

Canal trails: Conserving water and moving people

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The use of canals to transport water has a long history in Utah. Communities throughout Utah are interconnected by canals, and the water that moves through them has helped the state flourish. Now, new ideas are showing how canals can provide even more benefits.

In “Canal trails: Conserving water and moving people,” Dr. Patrick Singleton shared examples of Utah communities that added transportation options for people around already-existing canals. These pathways that encourage “active transportation” provide more recreation opportunities, improve public health, reduce air pollution, and even conserve water.

There is no perfect answer for cities and towns that want to expand the network of paths they provide their citizens, but looking at other Utah communities that have successfully integrated canal trails will highlight opportunities and flag potential challenges. These trails have regularly proven to be win-win scenarios for the community, canal companies, and other stakeholders.

During his presentation, Dr. Singleton highlighted the benefits of developing canal corridors, including the stunning water-saving results that come from burying the waterways. He also pointed out common hurdles that have been overcome along the way.

This presentation was held at the USU Salt Lake Campus on February 8, 2024.



