



## TOWN OF BRIGHTON NEWS JUNE 2023

America is a Song. It must be sung together. ~ Gerald Stanley Lee



## BRIGHTON BREAKFAST & PARADE TUESDAY • JULY 4 • 2023

**8-10:30 am**

### **Breakfast at the Milly Chalet**

Menu: Breakfast Burrito and milk, chocolate milk, juice, or coffee

### **Parade**

**10:15 am**

UPD closes vehicle access to Brighton Loop.  
Parade Participants gather in Brighton Chapel Parking Lot for staging.

**10:30 am**

Parade begins – One time 'Round the Loop.

**GROUPS** Vehicles and Floats go first, Bicycles second, Walkers & Wagons go third.

**CANDY POLICY** Please no candy throws from vehicles due to safety concerns for excitable kids darting in the road. Candy throws for Bikes, Walkers and Wagons are encouraged!



## BRIGHTON DAYS AND WILDFLOWER FESTIVAL

The popular Wildflower Festival and Brighton Days are being held jointly in a tribute to the Nature and History of Big Cottonwood Canyon. On Saturday, July 8, there will be Wildflower Tours, craft and history booths, music, food, and nature booths. Tents include Hogle Zoo, Discovery Gateway Children's Museum, and Tracy Aviary. Then on Sunday July 9, the Festival will move to Solitude Resort where arts and music are featured. The events are sponsored by the Cottonwood Canyons Foundation and the Brighton Institute. Here are the details:

### **SATURDAY, JULY 8 BRIGHTON RESORT 9 am until 2 pm**

*Food will be available for purchase at the Blind Miner's Coffee Shop at the Brighton Center*

### **SUNDAY, JULY 9 SOLITUDE RESORT 9 am until 2 pm**

*Food will be available for purchase at the Stone Haus Pizzeria and Creamery*



## HARDWORKING VOLUNTEERS -VS- INVASIVE WEEDS

Taylor Litwin, Director of Weeds and Wildflowers for the Cottonwood Canyons Foundation, is now scheduling appointments to come to Brighton communities to take out invasive weeds. Last year her team and local volunteers hand-pulled almost 6 tons of invasives in the tri-canyo area, including thistle, houndstongue, Toadflax, and others. In addition, she always brings wildflower seedlings to plant. Their good work and inspiration will be showing up for years to come. If you would like her strong young team to help with invasives around your home, gather up a group of interested volunteers, and contact her! Taylor Litwin: 518.210.1319 or [tlitwin@cottonwoodcanyons.org](mailto:tlitwin@cottonwoodcanyons.org)



## TOWN OF BRIGHTON 2023 ELECTION CANDIDATES

The **2023 Town of Brighton Municipal Election** will be held on Tuesday, November 7, 2023, to elect **two (2) Town Council Members**. Each position is at-large for a 4-year term.

Heidi Westfall

Gavan Ganung

Adrienne Aldous

Jeffery S. Bossard

Lise Sorensen Brunhart



In April of 2022, the Big Cottonwood Canyon Historical Society applied for a grant from Utah State Historical Records Advisory Board. The purpose was to get funding for archival boxes and supplies to re-house three collections in our archive. To their surprise and delight, the Historical Society awarded them

\$1304 plus guidance from experts in historical records. During the archiving process, “Finding Aids” were developed and make the collection available to the public via the Brighton Institute website. The Historical Committee is always seeking donations of records, photos, recordings or anything that might have public interest pertaining to Big Cottonwood Canyon. If you have something, please contact Chair, Jolene Despain at 435.714.2121. Check out the Historical Society website: [HISTORICAL SOCIETY — BRIGHTON INSTITUTE](#)

Because we had no flooding this year (bless us and save us!), the Historical Society sent in a description of the canyon flooding back in 1983. You can relive the disaster and be grateful for the mitigation efforts by UDOT that made this year’s melt a floodless event.

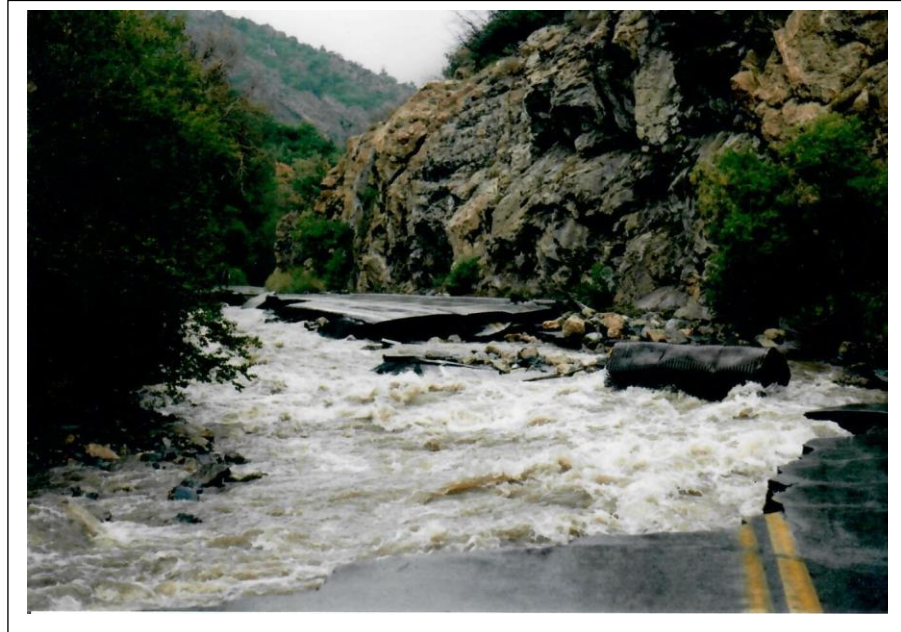
## MEMORIES OF THE FLOOD OF ‘83

*~ Written by Jolene Despain in February 2019 ~ Photos by Tom Loken*

Lots of stories have been written of the Salt Lake City flood of ‘83—People getting together to fill sandbags that were placed along the sides of streets, catching fish in the middle of the great “State Street River”, and flooding throughout the Salt Lake valley. But we at Brighton, have our own stories of the great meltdown. We live at the headwaters of Big Cottonwood Canyon and we watched the start of all that meltwater in the city...

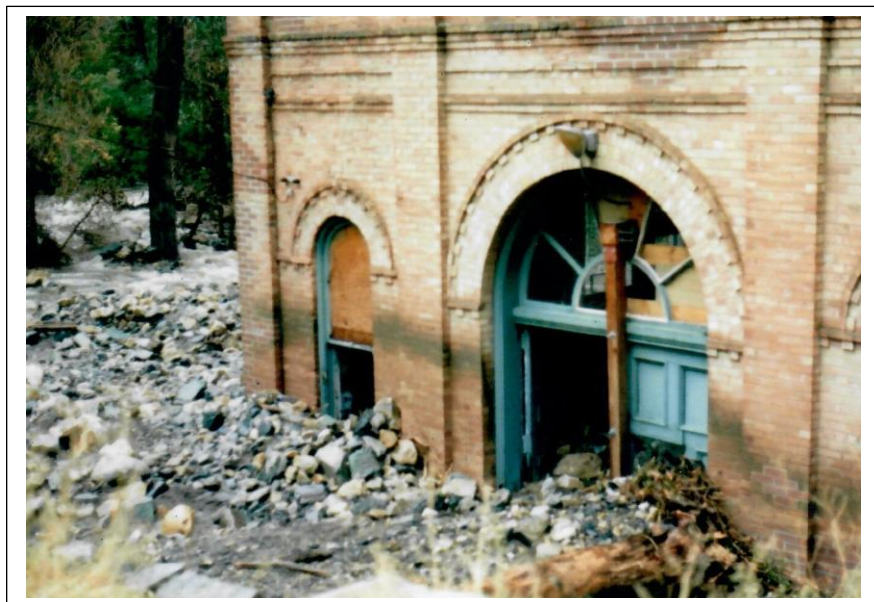


To really understand the snowmelt story, one must go back to the autumn of 1982. Near the end of September, we had a rainstorm which seemed to last for 40 days and 40 nights, saturating the ground and washing the road out from Storm Mountain to the bottom of the canyon. As it started raining, the water got higher and higher in the creek, washing over the banks. The sheriff came through the canyon and told everyone they needed to stay up in the canyon or evacuate as quickly as possible. My parents were staying at their cabin but hastily got in their car and made their way down canyon. Mom later called to say that they made it home but it was a terrifying ride down. Water lapped against the side of the car doors and Mom said it felt like they were in a boat, washing to and fro across the road. Their car was nearly washed over the road at the S curve.



The creek rose and in no time, the road was completely washed away. From Storm Mountain to the bottom of the canyon, the blacktop road gave way to rocks and water. The road was gone and the streambed took back its original course. Don, Dallas, and I hunkered down in our cozy house to wait out the storm.

It was eerily quiet in Brighton. Most everyone evacuated except for the few people who lived here. We owned the Brighton Store and Café but we simply closed it up. After a few days of endless rain, the temperature dropped and rain turned to snow, dumping two feet; leaving the saturated ground frozen

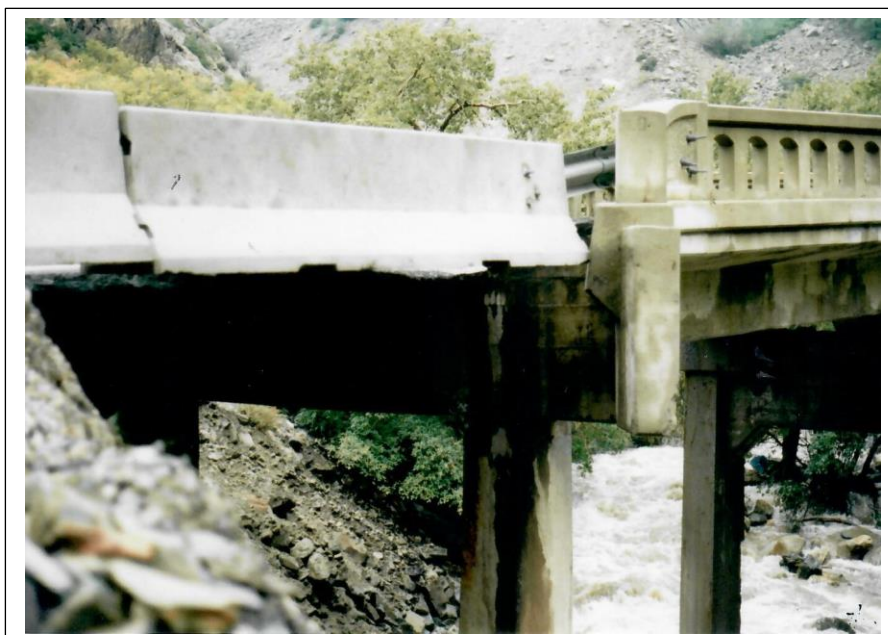
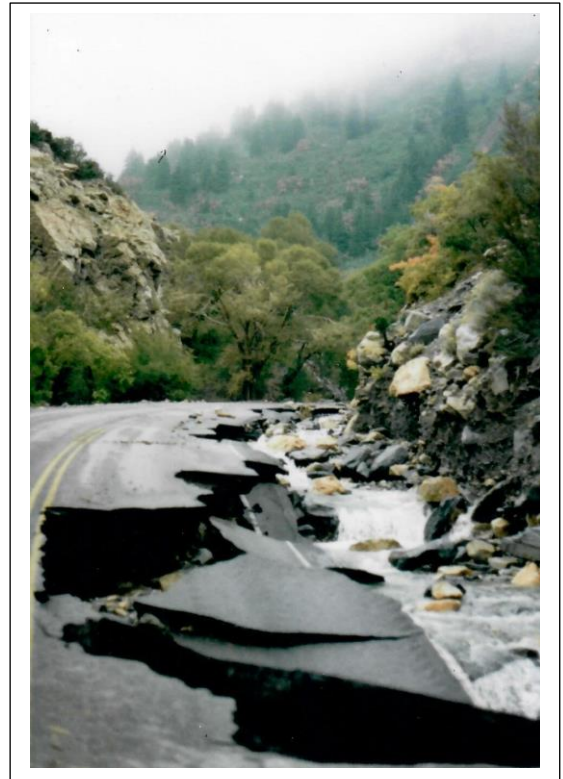


until spring. The only other way out of the canyon was over the Guardsman Pass Road to Park City. This was a dirt road and a few feet of snow made it impossible to drive over the mountain pass. We were stuck. With nothing to do but wait it out, we did what any Brightonite would do; we dusted off our skis and hiked around a bit for a nice early season ski. Dallas, at almost age three, went skiing with us.

After a few days of rain and snow, Don and I decided that it was time to head out of the canyon. Don had plans to run in the St. George Marathon, along with my dad and other friends. We filled our backpacks with dirty laundry (which we planned to wash at Mom and Dad's house since we didn't own a washer or dryer), our clothes for the week, and for some reason, I thought it was a good idea to put a few groceries in a paper sack to carry out of the canyon. Our plan was to ride to Storm Mountain with Steve Jorgensen and walk the three miles to the bottom of the canyon, where Don's parents would pick us up. We couldn't take our own car down the canyon as there was no road to drive on in the lower canyon.

Brighton Ski Resort was building a new ski lift and needed to get their crew up and down the canyon each day in order to work on the lift. It was Steve Jorgensen's job to drive a truck as far down the canyon as he could ("the gap"), pick up the employees who walked from the mouth of the canyon to the truck, and then pile about ten guys in the back of the truck, and drive up to work. The process was reversed at the end of the workday. The rain poured day after day as the Brighton crew walked up and down the canyon. UDOT (Utah Dept of Transportation) was working tirelessly to rebuild the road, but they thought it would take several weeks to get the road back to normal.

Well, at the appointed day and hour, Don, Dallas, and I loaded our provisions in Steve's truck and headed down. We traded places with the Brighton employees and began our trek from Storm Mountain to the base of the canyon. We looked a bit like refugees as we walked along in the pouring rain. Suddenly, my paper sack full of groceries turned to soggy nothingness and bright oranges and grapes fell



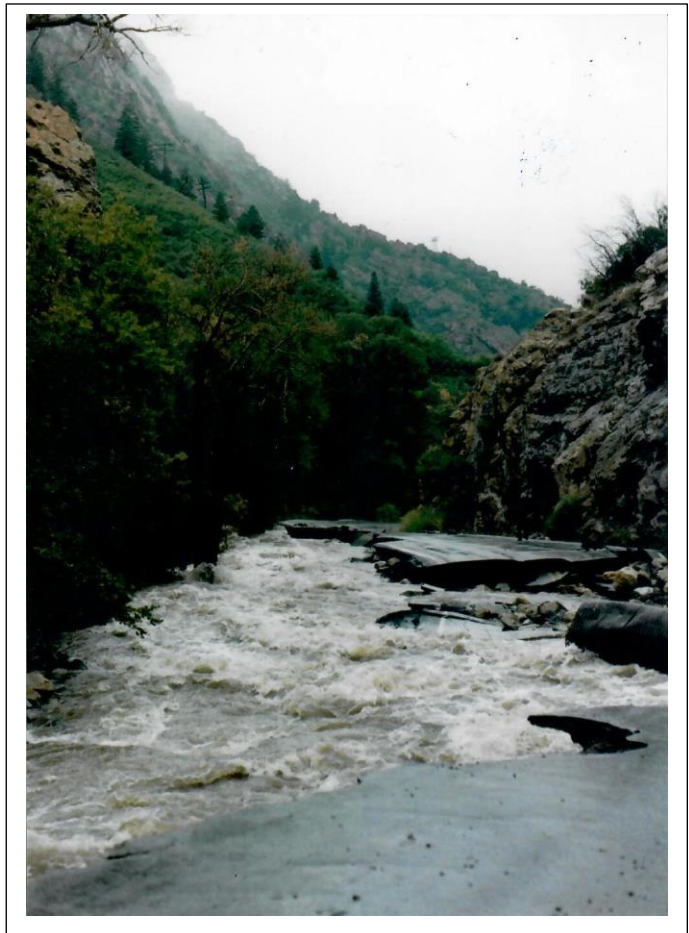
out of my arms and rolled like baseballs and marbles down the muddy road. Dallas, who was riding in a pack on my back found this unfortunate loss to be hilarious. Six or seven rolling oranges and grapes bouncing down the road did look kind of funny.

After about a mile of walking in a soaking rain, a big orange UDOT truck picked us up. Dallas and I and our backpacks fit in the truck with the driver, but alas, there was no room for Don. Don chivalrously climbed on the running board of the truck and hung on for dear life as the rain pelted his face and body. At the end of a harrowing ride down the rest of the canyon on a skinny mud road that was a work in progress, we were glad to see Don's parents waiting for us at the mouth of the canyon. My parents were on their way to St. George, so dad could run the marathon. A couple of days of cleaning up and staying at Mom and Dad's house had us ready to hit the road for St. George. Mom and Dad lent us their old Toyota truck since we couldn't drive our car down canyon. It felt good to leave the mess of rain, snow, and cold. With no way to work and make money in the store, we were glad to leave that behind too. Oh, by the way, Don ran a 3:32 marathon. A respectable first (and only) marathon for him.

The fall season was just the start of the flood story but the onset of an epic, record breaking winter foreshadowed the floods to come. Month after month, the snow piled up. By March, there was over 700 inches of snow. We had an old 1960's army ambulance truck with a plow on the front of it that Don used to plow the Brighton Store parking lot and he plowed that parking lot day after day, month after month until there was no room to pile the snow. The record-breaking winter turned into a record-breaking spring with cold weather and more snow. April in the mountains is usually the time when the robins return and the snow begins to melt. The days get warm and one can hear water running under the deep snow. Running water is the harbinger of warmer days to come.

We always closed the store for a few weeks after the ski resort closed. Don said the snow was too thin for tourists to ski and too thick for the summer crowd to hike, so most years during the spring, we would take a vacation; usually a camping trip to southern Utah which was about as far as our money would take us. But a camping trip was not in the works in 1983—April and May were as cold and snowy as the middle of winter.

Finally, finally, the temperature began to rise. Suddenly, during the last week of May, the temperature rose to 95 degrees in the city. The Memorial holiday weekend felt like the 4th of July. As the snow melted, the water got higher and higher in the creek, washing over the banks. The snow was melting faster than the banks of the creek could hold the water. Mudslides oozed over the canyon road and the water in the creek washed over bridges and rose level with the road.



Because of the worry that the battered canyon road would wash out again as it had in the fall, UDOT closed the canyon day after day. We drove down to the Maxfield Lodge at Storm Mountain and filled sandbags to try to shore up the creek. There weren't very many of us in the canyon to fill and place the sandbags as everyone in the city had more than enough flooding problems to deal with. We watched as

the road crew started to move a large backhoe into the river to pull rocks out of the water, but they had to abandon the job as the backhoe nearly got washed away by the fast-moving water.

Since there was no way to work and make money, we closed the Brighton Store and waited and waited for some sort of break in the now hot summer weather. Again, we settled down in our house to read and play games (we didn't have a TV) and we got an extended vacation that we didn't need. At long last, by the middle of June the flooding subsided, the roads got repaired, and the earth dried up. Things got back to normal and we got ready for a busy summer of working in the Store. By the 4th of July, the Brighton Store was busy and the rain and floods were all but forgotten. But once in a while, sitting around a campfire and sharing timeworn Brighton stories, we think of the rains of '82 and the floods of '83. We have happy memories of hunkering down in our cozy house and we say to ourselves, "those were the good old days!"

## TIMELINE OF THE CANYON FLOODS OF '82-'83

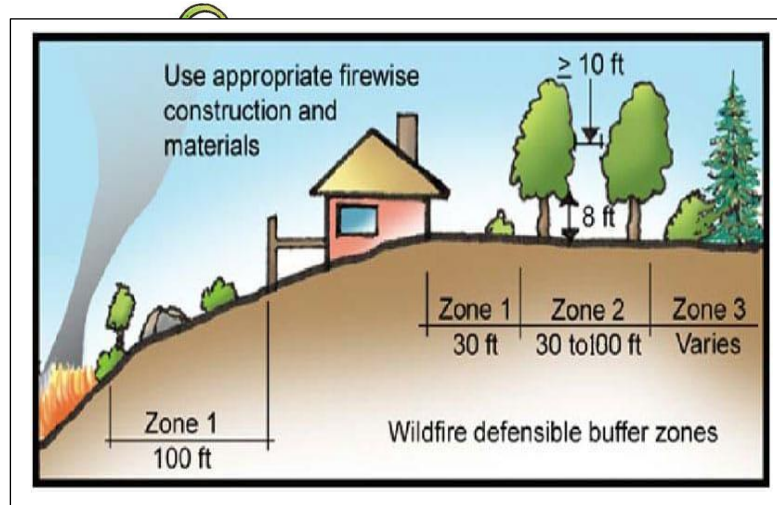
~ By Steve Jorgensen

- Torrential rains fell for days in September of 1982
- Two employees of Solitude went up to check the retention pond below Lake Solitude. They were concerned that it might flood into the base area, so they carved a ditch to drain it slowly. Instead, it burst through the ditch and the whole pond broke out onto the mountainside.
- The resulting flood water took out the lower causeway to the bottom parking lot at Solitude, and then took out the lower bridge in Silver Fork.
- Redman and Spruces Campgrounds did not suffer much damage, but it compromised the Cardiff bridge.
- From there, debris dammed up Mineral Fork and water raged down to damage the Mill B Trailhead.
- Flood waters continued down canyon to compromise the upper bridge at Storm Mountain.
- Water from Storm Mountain Gulch joined the washout and the added force took out the abutments of the big Storm Mountain bridge, and washed out the road below.
- The Stairs Station power plant filled with water and rocks and had to be closed.
- Water washed out all the bridges in the lower picnic grounds (Ledgemere, Dogwood, Birches).
- The lower penstock washed away and the power station at the mouth of the canyon flooded and had to be closed.
- UDOT made patchy repairs and reopened the road for the 1982-3 ski season.
- In the spring of 1983, a giant mudslide occurred at Mill D North which closed the road. Culverts at the bottom of the canyon became clogged with debris and mud.
- Everyday in the spring of 1983, the road was closed for portions of the day while UDOT worked to clear debris. A metal bridge was laid over the mudslide area so cars could go over it. Finally, UDOT plowed Guardsmans Pass and allowed people to get out. Most of the women and children left. The main road was closed for 6-8 weeks.
- Those who stayed in the canyon had to caravan to Storm Mountain where the road was washed out at the Storm Mountain Gulch, walk across the rubble, and catch a ride to town from friends waiting below.



## CHIPPER DAYS BEGIN JULY 31

Each year since 2008, UFA and Utah Forests Fire & State Lands have spent thousands of dollars in Big Cottonwood Canyon to encourage homeowners to create Defensible Space around their homes and neighborhoods. The service is free! All they ask is that we keep track of the hours spent clearing wood and brush. Then we use those hours as in-kind match for the next year's Chipper Days grant. Our homeowners make the neighborhood safer, and protect all homes in the area. Don't forget that Chipper Days begin on July 31<sup>st</sup>. [Sign up for Chipper Days Here.](#)



## BRIGHTON INSTITUTE EVENTS

**JUNE 17 (Saturday) | Mushroom Cultivation** ▪ Katie Lawson ▪ 1 pm ▪ Big Cottonwood Fire Station ▪ Cost/student \$40. Registration Required: [REGISTER HERE](#)

**JULY 4 | 4<sup>th</sup> of July Breakfast & Parade** ▪ Breakfast from 8-10:30 ▪ Parade at 10:30 ▪ Brighton Loop

**JULY 8 | Brighton Day & Wildflower Festival** ▪ 9 am – 2 pm ▪ Brighton Center

**JULY 9 | Wildflower Festival** ▪ 9 am – 2 pm ▪ Solitude Village Green

**JULY 31 | Chipper Days Begin** ▪ [Sign up for Chipper Days Here](#)

## MEETINGS AROUND TOWN

**Brighton Town Council**

2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the Month – 6:30 pm [Meetings | Brighton Utah](#)

OR [www.utah.gov/pmn](http://www.utah.gov/pmn) (You can subscribe to this website to receive automatic notifications.)

#### **Brighton Institute Meeting**

2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of the Month – 6 pm. Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86508034065>  
Meeting ID: 865 0803 4065 Phone Connection: +1-253-215-8782

#### **BCCA Community Council (No meetings in July or December)**

2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of the Month – 7 pm. Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86508034065>  
Meeting ID: 865 0803 4065 Phone Connection: +1-253-215-8782

#### **Brighton Planning Commission Meeting**

3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the Month – 6:00 pm – Fire Station #108 or virtually at  
<https://slco.webex.com/meet/wgurr> Meetings | Brighton Utah

### **RESOURCES**

#### **Environmental Dashboard**

The Central Wasatch Commission's Environmental Dashboard has some great information about our canyon. Access the Environmental Dashboard at this link: <https://cwcedb.utah.edu/>