



Spencer J. Cox

Governor

**EXECUTIVE ORDER  
2022-04**

*Declaring a State of Emergency Due to Drought*

**WHEREAS**, nearly 100% of Utah is in severe drought or worse; and

**WHEREAS**, the State of Utah continues to experience unprecedented drought conditions, with a drought executive order initiated in March of 2021, a State of Emergency due to drought declared in May of 2021 and extended through House Joint Resolution 101; and

**WHEREAS**, of the State's 29 counties, the United States Department of Agriculture currently has listed all 29 counties under the Secretarial Disaster Designation for drought; and

**WHEREAS**, extreme drought has significantly impacted the state eight of the last 10 years; and

**WHEREAS**, the statewide snowpack peaked approximately two weeks early at 25% below normal, leading to a deficit in spring water supply; and

**WHEREAS**, Utah lakes and reservoirs are at low levels, with Lake Powell – the nation's second-largest reservoir – at 24% capacity, and the Great Salt Lake reaching its lowest ever recorded level; and

**WHEREAS**, the federal government recently declared a water shortage on the Colorado River for the first time in its history, triggering reductions in downstream releases from Glen Canyon Dam and mandatory water consumption cuts for states across the Southwest; and

**WHEREAS**, the State of Utah experienced an exceptionally dry growing season in 2021, with soil moisture reaching exceptionally low levels not previously seen since monitoring began in 2006; and

**WHEREAS**, record-setting high temperatures throughout the state have exacerbated and accelerated historic dry conditions; and

**WHEREAS**, these extended dry hot conditions have adversely and significantly impacted agribusiness and livestock production, as well as wildlife and natural habitats; and

**EXECUTIVE ORDER 2022-04**  
**PAGE 2**

**WHEREAS**, record low water levels, soil moisture, and prolonged dry conditions have contributed to a formidable wildfire season, and continue to increase the threat of wildfires across the state; and

**WHEREAS**, these conditions have also contributed to and exacerbated flash flooding throughout the state; and

**WHEREAS**, drought conditions that require mitigation are expected to persist; and

**WHEREAS**, these conditions create a state of emergency within the intent of the Disaster Response and Recovery Act found in Title 53, Chapter 2a of the Utah Code; and

**WHEREAS**, Utah Code § 53-2a-204(1)(a) authorizes the Governor to utilize all available resources of state government as reasonably necessary to cope with a state of emergency; and

**WHEREAS**, Utah Code § 53-2a-204(1)(b) authorizes the Governor to employ measures for the purpose of securing compliance with orders made pursuant to the Disaster Response and Recovery Act (Act); and give direction to state and local officers and agencies that are reasonable and necessary for the purpose of securing compliance with the provisions of the Act and with orders, rules, and regulations made pursuant to the Act;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Spencer J. Cox, Governor of the State of Utah, declare a state of emergency due to the aforesaid circumstances requiring aid, assistance, and relief available from State resources.

**IT IS FURTHER ORDERED** that the State Emergency Operations Plan will continue to be executed as needed and coordinated by the Department of Public Safety, Department of Natural Resources, and Department of Agriculture and Food.

**THIS ORDER** is effective immediately and shall remain in effect for 30 days unless the Legislature extends the state of emergency.



**IN WITNESS, WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of the State of Utah. Done in Salt Lake City, Utah, on this, the 21st day of April, 2022.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Spencer J. Cox".

Spencer J. Cox  
Governor, State of Utah

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Deidre M. Henderson".

Deidre M. Henderson  
Lieutenant Governor, State of Utah

ATTEST: