



USDA Forest Service Intermountain Region **FISHLAKE NATIONAL FOREST**



Fishlake Forest Supervisor



Mike Elson has been the Forest Supervisor of the Fishlake National Forest since August 2018. Prior to that, he was the District Ranger in Flagstaff, Arizona for 10 years, where he worked closely with the community following the Schultz Fire of 2010 to develop and implement the Flagstaff Watershed Protection Project. He was also a part of the Four Forest Restoration Initiative from its inception to wide-scale implementation and developed a large and successful program for managing natural ignitions across the Flagstaff Ranger District.

Mike loves the landscape and diversity of the Fishlake National Forest. “This is one of the areas I came to recreate long before I worked here,” said Elson. “I love the wide-open spaces, red rocks, forests, fish and wildlife, and high peaks. Fishlake has a reputation for getting things done (we have the best people!), which is very important to me, and there are some great partnerships with our communities and other agencies.” Elson is an avid fisherman and photographer.

ABOUT THE FOREST

The Fishlake National Forest is located in South-Central Utah and encompasses 1.5 million acres in Beaver, Garfield, Iron, Juab, Millard, Piute, Sanpete, Sevier, and Wayne Counties.

The Forest features majestic stands of aspen encircling open mountain meadows that are lush with a diverse community of forbs and grasses. One such stand is the clone named Pando. It holds the Guinness Book of World Records for the largest living organism.

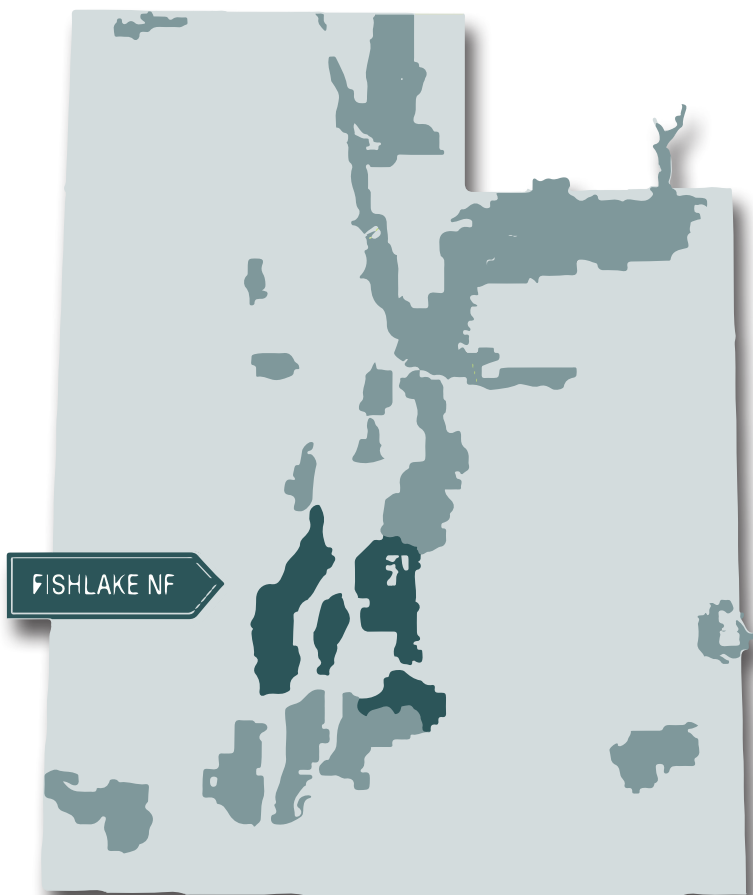
The Fishlake Forest sits across the boundary of two major physiographic elements of the North American continent: the Colorado Plateau and the Basin and Range. The Colorado Plateau is characterized by rocks deposited in a shallow marine environment or on a coastal plain. These rocks are predominantly sandstones, shales, and salts. Their spectacular colors come from the warm oxidizing environment that acted on trace elements within the rocks.



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About thirty million years ago, the plateau was uplifted about a mile to its present elevation. The rocks have been bent into broad, sweeping arches and basins such as the San Rafael Swell and the San Juan Basin. Igneous intrusions have formed laccolithic mountains such as the Henrys and Sleeping Ute. Most of the Plateau is drained by the Colorado River System which has cut spectacularly sharp canyons.

Fish Lake, from which the forest takes its name, is considered by many to be the gem of Utah. The largest natural mountain lake in the state, it offers trophy fishing and bird watching. The mountains of Fish Lake are a source of water for many of the neighboring communities and agricultural valleys in the region. Hunting, fishing, and ATV/OHV use are among the most popular forms of recreation enjoyed by forest visitors.



The Fishlake boasts the largest motorized recreation program in Region 4. The Paiute Trail system has over 3,000 miles of trails that loop in and out of the mountains of Central Utah.



The Fishlake has placed particular emphasis on their vegetation management program. Last year, they treated over 50,000 acres to mimic natural disturbance regimes and planted over 83,000 trees.



The Forest is home to the largest and most massive aspen clone, Pando. Pando also holds two Guinness Book of World Records, one of which is the world's largest living organism.



Fishlake NF has put increased focus on its range management program, including long-term trend monitoring, Range NEPA, and permit administration.



The Fishlake is one of the first forests in Utah to use the Good Neighbor Authority to supplement timber prep and sales.



Fishlake NF is currently hosting two Utah Shared Stewardship projects on the Beaver and Fillmore RDs.