

Utah Division of Water Quality's (UDWQ) Broad Objectives for Great Salt Lake Wetlands

UDWQ is continuing to work on drafting an assessment framework. Through this process we have identified four primary objectives, that we believe will help to prioritize our Clean Water Act mandate to protect, maintain and restore the chemical, physical and biological integrity of these waters. Also, we hope that these objectives will help with coordination efforts because many of these objectives are shared by others.

What is the condition of Great Salt Lake wetlands?

One objective of the Assessment Framework is to ***report the ecological health of Great Salt Lake wetlands***, starting with impounded-class systems. The initial reporting of ecological health provides a baseline for documenting if and how the beneficial uses of impounded wetlands are protected. Beneficial uses will be assessed with tools that provide numeric translators of narrative water quality criteria.

How should we proceed with improving wetland conditions?

A second objective of the Assessment Framework is to ***produce environmental information that forms the foundation of a water quality management plan for GSL wetlands***. The water quality management plan will be based on adaptive management principles. Those principles are used to develop and deploy required control measures, as needed, to ensure attainment of applicable water quality standards— or support of designated uses— in a reasonable period of time.

What can we do to better understand the status and trends of all Great Salt Lake wetlands?

The third objective of the current Assessment Framework is to ***expand the scope of monitoring and assessment activity to include all GSL wetland classes***. Wetland monitoring and assessment will be integrated with other aquatic monitoring activity.

How can we most efficiently and effectively remediate any water quality concerns that we identify?

The fourth objective of the Assessment Framework is to ***build the scientific information needed to characterize how GSL wetlands “work” and how they respond to disturbance and adaptive management practices***. Part of this objective would involve the development and revision of numeric water quality standards.