



INTEGRATED REPORT FACT SHEET

What is the Integrated Report (IR)?

The Clean Water Act (CWA) requires states to assess the conditions of surface waters every two years to determine whether they are meeting their designated beneficial uses. To meet this requirement, the Division of Water Quality (DWQ) compiles all existing and readily available data, conducts beneficial use assessments, and summarizes the results into a biennial Integrated Report (IR) that it submits to the EPA.

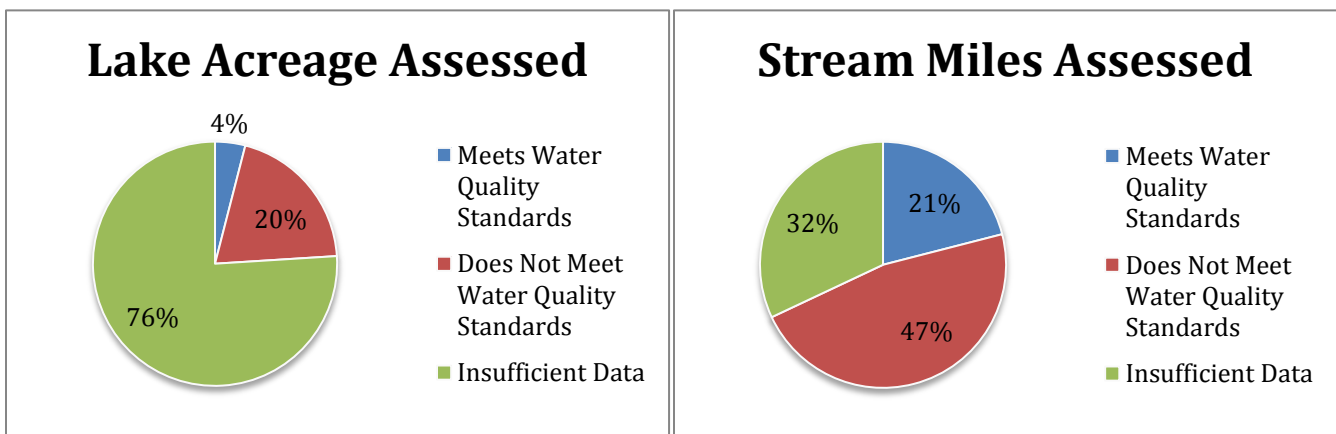
What are designated beneficial uses?

The state classifies waters based on their uses and develops water quality standards to protect those uses. Utah’s designated uses include drinking water, recreation, aquatic wildlife, and agriculture. The Great Salt Lake has separate beneficial use designations due to its unique characteristics.

How many lakes and reservoirs did DWQ assess?

The Division reported on the condition of 750 river and stream segments (15,583 river and stream miles) and 142 lakes and reservoirs (1,467,222 surface acres).

What did the assessments show?



To put the percentages into context with regard to lakes assessed or not assessed:

1. The Great Salt Lake acreage (1.1 million acres) makes up 75 percent of the Category 3 (Insufficient Data) lake acreage, which tends to skew the percentages.

2. Of the lake acreage remaining that was assessed, Lake Powell (150,000 acres) and Utah Lake (91,000 acres) make up approximately 90 percent of the Category 5 (Does Not Meet Standards) acreage. Lake Powell moved from a Category 1 (Meets Standards) to a Category 5 in this reporting cycle due to pH exceedances. There are only five more lakes in category 5 than the last IR, but the overall percentages are much different due to Lake Powell, which accounts for over half of Category 5 acreage in this IR.

When waters are listed as a Category 5, what happens?

Waters reported as Category 5 are non-supporting, which means they don't meet their designated uses. These waters are sometimes referred to as "303(d)" waters, the section of the CWA that requires states to identify non-supporting waters. The CWA requires the state to develop a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) that determines the maximum amount of a pollutant discharge into the waterbody while still meeting state standards and identifies acceptable loads from the pollution source. Alternative mechanisms, such as watershed-based implementation plans, can be used to restore non-supporting waters.

What are some highlights of the 2016 IR?

DWQ added several new waterbodies to the list of non-supporting waters in Utah, developed new methodology for assessing harmful algal blooms and dissolved oxygen, and crafted a new vision for implementing the 303(d) program that tailors strategies to specific situations.

San Juan River

DWQ completed a full assessment of data collected on multiple dates from the San Juan River following the Gold King Mine release in Colorado on August 5, 2015. Data collected in Fall 2015 during storm events led the division to list two segments of the San Juan River as non-supporting for several metals.

Harmful Algal Blooms

The division made significant progress in its harmful algal bloom assessment (HAB) program in 2015, including the development and application of a HAB assessment methodology that reflects the potential for undesirable human health effects from these blooms and effects on recreational uses.

DWQ identified Utah Lake as non-supporting for recreational use due to HABs that occur in the lake, the most recent occurring July 13, 2016. The division plans to increase monitoring and assessment of HABs occurrences in important recreational and drinking water source waters for future assessment cycles.

Jordan River High Frequency Data Pilot Study

DWQ analysis of methods for assessing high frequency dissolved oxygen (DO) measurements reaffirmed that DO is a continuing problem on the lower Jordan River. DWQ now has a draft methodology for the future assessment of high frequency dissolved oxygen which will be used on other sites where this type of data is readily available.

303(d) Vision

In 2016, DWQ adopted a new framework for implementing the 303(d) Program. The new Program Vision enhances overall efficiency of the program, focuses on priority waters, and provides flexibility in using alternative tools in addition to TMDLs to restore and protect water quality. DWQ recognizes there is not a "one size fits all" approach to restoring and protecting water resources and has developed tailored strategies that meet its water-quality responsibilities under the CWA. The Vision also prioritizes non-supporting waters across the state for TMDL development. The division has prioritized waters that are not supporting recreational and drinking water uses as well as those that are high priority fisheries.