

About Brighton

Brighton has been a scenic gathering place since its pioneer days. The first Pioneer Days in Utah were celebrated at Silver Lake in 1857. Soon after, Brighton was homesteaded by Scottish immigrants William and Catherine Brighton in 1870. They built a rustic hotel that hosted hundreds of visitors to enjoy the canyon scenery and cool summer days. Timber to build Salt Lake City was an important export from the canyon, as was silver ore during the mining boom of 1872-1892. The Cardiff Mine, closed in 1961, was the largest and last active mine in the canyon.

Today, recreation-loving visitors number about 2 Million annually. Big Cottonwood Canyon is the largest watershed in Salt Lake Valley, covering 50 sq. miles, and furnishing 20% of the valley's water. Sparkling mountain water reaches home faucets in 24 hours without an intermediate storage reservoir. Some water storage is provided by snow, averaging 500 inches/year, which yields 27 inches of water (the valley gets about 16 inches/year). It's the cleanest water of any source in the area, and canyon water companies have won several BEST WATER IN UTAH awards. The U.S. Forest Service supervises 80% of the land in the canyon; 20% is private land stretching back to pioneer homesteads and old mining claims. There are about 800 homes, with 80% being seasonal cabins. Two world-class ski resorts, Brighton (est. 1936) and Solitude (est. 1956), provide a casual, family-friendly flavor to the canyon, and are surrounded by thousands of acres of backcountry ski terrain.

The 260 full-time residents voted to incorporate in 2018, and the incorporated Town of Brighton was created on January 1, 2020.