

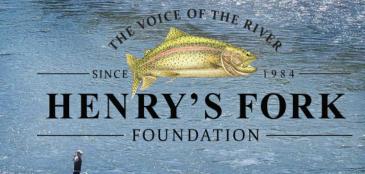
SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2018

Above-Average Water Supply Predicted 2nd Year in a Row

HFF Community Campus
Grand Opening

pg. 8

HFF and Friends of the Teton River Work Together





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**Bryce Contor** Landowner Outreach Manager

### **HFF Staff Members Celebrate** 5 and 10 Year Anniversaries with the Foundation

Between 2017 and 2018, HFF has quite a few staff celebrating major milestones with the Foundation.

Our Executive Director, Brandon Hoffner, Senior Scientist, Rob Van Kirk, Membership and Systems Coordinator, Julie Maurer, Graphic Design and Marketing Coordinator, Paige Cahoon have all celebrated 5 years of working for HFF.



Not to mention, our Conservation Fund Director, Brady Taylor, who celebrated 10 years with the Henry's Fork Foundation in 2017. In June, Brady will be a part of his 12th Henry's Fork Days!





As the Henry's Fork Foundation continues to strengthen our programs and achieve more for the river, we rely on our strong team of staff to make the HFF mission a reality. As a staff, we're lucky to be able to dedicate our days to conserving this unique and wonderful place.





# HFF and Friends of the Teton River Work Together

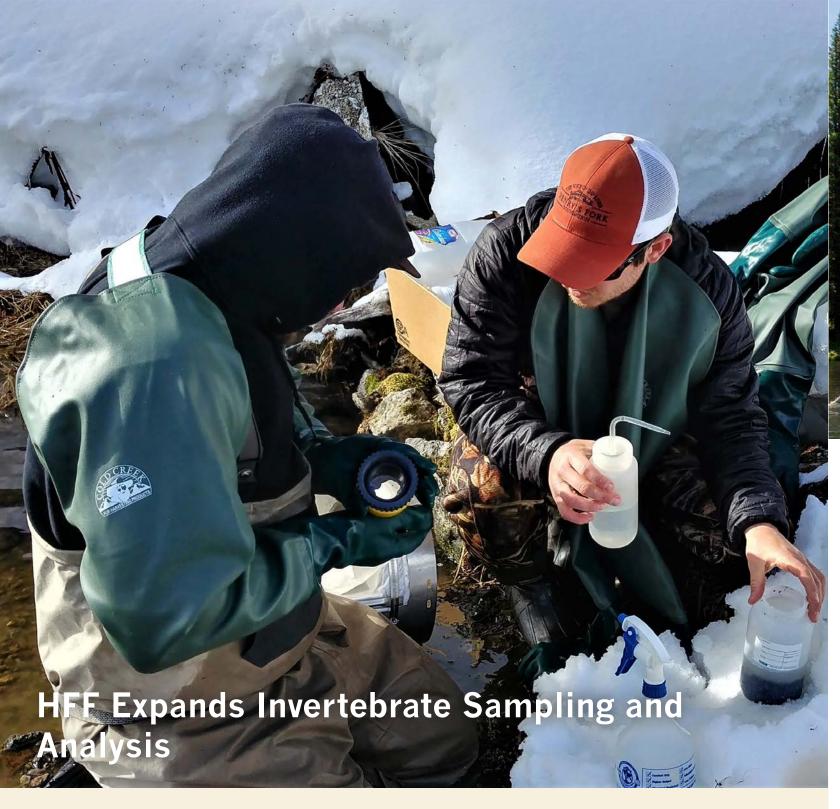
by Brandon Hoffner, Executive Director

There is much to be excited about when it comes to innovative water management in eastern Idaho and the role that conservation organizations like HFF, Friends of the Teton River (FTR), Trout Unlimited (TU), and The Nature Conservancy (TNC), are playing in solving issues affecting irrigators and agricultural producers, aquifer management, critical ecological flows, and wild trout populations. Embedded in that excitement is the opportunity we have for greater "shared stewardship" of our water resources, by working closely with our colleagues at FTR, TU, and TNC.

While HFF and FTR have shared information for years—especially science and monitoring data—shared stewardship is what we are doing to integrate that knowledge on the ground. A great example is how the Teton Water Users Association is using hydrologic and groundwater modeling provided by Dr. Rob Van Kirk, Senior Scientist at HFF. In other examples, HFF research staff and interns have pitched in to assist FTR with fisheries and stream flow monitoring, HFF staff member Ben Ortman will be assisting FTR with an Economic and Recreation survey this summer and FTR's Development

Director Anna Lindstedt wrote grants to enable the Teton River to be included in the study. The partnership between HFF and FTR leverages funding and human resources while allowing each organization to accomplish more.

This new level of coordination is not occurring by accident. The board and staff leadership at both FTR and HFF are pursuing integration of our work at all levels because we have goals big enough to warrant the infusion of more resources into our respective programs. Fish friendly farming, soil health, and water management that enable resilient wild trout fisheries are just a few of the concepts we're working on. The best and most recent example of the growing HFF/FTR partnership is the Landowner Outreach Manager joint position. With Bryce Contor filling this role, HFF and FTR expect long-lasting conservation gains that benefit the watershed and are realized through healthier streams and relationships. We are thankful for FTR's willingness to partner, share stewardship, and achieve more for this place that we all cherish. We are also thankful for HFF membership's willingness to continue supporting this work!



For the fourth consecutive year, invertebrate experts from River Continuum Concepts in Manhattan, Montana joined HFF staff to collect invertebrates from the Henry's Fork at Flatrock, Last Chance, Osborne Bridge, Ashton, and St. Anthony. To improve the power of statistical analysis, we increased sample size from five samples per site to six. Results of this year's sampling will be available in the middle of the summer.

Meanwhile, HFF Conservation and Outreach Coordinator Ben Ortman analyzed all invertebrate data we have, dating back to 1992, and presented his findings at the Idaho Chapter American Fisheries Society meeting in February. He did not find any statistical evidence of changes over time in diversity, habitat, and water quality as indicated by species composition, and percent mayflies, stoneflies, and caddisflies. However, he found that percentage of mayflies, stoneflies, and caddisflies decreased from about 55 percent at Flatrock to 10 percent at Rexburg, indicating decrease in habitat and water quality with distance downstream from the headwaters.



In February of this year, the Henry's Fork Foundation (HFF) and Friends of the Teton River (FTR) jointly advertised a Landowner Outreach Manager position to work at the intersection of agriculture and watershed health. That position has been filled and we're happy to announce that Bryce Contor began work as the Landowner Outreach Manager on April 1st.

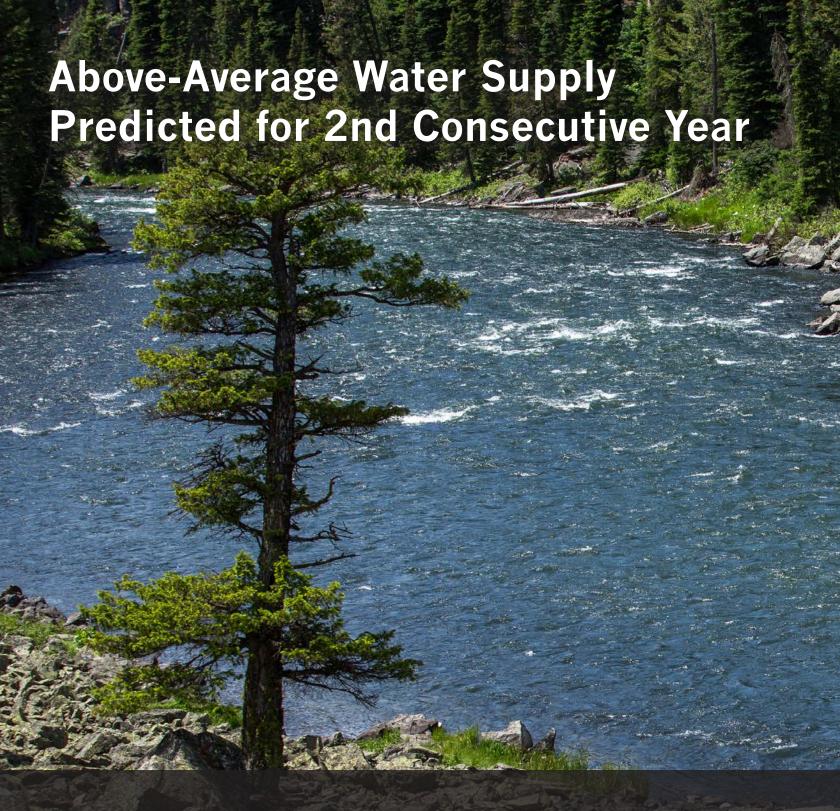
Bryce has 15 years of experience in irrigated agriculture and 20 years of experience in hydrology. He holds an M.S. degree in hydrology from the University of Idaho and a B.S. degree in agricultural economics from Brigham Young University. Bryce's hydrologic specialties include groundwater and surface-water interactions and MODFLOW aquifer modeling, water-budget analysis, pipeline and open-channel flow measurement, and statistics; and his economics specialties include water banking and economic demand for irrigation water.

Bryce comes to HFF and FTR from a position as Senior Hydrologist at Rocky Mountain Environmental Associates, Inc. and he will continue to be an active participant in the Henry's Fork Watershed Council. Bryce provided us with a bit of perspective on his first 1.5 months of work.

"I see the three legs of my stool as water quantity, water quality, and keeping working farmlands working. The last one is an important key to the first two, and where my efforts start. In the Ashton/St. Anthony area, I'm looking



first at ways to reduce total diversions of irrigation water. This includes rotational fallow and changes in crop mix, to start with. In the Teton the first efforts are focused on water quality, things like no-till and reduced-till planting, and cover crops. Some of my work in Teton Valley will be to help with ongoing efforts to take full advantage of incidental aquifer recharge, and some of my work in the Henry's Fork may help facilitate managed aquifer recharge."



A 9-week run of cool, wet weather from mid-February until mid-April turned a lackluster snowpack into one that was solidly above-average. Although peak snow accumulation occurred a little earlier than average in Island Park, date of peak accumulation across the whole watershed was April 18, 10 days later than average. This year's peak was 117 percent of average, and substantial snowmelt didn't start until late April. Based on good snowpack and on strong winter flows inherited from above-average precipitation last year, overall water supply is forecast to be above average for the second

consecutive summer.

However, there are some important differences between last summer and what we expect in 2018. First, although snowpack was above-average this year, it wasn't as high as that in 2017, and water-year total precipitation so far this year is only 107 percent of average, compared with 135 percent at this time last year. Second, snowpack this year favored the upper Henry's Fork subwatershed and was only about average in the Teton subwatershed, the opposite of last year. The end result is that streamflow



is projected to fall below average in the Teton River by mid-summer, but streamflow in the upper Henry's Fork is forecast to remain above-average all summer, versus only 90 percent of average last summer. Fall River will continue to contribute above-average flow throughout the year, although not as much as in 2017, when streamflow in Fall River was 120 percent of average.

Because of lower natural flow in the Teton River this year, more water will need to be delivered from the Henry's Fork to the Teton River through the Crosscut Canal. This additional irrigation delivery will require higher outflow from Island Park Reservoir this summer, probably 800-1000 cfs for most of July and August, about 200 cfs higher than in 2017. However, higher reservoir inflow this year will offset the higher delivery, and the reservoir is forecast to finish out the irrigation season around 70-80 percent full, roughly where it ended up last year. This will allow above-average winter flow below Island Park Dam again next winter, although probably not as high as last winter's 500 cfs.





As HFF members, you've likely heard about the new HFF Community Campus in various newsletters and emails over the past year. The Community Campus building was once the Ashton Hospital, then a nursing home, and finally, storage space until it was purchased by HFF in June of 2016. Renovations began in December of 2016 and HFF staff moved in to the completed office space within

the campus in August of 2017. Since then, renovation has been ongoing with the construction of the intern dormitory and graduate student suites in the north wing, the installation of new equipment in the multi-purpose science laboratory, and the design of the Henry's Fork Country Interpretive Center.

The Interpretive Center will take visitors through exhibits like "Local History, Agriculture, and Hydropower", "Fly Fishing on the Henry's Fork", "Hydrology and Water", and "Aquatic Ecology and the Web of Life". The campus also features a collaborative conference center, staff conference room, and visitors lounge. Remaining projects will include exterior refurbishments and landscaping, including a native plants garden.

All of this work has been leading up to our Grand Opening where we can officially share this space with all of our members and the public. We hope the new HFF Community Campus can be a place of discovery, community, and learning for avid anglers and visitors alike. The campus will not only increase our capacity to do great work for the river, but will provide us an entirely new way to share the story of the Henry's Fork watershed. None of this would be possible without the generous support from private individuals, HFF members, and private foundations, especially the CHC Foundation and M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust. Thank you!

We hope you'll join us on June 14th for the Grand Opening of the HFF Community Campus!

801 Main Street, Ashton, ID 83420 June 14th, 2018 • 4:00-7:00 PM





## Migrating Trout Utilize HFF Fish Ladder at the Buffalo River Hydroelectric Facility

Henry's Fork Rainbow Trout migrating to spawn in the Buffalo River have to pass through the fish ladder at the Buffalo River hydroelectric facility to access upstream spawning habitat. HFF operates a fish trap at the top end of the fish ladder from early February through the middle of June to collect data on run size, run timing, number of spawners (Rainbow Trout >12 inches), number of return spawners, and other valuable information needed to monitor and understand the Henry's Fork Rainbow Trout

population. From February 14 through May 11, 662 fish have been caught at the Buffalo River fish ladder. Of these fish, 551 were Rainbow Trout, 96 were spawning sized Rainbow Trout, and the largest Rainbow Trout was recorded at 22.2 inches! Spring fish ladder usage is tracking well with the long term average and a complete report will be available in June when Rainbow Trout spawning is concluded.

## Contributions: October 1, 2017 - March 31, 2018

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