

Pollution in utah and it's affect on wild life

[Science](#), [Biology](#)



Pollution in Utah and its Effect on Wildlife Environmental pollution in any of its various forms –air, water or even light has detrimental effects on human health and life. But, humans are not the ones to suffer from the impact of pollution, wildlife too are affected in various ways. Pollution is a global problem and Utah is not an exception. Utah faces major air, water and light pollution problems of it's the impact of which is clearly visible on the wildlife of the region.

Good quality air is important for survival however Utah has several industries which contribute towards the presence of particulate matter in the air.

Wildlife of Utah does not have any other choice but to breathe in the bad quality air which leads to several health problems. The pollution in the air affects behaviour and reproduction ability in amphibians, birds and even in insects. Several pollutants are present in air in Utah such as sulphur dioxide and lead which can cause damage to the nervous system and the respiratory system of the wildlife in Utah. One of the major contributors to the air pollution is the oil and shale facilities. The development of energy in these facilities produces toxic substances which can cause problem to the deer and elk populations.

Light pollution is another major problem that exists today in Utah. Light pollution refers to the increasing use of artificial lights which has grave implication o the ecology of individual insects and organisms. Light pollution causes alteration in the normal natural light cycles and affects both nocturnal and diurnal animals. Migrating birds are often surprised by tall buildings lit up heavily by lights. The birds lose their sense of direction and often smash into the buildings. This not only hampers the population ecology

f the migratory species but also alters the migratory patterns and routes of these birds (Plumer, 2014).

However, water pollution is perhaps one of the major threats to the wildlife of the region. Waters of large water bodies such as Great Salt Lake have been polluted with contaminants such as methyl mercury. Studies have shown that the fish of the Great Salt Lake contain methyl mercury in their bodies. The chemical bioaccumulates and is transferred between species through the food chain. Therefore, piscivorous animals such as birds, ducks and otters suffer from adverse effects from the toxicity which may cause behavioural, neurological changes and can even result in death (Utah, department of Environmental Quality, 2014). Surveys of the Great Salt Lake conducted in 1996-1997 reported presence of heavy metals such as lead, cadmium and selenium in the sediments. Contamination was also found in 600 samples of avian eggs, amphibians and reptiles of the wetlands. These contaminated waters serve an important region for millions of migratory birds. However studies of birds such as green-winged teal, northern shoveler etc between 2004-2005 have shown traces of mercury and selenium contamination which have subsequently lead to thinning of the egg shells laid by these birds. Thus, contamination leads to harmful impacts on the reproduction rates of the birds (Vest et al, 2009).

Pollution is today a major problem. The administrators of Utah need to understand and investigate the various problems that the wildlife of the region has to face because of the growing problems of all pollution.

Identification of the problems needs to be followed by solution and proper implementation of the solution. Therefore all states need to adopt and

implement pollution management strategies and come up with methods to reduce the impact of pollution on wildlife to ensure the survival of the species. In addition to this proper monitoring methods also need to be introduced in order to ake sure that the solutions implemented in order to protect the wildlife is followed.

References

- Plumer, B." Light pollution is erasing the night sky. Can we bring it back? (2014). Retrieved from <http://www.vox.com/2014/9/18/6152979/light-pollution-is-erasing-the-night-sky-can-we-bring-it-back>
- Vest, J. L. et al. " Trace element concentrations in wintering waterfowl from the Great Salt Lake, Utah." Archives of Environmental Contamination and Toxicology. 56. 2 (2009): 302-316. Print.
- Utah Departemnt of Environemnt Quality." Mercury in fish and wildlife." (2014). Retrieved from <http://www.deq.utah.gov/Pollutants/M/mercury/facts/fishwildlife.htm>