



**UTAH PHYSICIANS**  
for a **HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT**  
Clean Air, Clean Energy, Clean Future

# 2025 Annual Report



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**2025 was another year of accomplishments for UPHE. Even in very difficult times and a challenging political environment we were on the front lines working hard for clean air and a healthy environment for our families to live in.**

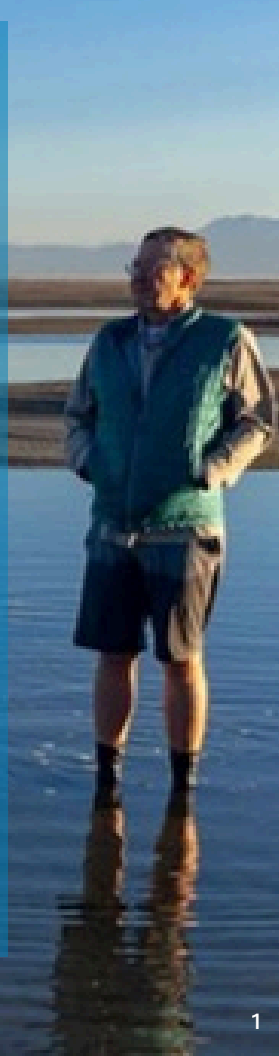
We have an amazing all volunteer Board of Directors that gives us the expertise, knowledge and extensive experience that helps us be the leader promoting the link between environmental hazards and our health. We help give people the tools through education on the dangers of air pollution and how to protect ourselves and advocate for better regulations and enforcement of laws that are already on the books.

**As you will read in the pages of our annual report we have been working hard on your behalf.** We started a pilot program to educate school aged kids about air quality through our Clean Air Monitoring and Education in Schools Program. We continue to pressure the local and state government to make decisions that will positively affect our health. Our unprecedented legal actions have taken thousands of parts and hundreds of vehicles off the road that were breaking environmental laws and dangerously polluting the air because of illegal and modified exhaust systems. We are part of litigation to protect Great Salt Lake and are actively battling to stop a dangerous mine in Parley's Canyon.

Like the saying goes, there is no rest on planetary duty. We are so grateful to be supported by a dedicated group of members and supporters who let us know that the work we do is important to them and we will never stop and never back down in our quest to protect the health and well being of all Utahns.

With gratitude, Jonny Vasic

Executive Director



# Brian Moench, M.D.

President and Co-founder

In my 20 years of working on environmental issues, we have never been facing a more difficult situation, and at the worst possible time.

Our federal government has openly acknowledged they have abandoned their responsibility to protect us from pollution, toxic chemicals, or the climate crisis. Our state government is turning a blind eye to the environmental & health consequences of their relentless economic obsessions. I used to say rhetorically UPHE's willingness to take these environmental issues to court is our last line of defense. That is no longer just rhetoric, it's reality. Like the recent Academy Award winning movie, "One Battle After Another," for us it is constantly, "one battle after another" against a legislature dominated by people refractory to science, facts, and empirical evidence.

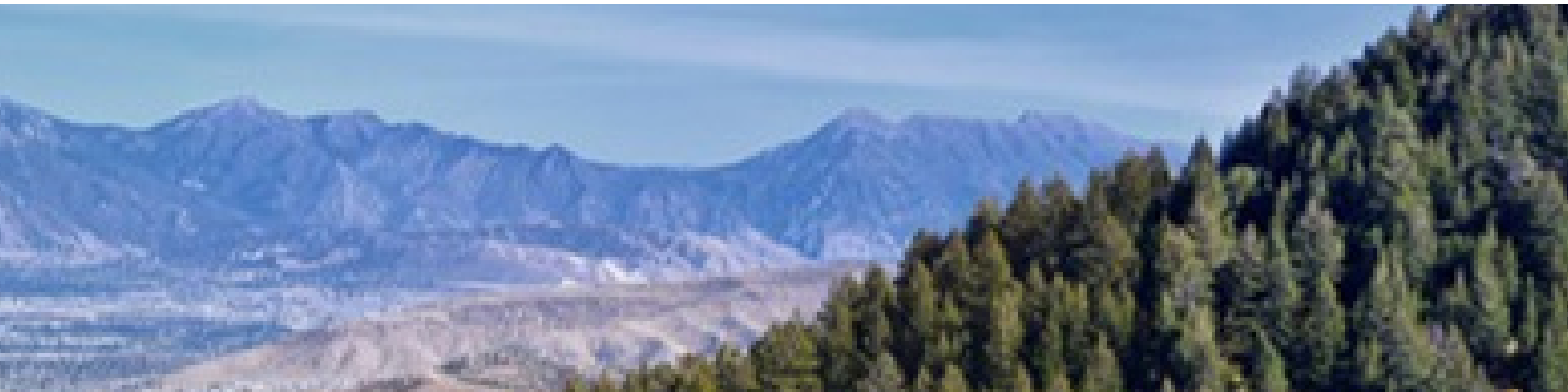
**Informing and educating the public on the latest research has always been an important part of UPHE's mission. This year we completed the most detailed report found anywhere on the multiple hazards in Great Salt Lake dust. We just finished a similar, comprehensive report breaking down all the reasons why nuclear power is not the answer to Utah's future energy needs. We continue to fight against the Utah Inland Port Authority's industrialization of the Wasatch Front, the state's love affair with fossil fuels, and their willful blindness to the devastating impact of an ever hotter world and a drier climate in Utah. We wish we could work ourselves out of a job, but in meantime we have a lot more work to do.**

# Mission Statement

UPHE is dedicated to protecting the health and well-being of the residents of Utah by promoting science-based education and interventions that result in progressive, measurable improvements to the environment and our health.

**In 2007, UPHE began working for a healthy environment in Utah because we knew the voice of medical science was badly needed in the quest to preserve a livable future for all of us. We don't just speak truth to power; we work to give real power to scientific truth. We educate, advocate, and when necessary, litigate to protect your health and our future.**

UPHE has always been committed to doing what's necessary to protect Utahns from the health hazards of the many and varied types of environmental contamination that plague our state. This report outlines some of the things we have worked on in 2025 on behalf of you and your family.







### Great Salt Lake Rally

We are proud co-sponsors of the rally every year, because we know what's at risk. Positioned at the start of Utah's legislative session, the massive show of support we see at the rally serves as a powerful reminder to the legislature of Utahns' priorities. UPHE is proud to be a trusted source on the public health threats of the lake's condition.

### A Taxpayer Boondoggle: The Utah Inland Port Authority's Impact on Utah Taxpayers

We helped expose the health effects of the \$1.3 BILLION being spent subsidizing industrialization across Utah, but most concerning, on Great Salt Lake wetlands.

### The Wallace Stegner Symposium at the University of Utah

Dr. Moench answered serious questions about our region's air quality challenges in a panel discussion with the Division of Air Quality director and SLC Mayor.

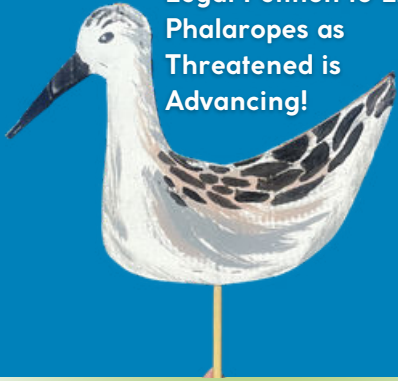
# YEAR

## EARTH DAY



# IN REVIEW

Legal Petition to List Phalaropes as Threatened is Advancing!



## Sailfest

It's always great to get out to Great Salt Lake for some fun and festivities.



## People's Great Salt Lake Summit

A sneak peak of our upcoming documentary was shared, we presented on health findings from our dust report, *Downwind*, and volunteers helped us engage with attendees!



UPHE's very own Dr. Brian Moench honored with a Distinguished Humanitarian Award.



## Ask Us Anything

We answered over 100 questions from the community about the health impacts of our drying Great Salt Lake. Our conversations on Reddit had 75K views!



# Programs and Campaigns

In 2025, UPHE stepped up to protect the health of Utah residents from poor air quality, from powerful industries, and harmful policies.

At UPHE, we firmly believe the people hold the power. Our philosophy is to educate and engage the public, so that they are able to take action and apply pressure to create meaningful changes for our communities. That's why we worked on translating the latest medical and scientific literature to actionable items, like in our comprehensive dust report, Downwind.

We pride ourselves on being trusted watch dogs for the community, alerting neighbors of proposed development from the Utah Inland Port, or Granite Construction's Parley's Canyon mine proposal.



Education & Advocacy



Great Salt Lake



Litigation



Parley's Canyon



Inland Port

Data Centers



Dangers of Wood Smoke



Forever Chemicals



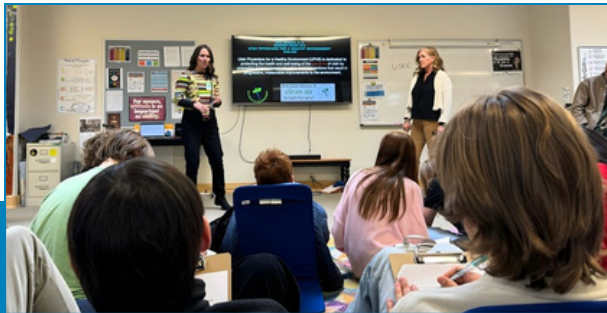


# Education and Advocacy

This year, our team brought environmental health education directly to classrooms across Utah, engaging students with clear, science-based lessons on air quality, climate change, and toxic exposures. These presentations sparked curiosity, built understanding, and helped students see how environmental conditions directly affect their health and futures.



Our educational impact extended well beyond schools. UPHE delivered community presentations to boards, local organizations, and public audiences statewide, translating complex environmental health research into accessible, actionable guidance. Through these conversations, we help individuals and communities make informed choices that support healthier homes, schools, and workplaces—strengthening public health across Utah.



We prioritize proactive education, equipping the next generation with the knowledge to recognize environmental risks and advocate for healthier communities. By integrating medical and public health expertise into school settings, we empower young people with practical tools to reduce exposure to pollution and environmental toxins in their everyday lives.



# Litigation

## Current Cases



Lawsuits may be the most important tool that UPHE uses on your behalf.

Victory!



Harley  
Davidson

### Great Salt Lake

Public trust doctrine was famously used to prevent complete decimation of Mono Lake in California. And we are working with coalition partners to use it to save Great Salt Lake.

Public trust doctrine established that certain natural and cultural resources are preserved for public use. The public is considered the owner of the resources, and the government protects and maintains these resources for the public's use.

**A state district court judge ruled to continue our lawsuit after the state attempted to have it dismissed.**

Through our lawsuit, the state's lack of intention to reduce upstream diversions from the lake has become even clearer. We are hopeful the legal process will play out successfully in this case.

"Court orders excess air pollution to stop from tampered motorcycles sold and serviced at Harley-Davidson dealerships."

**This is the first known Clean Air Act citizen enforcement action to stop the catalyst-defeating practices of motorcycle dealerships.**

"We're pleased to have reached this resolution of our case with the dealerships. They are to be commended for taking this turn in direction. It's a win for everyone, and it's a win for clean air."

- Dr. Kirtly Parker Jones

Citizen authority to curb excess pollution from tampered diesel trucks operating in the Wasatch Front was established in the "Diesel Brothers" litigation, and was used in the Harley-Davidson matter to reduce excess emissions from tampered motorcycles.



# Great Salt Lake

For the first time, **physicians who specialize in the health consequences of air pollution** have reviewed all the relevant medical research, including **over 500 studies**, & have **compiled the most comprehensive report to date** on the public health consequences of a disappearing Great Salt Lake.



Executive Director, Jonny Vasic, speaking on behalf of a legal petition to get the Wilson's Phalarope listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. This is a canary in a coal mine moment for the survival of the birds and the lake.

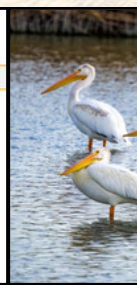
## Downwind

*How Failed Great Salt Lake Water Policy and Toxic Dust Create Generational Debt and Jeopardize Utah's Future*

Our new report, **Downwind**, provides the most comprehensive database assembled on the issue of air pollution caused by the continued desiccation of the Great Salt Lake, and it goes far beyond the media stories that have been generated so far.

The report seeks to help the public understand the economic liability of not saving the Great Salt Lake and outlines the myriad toxic impacts to Utahns from failing to raise lake levels. UPHE and the Utah Rivers Council's Great Salt Lake Waterkeeper have spent **18 months** researching and summarizing this material and consulting some **577 published references**.





# Utah Inland Port

The Utah Inland Port Authority (UIPA) was forced to answer to our lawsuit, calling out inconsistencies with their board and separation of powers in the state constitution. Massive industrial development authorized and subsidized by the port authority is harming communities.

We continue to fight their proposals that would worsen air quality and threaten wetlands.

We organized multiple times at press conferences and rallies, brought the voice of medical science through public comments, and thoroughly researched reports.

We dove deep into the potential impact of developing over wetlands, and brought that information to light.

See the latest updates & new reports on the potential impact of Inland Port developments





# Protect Parley's Canyon

Granite Construction is trying to dodge large mine regulations by first applying for a "mini" mine of six acres. But they clearly intend to exploit a 2025 state law that makes it nearly impossible for citizens or local governments to prevent mine expansions. These property owners could ultimately expand to 1,500 acres which would destroy Parley's Canyon as we know it.

Last year, we helped get a study implemented that showed there is no shortage of aggregate and therefore the proposed mine and gravel pit in Parley's Canyon is not needed.



"WITH THE DUST EVENT THAT WE'RE SEEING TODAY ESPECIALLY, A LOT OF THE DUST IS PROBABLY COMING WITHIN THE VALLEY FROM THE VARIOUS KIND OF QUARRIES THAT WE HAVE AND MINING OPERATIONS THAT WE HAVE THROUGHOUT THE VALLEY,"

University of Utah Professor Derek Mallia on a May, 2025 dust storm

THE DAQ DIRECTOR TELLS US THAT BY FAR, THE MOST COMMON AIR QUALITY COMPLAINT THEY GET FROM THE PUBLIC IS ABOUT FUGITIVE DUST FROM GRAVEL PITS.

# 2,943

MESSAGES SENT TO LEGISLATORS  
OPPOSING LEGISLATION THAT WOULD HAVE  
FAST-TRACKED A MINE FOR PARLEY'S CANYON.  
WE'RE STILL FIGHTING THIS, FOR A  
HEALTHIER UTAH.

# 1,500

ACRES OF PARLEYS  
CANYON AT RISK OF BEING  
BULLDOZED.

# 139,000

PEOPLE LIVE WITHIN A  
3-MILE  
RADIUS OF THE PROPOSAL

## Nuclear

After years of advocacy by impacted communities, Congress has reinstated and actually even **expanded** the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA). This historic update means that many more people, including those who lived in all of Utah during the 1950's and 60's nuclear testing era are now **eligible for \$100,000 in compensation** if they develop certain cancers linked to radiation exposure.



**RECA was EXPANDED!**

See if you or a loved one qualifies for compensation.

**Win!**

## Data Centers

There is growing information about the massive amount of water & energy consumption of AI Data Centers. **There are multiple AI Data Centers planned across our water stressed state.** We oppose this type of development as it prioritizes, and through UIPA could even subsidize, profit for tech billionaires at the direct expense of the health of our residents. Data centers are being used as an excuse to bring nuclear power to Utah, a huge mistake. They are also epicenters of PFAS contamination in communities.

## PFAS (forever chemicals) & Pesticides

Virtually all of us have PFAS in our blood, including newborns. **The chemicals have been linked to 55 different diseases.** They are probably the most toxic industrial chemicals produced, and should be phased out entirely.

UPHE has focused efforts attempting to **BAN PFAS chemicals from pesticides** sprayed by state agencies. Pesticides are toxic to human health on their own, but compounded can be detrimental.

We are determined to protect our community from harmful chemical exposure & **the science is on our side.**

## Dangers of Wood Smoke

At UPHE, we believe clean air is a human right, indoors and outdoors. **Wood smoke is a serious and too often overlooked threat to public health.** Whether it comes from a crackling fireplace inside a home or a prescribed burn in a nearby forest, wood smoke is among the most dangerous types of air pollution we are exposed to.



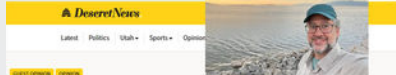
# UPHE in the NEWS



Courtney Henley, UPHE board member, had an excellent [op-ed in the Salt Lake Tribune](#) this week on the Utah Inland Port Authority's (UIPA) attempt to purchase State Institutional Trust Lands Administration (SITLA) land to further their operations. The full op-ed is copied below.

**Letter: SITLA can't benefit Utah students by contributing to pollution**

UPHE's executive director, Jonny Vasic, had an op-ed in the Desert News, connecting his personal relationship with Great Salt Lake to UPHE's advocacy to revive it.



**Opinion: Protecting the Great Salt Lake is necessary to keep Utah a great state**

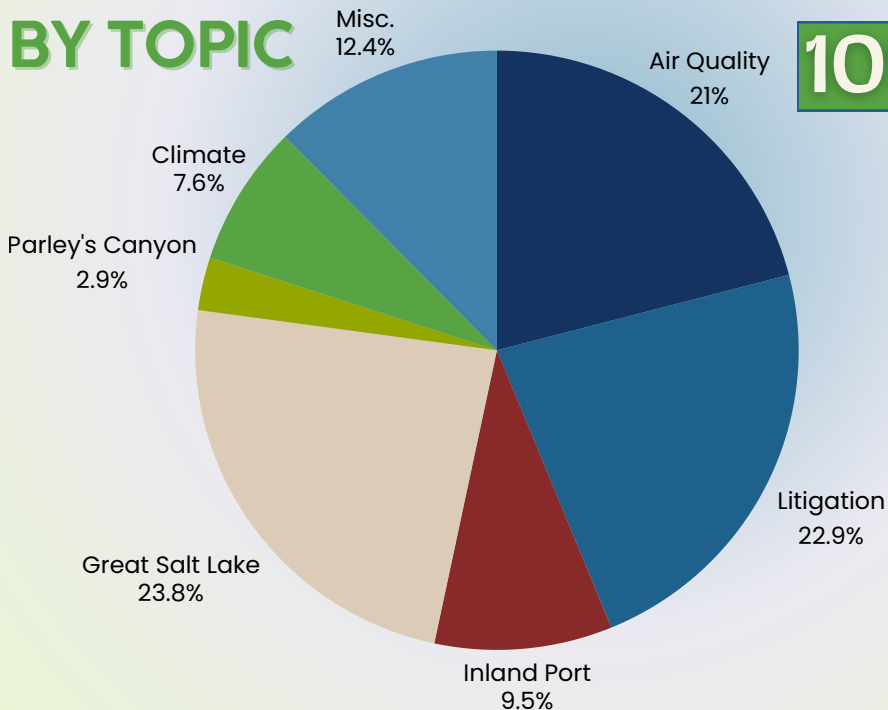
The shrinking and potential disappearance of the Great Salt Lake is one of the most important environmental issues and public health threats in Utah's history.



**Voices: I didn't have asthma until I moved to Utah. Weakening air quality forced me to leave.**

Four years after moving here, I can hardly utilize the mountains in Utah. I have asthma now, and I'm not alone. UPHE Manager of Programs and Development, Brandi O'Brien, is talking about how her own health is impacted by poor air quality in Utah.

## BY TOPIC



**109** News Features!

**48** Trusted News Outlets

## Social Media

**30+** WAYS TO TAKE ACTION

In 2025, we expanded our reach...

**9.7 k** VIEWS ON TIKTOK

**4.38k** VIEWS ON SUBSTACK

# Board of Directors

President & cofounder



Brian Moench,  
M.D.

Vice President



Kirtly Parker Jones,  
M.D.

Treasurer



Scott Pynes



Janice Evans



Mark Goldfarb,  
M.D.



Courtney Henley,  
M.D.



Sara E. H. Johnson,  
M.D.



John MacFarlane,  
M.D.



Richard Kanner,  
M.D.



Sean Slack,  
M.D.



Robert Weir,  
M.D.

Our all volunteer board brings their  
knowledge and expertise to  
community issues.

A special thank you to our wonderful 2025 interns!  
Alexa Peseri, Eron Powell, Sydney Rogers & Kara Olsen

## Staff



Jonny Vasic  
Executive Director

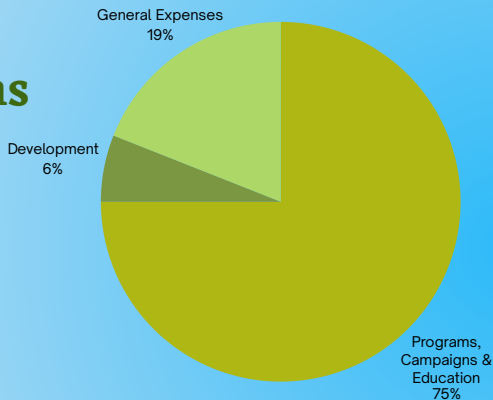
Brandi O'Brien  
Manager of Programs & Development



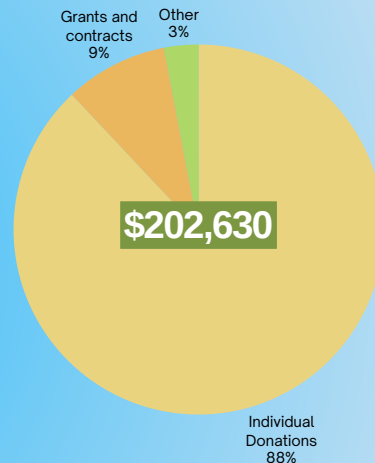
# Resource Allocation

We work hard every day to be worthy of your trust and donations. We are proud that the majority of our funding comes from private donors, and we are able to allocate the majority of that money to our programs, campaigns & education programs. Thank you to all of our dedicated donors and fiscal partners.

## Allocations of Funds



## Funding Sources



# Coalition & Community Partnerships



Center for Biological Diversity  
Doctors and Scientists Against Wood Smoke  
EarthJustice  
Friends of the Great Salt Lake  
Great Salt Lake Audubon  
Heal Utah  
League of Women Voters  
National Parks Conservation Association  
Natural Resources Defense Council  
Save Our Canyons  
Save Our Great Salt Lake

Sierra Club Utah  
Stewardship Utah  
Utah Citizens Advocating Renewable Energy (UCARE)  
Westside Coalition  
Western Resource Advocates  
Utah Valley Earth Forum  
U of U - Sustainability Office  
Utah Tar Sands Resistance  
Utah Rivers Council  
Utah Moms for Clean Air



Protect Parley's Working Group



Stop the Polluting Port



Pesticide Working Group



Founding Member of the Utah Lead Coalition



Regional Haze Coalition



Protect Great Salt Lake Coalition



Utah State Affiliate and Member of Medical Society Consortium on Climate & Health

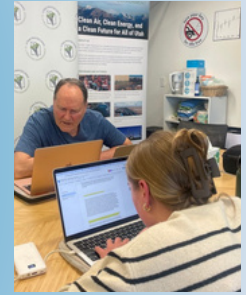
# Contact us

Join us in our mission to ensure a healthy environment for all Utahns.

Just a \$25 donation secures your membership.  
Be a part of the solution for a healthier, cleaner future for Utah.  
Together, we can make a difference.



Sign up for our weekly email updates to get involved.



Follow Us On Social Media! @utahphysicians



YouTube



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