trail.”**
  - A. The Park will cooperate with the Bear Lake Regional Commission to insure that the bike and pedestrian “Bear Trail” planned to circumnavigate the lake, and pass through Rendezvous Beach, will

meet the needs of both the Park and community.

**3. Rendezvous Beach – Provide trails for access to facilities and recreation areas, including access for those with disabilities.**

- A. Develop trails for access to restrooms and beach, to protect vegetation and to minimize cutting through campsites for this access.

***Phase II Recommendations***

**1. Rendezvous Beach – Big Creek Wetlands nature trail.**

- A. The Big Creek riparian/wetlands area of Rendezvous Beach is an important resource to the Park, offering recreation and nature study potential. There is a piece of private property that partially bisects the Park property, limiting the possibilities in this portion of the Park. A land trade with the private owner has been discussed and should be pursued.
- B. Construct a trail through the Big Creek wetlands/riparian area to encourage park visitors to visit and learn about this interesting area.

**2. Eastside Management Areas – Connections to proposed “Bear Trail.”**

- A. The Park will coordinate with the Bear Lake Regional Commission to insure that the bike and pedestrian “Bear Trail” planned to circumnavigate the lake will meet the needs of both the Park and community.

**3. First Point – Overlook trail.**

- A. Consider constructing a trail to a high overlook east of the paved road.

**4. Rainbow Cove – Canyon trail to overlook.**

- A. Construct a trail up the canyon to the east of the paved road, terminating at a scenic overlook.

**Staffing, Funding and Operations**

The planning team and the general public identified concerns about the Park’s limited funding for the current operational workload. They felt that the Park does not have adequate numbers or types of staff, or adequate funding to properly operate the Park at its current level of development. New development would only add to this problem, unless increases in ongoing operational funding were included with the new development.

**Issue Area: Staffing, Funding and Operations**

**Key Issues:**

- ☞ Lack of staff and funding for park operation
  - Need business plan for the Park that includes budget and staffing analyses.
  - Change Park’s fee structure to improve ability to manage and operate the Park.
  - On-going operational funding is included with any new development.

The team felt that some analysis should take place to determine what staffing and funding levels should be with the current level of development, and for the proposed improvements to the Park. The team also felt that there were some measures that the Park could institute to help alleviate the lack of funding to the Park.

The team developed recommendations for one issue: the lack of staff and funding for park operation.

***Issue: Lack of staff and funding for park operation.***

The park does not have adequate operational funding, or numbers and types of employees, to properly operate the Park and meet off-park responsibilities. Maintenance of facilities, in particular, has suffered. The Park has had trouble in the past meeting the minimum Division of Facility Construction and Management maintenance standards. The eastside management areas, in particular, suffer from lack of staffing.

**Recommendations**

An analysis of staffing and funding levels will assist the Park in their requests for more operations staff and funds, and will help them justify more operational funding and staff for new development. Targeted user fees will help to protect and maintain the facilities and experiences for those specific activities.

***Phase I Recommendations***

**1. Complete a business plan for the Park.**

A. The business plan should examine all aspects of the park operation, and should include analyses of budget and staffing use and needs for existing and future development.

**2. Change Park’s fee structure to improve ability to manage and operate the Park.**

A. Consider changes such as:

- Surcharge fees, that remain available to the Park, for various activities such as slip rental surcharge to pay for dock repair and replacement, and camping surcharge to help pay for

reforestation and tree care in campgrounds.

- Lower fees for walk-ins and bicycles at the Marina (to encourage these uses to ease the parking problem), and for those wishing to access the concession operation.

**3. Ensure that on-going operational funding is included with new development.**



*Scenic Bear Lake*

## **Natural Resource Management**

The planning team identified natural resource management issues relating to overuse by visitors, uncontrolled dispersed use, and pollution and water quality. Of utmost concern is the loss of cottonwood trees in the Cottonwood and Big Creek areas of Rendezvous Beach. Overuse has played some part in the death of these trees, and, along with dispersed visitor use, is damaging native vegetation in other areas.

### **Issue Area: Natural Resource Management**

#### **Key Issues:**

- ☞ Overuse of park areas.
  - Landscape designs for all park areas.
  - Program to replace and maintain trees in Cottonwood and Big Creek Campgrounds.
  - Separate group and individual sites.
  - Use limits and closures to rehabilitate areas.
- ☞ Pollution and water quality.
  - Hazardous spill plan.
  - Re-engineer sewage pump-out at Marina.
  - Support efforts to maintain water quality.
  - Cleanup SW Undeveloped Area dumpsite.
  - Resolve Rendezvous Beach sewer lagoon site status.
  - Investigate municipality providing culinary water to Rendezvous Beach area.

A potential for hazardous spills in the Marina was addressed, as was general lake water quality, and the cleanup of a dumpsite on park property. The team was concerned about the Park's operation of a water system that supplies culinary water to private homes.

#### ***Issue: Overuse of Park Areas.***

The trees at Rendezvous Beach were identified as an intrinsic value of that area. The trees, especially in the Cottonwood and Big Creek areas, have been dying at an alarming rate. Many have had to be removed because their state of health has made them a falling danger to visitors. The trees, and the shade they provide, are an important attraction to the area. The concentrated visitor use and campground design are contributing factors (along with drought) to tree loss.

Uncontrolled, dispersed use at the eastside areas is also causing damage to, and loss of, vegetation.

### **Recommendations**

The recommendations outline ways to restore, improve and maintain the Park's vegetation, while protecting and improving visitor experiences.

#### ***Phase I Recommendations***

##### **1. Landscape design plans for all park areas.**

- A. These plans will outline how vegetation will be restored and maintained, and will suggest species to be used. These plans were also mentioned in the Facilities Development section.

##### **2. Specific program to replace and maintain the trees in the Cottonwood and Big Creek campgrounds.**

- A. Should include a redesign of the Big Creek Campground to minimize impacts to vegetation and to distribute visitor use.
- B. Replace trees and protect new tree growth. Specify replacement tree species.
- C. Outline more extensive management of trees including supplemental watering systems.
- D. Provide educational material to visitors about trees and tree care.

**3. Management of trees at eastside areas.**

- A. Plant and maintain trees at eastside areas, and implement means to protect existing trees. These would provide shade and screening in day-use and campsites.

**4. Separate group-use and individual sites.**

- A. Group-use in individual or family campsites is compounding the overuse problem. Develop strategies to separate these types of use, including constructing more group sites.

**5. Use limits and closures.**

- A. Consider establishing use limits and/or closing areas for rehabilitation of resource damage if other means do not reverse impacts.

***Issue: Pollution and Water Quality.***

There is potential for pollution and an impact on the water quality of the lake due to hazardous spills in the Marina from fuel and sewage. There is a park area that has been used as a dumpsite by area residents and another that is the former site of a sewage lagoon. The team is concerned about the Park operating a water system that supplies culinary water to the Park and private residences.

**Recommendations**

These recommendations address resolving existing and potential pollution sources, and other potential problems to the Park and environment.

***Phase I Recommendations***

**1. Hazardous spill response plan.**

- A. The Park should develop a plan to deal with hazardous spills in the Marina and other areas where potential exists.

**2. Sewage pump-out at Marina.**

- A. The sewage pump-out at the Marina has had an ongoing problem. The pump has to be primed before each use. This makes the process more complicated and increases the chance of sewage being spilled into the lake.
- B. The Division Planning and Construction section will find a solution to this problem.

**3. Monitor, preserve and protect water quality of the lake.**

- A. The Division and Park should support efforts to monitor, preserve and protect the water quality of the lake.

***Phase II Recommendations***

**1. SW Undeveloped Area – Dumpsite.**

- A. There is a borrow site in this management area that has been used by locals as a dumpsite. This area should be cleaned up and protected from future use as a dumpsite.

**2. Rendezvous Beach – Sewer Lagoon Site.**

- A. This detached parcel south of Rendezvous Beach was formerly used as the sewage lagoon for Rendezvous. It no longer serves that purpose and could be liquidated.

**3. Rendezvous Beach Water System.**

- A. The Park operates a water system with well, storage tank, and supply lines that not only supplies water to Rendezvous Beach, but also to a number of private residences adjacent to the Park.
- B. The planning team is concerned about the responsibility and liability associated with this system.
- C. The Park should investigate having a local municipality provide culinary water to the Rendezvous Beach area.

## **Economic and Community Impact**

The team recognizes that Bear Lake State Park has an important role in the wellbeing of the local community and economy, both in Utah and Idaho. As mentioned previously, the Park generates nearly 30 percent of the total visitor spending in Utah's Bear Lake communities. The Utah Division of State Parks and Recreation's long-range strategic plan, Vision 2010, recognizes that parks have an important role to play in the state and local economies. In fact, Vision 2010 directs the Division to "lead efforts to increase the impact of tourism and recreation on local and state economies." It also states, "the Division will actively seek partnerships and concession opportunities for the private sector in the state park system."

### **Issue Area: Economic and Community Impact**

#### **Key Issues:**

- ↪ Economic impact.
  - Appropriate ATV trailheads and facilities.
  - Information panel for area visitor center.
  - Attract off-season use.
  - Consider non-traditional or new activities.
- ↪ Increase concession opportunities.
  - Increase number of camping cabins.
  - More boat mooring opportunities.
  - Consider new concessionaire suggested activities.
  - Visitor surveys should ask what concession services are desired.

### ***Issue: Economic Impact***

As mentioned above, the Park is important to the local economy, and has a responsibility, as outlined in the Division's

strategic plan, to increase the economic impact of tourism and recreation in the Bear Lake area.

## **Recommendations**

The Park will provide recreation opportunities to enhance visitation and visitor spending in the area.

### ***Phase I Recommendations***

- 1. All-terrain vehicle (ATV) trailhead and access.**
  - A. Where appropriate, provide ATV trailheads and/or trail access from campgrounds.
  - B. As indicated in the Facility Development section, an ATV trailhead and access was recommended near the Big Creek Campground at Rendezvous Beach.
- 2. Information panel at new overlook visitor center.**
  - A. Work with UDOT and local travel councils to develop an informational panel highlighting park opportunities at the new area visitor center.
- 3. Attract off-season use.**
  - A. Encourage concessionaire to have cabins at Rendezvous Beach open year round to attract cross-country skiers, snowmobile operators, and other off-season use.
- 4. Consider non-traditional or new activities at Park.**
  - A. Investigate, and be open to, alternative (non-traditional) activities at the Park such as public/private partnerships, packages, tours, off-season activities, balloon festival, and Park participation in chamber of commerce activities.

***Issue: Increase Concession Opportunities.***

As directed by the Division’s strategic plan, the planning team considered ways to augment concession opportunities in the Park.

**Recommendations**

Concession operations in parks must be appropriate to the park’s mission and must meet visitor needs. The team crafted recommendations that fit these criteria.

***Phase I Recommendations***

- 1. Increase number of camping cabins.**
  - A. Work with concessionaires to increase number of camping cabins in the Park. Accomplish this by putting small groups of cabins in appropriate locations throughout the Park making use of existing facilities such as restrooms and showers.
- 2. Increase boat-mooring opportunities.**
  - A. Investigate the development and use of buoy fields, with wave breaks or floating docks, to provide increased mooring and possible concession opportunities.
- 3. Additional services to be considered by existing concession operator.**
  - A. Mast set-up and takedown assistance for a fee.
  - B. Catering food for large groups within the Park.
  - C. Improve and provide better signage for boat wash area. Concessionaire to consider installing coin operated pressure washers for boat washing.
  - D. Provide Internet access.
- 4. Surveys to determine concession services desired by visitors.**
  - A. In all visitor surveys, ask visitors what types of concessions they would like.

**Interpretation and Education**

The Division’s Vision 2010 plan, requires that all park RMPs address interpretation and education. Interpretation can improve visitor experiences, while building an appreciation of the park and its resources. This appreciation can lead to the proper use of park facilities and resources by visitors.

**Issue Area: Interpretation and Education**

**Key Issues:**

- ✦ Interpretive and educational opportunities for visitors and community.
- Comprehensive interpretive plan for park.
- Nature trails with interpretive signing or brochures.
- Continue school programs.
- Utilize the historic cabin at Rendezvous as a nature/interpretive center.
- Interpretive exhibits.
- Partner with community to develop and maintain an area website.

The Park needs to expand the interpretive/educational activities it offers to enhance visitor opportunities and experiences, improve regulation and rule compliance, and to better protect park and area resources and facilities.

***Issue: Interpretive and Educational Opportunities for Visitors and Community.***

The Park does not have a comprehensive interpretive plan, but has had some success with offering interpretive programs in park and community settings. Without an interpretive plan, the Park does not have clear goals for these efforts, and may not be getting their messages out in the most effective way. Also, visitors may not be getting the information that they desire.

## **Recommendations**

The team recognized that an interpretive plan is needed for the Park. A number of possible interpretive facilities and exhibits were suggested, though an interpretive plan will ultimately direct the Park as to what types of interpretive medium and facilities are developed. Individual park interpretive plans are being completed as prioritized by the Division's Operation Management Staff.

### ***Phase I Recommendations***

- 1. Create a comprehensive interpretive plan for the Park.**
  - A. Use this recommendation to gain a placement on the Division's interpretive planning priority list.
  - B. Work with the Division's Heritage Coordinator and Planning Section to complete an interpretive plan for the Park.
- 2. Develop nature trails with interpretive brochures or signing where appropriate.**
  - A. The Big Creek riparian/wetlands area was mentioned in the Facility Development section for this type of trail.
- 3. Continue to provide interpretive programs in the area's schools.**
  - A. Work with educators to make these programs curriculum based. These programs do educate young people about the Park and its importance, and improve the Park's standing in the community.
- 4. Nature/interpretive center.**
  - A. Utilize the historic cabin at Rendezvous Beach, Big Creek Campground as a nature/interpretive center.

### ***Phase II Recommendations***

- 1. Aquatic wildlife exhibit.**
  - A. Install an aquatic wildlife exhibit in the park office/visitor center, such as a refrigerated aquarium to interpret the native fishery.
- 2. Exhibits to interpret water temperature, weather conditions, and Bear Lake water usage.**
  - A. Develop exhibits to educate users about Bear Lake water use and associated fluctuations in water level. Currently little is understood about these topics.
  - B. Install exhibit with visitor accessible water temperature and weather information. This exhibit would also serve a safety function.
- 3. Bear Lake area website.**
  - A. Partner with community to develop and maintain an area information website with live web cam and links to other recreation related sites. This would attract people to the area, and would provide important information to visitors before they arrive.

**Figure 6: Issue/Recommendation Phase I and II Summary**

Issue Area/Issues	Phase I - Recommendations	Phase II - Recommendations
<b><u>Facility Development</u></b>		
<b>Improve Existing, and Develop Additional, Boating Facilities</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Study feasibility for deep-water expansion at Marina, and develop expansion, if deemed feasible.</li> <li>2. Improve approach to boat ramp at Rainbow Cove.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Eastside Areas – Widen boat ramps as necessary and improve boat trailer parking.</li> <li>2. Study feasibility of a floating marina on eastside of Lake.</li> <li>3. Study feasibility of providing courtesy docks at eastside boat ramps.</li> <li>4. Rendezvous Beach – Develop a single-width boat ramp next to concession operation.</li> </ol>
<b>Improved Opportunities and Facilities for Day-use, Camping, and Lodging</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improve ADA-type accessibility.</li> <li>2. Complete development site plans for all eastside areas, and proceed with development, as funds are available.</li> <li>3. Develop day-use facilities at the Marina.</li> <li>4. Redesign the Big Creek Campground.</li> <li>5. Develop clusters of camping cabins at Rendezvous Beach.</li> <li>6. Develop a maintenance facility at Rendezvous Beach.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide water and electricity in restrooms at eastside areas, where possible.</li> <li>2. Complete development site plans for the SW Undeveloped Area, and proceed with development, as funds are available.</li> <li>3. Complete a boundary survey of Rendezvous Beach.</li> <li>4. Investigate additional day-use opportunities at Rendezvous Beach.</li> <li>5. Develop amphitheaters and overflow parking at Rendezvous Beach.</li> <li>6. Improve lake access from campsites at Rainbow Cove.</li> </ol>
<b>Trails and Trail Connections</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop an ATV trailhead at Big Creek to link the Park to nearby public lands and the existing Shoshone Trail.</li> <li>2. Plan for impact of the “Bear Trail” at Rendezvous Beach.</li> <li>3. Provide trails for access to facilities and recreation areas, including access for those with disabilities at Rendezvous.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop a nature trail at the Big Creek wetlands.</li> <li>2. Plan for impact of the “Bear Trail” at eastside areas.</li> <li>3. Consider and construct overlook trails at First Point and Rainbow Cove.</li> </ol>
<b><u>Staffing, Funding and Operations</u></b>		
<b>Lack of Staff and Funding for Park Operation</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Complete a business plan for the Park.</li> <li>2. Change Park’s fee structure to improve ability to manage and operate the Park.</li> <li>3. Ensure that on-going operational funding is included with new development.</li> </ol>	
<b><u>Natural Resource Management</u></b>		
<b>Overuse of Park Areas</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Landscape design plans for all park areas.</li> <li>2. Specific program to replace and maintain the trees in the Cottonwood and Big Creek Campgrounds.</li> <li>3. Management of trees at eastside areas.</li> <li>4. Separate group use and individual sites.</li> <li>5. Use limits and closures.</li> </ol>	
<b>Pollution and Water Quality</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Hazardous spill response plan for Marina and other areas.</li> <li>2. Re-engineer sewage pump-out at Marina.</li> <li>3. Monitor, preserve and protect water quality of the lake.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mitigate dumpsite at SW Undeveloped Area.</li> <li>2. Resolve issue with sewer lagoon site.</li> <li>3. Investigate municipality supplying culinary water to Rendezvous Beach area.</li> </ol>
<b><u>Economic and Community Impact</u></b>		
<b>Economic Impact</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All-terrain vehicle (ATV) trailhead and access.</li> <li>2. Information panel at new overlook visitor center.</li> <li>3. Attract off-season use.</li> <li>4. Consider non-traditional or new activities at Park.</li> </ol>	
<b>Increase Concession Opportunities</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase number of camping cabins.</li> <li>2. Increase boat-mooring opportunities.</li> <li>3. Other opportunities for existing concessions.</li> <li>4. Surveys to determine concession needs.</li> </ol>	
<b><u>Interpretation and Education</u></b>		
<b>Interpretive and Educational Opportunities for Visitors and Community</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create a comprehensive interpretive plan for the Park.</li> <li>2. Develop nature trails with interpretive brochures or signing where appropriate.</li> <li>3. Continue to provide interpretive programs in the area’s schools.</li> <li>4. Develop a nature/interpretive center.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Install an aquatic wildlife exhibit at the Marina office.</li> <li>2. Exhibits to interpret water temperature, weather conditions, and Bear Lake water usage.</li> <li>3. Partner to create a Bear Lake area website.</li> </ol>

# Conclusion

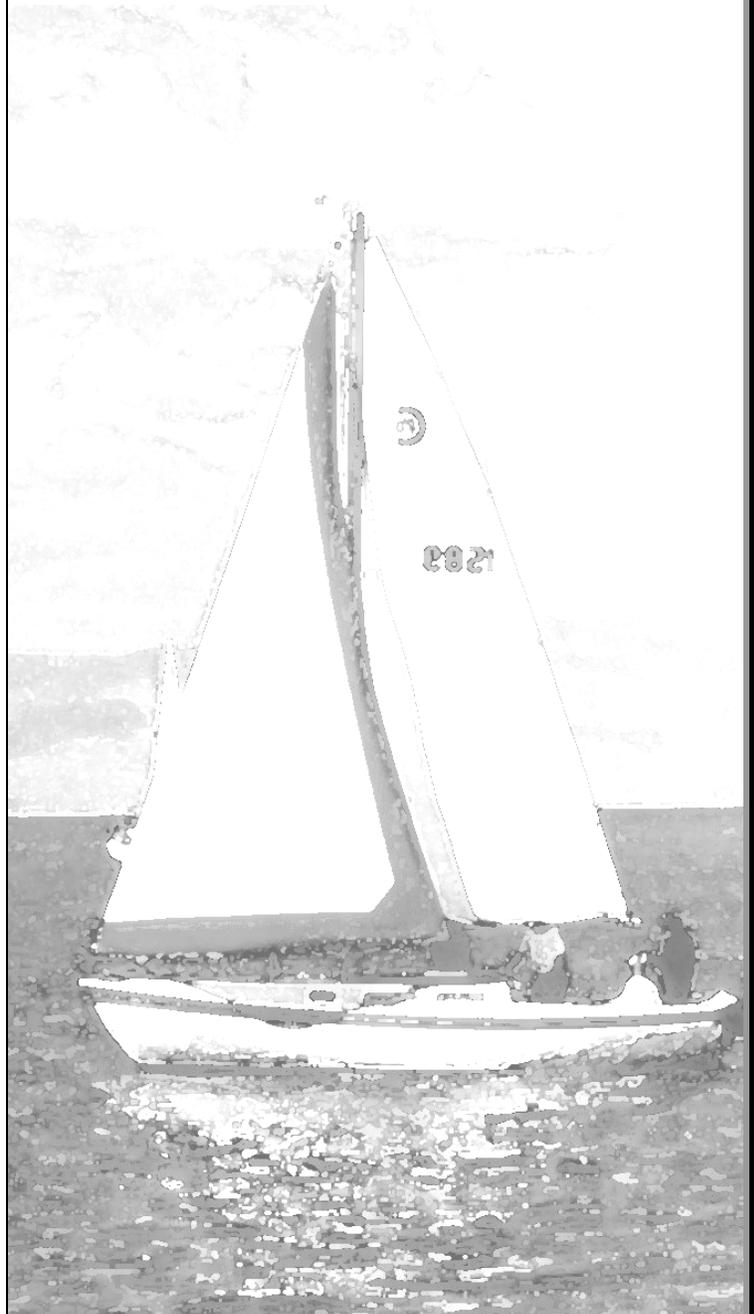
This plan is a blueprint to help implement the planning team's recommendations. As such, it outlines the initial steps to be taken in concert with park visitors, local communities and other interested users to: properly develop facilities to meet diverse visitor needs; ensure adequate staffing and funding; protect the natural resources of the Park; enhance the Park's impact on the community, and the state and local economies; and educate visitors and community members about the Park and its resources.

The recommendations contained in this plan conform to the team's mission of providing visitors a wide variety of safe and satisfying water-based and shoreline recreation experiences. The plan's recommendations effectively address the current needs for facility development, resource protection, park operations, land management, and cooperative efforts. However, it is crucial that adequate funding be received to implement these goals and accommodate visitor needs.

The plan's success is dependent upon the continued support of stakeholders. Stakeholders must continue their efforts to support park improvements, preserve park resources, interact with local communities and strive to meet the expectations of park visitors in the midst of a rapidly growing community of recreation-oriented citizens. The recommendations contained within this plan were based upon an open and collaborative process. It is imperative that this collaborative spirit continues as the plan's components are implemented.

It is also imperative that the document be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure its viability, relevance and usefulness. This document has sufficient flexibility to be amended in response to changing resource conditions, visitor needs and expectations,

community needs and agency priorities. Such amendments may occur under the auspices of the Division of Parks and Recreation. Any such changes will include input from park visitors, local citizens, community leaders, park management or other stakeholders with interests relevant to the operation and maintenance of the Park.



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# Maps

**Map 2: Bear Lake and Vicinity (showing the various management areas of Bear Lake State Park)**

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## **Appendices**

**Appendix A: Summary of Public Comments and Responses –  
Page 43**

**Appendix B: Aquatic and Terrestrial Wildlife Utilizing the Bear  
Lake State Park Parcels – Page 45**

**Appendix C: Marina Expansion Conceptual Design – Page 47**

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# Appendix A

## Public Comments on Draft Resource Management Plan

In October 2005, this Plan was released to the public for review and comment. During October and November 2005, the Plan was made available to the general public by placing an electronic version on the Utah Division of State Parks and Recreation website. Hardcopies were made available to the public at Bear Lake State Park, the Garden City offices, and the Department of Natural Resources building in Salt Lake City. Comments were accepted by e-mail or in writing to the Division's planning section. The following is a summary of comments received in response to the Draft Plan. Each comment is summarized below and is followed by the Division's corresponding response.

### **Comment: Deep Water Marina Expansion (one comment)**

The comment asked if the drawing of the marina expansion was preliminary in nature, and offered some design elements to consider for the expansion. The suggestions are listed below.

I would suggest that consideration be given to overlapping the breakwater entrances for 2 reasons:

- A. *As we all are aware, there is a silting problem immediately in front of the entrance to the existing marina due to the natural current & circulation of the water coming from the north. If the northern side of the new north jetty overlapped the southern most jetty, it might prevent silt build up at the mouth of the new marina expansion.*
- B. *An overlapping of the mouth of the jettys might serve to act as a traffic calming device since power boats trying to enter the marina would have to make a couple of turns to get in rather than just hotshotting it full bore and blasting into the marina as a lot of power boats do today. This would improve safety when entering and leaving the marina.*

*I would also suggest exploring the location of the new crane platform. It appears to be even further inland than the existing crane platform at the marina. I understand efforts will be made to make this a deep water facility, but I think the crane platform should be put on the SE corner of the new south jetty to allow more water depth should for some reason the water level fall much below its present level in the future.*

### **Response:**

The representation of the possible marina expansion shown in this RMP is very conceptual in nature. The drawing does not necessarily represent the final design of the expansion. The RMP is meant to identify issues, and the means to deal with those issues. While suggested facility development is part of the Plan, final design of those facilities will occur outside of the Plan. The recommendations from this comment have been shared with the Division of Utah State Parks and Recreation Development Section to consider when the actual design of the expansion is developed.

**Comment: Thanks! (one comment)**

This comment thanks the Division for allowing the public to participate in the resource management planning process, and for keeping the public aware of progress of the plan.

**Response:**

The Division's goal is to involve the public in all aspects of the RMP process, through membership on the planning team, public meetings to identify issues, and by soliciting comments on draft plans.

**Comment: Possible Expansion of Park (one comment)**

The comment, from a Division employee, states, *State Parks should consider the possibility for the future expansion of recreation estate/opportunities of Bear Lake State Park through MOU/MOA with other state, federal, and local agencies. These opportunities should include property not located directly adjacent to the shoreline of Bear Lake.*

**Response:**

The area around Bear Lake is developing rapidly. Open space is filling in with residential development, mostly for second or vacation homes. The demand for recreation facilities is continuing to increase. The Division will consider expansion possibilities for Bear Lake State Park, if they enhance recreational opportunities for visitors, protect critical lands and resources, and have public support.

# Appendix B

## Aquatic and Terrestrial Wildlife Utilizing The Bear Lake State Park Parcels

Bryce Nielson, 2004

### Introduction

This paper will discuss in general terms the wildlife present, typical utilization, habitat preferences, and general planning considerations at six parcels owned and managed by the Utah Division of State Parks and Recreation.

### Stateline/North Eden

This small parcel is bordered by Idaho State Parks property to the north and private property (Steven Nebeker) to the south. It consists primarily of a sandy beach berm and some sage and grass mixture. The value of the adjacent littoral zone for Bear Lake fishes is limited since there is no rock or gravel substrate. The upland area has cottontail and possibly pygmy rabbits, Uinta Mountain ground squirrels, chipmunks and mule deer. Amphibians may include the tiger salamander and the chorus frog. Reptiles may include the wandering garter snake, Valley garter snake, Great basin Rattlesnake and the northern sagebrush lizard. The site is frequented, depending on time of year, by raptors, Bald and Golden Eagles, Osprey, gulls, magpies, and neotropical and resident small bird species.

### Rainbow Cove, Cisco Beach and South Eden

This parcel is the most diverse and valuable in terms of wildlife and habitat of any of the Bear Lake State Park property. It is bounded on both ends by natural deltas, North and South Edens, which provide excellent sagebrush habitat bordering agricultural activities. At the north end of Rainbow Cove, part of a fluctuating wetland complex exists. When the lake level is normal, water percolates through the beach berm and creates a natural wetland with the typical emergent vegetation and associated bird and wetland species. During low water the site dries and provides minimal habitat value. All of the aforementioned terrestrial exist in this parcel also. The east north/south fault line of Bear Lake creates Cisco Beach. This area and the bedrock talus material that has eroded into the lake are extremely important to the endemic fish species. The Bonneville cisco, Bear Lake whitefish and Bonneville whitefish all utilize this site for spawning. The Bear Lake sculpin is dependent to the flat rocks in the area for egg attachment. The Utah sucker also utilizes this habitat for spawning especially near the thermal springs and methane gas vents common along the beach littoral zone. Speckled dace, red-sided shiners and Utah chub also inhabit this area. During spring and fall migration of piscivorous birds, including common loons, terns, mergansers, gulls, goldeneye and others frequent this area to feed of fish congregations.

### First and Second Points

These two small rocky points provide similar habitat for the aquatic complex when the lake is at typical levels. At low levels, the majority of the rock is dewatered. The value of this parcel is the sage and cedar hills that rise to the east from the lakeshore. This area is extremely important for deer winter range and refuge. It is not grazed by domestic livestock and provides a diversity of habitat for many common terrestrial species of wildlife.

### **Rendezvous Beach/Big Spring Creek**

Rendezvous Beach has intensive recreation impacts and wildlife is limited during the summer. After the visitors leave, the area is repopulated with many bird species including owls, raptors and cavity nesting birds which are attracted to the old growth cottonwoods. The beach area provides little habitat for fish however the entrance of Big Spring Creek into the lake creates nutrient and detritus inflows, which are beneficial to wildlife. It has been interesting to observe a number of hibernaculum's that are utilized by various snake species, garter and green along the creek riparian corridor. This largely undeveloped riparian zone along Big Spring Creek hosts a myriad of different terrestrial animals (beaver, raccoon, skunks, red fox, coyote), birds, waterfowl, amphibians and reptiles. Although stream flows are problematic, when flowing it provides spawning and rearing habitat for Bear Lake cutthroat trout, Utah sucker, red-sided shiners, yellow perch, longnose dace, green sunfish and carp. It also harbors freshwater mussels of which little is known. This area has been impacted by agricultural and livestock which has resulted in eroding banks and stream siltation. Utah Wildlife Resources and the adjacent property owner are addressing these problems presently and this natural riparian area will be improved.

### **South Side**

This strip of land presently has value as winter range for mule deer. It is frequented by other terrestrial animals and birds. Its true value will be as an open space corridor between the highway/lake and the eventual recreational property development above and to the south of it.

### **Bear Lake State Marina**

The marina provides a unique aquatic habitat on Bear Lake. The riprapped outside provides the same habitat and function for the endemic fish species as does Cisco Beach. The inside of the marina provides protection from the scouring wave action of Bear Lake. It is like a pond with rooted macrophytes that provide cover and rearing habitat for cutthroat trout, Utah chub, yellow perch, and carp. The inside of the marina is perfect spawning habitat for Utah suckers. This fish assemblage provides food from western grebes, white pelicans, ospreys and gulls. The marina is like its own little unique ecosystem.

### **Summary**

There is a diverse number of habitat types and resulting wildlife in Bear Lake State Park parcels. As a management plan is developed for these areas, opportunities exist to incorporate and enhance the wildlife and habitat values that exist there.

# Appendix C



## BEAR LAKE DEEP WATER MARINA EXPANSION

**King**  
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<b>PROJECT TITLE</b>	BEAR LAKE DEEP WATER MARINA EXPANSION
<b>CLIENT</b>	BEAR LAKE STATE PARK GARDEN CITY UTAH
<b>DATE</b>	11/15/2018
<b>DESIGNER</b>	JOHN W. KING
<b>CHECKER</b>	JOHN W. KING
<b>DATE</b>	11/15/2018
<b>SCALE</b>	AS SHOWN
<b>PROJECT NUMBER</b>	C-101
<b>SHEET NUMBER</b>	1 OF 2

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