

Celebrating 40 Years!

VOICE OF THE RIVER

Summer Newsletter 2024

Celebrating 40 Years

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2024 Fishing Season Predictions

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Get to Know Our Staff

Dr. Jack McLaren, Aquatic Ecology Program Manager

Fisheries | Entomology | Ecology | Reservoirs | Water Quality

Jack has been working with the Foundation for nearly a decade, studying Island Park Reservoir and the Henry's Fork for both his Master's and Ph.D. research. Jack's love of trout and fly fishing began as a young boy growing up in Denver, Colorado, but soon drew him to the Henry's Fork.

"The Henry's Fork is like an infinite puzzle, whether I'm approaching it from an angling or scientific perspective. The river is constantly moving, shifting, and changing, often in almost imperceptible ways. Every time I go fishing is a different experience, every scrap of data we get shows us a new side of the river. That fascination feeds an intense feeling of moral duty to conserve this river as a functioning ecosystem. The Henry's Fork is not ours, it's just our turn."

Jack is leading the DIRT Plan, the next huge step in fisheries conservation for the Henry's Fork. Read more about it at henrysfork.org. 





Celebrating 40 Years!

"Well, congratulations to all of the members, staff, and founders of the Henry's Fork Foundation for 40 years of unbelievable success. When we started the Foundation, we were passionate about protecting one of the renowned rivers and fisheries in the world. We are all so proud of what the Henry's Fork Foundation has grown into, all science based. Thanks to all who have given so freely of their time, money, and efforts."

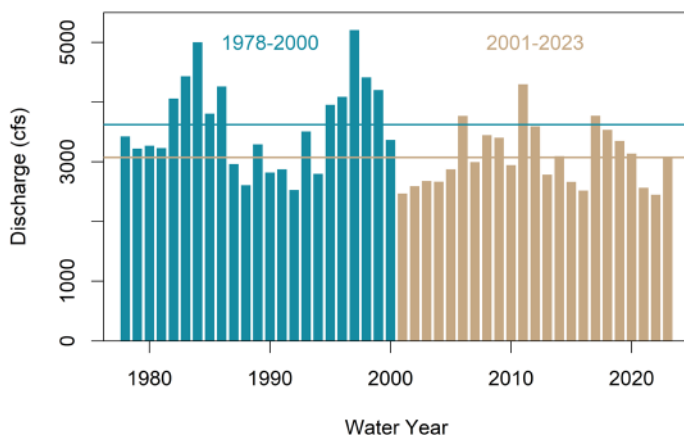
- Dr. Mick Mickelson, *co-founder and President of the Foundation from 1985-1992*



Flow Prediction for the 2024 Fishing Season

Every April, HFF's Senior Scientist Dr. Rob Van Kirk issues a scientific prediction of the upcoming fishing season. Rob's annual prediction runs 30-90 years of data through 5,000 simulations of possible Henry's Fork summers to paint a picture of the summer ahead. The results are in!

Average natural flow in the Henry's Fork watershed has decreased by 15% since 2000



Overall

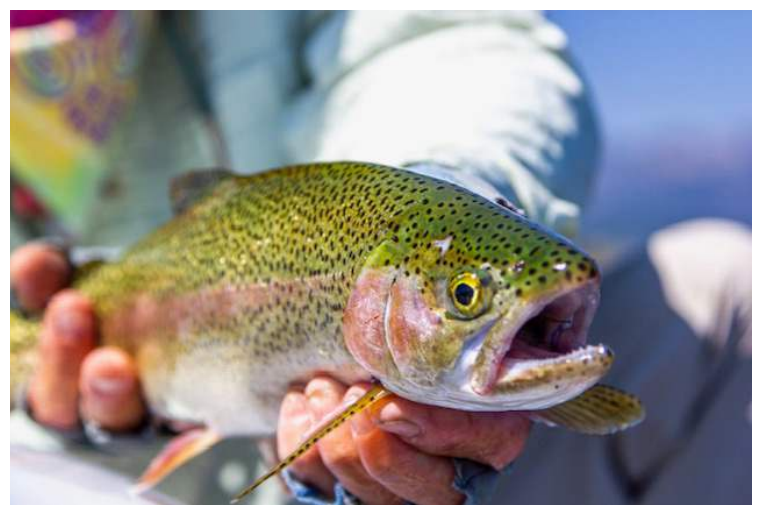
We're expecting a solidly average season that may look a lot like 2018 and 2019. While that doesn't sound very exciting, it's getting drier here on the Henry's Fork, so an "average" year of water supply just might be something to celebrate.

Did You Know?

Summer conditions are largely dependent on snow water equivalent (SWE) on April 1st and baseflow conditions; both near-average this year.

Outflows from Island Park Reservoir (Now–July 1)

- Outflow may increase to ~1,200 cfs in mid-May.
- We predict Island Park Reservoir will be 100% full by June 9.
- Once the reservoir is full, average outflow will likely decrease to ~900 cfs by mid-June and ~770 cfs on July 1.
- 💡 Remember, no managed freshet is planned this spring, but high spring and early summer flows are still possible. With a full or near-full reservoir, managers will pass natural inflow through the dam and outflow could reach as high as 1,750 cfs in mid-May depending on how fast snow melts.



Outflows (July–September)

- 🚧 Once natural streamflow can no longer meet downstream irrigation demand for agriculture, Island Park Reservoir is drafted (or drawn down) to meet that demand.

☀️ We expect draft will start July 5, three days earlier than last year and almost a week later than average. However, draft could start sooner depending on whether May–June is hot and dry, or cool and wet.

🌀 Mid-July flows will likely be ~1,250 cfs (close to average). But, in the most extreme case, outflow could reach 1,750 cfs for a week or two in July.

↘️ Dam outflow will likely gradually decrease from late July through the end of September—eventually reaching ~500 cfs. A wet August could reduce irrigation demand and lead to an even lower outflow (like in 2023).



Temperatures and Sediment in the Ranch and Box Canyon

There are still a large range of possibilities depending on day-to-day weather, but it is unlikely to be as bad as the worst years on record (2015/2016) or to be as good as the 1990s.

🕶️ Average turbidity (how clear/cloudy the water is) is likely to be ~4 NTU (near average). Whether from sediment or decaying plants, anglers tend to notice turbidity at 5 NTU or above.

🌡️ Outflow water temperature is likely to average ~60°F (lower than average). Although our prediction has a wide range of possibilities, it is unlikely temperatures will be as warm as they were in 2021 and 2022.

Remember: Our daily efforts to keep water in Island Park Reservoir directly benefit turbidity, suspended sediment load, and temperature downstream.




Hatches

Hatch timing on the Henry's Fork depends largely on water temperatures because insect development occurs based on how many thermal units they accumulate (essentially, how many warm water days they get).

❄️ So, if it's a cold spring, hatches may be delayed a few days from average. Or, if temperatures are above average, hatches could be early.

🦎 Keep an eye on the weather forecast and track hatch timing from Flat Rock all the way to St. Anthony on our dedicated [Hatch Timing website](#)—a special project from 2022.

Here's a snapshot of what that data looked like as of mid-April this year.



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Hatch Timing

Lower HF Streamflow

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IP Reservoir Winter Fill

Teton Valley GW Recharge

Henry's Fork Hatch Timing

Graph

Table

Info

Approximate timing of aquatic insect development

The first column of times are relative to emergence timing in an "average" year for the date **Apr 14 2024** and the next column contains the 7-day forecast of relative hatch timing given the the 3-7 day [climate outlook](#) from NOAA. The 3rd column reports the number of days this year's hatches differ from hatch timing last year. Note, the first and third columns report modeled hatch timing based on observed water temperature starting April of that year, within each reach.

Site	This year compared to average	7-day forecast	This year compared to 2023
Flat Rock	2 days earlier	1 days earlier	0 days later
Island Park Dam	1 days later	1 days later	1 days later
Pinehaven	2 days earlier	1 days earlier	0 days later
Marysville	1 days earlier	1 days earlier	2 days earlier
Ashton Dam	0 days later	0 days later	10 days earlier
St. Anthony	1 days earlier	0 days later	2 days earlier

For even more detail on what to expect this season, visit henrysfork.org/post/2024-fishing-prediction. 🐟

Education and Outreach

HFF is constantly seeking ways to grow and improve our education and outreach programs. This spring, the office has come alive with the hustle and bustle of the many students who have visited the HFF campus or who have participated in our outreach programs.

Field Trips

Third and fourth grade students from South Fork Elementary School and Hibbard Elementary School visited the HFF campus where they learned about

macroinvertebrates (aquatic insects), the life cycle of rainbow trout, and water quality.

HFF staff visited the middle school class at Swan Valley School, where students learned about aquifers and groundwater in Idaho, as well as designed and tested their own dams out of clay.

Outreach Events

This was the first year that HFF participated in the

Summer Seminar Series 2024

HFF is putting on a summer seminar series every Wednesday from 3–4 pm. Attend presentations on hatches, climate, water and more, from local anglers, HFF, and our partners!

Teton Valley Earth Day celebration at the Teton Valley Fairgrounds. Participants who visited the HFF booth learned about macroinvertebrates (aquatic insects), watched a groundwater demonstration, and learned about the important work that we do.

Trout in the Classroom

HFF increased the number of Trout in the Classroom tanks that we mentor. We now help at four different classes (Ashton Elementary, Teton Elementary, North Fremont Middle School, North Fremont High School).



Students spent the last few months raising trout from the egg stage to the fingerling stage. HFF staff taught the elementary school students about the life cycle of rainbow trout, trout anatomy, camouflage, the web of life, and other topics related to the trout they are raising. Trout in the classroom will culminate with a trout release field trip in May. 🐟

Volunteer Opportunities

We need your help with
critical work in 2024!

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3 river cleanups (June, July, and August)
Fish salvage (September)

Email jasper@henrysfork.org to join our
volunteer list!

DID YOU KNOW

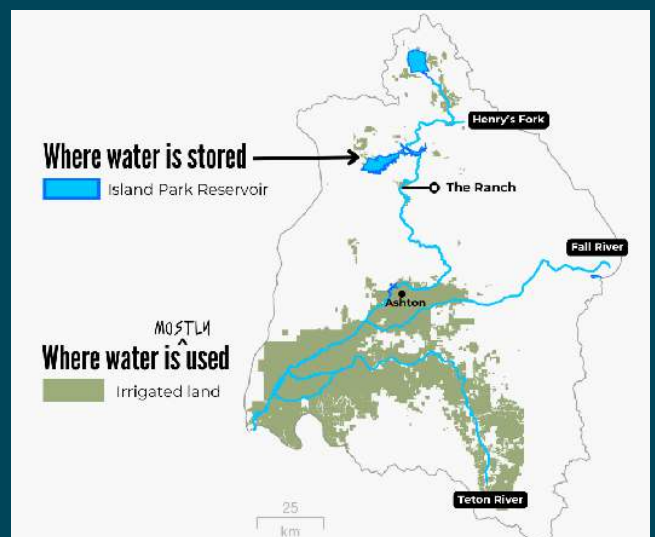
*Island Park is the
"center of the universe"?*



Decades of research show that Island Park Reservoir is the key to the fishery all the way from Big Springs to Riverside. And 100% of the water in the reservoir is owned by and can be sent to farmers in the valleys 40+ miles downstream.

So, if we want to protect the heart of the Henry's Fork, we have to focus time and energy on Island Park Reservoir and collaborate with the folks who own its water.

You can learn more at henrysfork.org/post/center-of-the-universe.



Is HFF paying attention to what's going on at Henry's Lake Flats?

Yes. In our role as Voice of the River, we're in conversation with other partners, and shared our data at the Planning & Zoning hearing earlier this year. We're looking closely at the watershed's declining water supply, increasing phosphorus loads, and Island Park's wastewater treatment plants' capacity—all of which would be negatively affected by any new commercial development. Our team, including

Aquatic Resources Coordinator Matt Hively, Aquatic Ecology Program Manager Dr. Jack McLaren, and Senior Scientist Dr. Rob Van Kirk are keeping a close eye and speaking up for the river every chance we get.

For more information visit henrysfork.org/post/henrys-lake-flats-rezone. 

It's Our 40th Anniversary!

Celebrate with us as we honor 40 years of
Stewardship Through Science.



Summer Seminar Series
every Wednesday from
3–4 PM starting June 5th.



Morning Bites at
access sites with free
coffee and donuts.



Henry's Fork Days XL
on Saturday, June 15th
at the Log Jam.

What's Happening on the South Fork?

HFF's South Fork Initiative is an independent, self-funded program, that aims to not only benefit the fisheries of the South Fork, but consider the holistic and interconnected nature of watersheds.

In addition to important work like restoration, fish passage, and water quality, we know that education is also a vital component to protecting our favorite places.

Check out the new kiosk (right) along the Rainey Creek Phase 1 restoration project in Swan Valley. Students and life-long learners alike can see the restoration process unfold, plus learn more about trout life cycles, aquatic insects, and local volunteer efforts. 🐟



Contributions: October 1, 2023–March 31, 2024

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HENRY'S FORK DAYS XL

Celebrating 40 Years!

Saturday, June 15, 2024 | Fisherman's Access | Last Chance, ID

4:00 PM
Reception and Silent
Auction Open

5:30 PM
Ribeye Steak and
Chicken Dinner

7:00 PM
Silent Auction Closes,
HFF Awards, Live Auction

801 Main Street
PO Box 550
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