

Mayor's Report
02 May 2022 – 07 May 2022
Larry Jacobsen

Here is my Status Report for the first week of May.



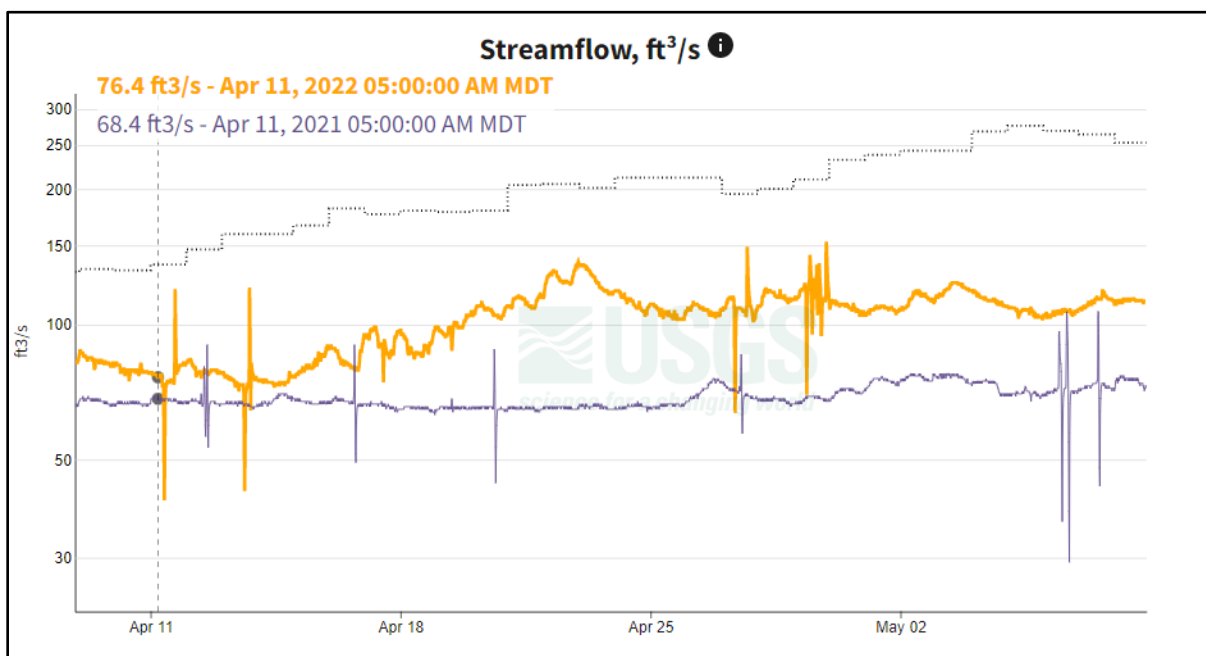
Water. As we anticipate the spring runoff of the Black Smith Fork River, it seems appropriate that several activities last week centered on water.

The Cache Water District gave a tour of several water projects in the south end of Cache Valley. We visited the diversion for the Nibley Black Smith Fork (BSF) canal off Hollow Road. This is a project to upgrade the canal diversion that involves several entities including the BSF Irrigation Company, Utah State University, the Bureau of Reclamation, and Trout Unlimited. The improved diversion will more safely and more reliably control the water sent to the irrigation canal at this location and provide a mechanism for fish to retreat upstream on years (which is most years) when this last diversion dewateres the BSF River. We also heard an update on the BSF Canal piping project on the west side of Hwy 165, along with a currently unfunded project that would pipe between this new diversion and the east side of Hwy 165. Nibley City has little jurisdiction or authority in canal company governance and operations, but we do play an intermediary role between the canal company and developers and the canal company and citizens. I know several citizens are watching with interest the trend in piping canals. I am paying attention as well.

A second water project took us inside the belly of the Hyrum Dam, which was completed in 1933 and constructed by the Bureau of Reclamation. This is an important structure for flood control and several irrigation companies on the west side of Cache Valley. It was impressive to see much of the original equipment (gates, valves, etc.) still in use.

I found an updated website showing real-time stream flow data on the BSF River provided by the US Geological Survey. Here is the website and a snapshot from 8 May 2022. The top curve is the historic median (or most common) flow rate, the middle curve is this year, and the bottom curve is last year.

<https://waterdata.usgs.gov/monitoring-location/10113500/#parameterCode=00060&period=P30D&compare=true>



If you have been watching the snow data that I have previously mentioned (Mayor's Journal on the Nibley website, March), then you might be slightly more optimistic about BSF stream flows this year. The chart above also shows some optimism. In years past, we would watch these data and worry about flooding when flows approached approximately 800 ft³/sec. It seems like those were the good old days, although they had their share of angst as well.

In the May Newsletter, I promised to show you a picture of a town named Wasserburg am Inn (you must pronounce it like the locals: Vasserburg) where I attended a town celebration much like our Heritage Days. The interesting thing about the celebration in Wasserburg was they were celebrating their 1000th anniversary as a town. You might recall a mention in a newsletter article about city walls and their role in collecting the equivalent of sales tax on trade within the city. Wasserburg is aptly named, and the city wall only spanned the narrow neck of the peninsula. The parts of the town not on the peninsula have developed over the past 1000 years. Pretty cool place for a town, don't you think?



The final water-related meeting last week involved a discussion with a resident about protecting their private springs and our Yeates Spring in the Nibley Hollow from a gravel mine in the vicinity. You may recall that the Yeates Spring was contaminated with diesel fuel in 2015. Given the difficulty of protecting the area close to the spring, we haven't brought it back online as a culinary water source. However, it is still an important resource for Nibley City, and one that we are motivated to protect.

Ordinance Work. Nibley City was active on Ordinance work last week.

Levi (City Planner) is working on a Transfer of Development Rights ordinance. This would allow us to transfer development rights from one area that we want to preserve to another that we designate as tolerating higher density. The respective landowners exchange money to achieve this transfer of development rights. It's easy to identify areas that we want to preserve, but more difficult to identify areas that can accept the higher density.

I appreciated a question and a request for changing our Animal Land Use Ordinance on lots between 0.5 and 0.75 acres. The issue relates to best practices regarding avian flu when combining types of fowl on one lot. There is more work to be done with the Planning Commission and City Council on this one.

Finally, Justin (City Manager), Levi (City Planner), and I met with Councilmember Nathan Laursen to consider corridor zoning along US-89/91 and Hwy-165. We talked about whether the existing zoning achieves our different objectives on these two different corridors. If not, do we need different zoning to achieve our goals? More to come on that one as well.

When I report on Ordinance work, I realize how slowly it may seem to implement what may appear to be good ideas. David Church, former Legal Counsel for the Utah League of Cities and Towns said, "We have given up efficiency in favor of transparency." While that may seem frustrating at times, I think that is a good trade.

Thanks for reading this report. After driving from Fort Worth, Texas, last weekend it's great to be back in Nibley. You are my boss. Please call, text, or email.

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