

MAY

■ Highest Temperature: 85, on the 15th • Lowest Temperature: 30, on the 2nd • Total Precipitation: .92 (avg.: 1.44)

Snow's Going Fast, But City's Backup Water Sources Are Full

Water Withdrawal



Jayson Jacoby/Baker City Herald

A snowdrift still blocks the road leading to Marble Creek Pass in the Elkhorns.

By Jayson Jacoby
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MAY 30 — Michelle Owen noticed what was missing while she was driving to Baker City Hall Tuesday morning and she looked west at the towering wall of the Elkhorn Mountains.

Snow. There were still splotches of white decorating the brown rock, to be sure.

But those splotches seemed pretty small to Owen's eyes.

And she takes more than a passing interest in that particu-

lar view.

Owen is the city's public works director, and it's the Elkhorns' snowpack that keeps the city's faucets and hydrants flowing.

Although she was a bit surprised by how much the snow has receded, still more than three weeks short of the summer solstice, Owen was not especially troubled.

She needed only to remind herself about the 400 million gallons.

That's the combined storage capacity of Goodrich Reservoir,

high in the Elkhorns, and the well into which the city diverts water from mountain streams during the winter and spring.

Both of those supplementary water sources are full, Owen said.

"We're in good shape there," Owen said.

The scanty snowpack, depleted during what's likely to be the second-warmest May on record at the Baker City Airport, is not so positive, but Owen doesn't expect any water shortfalls this summer.

PRIMARY ELECTION RESULTS

Harvey, Nichols to face off in fall

■ Brent Kerns avoids a runoff in Justice of the Peace race with more than half the votes

By Jayson Jacoby
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MAY 16 — Baker County voters will have a second chance this fall to choose the chairman of the Baker County Board of Commissioners, and this time it will be a two-man race.

Tuesday's primary wasn't decisive because none of the three candidates received more than half the votes cast.

The top two — incumbent Bill Harvey and Bruce Nichols, who holds one of the two part-time commissioner positions — will compete in the Nov. 6 general election.

Harvey, who received 92 more votes than Nichols in unofficial results, said he expected the primary would result

in a runoff.

"This is the process we have to work through," Harvey said.

Nichols, who was elected to a four-year term as a commissioner in 2016, said he had "high hopes" that he would win more than 50 percent of the votes in the primary and thus win the chairman's seat outright.

But he said he was disappointed but not surprised by the results.

"Any time you take on an incumbent, it's difficult," Nichols said.

In the Justice of the Peace race, Brent Kerns avoided a runoff by winning slightly more than half the votes cast to defeat Josie Hermann and Raymond Duman.

City might ban deer feeding

By Jayson Jacoby
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MAY 21 — The Baker City Council on Tuesday will consider an ordinance banning residents from intentionally feeding deer.

The ordinance requires the city to issue residents a written warning before imposing a fine.

Violations would carry a \$115 fine, with each day that a property is in violation considered a separate offense.

Tuesday's meeting starts at 7 p.m. at City Hall, 1655 First St.

The introduction of the proposed ordinance follows the Council's initial discussion, during its May 8 meeting, of the population of deer living in town most or all of the year.

Brian Ratliff, district wildlife biologist at the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's (ODFW) Baker City office, told councilors that during his 12 years here the deer population in town has increased.

School budget in good shape

By Chris Collins
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MAY 30 — The Baker School District's Budget Board spent two hours reviewing a proposed 2018-19 budget that shows a \$6 million General Fund spending increase, from \$31,959,513 to \$38,023,626, for the coming year.

After hearing Superintendent Mark Witty's budget message and reviewing "strategic investments" made this year and "identified priorities" for next year, the group agreed to meet again on June 5. That meeting will begin at 5 p.m. at the District Office, 2090 Fourth St.

County: gate must go

By Jayson Jacoby
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MAY 14 — Baker County has prepared the draft of a certified letter to be mailed to a Pendleton man demanding that he remove a locked gate blocking a road near Lookout Mountain at the eastern side of the county.

County officials say the Connor Creek Road is a public right of way that must remain open.

The draft letter, which is being reviewed by District Attorney Matt Shirliff and two Ontario lawyers, is addressed to Todd Longgood, who owns the property at the west end of the Connor

Creek Road, about six miles west of Brownlee Reservoir.

The site is about 30 air miles southeast of Baker City.

The Connor Creek Road connects the Snake River Road, on the reservoir's Oregon shore, with the Daly Creek Road about two miles north of Lookout Mountain.

The draft letter states that county officials, including Commission Chairman Bill Harvey and Roadmaster Jeff Smith, visited the area and found a locked gate across the Connor Creek Road.

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