

MINUTES  
**SENATE AGRICULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** Tuesday, February 23, 2016

**TIME:** 8:00 A.M.

**PLACE:** Room WW53

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Rice, Vice Chairman Bayer, Senators Patrick, Souza, Lee, Den Hartog, Harris and Ward-Engelking

**ABSENT/ EXCUSED:** Senator Burgoyne

**NOTE:** The sign-in sheet, testimonies and other related materials will be retained with the minutes in the committee's office until the end of the session and will then be located on file with the minutes in the Legislative Services Library.

**CONVENED:** **Chairman Rice** called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

**INTRODUCTION:** **Chairman Rice** introduced and welcomed Committee Page Tabitha Manor.

**MINUTES APPROVAL:** **Senator Souza** moved to approve the Minutes of February 2, 2016. **Senator Harris** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

**MINUTES APPROVAL:** Senators Patrick and Burgoyne were not present to approve Minutes of February 4, 2016.

**PRESENTATION:** **Idaho State Department of Agriculture, Invasive Species and Weed Awareness Program Updates.** **Lloyd Knight**, Administrator, Plant Industries Division, Idaho State Department of Agriculture (ISDA), began his invasive species prevention presentation by pointing out that the first watercraft inspection station was opened in 2009. Idaho was the first state to implement a statewide watercraft inspection program for the purposes of prevention. The State's primary focus is quagga and zebra mussels along with aquatic weeds. When the program commenced, ISDA started collecting data and analyzing the information to make decisions on strategies, budgets and expenses. Another aspect of this project is water sampling around the State; 700 samples from bodies of water across the State are tested each year looking for the mussels and none have been found.

In 2015 Idaho had 20 roadside stations on the routes entering the State. The stations across Southern Idaho and on Interstate 90 are meant to target the traffic that moves watercraft that has been to mussel-infested water bodies across the country. Their agency inspected 64,000 watercraft in 2015, which was a large increase from the normal 40,000.

**Mr. Knight** stated that since 2009, ISDA has intercepted 145 mussel-fouled vessels entering Idaho. These vessels originated from Lakes, Mead, Havasu, Pleasant and Powell. These lakes are all in the lower Colorado River area, which is the primary source of the infested boats with viable mussels. Boats that come out of the Great Lakes usually do not have viable mussels on them because they have been pulled out of the water and wintered. ISDA has learned through their data analysis where boats that come through the State are going. Most of the boats that have been in mussel-infested waters are going to other states.

Of the 25 mussel-infested boats that were found in 2015, 11 of the boats had been out of water for less than 30 days (mussels can survive outside of water and still be viable) and 14 of the boats were commercially transported and destined for another state (attachment 1 and 2). **Mr. Knight** explained the data of average days in water for boating behaviors. Through data collected over the last several years, it has revealed that boats that go to Lake Powell spend a week; if they go to Lake Havasu the vessel will go for the winter and be in the lake for a month and then travel back to the State. The longer the boat is in mussel-infested water, the more opportunity there is for mussels to attach to the vessel. In 2015, 60 percent of the boats that were fouled came from the east and this is a different pattern of boat traffic from past years. Also, the destination was different than in past years. In 2015, 68 percent of the boats were destined for Idaho; usually the boats are going to other states.

**Chairman Rice** asked if ISDA has received the additional monies from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to help support the inspection process for the State?

**Mr. Knight** advised that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Authorization and Appropriation did include \$4 million specific to the Columbia Basin for watercraft inspection. They are still waiting for the guidance document for the funding. In ISDA's planning talks for the allocation of these additional funds, one of the topics they have discussed is expanding hours of the inspection stations and additional locations.

**Senator Patrick** stated that Idaho is the defense line for the Columbia River Basin and there is much concern with the diligence of the inspection process. He questioned the hours of operation, stating that boats that are hauled from the south do not get to Idaho border station until they have closed for the night. **Senator Patrick** said he believes the intrinsic measure in this battle is to keep the stations open longer. **Mr. Knight** stated that they have data that shows the boat traffic falls off precipitously after a certain hour. They have extended the hours in a few locations beyond eight to try to capture how many boats go through at that time. ISDA believes they are capturing most of the boat traffic. **Senator Patrick** stated he is concerned because of the damage these mussels will do to Idaho's agriculture, reservoirs and hydrosystems. He agrees that states who have the mussels should be cleaning the boats as they leave; but they do not seem to be concerned because their waters are already contaminated. Until Idaho gets the federal government to cooperate, Idaho may not win the battle. If you think through the travel time needed to haul a boat from Lake Mead or Powell they will not make the Idaho border before eight o'clock at night. It would make sense to run longer hours at certain stations. **Mr. Knight** answered that their contractors are on the ground at those stations on a regular basis. They are in constant contact with the individuals running the stations and do surprise visits. This is a program that ISDA takes very seriously and he did not want the Committee to understand their answers for hours of operation to portray anything other than a very intense focus on this effort. ISDA understands the devastation if Idaho got an infestation of this mussel. Idaho has endangered species concerns that other states do not have to contend with, and hydropower and irrigation. ISDA understands the urgency.

**Senator Souza** asked if there is a mechanism at the source lakes for the boaters to be informed that if they put their vessel into these lakes that they take on the financial risk to treat and remove these mussels. **Mr. Knight** answered that the source water authorities have stepped up their communication efforts for vessels that enter and leave their water bodies. The focus of their message is clean, drain and dry, emphasizing the importance of not transporting fouled watercraft to neighboring states. When a fouled vessel comes through one of Idaho stations, the primary goal is to make sure that vessel is clean. The boats that are held at an Idaho station remain in ISDA's possession for 30 days.

**Chairman Rice** commented that the message the Committee would convey is they are engaged in this effort as Legislators to work with ISDA and make sure that the resources necessary are available so this invasive species does not get a foothold in Idaho waters.

**Mr. Knight** gave a brief overview of an outreach campaign for noxious weeds and invasive species, stating ISDA is in the process of launching a new website that will feature such information as: 1) how to identify weeds; 2) what are the species listed in the State and what do they look like; 3) why are weeds important. They rolled out part of the campaign last fall and are now putting the finishing touches on the website to have it up this spring. They have contracted with an agency, which has helped with other public awareness issues for their agency in the past. The biggest challenge ISDA faces is outreach and targeting their audience to educate and inform the public of their role in weed control in the State. The campaign and a portion of the website incorporate the message "Weeds are important because all humans move them."

**PRESENTATION: Idaho Barley Commission. Kelly Olson**, Administrator, began her presentation highlighting the barley crop figures for 2015. Harvested acres were 550,000, which was equal to last year. The average statewide yield for 2015 was 97 bushels to the acre, up 3 percent (a new record). The producers output was 53 million bushels and the farm-gate receipts were \$286 million, up 7 percent; that means barley is the fifth largest crop in the State. In the past 20 years, acres of production are down 25 percent but the same production remains. Today the farmers are producing the same amount of barley on 25 percent fewer acres, and 85 percent of the crop is used to produce malt for beer (see attachment 3).

**Ms. Olson** then gave an overview of their budget for 2016 and discussed how the dollars were allocated: 14 percent administration, 48 percent research, 12 percent market development, 16 percent growers services and 10 percent information and education. Three years ago the barley producers created a \$1 million endowment to create an agronomist position, and Dr. Christopher Rogers was hired. He specializes in soil science, fertility, plant nutrition and applied soil physics. In the last year he has won or earned competitive research grants from University of Idaho, Idaho Barley Commission, Anheuser-Busch, MillerCoors and the Brewers Association. This young scientist has far exceeded their expectations and he is already becoming an outstanding return on investment for Idaho Barley Producers.

For the last 100 years the USDA has invested in barley breeding in the State. This is the only federally funded barley breeding program and the largest breeding facility in the United States. Idaho is the number one producer for malt barley in the country. The Anheuser-Busch and MillerCoors brewing companies have invested heavily in Idaho. The commercial malt industry of GrainCorp located in Pocatello is the world's fourth largest malt manufacturer. The company is expanding its Pocatello plant by 130 percent and that expansion is being driven by the tremendous growth in the craft brewing industry.

**PRESENTATION: Idaho Bean Commission. Andi Weibye**, Administrator, reported that the Idaho Bean Commission (IBC) submitted a multi-state specialty crop block grant in 2015 with Wyoming and Colorado to create the multi-state bean breeding research. They have expanded markets to Costa Rica with a specialty crop block grant and have been researching red beans. The IBC has been doing specialty crop block grants since 2009. In 2015, the IBC received approval for approximately \$300,000 for future research (see attachment 4).

**Ms. Weibye** gave a summary of the IBC budget, reporting an estimated reserve balance of \$665,227, receipts with expenses of \$319,737 and grant matching expenses of \$47,196. Their total expenditures of \$366,933 including an estimated reserve balance of \$300,000.

**Ms. Weibye** concluded that IBC attended the West Coast kick-off launch of the International Year of the Pulse. In attendance were food bloggers, nutritionists and food magazines to name a few. They came to learn to cook pulses, the benefits of pulses and how to cook beans. The future activities of IBC will be to continue to support the development of the multi-state bean consortium. There will be a continued involvement with the Global Scholars Program to help grow new international markets and to pursue grant funding.

**Senator Den Hartog** stated that she appreciate IBC's focus on returning something valuable back to the growers. This is an important component of the commissions and the Committee does not see that often. The renewed focus on what the IBC can do for the growers is an important move forward.

**ADJOURNED:** There being no further business, **Chairman Rice** adjourned the meeting at 9:20 a.m.

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Senator Rice  
Chair

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Carol Deis  
Secretary