

State News for NSPE Members

Utah's Ongoing Efforts to Boost Dam Safety

Dams are the lifeblood of the West. Without them, the region wouldn't be able to support metropolitan areas like Salt Lake City, Las Vegas, or southern California with critical drinking water and the ability to grow crops. Water is needed in the "bank" for use in times of drought.

But the West's dams are aging. Imagine being "born" in 1906, enlarged in 1916 and undergoing a portion of an upgrade in 2004? That's a lot of years to fulfill your mission — especially if it is 2023 and there are decades of "life" still to come, the [Deseret News reports](#).

Over time, things start to get stressed. The knees buckle, the back starts hurting. Arthritis kicks in. And in the case of dams, it is outdated infrastructure threatening the water supply — which threatens the future of farmers, ranchers and the public safety of people who live downstream from these structures.

With this record snowpack, the dams are spilling. That is a good thing — and what they were designed to do. But officials say now is the time to take a health check on the ones that need some rehabilitation.

"With aging infrastructure here in Utah, water is so critical, more than just to irrigators but for its recreational benefits and other reasons. The state has recognized the need to rehabilitate these projects and keep that infrastructure in service to protect them as the commodities they are," said Everett Taylor, assistant Utah state engineer over dam safety and stream alteration.

On average, Taylor said the state inspects about 300 dams a year, including those deemed high hazard. There are 223 with that classification in Utah. [Read more](#).

UDOT Moves Forward with Canyon Gondola Plan

The Utah Department of Transportation has made it official — it wants to build an

eight-mile-long gondola through Little Cottonwood Canyon.

UDOT's final record of decision means the department can officially move forward with the gondola plan, a decision years in the making. Building the gondola would likely take years, if not decades, to complete, [The Salt Lake Tribune reports](#).

The agency released a preliminary plan last August identifying the gondola as the best solution to fix the canyon's longstanding traffic issues, as winter sports enthusiasts regularly see long lines to enter the Alta and Snowbird resorts, along with the canyon's backcountry. Congestion can often spill into the summer months, too, as popular trailheads see lines of cars parked along the shoulders of the canyon's road.

The decision in August prompted thousands of public comments, which UDOT reviewed before releasing the finalized decision. According to UDOT records, the agency is taking a phased approach to the canyon's transportation. As early as this summer, the department will get the ball rolling on buying more buses, designing mobility hubs and make plans for tolling in the canyon. The latest tolling estimates could be around \$20 to \$30, with the hopes of reducing traffic and encouraging carpooling. UDOT wants these updates done by the fall of 2025. [Read more](#).

Utah State University Partners with Engineering Program in Taiwan

Utah State University has signed another agreement with National Chung Hsing University in Taiwan — this time with the College of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, according to a [news release](#).

The agreement is identical to the one signed with NCHU's College of Engineering in that it will allow doctoral students to earn a PhD at both institutions. Research and collaboration among students and faculty at both universities will now be streamlined through this agreement.

The College of EECS at NCHU was officially established on August 1, 2018, after the number of electrical engineering graduates skyrocketed. Over a quarter of degrees earned in Taiwan are in electrical engineering. EECS also includes 54 full-time faculty members and two adjunct faculty members, all of which specialize in electrical engineering, computer engineering and computer science.

"Uniting with the College of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science at NCHU is an honor and a great benefit for research and the PhD program at both institutions," said Rose Hu, engineering associate dean for research at USU. "I look forward to seeing what our talented faculty and students can accomplish." [Read more](#).



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Meet the 2023 NSPE Emerging Leaders



NSPE is pleased to recognize 15 talented professionals who recently completed the Society's [Emerging Leaders Program](#). This diverse group of young professionals was selected from around the country to take part in an intensive, unique enterprise designed to equip them as leaders in the engineering field.

- **Nicholas J. Bailey, P.E.** (Cincinnati, Ohio)
- **Frank Block III, Ph.D., P.E.** (Silver Spring, Maryland)
- **Timothy Choma, P.E.** (Iselin, New Jersey)
- **Courtney Cunningham, P.E.** (Houston, Texas)

- **Steven T. Fox, P.E.** (Nashville, Tennessee)
- **Blane Gee, P.E.** (Oklahoma City, Oklahoma)
- **Holly Hartley Guillaume, P.E.** (Katy, Texas)
- **Lingbee Chyna Lim, P.E.** (Charleston, South Carolina)
- **Brianne R. Jole, P.E.** (Lubbock, Texas)
- **Corey Kingsland, P.E.** (Kansas City, Missouri)
- **Carter Lytal, P.E.** (Lubbock, Texas)
- **Rebecca Martinez, P.E.** (Cherry Hill, New Jersey)
- **Alissa Neuhausen, P.E.** (Rockville, Maryland)
- **Victor Odili, P.E.** (Conroe, Texas)
- **Skylar Wierzbicki, P.E.** (Grapevine, Texas)

The program is [accepting applications](#) for the next class of rising leaders until August 31.



The upcoming [Professional Engineers Day](#) (Wednesday, August 2) is an incredible opportunity to showcase the value of NSPE and your PE license. We encourage you to post on your social media accounts a highlight from your community, your work, your impact, your story and include the #IAMNSPE, #WeareNSPE, #ProudPE.

NSPE's [apparel shop](#) features the PE Day logo on a variety of items including many styles of t-shirts and other apparel for men, women, and kids, as well as accessories like mugs, notebooks, tote bags, wall prints, and even phone cases. [Shop now.](#)

Check Out the Latest Issue of *PE*

The Chatter About AI

OpenAI's ChatGPT came on the scene in November 2022. This type of generative AI has made a noticeable impact in a brief period of time and other versions of chatbots have been released. This emerging technology is sparking discussions about what impact AI could have on the engineering workforce and in engineering practice.

Reaching Tomorrow's Innovators

DiscoverE has released its latest research on the views of high school students and parents on engineering and engineering careers. The Messages Matter results were encouraging as they reveal that targeted messages and profiles of engineers can spur interest in engineering among the very groups that will ensure a more diverse future for the field.

Members who subscribe to the [digital edition of *PE*](#) can access the current and back issues.



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