



SOIL AND PLANT SCIENCE DIVISION

Technical Soil Services

Southwest Soil Survey Region

Richfield, Utah, Major Land Resource Area Soil Survey Office

Wetland Determination for Eligibility of Wetland Reserve Easement at Tooele County, Utah

Purpose

The purpose of this technical soil service was to determine if the property referred to as Salt Pointe meets wetland classification conditions for the wetland reserve easement program.

Background

Utah State Soil Scientist Terron Pickett requested the assistance of Soil Scientist Keith Crossland with describing hydric soils at Salt Pointe. The Salt Pointe property is at the southern tip of the Great Salt Lake and sits on the first lake terrace, which was previously used as evaporation ponds for salt harvesting. Salt production ceased a few decades ago when the railway that lies between the property and the lake was raised. Restoring channels and culverts to reinstate the flow to the property was deemed economically unviable. The property does receive some run-off of freshwater from nearby mountains, and the owner has some water rights.

Key Outcomes

The Salt Pointe property primarily consisted of two soil map units: Saltair-Playas complex, 0 to 1 percent slopes, and Skumpah-Yenrab complex, saline, 0 to 15 percent slopes, and one miscellaneous area of water and saline. The miscellaneous area is no longer entirely flooded, and the soils met the criteria for hydric conditions, as did the soils examined in the two soil map units. Wetland indicators were present just 2 to 5 cm below the surface. Area and field office staff assessed vegetation and hydrology and concluded that with the presence of hydric soils, the property met conditions for a wetland.