



# Tropic Reservoir & Otter Creek Water Storage Update



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Utah Division of Water Rights



# Introduction

- Tropic and East Fork Irrigation and Otter Creek Reservoir have a long history of cooperative water storage.
- A lapse in legal agreements has brought renewed attention and regulation.
- The Division of Water Rights is working on a resolution and ensuring compliance.



# Background

**1898-1901** →

Tropic Dam is documented as early as 1898, but likely built earlier

**1936** →

Dam failed, additional storage was constructed

**1942** →

Additional storage was requested but rejected

**1961**

Two-year, Temporary Informal Storage Agreement "Napkin Agreement"

**1977** →

Spillway rebuilt; Otter Creek filed change application a9528 to store up to 3,000 af in Tropic

**2005** →

State Engineer approved change a9528

**2010** →

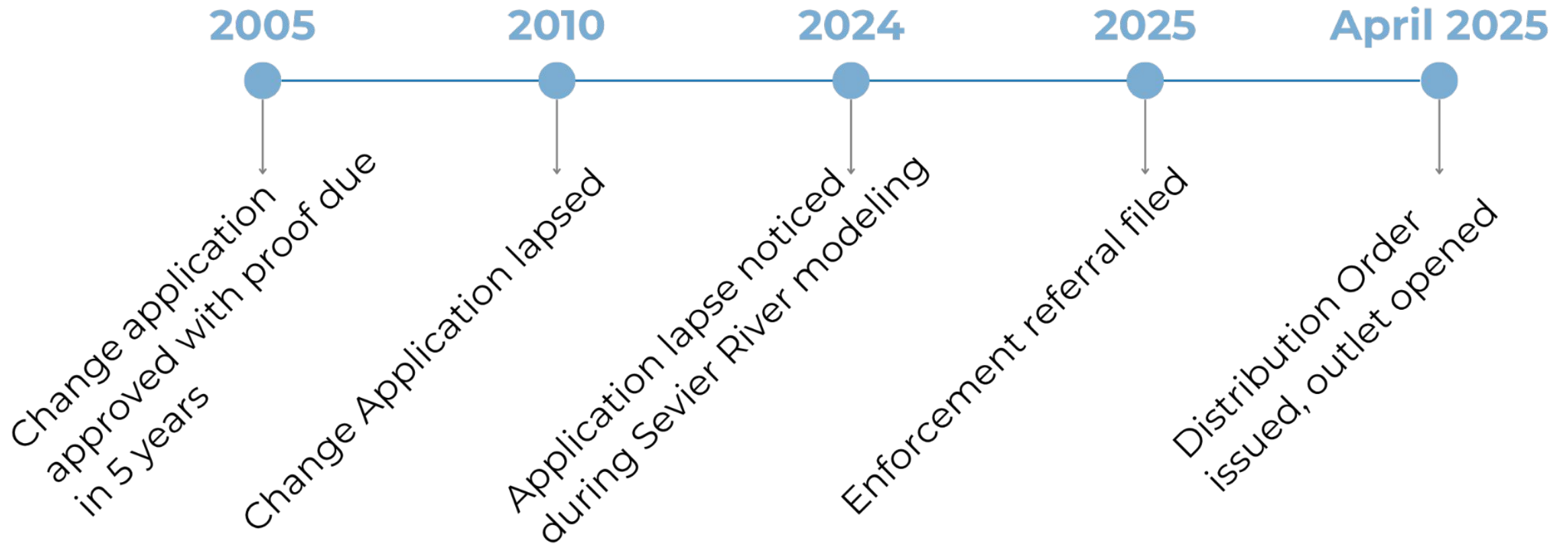
Application lapsed; notices returned undeliverable

*until* **2025**

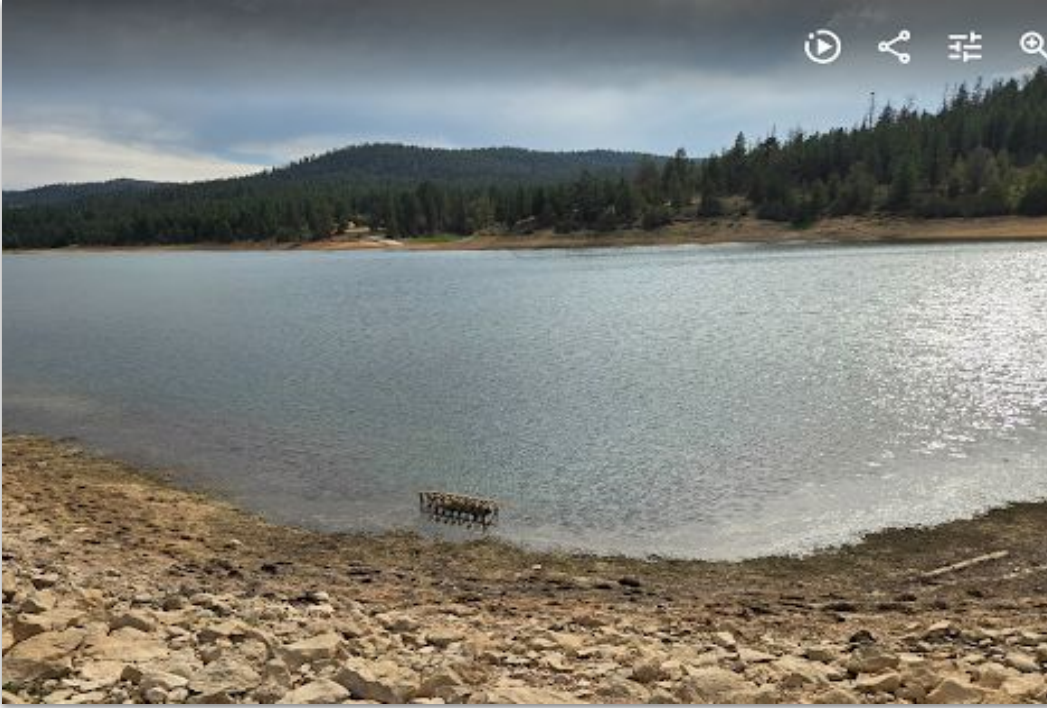
Tropic continued storing water without a valid water right



# Timeline of Recent Administrative Actions



# Tropic: What is legally allowed



- Direct Flow:
  - 20 cfs 4/15 to 6/1
  - 15 cfs 6/1 to 10/15
- Tropic is allowed to store no more than 540 acre-feet between May 1 and Oct. 15
- Winter storage is not allowed without a valid change application.





# Otter Creek: Decreed right & storage



- Otter Creek owns the water right, a change application has not been made, and they have declined to refile a change application.



# Measurement installed to improve distribution



- To improve monitoring and to accurately assess the situation, the division added measurement, installed telemetry, and updated existing devices.
- Measurement devices have been added on three locations and one more is planned.





# Status Report: June 2025



- The unauthorized water in Tropic has been released and legal storage resumed.
- State Engineer continues to work with all parties toward compliance and best next steps.





# Looking ahead

- Measurement and monitoring systems expanding
- Development of WCAT Model for the Sevier underway
- New agreements must follow legal procedure
- Commitment to transparency and sustainable water use
- Working to alleviate concerns about irrigation season
- Continued collaboration encouraged.





# Thank you.

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