

Mayor's Report

18 April 2023 – 23 April 2023

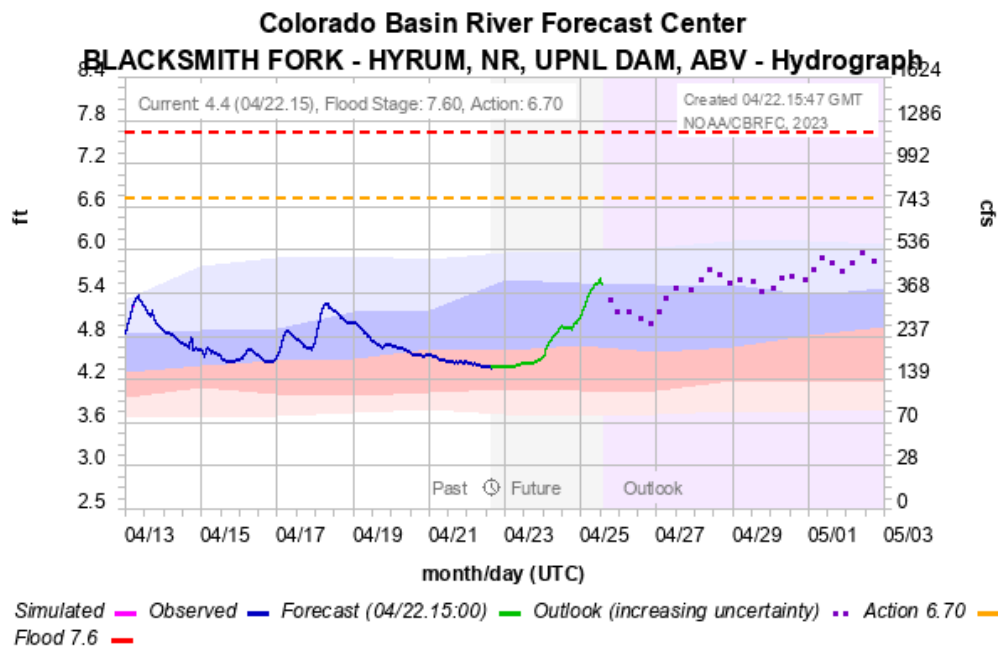
Larry Jacobsen

Greetings, boss! The break with our usual cadence that is synced with City Council meetings makes this a short reporting period. However, there are a few items that I hope you are interested in hearing about.

- **Update on Flood Forecasts**
- **Utah League of Cities and Towns: Dignity Index**
- **Cache Economic Summit**
- **Chamber of Commerce**

Update on Flood Forecasts

Yes, we are still waiting for the spring runoff after a winter that produced a lot of water, much of which is still stored in the snowpack. Although I haven't talked much about forecasts, as we get closer to peak flows, perhaps it's a good time to do so. The graph below shows the previous week on the Blacksmith Fork (BSF) and the forecast for the coming week. This graph is updated daily by the National Weather Service. The amount of water in the BSF is portrayed on the graph in two ways: the left axis shows stage height in feet; the right axis shows flow rate in cubic feet per second (cfs). This graph also shows the "Action" and "Flood" levels. The forecasted peak for this runoff season is more than a week away.

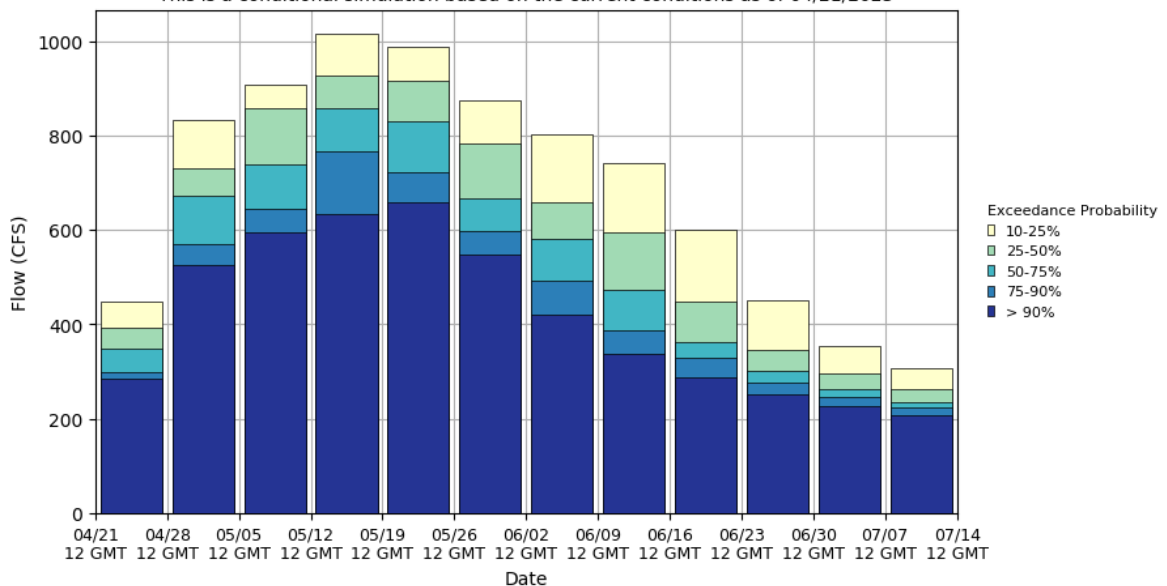


[National Weather Service Advanced Hydrologic Prediction Service](#) - Hydrograph

Before we look at a longer-ranged forecast, it's worth understanding that forecasts are ... well, forecasts. They are the experts' best estimations about what might happen. As such, forecasts are often accompanied by the chance, or probability, that the forecast will happen.

The graph below shows the forecast for the BSF peak flows from the National Weather Service. The forecasted peak is during the week of May 12 to May 19. During the week of May 12, there is more than a 90 percent probability that the BSF will flow at least 650 cfs (the dark blue part of the bar). A 90 percent probability is a pretty good bet. Also during May 12, there is a 75 to 90 percent probability (a slightly lower probability) that the BSF will flow between 650 cfs and 750 cfs (a higher flow). Still a pretty solid bet. The previous hydrograph showed the Action stage at about 800 cfs, and this graph shows a 50 to 75 percent probability that we will hit the Action stage. The Flood stage is 1000 cfs, and we have about a slightly better than ten percent chance that we will get to the Flood stage during the week of May 12.

Weekly Chance of Exceeding River Flow at BLACKSMITH FORK - HYRUM; NR; UPNL DAM; ABV for the period 04/21/2023 - 07/20/2023
This is a conditional simulation based on the current conditions as of 04/21/2023



[National Weather Service Advanced Hydrologic Prediction Service](#) - Bargraph

(Select Flow rather than Stage on the pull-down menu at the bottom right of the graph.)

From years past, I start to worry about various areas in Nibley when the flows get to the Action stage of 800 cfs. The Flood stage of 1000 cfs is definitely a concern. From these forecasted flows, and the associated probability of achieving these flows, I do not think that it's time to hit the panic button. However, the forecasts show reason to be concerned and prepared. Nibley City has already made sandbags available to citizens on a limited basis, and when the time comes, we can easily remove that limit and kick into high gear. I am confident that when—or if—the word goes out that it's time to take action, our citizens will rise to that call. Please stay tuned on our website and social media for additional forecasts and calls to action. We can do this.

Note: I just looked at the new forecast, and of course, it's different from the forecast shown above. I think it is more optimistic with a lower peak and the flow spread over a longer time period. Have a look and see if you agree.

Utah League of Cities and Towns

Nibley City is a member of the Utah League of Cities and Towns (ULCT), which held its mid-year conference last week. This is a coalition of Utah cities that does a number of things, including providing training for elected officials and lobbying the Utah Legislature on behalf of its members. I found the central theme of this conference to be a meaningful one. Dr. Timothy Shriver, Chairman of the Board for the Special Olympics, nephew of former President John F. Kennedy, son of Eunice Shriver who started the Special Olympics, and son of Sargent Shriver who helped found the Peace Corps, spoke about a project called the Dignity Index. Dr. Shriver was a powerful speaker with an important message about the need for us to speak to one another with dignity and respect.

From the Dignity Index website ([The Dignity Index](#)), this effort "is a national movement to encourage Americans to reject 'us vs them' thinking and stand together in common purpose. The Dignity Index was developed in partnership with behavioral scientists and other experts, and the demonstration project is being guided by researchers at the University of Utah." The Dignity Project is NOT a partisan project intending to promote one political ideology over another, nor is it an attempt to stifle engagement or free speech. It is simply an attempt for us to be nice to one another. One of the things this project does is rate specific statements by politicians on a scale of 1 (the least dignity) to 8 (the most dignity). If you visit their website, you can see ratings on recent statements from various politicians.

I have mentioned before how thankful I am that Nibley governance does not put an R or a D behind our names. As a result, we work as an entire council rather than a political party so we can focus on finding solutions rather than building coalitions of power. I have also mentioned how thankful I am to my fellow council members that we treat each other with respect and dignity. We can engage with one another, and we can disagree with one another, but we do so with respect and dignity. I hope that you see the council, along with Nibley's City Staff, extending that same level of respect and dignity to you as a Nibley citizen. If you don't, please make me the first person you contact to fix that situation.

Cache Economic Summit

I was coerced into speaking at the Greater Cache Economic Summit last week. My topic was "Economic development in a small town in Cache Valley." I started with a historical perspective going all the way back to the 1700s when Europeans built city walls not for defensive protection, but to collect taxes. These city walls and gates limited entry and exit to and from the city and enabled collection of taxes on goods that farmers brought into the city to sell as well as the

collection of taxes on goods manufactured in the city that farmers took home with them. Fast-forward 300 years, and part of the local sales tax that we pay works much the same way. Nibley citizens, like all Cache Valley residents, pay a local sales tax that is one percent of the retail purchase price. Most of the rest of the seven percent sales tax goes to the state government. Half of that local tax is distributed state-wide to cities on a population basis, and half of that local sales tax goes to the municipality where the sale was made, called the point-of-sale. We don't need city walls to collect this point-of-sale tax because merchants collect this tax, forward it to the state, and report where the sale was made so the state can distribute it to the appropriate municipality. Still, the point-of-sale tax constitutes a virtual wall where our residents leave our city to shop, offset by non-residents coming to Nibley to shop.

Last year, 62 cents of every dollar that Nibley citizens paid in point-of-sale tax "leaked" outside our city boundaries. We simply don't have many retail businesses inside our boundaries (or walls) that generate sales tax. That 62 cents is actually an improvement from our historical 70-cent of point-of-sale leakage. I attribute most of that improvement to online shopping. When you order something online, the point-of-sale is the address from where you placed the order. Of course, there are other tax benefits of economic development, including the fact that property tax is levied on the full assessed value of commercial and industrial property, while residential tax is levied on only 55 percent of the assessed value.

The historical story was only the introduction to my talk, and the rest of it discussed the holistic motivation to become a complete community, barriers to economic development in Nibley, and steps we are taking to bring more economic development. While it's too much to cover here, those steps focus on making Nibley a city where we can live, work, move, and thrive. As I see it, one of our biggest challenges while we pursue economic development is maintaining the character of our town. Although last week's talk was a single point in time, I look forward to more discussion with you and the city council on economic development in Nibley.

Chamber of Commerce

I also gave a brief talk to the Cache County Chamber of Commerce on the day before the Economic Summit. This was simply an update on what's going on in Nibley. About five other mayors did the same for their towns. There were so many things I could have covered, and I limited the discussion to Nibley City becoming a Nature Town. I discussed our citizens' desire to connect with nature from the recent USU Wellness Study, and our commitment to enabling that connection. I mentioned three specific things. First, our reimbursement from Cache County for the purchase and half of the development costs of our Firefly Nature Park. Second, the US Economic Development Agency's \$1.9M grant to the Stokes Nature Center to develop their outdoor classroom in Nibley. Finally, the land that is available to Nibley City to own and maintain as enhanced natural space. On this last point, there are many wet areas in our town that are difficult to develop, and many developers are willing to give that land to Nibley City as part of a larger development agreement. Before the city accepts that land, we must make decisions about its use and value to our citizens. The yet-to-be-named park in Ridgeline Park is an

example. That park is an enhanced natural space that will include recreation amenities including trails. These enhanced natural spaces still need to be managed, but differently than turf grass. I am looking forward to our Parks and Recreation Plan rewrite this year where our citizens can discuss plans for these spaces.

Thanks for reading, boss. Agree or disagree, please call, text, or write anytime.

Larry

435-512-7495

larry@nibleycity.com

My continued appreciation to Leslie Maughan for proofreading and giving feedback on this report before you see it.