



## **TRUST LANDS STEWARDSHIP**

As land manager and fiduciary of trust land assets that belong to Utah's public schools and other state institutions, the School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration (SITLA) understands that its fiduciary duty includes the responsibility to preserve these resources for the long-term support of trust beneficiaries, primarily Utah's school children of today and tomorrow.

Consistent with this obligation, SITLA is a strong partner in land exchanges and other transactions which preserve sensitive lands, but remains committed to its primary responsibility of generating revenues for its beneficiaries.

For lands on which development does occur, SITLA manages an effective environmental compliance program. The agency also works with Utah's Resource Development Coordinating Committee and the Division of Oil, Gas and Mining to ensure projects are reviewed through state regulatory and environmental processes.

## **PRESERVATION**

Since 1998, SITLA has been involved in numerous transactions, including land exchanges and sales that have preserved and/or protected more than 560,000 acres of Utah land, an area equivalent to the combined acreage of Arches, Zion, Bryce Canyon, and Capitol Reef national parks.

SITLA has a strong record of partnering with federal and state agencies, counties, and private and non-profit conservation entities to protect Utah lands identified as important for their scenic or recreation value, or as habitat for threatened or endangered species, such as the desert tortoise and dwarf bear claw poppy.

### **Notable recent projects include:**

- In May 2014, after nearly eight years of delicate political and administrative navigation, SITLA and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) finalized the Utah Recreation Land Exchange Act of 2009. The BLM received 25,000 acres of trust lands in the scenic Colorado River corridor near Moab, while SITLA received 35,000 acres of land in areas more suitable for development.
- Sale of 800 acres of prairie dog habitat in Garfield County to the Nature Conservancy helped local, federal, and private agencies protect habitat for the Utah prairie dog, a species listed as ‘threatened’ under the Endangered Species Act.
- Conveyance of 17,000 acres of trust lands, located within or adjacent to existing Wildlife Management Areas to the Division of Wildlife Resources in exchange for property located at 5600 West 2100 South in Salt Lake County, protected habitat for waterfowl and big game while enabling SITLA to divest itself of non-performing assets.
- Other partners and projects: Protected 1,700 acres of desert tortoise habitat in Washington County; joined with The Nature Conservancy in preserving 3,191 acres in Grand, Washington, and Utah counties; worked with Utah Open Lands, The Conservation Fund, San Juan Foundation, and others to preserve 3,276 acres in Beaver, Garfield, Grand, Millard, San Juan, Sevier, and Washington counties.

### **RECLAMATION AND RECREATION**

In addition to land sales and exchanges, SITLA works with many partners to rehabilitate lands and provide recreation access.

- SITLA is an active partner in Utah’s Watershed Restoration Initiative, which is instrumental in mobilizing collaborative fire restoration projects. Last year, SITLA spent \$450,000 to reseed and rehabilitate lands affected by wildfire. These projects protect watersheds, wildlife habitat, and other important values.
- The Great Hunt Panel, one of the most famous and recognized rock art sites in Utah, is located on trust land in Nine Mile Canyon northeast of Price. Because of its location adjacent to a well-traveled road, it was in danger of deterioration. After collaborating with a private partner to realign the roadway adjacent to the panel, SITLA designed and installed fencing, walkways, and other protective features. An interpretive panel was also designed and installed with the help of Carbon County, the College of Eastern Utah, Utah State University, the Castle Valley Chapter of the Utah Statewide Archaeological Society, and the Nine Mile Coalition.
- Taking action against historic resource degradation caused by undisciplined off-highway vehicle use in the La Sal Mountains, SITLA designated a 135-mile off-highway vehicle (OHV) trail system on 28,000 acres of trust land. SITLA led several public meetings involving officials from Grand and San Juan counties, representatives from the Divisions of Wildlife Resources and State Parks, and several off-roading groups. This project also involved closure and reclamation of more than 50 miles of unauthorized roads and trails, which were threatening resources on two of the agency’s premier land blocks.

SITLA has a strong 20-year history of balancing its legislative mandate with stewardship, protection, and restoration of trust lands. The agency will continue its stewardship efforts to insure the 3.4 million acres of trust lands and the additional 1.1 million acres of mineral estate provide long-term support for its beneficiaries.



## **FINANCIAL, ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS OF SITLA LAND TRANSACTIONS WITH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT**

On behalf of public schools, state hospitals and universities, the Utah School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration (SITLA) has worked on and continues to collaborate on land transfers, exchanges, and other transactions with the federal government to protect state trust land holdings.

Collectively, these land transactions have generated approximately \$441.73 million for SITLA beneficiaries, as well as help preserve more than 508,000 acres of environmentally sensitive lands for Utah and the nation.

In 1894, the federal government granted parcels of land to Utah from which revenue could be generated to support public schools and 11 other state institutions. As manager of what is now a 3.3 million-acre land trust, part of SITLA's legal and fiduciary responsibility is to improve its land holding position and seek to trade out of environmentally sensitive federal lands or that are otherwise rendered inaccessible or undevelopable.

For example, the 1996 presidential designation of the Grand Staircase Escalante National Monument (GSENM) enveloped more than 200,000 surface acres and mineral estate lands belonging to the public school system and other trust land beneficiaries. SITLA, along with Utah's congressional delegation, worked with the federal government to ensure a fair land trade and even secure compensation for lost mineral royalties. A portion of lands acquired by SITLA in that exchange, known as the Drunkards Wash Block straddling Carbon and Emery counties, generated \$1.5 million monthly in royalties from coal bed methane development for more than a decade.

The most recent state and federal exchange involving SITLA and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) was the Utah Recreational Land Exchange Act of 2009. Under the Exchange Act, SITLA and the BLM consolidated land ownership through an equal value exchange of lands in Uintah, Grand, and San Juan counties. The exchange protected environmentally-sensitive lands along the Colorado River corridor and helped position SITLA with lands more suitable for development.

These exchanges have also financially benefited many rural counties. SITLA administers the Land Exchange Distribution Account (LEDA), which contributes to the complex disbursement of mineral development royalties of counties affected by the GSENM exchange. To date, 27 counties have collectively received \$69.7 million from this account, which was created by the Utah Legislature in 2007.

In addition to protecting the financial interests of its beneficiaries, SITLA's work on federal land transactions have preserved and/or protected more than 508,000 acres of Utah land.

**State of Utah School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration**

<b>SCHOOL AND INSTITUTIONAL TRUST LANDS ADMINISTRATION CONSERVATION LANDS</b>		
	<b>State of Utah</b>	<b>Total Acreage</b>
1/8/1999	Grand Staircase Escalante National Monument and Inholdings	377,000.00
1/16/2001	West Desert Exchange	106,000.00
6/6/2014	Utah Recreation Land Exchange Act	25,000.00
7/9/2014	Hill Creek Extension Land Transfer	18,000.00
	<b>Division of Wildlife Resources</b>	
12/2/1998	Big Water Hatchery	265.36
8/6/2001	Wallsburg	586.02
8/6/2001	East Canyon	634.40
8/6/2001	Echo Canyon	931.11
8/6/2001	Hardware Ranch	720.00
10/21/2004	Panguitch Creek	1,196.81
4/15/2005	Cedar Valley	1,010.61
5/11/2007	Little Hole	356.40
8/26/2007	Clear Lake Wildlife Refuge	120.00
3/4/2008	Marshall Draw	1,002.36
12/2/2009	Range and Gordon Creek	1,513.14
6/26/2012	Gordon Springs	688.01
3/15/2013	Locomotive Springs	54.14
4/19/2013	Phase I 5600 West	7,189.58
3/1/2014	Phase II 5600 West	10,878.35
	<b>Desert Tortoise Habitat</b>	
12/4/2001	Parcel 3a	579.07
1/28/2002	Snow Canyon	59.42
4/11/2003	Beck Hill	435.13
4/30/2003	Parcel 2a	193.68
4/30/2003	Parcel 2b	60.57
5/14/2003	Parcel E	39.67
10/31/2003	Parcel D	58.70
6/30/2004	Parcel 3a Remnant	19.25
6/29/2004	Entrada	101.68
6/29/2004	Chuckwalla	131.19
	<b>Utah Prairie Dog Habitat</b>	
9/29/2005	Mitigation Bank - Parker Mountain Block	800.00
4/28/2008	Prairie Dog Mitigation	220.00
7/15/2013	The Nature Conservancy - Garfield County	800.00
	<b>The Nature Conservancy</b>	
8/3/1999	Goshen Bay	440.15
3/15/2001	Pace Hill	560.00
3/15/2001	Parriott Mesa	640.00
3/15/2001	Porcupine Rim	256.10
5/8/2003	Onion Hill - Grand County	640.00
5/18/2007	White Dome #1	55.52
7/15/2008	White Dome #2	135.00
7/23/2009	South Block Astragalus	6.44
11/12/2009	White Dome #3	161.00
4/28/2011	White Dome #4	296.86
	<b>Other Projects</b>	
3/6/1998	North Harding	280.00
3/6/1998	Koosharem Reservoir A	320.00
3/6/1998	Koosharem Reservoir B	233.07
12/31/2001	East of Beaver	730.05
2/21/2000	Escalante	3.15
1/17/2002	Castleton Tower	217.30
7/2/2003	Castle Valley	518.00
2/1/2004	Beaver Dam Wash	369.88
8/27/2007	Bluff Parcel A	16.99
8/28/2008	Poppy Mitigation	195.58
3/15/2010	Bluff Parcel B	14.15
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>562,733.89</b>