

Water Conditions, Streamflow, Priority Distribution

Legislative Water Development Commission



Water Rights

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Utah follows the Law of Prior Appropriation, which means older rights receive water first -- "first in time, first in right." In a typical year, junior rights may get cut back by midsummer as stream flow drops after spring runoff. This year, with very little snowpack, distribution cuts are happening much earlier.

Four Main Water Rights Concepts During Drought

Natural Flow is the total supply of a stream system, which is generally different from stream flow stream at any given time.

Natural Flow

Priority Date

Priority Date is a water right's assigned chronological date.

- Water rights that share a priority date are also given a "class" (1st, 2nd, 3rd)
- Many dates and classes are established by court decree

Direct Flow Rights are taken directly from the stream.

- Among the earliest rights
- Cannot be stored
- Always fully satisfied before other water rights

Direct Flow Rights

Storage Facilities

Storage Rights have the latest priority dates.

- Water can only be stored when **Natural Flow** exceeds 100% of **Direct Flow** Rights

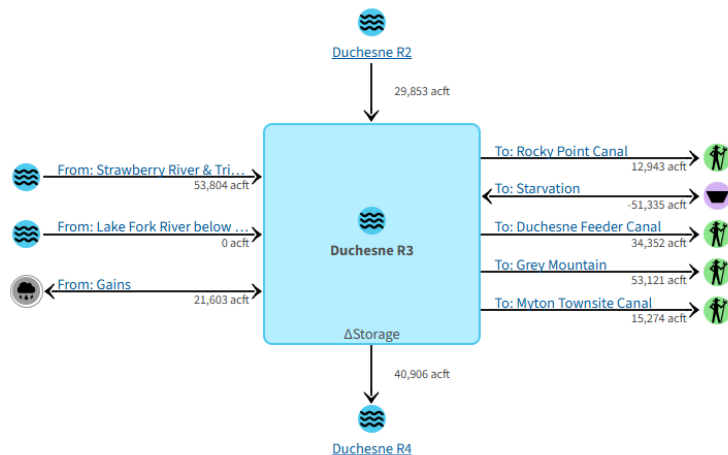


Historical Diversion Accounting

Accounting by individual water rights

Based on:

- Diversion measurements
- Water Right Network data

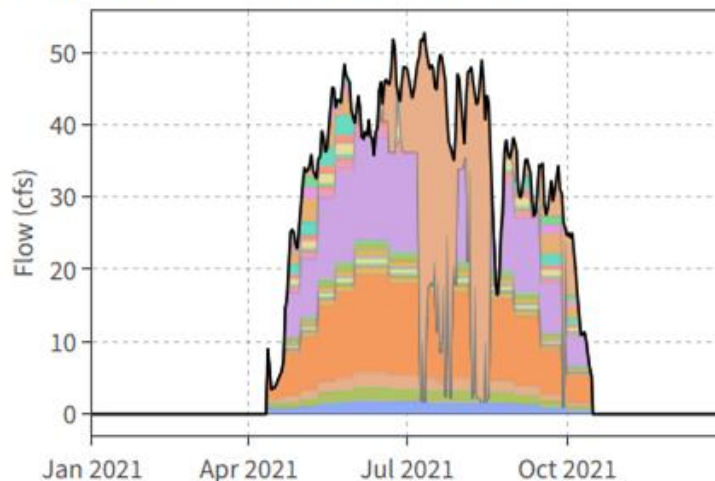


Duchesne R3 → Rocky Point Canal

Flow Observation (s)

+ 400 ROCKY POINT CANAL HEAD
-400 ROCKY POINT CANAL OVER

Daily Water Right Apportionments



Water Rights

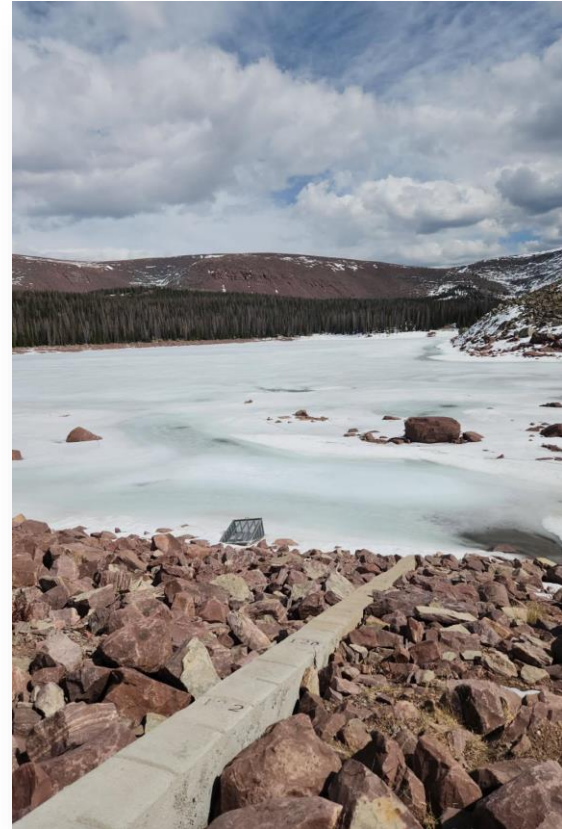
River Systems in Utah

The State Engineer oversees the distribution of water and directs the priority distribution of 42 river systems throughout the state.

This work is carried out through appointed river commissioners and deputy river commissioners



Water Rights





As of last week, there seems to be a correlation between now and 2021, but we are experiencing reductions several weeks earlier this year.

Groundwater & Wells

During drought, needs to replace or deepen older wells may increase.

- We are watching conditions and preparing to process well requests more quickly.
- We encourage water users to reach out to regional engineers in the local for questions and support.





Thank You

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