

# POTASH RESOURCES OF UTAH: AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

*by*

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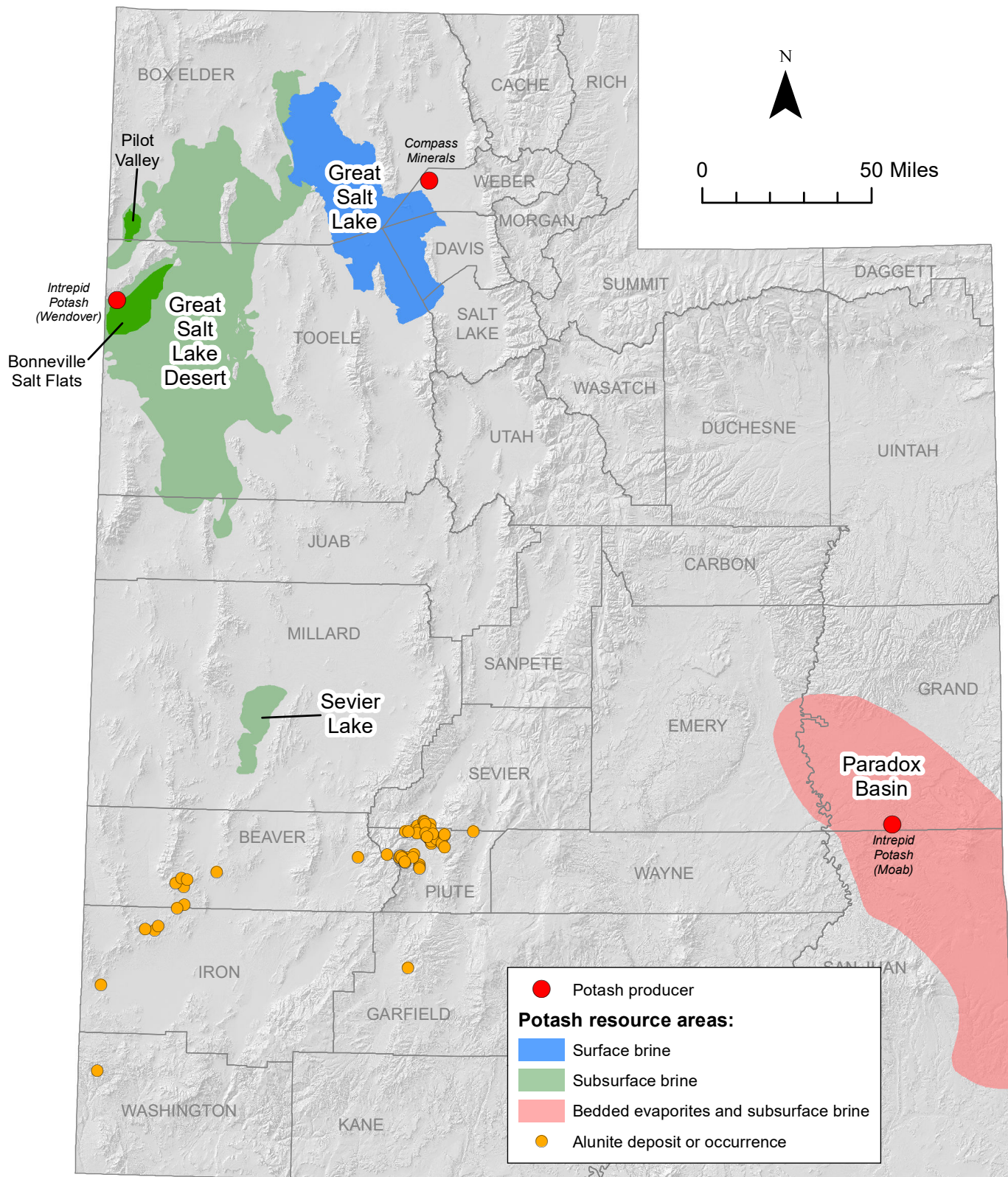
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## INTRODUCTION

Potash is an important part of Utah's diverse mineral industry and, currently, Utah is one of only two potash-producing states. Potash is a somewhat generic term that includes both natural and manufactured potassium-based compounds or salts such as potassium chloride (KCl or MOP [muriate of potash]), potassium sulfate ( $K_2SO_4$  or SOP [sulfate of potash]), and potassium magnesium sulfate ( $K_2SO_4 \cdot 2MgSO_4$  or SOPM [sulfate of potash-magnesia]). Because potassium is an essential plant nutrient, most potash is used as fertilizer and, according to the U.S. Geological Survey, 85% of domestically produced potash in 2021 was used for that purpose. The remaining 15% was used in other industrial or chemical applications. In 2018, potash was declared a critical mineral by the U.S. Department of the Interior because the U.S. imports most of its potash (Fortier and others, 2018); however, potash's status as a critical mineral was removed in 2022 (Nassar and Fortier, 2021; U.S. Geological Survey, 2022).

Utah's potash resources are found in surface brines, subsurface brines, subsurface bedded evaporites, and alunite (figure 1). Currently, Utah produces potash from surface brines, subsurface brines, and subsurface bedded evaporites. Notably, Utah produces two types of potash: potassium sulfate from Great Salt Lake and potassium chloride from subsurface brines at the Bonneville Salt Flats and bedded evaporites in the Paradox Basin. In the last decade or so, exploration activities for potash in Utah have focused on subsurface brines, subsurface bedded evaporites, and alunite.

The purpose of this bibliography is to catalog some of the most significant published and unpublished references related to Utah's potash resources, and if available, to provide web links to those references. This list is not exhaustive and priority was given to sources that contain grade information, resource estimates, or production history. Brief annotations of the contents of the references are provided. Following a statewide section, the remaining sections are broken down geographically into different resource areas (with the exception of alunite resources): Great Salt Lake, the Great Salt Lake Desert (includes the Bonneville Salt Flats and Pilot Valley), the Paradox Basin, and Sevier Lake. An alunite section follows these. Ideally, this bibliography will be updated as additional important sources are identified and as opportunity permits.



**Figure 1.** Potash resource areas and deposits in Utah. Relevant sources for the features on this map include Massoth (2012), Hintze and others (2000), and the Utah Geological Survey's Utah Mineral Occurrence System database (UMOS).

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- This report contains a description of the Crescent Graben potash deposit and contains potash interval data for multiple wells in the area.
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- The report includes a JORC-compliant resource estimate for potash in the Hatch Point area from cycles 13 and 18; includes resource maps.
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- Report includes thickness, grade, and overburden maps for multiple potash cycles/intervals in northern San Juan County.
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- This report includes brine chemistry data for the Paradox Basin.
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- This report includes some brine chemistry from Sevier Lake.

Blois, M.D.S., Hardy, M., Effner, S., Henchel, L.D., and Waite, D., 2013, NI 43-101 technical report preliminary feasibility study of the Sevier Lake Playa sulphate of potash project, Millard County, Utah: Unpublished Canadian National Instrument (NI) 43-101 technical report prepared by CH2M Hill for EPM Mining Ventures Inc., variously paginated, <https://geology.utah.gov/apps/reportviewer/reports/SevierLakeK2013NI11-18.pdf>.

- Extensive summary of the Sevier Lake potash deposit; includes historical information, exploration summaries, resource estimates, grade maps, brine chemistry data from exploration, and other information.

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Gwynn, J.W., 2006, History and mineral characterization of Sevier Lake, Millard County, Utah: Utah Geological Survey Miscellaneous Publication 06-6, 144 p., <https://doi.org/10.34191/mp-06-6>.

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Whelan, J.A., 1969, Subsurface brines and soluble salts of subsurface sediments, Sevier Lake, Millard County, Utah: Utah Geological and Mineralogical Survey Special Studies 30, 13 p., <https://doi.org/10.34191/ss-30>.

- Includes brine chemistry from Sevier Lake.

Wilberg, D.E., 1991, Hydrologic reconnaissance of the Sevier Lake area, west-central Utah: Utah Department of Natural Resources, Division of Water Rights Technical Publication no. 96, 51 p., <https://waterrights.utah.gov/docSys/v920/y920/y9200004.pdf>.

- This report includes brine chemistry and density data; also includes well data and logs.

## Alunite

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- This report includes brief descriptions and resource estimates for several Utah alunite deposits.

- Hild, J.H., 1946, Exploration of alunite deposits, Marysvale, Piute County, Utah: U.S. Bureau of Mines Report of Investigations 3972, 74 p.
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- This technical report includes grade data (including location data and limited grade data from drill holes) and resource estimates for Blawn Mountain deposit.
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