

**BEAR LAKE PRESERVATION AMENDMENTS**

2024 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

**Chief Sponsor: Chris H. Wilson**

House Sponsor: \_\_\_\_\_

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**LONG TITLE**

**General Description:**

This bill addresses Bear Lake.

**Highlighted Provisions:**

This bill:

- ▶ provides that development of Bear Lake be consistent with certain principles;
- ▶ recognizes certain principles related to Bear Lake; and
- ▶ makes technical changes.

**Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

None

**Other Special Clauses:**

None

**Utah Code Sections Affected:**

AMENDS:

**65A-2-7**, as enacted by Laws of Utah 2015, Chapter 295

ENACTS:

**73-1-22**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

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*Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

Section 1. Section **65A-2-7** is amended to read:

**65A-2-7. Development of Bear Lake.**



28 The division shall:

29 (1) designate state lands along Highway 30 from the Ideal Beach RV Park and  
30 Spinnaker Marina southward approximately four miles to Rendezvous Beach State Park, which  
31 lands are located in Township 13N, Range 5E, Sections 003, 010, 015, 022, and 023, as an area  
32 for the ongoing development of facilities for boating, fishing, beach going, swimming, parking,  
33 picnicking, and other recreational activities; and

34 (2) develop the area described in Subsection (1):

35 (a) consistent with the division's Bear Lake comprehensive management plan and  
36 Section 73-1-22; and

37 (b) as funding allows.

38 Section 2. Section 73-1-22 is enacted to read:

39 **73-1-22. Bear Lake principles.**

40 The state recognizes the following:

41 (1) Bear Lake was a natural lake at the time Utah gained statehood and remains a  
42 highly valued resource for Bear Lake's native fisheries, recreation, and distinctive  
43 characteristics, including water clarity and mineral and chemical uniqueness, giving Bear Lake  
44 the intense turquoise blue color for which Bear Lake is known all over the world.

45 (2) While serving as a reservoir, Bear Lake retains Bear Lake's basic native form and  
46 character, preserving much of Bear Lake's valued scenic beauty, navigability, and lake-related  
47 recreation opportunities. It is the desire and expectation of the state that Bear Lake and Bear  
48 Lake's inherent qualities and characteristics be preserved for future generations.

49 (3) The state desires to prevent Bear Lake's degradation in quality and functions and to  
50 preserve and enhance Bear Lake's unique characteristics, including native fish and wildlife,  
51 unique water quality, native lake bed, navigation, littoral rights, lake-related recreation, and  
52 irrigation storage.

53 (4) Bear Lake has been operated as a reservoir since the early 1900s to store water for  
54 irrigation, flood control, and incidental power generation, which has enhanced agricultural  
55 productivity and prosperity in the Bear River Basin, and will remain an essential irrigation  
56 water supply into the future. The state supports enhancement of the operational utility of Bear  
57 Lake for irrigation storage purposes.

58 (5) To achieve the goals of this section, the state encourages collaboration among

59 agencies and stakeholders to help preserve and enhance such interests.

60 (6) Nothing in this section is intended to impair or constrain the operation of Bear

61 Lake, to interfere with or change any water rights, or to appropriate any water.

62 Section 3. **Effective date.**

63 This bill takes effect on May 1, 2024.