

MINUTES
HOUSE RESOURCES & CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Thursday, February 23, 2017

TIME: 1:30 P.M.

PLACE: Room EW40

MEMBERS: Chairman Gibbs, Vice Chairman Gestrin, Representatives Moyle, Raybould, Shepherd, Wood, Boyle, Vander Woude, Miller, Burtenshaw, Mendive, Youngblood, Kauffman, Giddings, Blanksma, Erpelding, Rubel, Jordan

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** None

GUESTS: The sign-in sheet will be retained with the minutes in the committee secretary's office until the end of the session. Following the end of the session, the sign-in sheet will be filed with the minutes in the Legislative Services Library.

Chairman Gibbs called the meeting to order at 1:31pm.

MOTION: **Rep. Kauffman** made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 15, 2017 meeting. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

Rep. Raybould welcomed the BYU-Idaho Agriculture Business class to the meeting.

H 140: **Rep. Kauffman**, District 25, stated this legislation would amend **42-1743B**, Idaho Code, which would direct the Idaho Board of Water Resources to notify each member of the Legislature of any changes to the comprehensive State Water Plan. This amendment would ensure that any changes to the State Water Plan is known by all legislators and the process remains transparent.

Brian Patton, representing the Department of Water Resources, Water Resource Board, stated both Water Resources and the Water Board are **in support** of this bill.

Braden Jensen, representing the Idaho Farm Bureau, stated they are happy with the clarification of the Legislative notification of any changes to the State Water Plan and are **in support** of this bill.

MOTION: **Rep. Blanksma** made a motion to send **H 140** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote.** **Rep. Kauffman** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

S 1027: **Sharon Kiefer**, Deputy Director, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, stated the primary element of this legislation is to make the distinction between black bear and grizzly bear in several provisions of **Title 36** in expectation of the delisting of the Yellowstone Ecosystem grizzly bear. She stated **S 1027** does not delist the Yellowstone grizzly bear nor does it open any hunting seasons for delisted grizzly bear. What it does is address the rules to administer grizzly bear hunting should the bear be delisted and a hunting season authorized by the Fish and Game Commission. These are proactive measures to set the stage for state management, consistent with the 2002 Idaho Management Plan for Yellowstone Grizzly Bear, should that opportunity come through delisting prior to the next Legislative Session. She stated this legislation also revises taxidermist and furbuyer license requirements to include reporting of certain grizzly bear parts or skins and raw wolf skins, increases the timeframe for reporting the control of depredating wolves when no permit is required, and removes some obsolete language in other sections.

In response to a question regarding any conflict between **S 1027** and **H 141**, **Ms. Kiefer** stated she evaluated **H 141** regarding commercial wildlife tanneries and determined that because **H 141** establishes a new definition and provisions of recording exclusive to that definition, no conflict is created with **S 1027**.

Gary Grimm, representing himself, is **in opposition** to the bill. He stated there are many documents that indicate the grizzly bear should not be delisted and in his opinion it is premature for Idaho to even be talking about hunting grizzly bear.

Brian Brooks, representing Idaho Wildlife Federation, stated they are **in support** of this bill. He stated the increased population numbers of the Yellowstone grizzly bear is a testament to the successful management through the Endangered Species Act. These sustainable population numbers indicate the health of this iconic keystone species and the Federation believes it is now time for the Yellowstone grizzly to come off of the endangered species list and for Idaho Department of Fish and Game to manage the species. He further stated the Department has proven success in managing predator species and big game species and believes it's time to establish regulations to allow hunting of the grizzly. The Federation believes that funds from grizzly bear tags could be used to help manage the grizzly; examples include grizzly poaching enforcement, migration planning, wildlife overpasses, and bear boxes in campgrounds. The Federation cautions the Department to manage them in a sustainable way to not send them back to the endangered species list, and that it may be necessary to update the 2002 Management Plan in order to address the biggest threat; bear-human conflicts.

Nick Bishop, representing himself, is **in opposition** to the bill. He believes it is too soon to delist the grizzly bear and should be postponed until accurate population numbers can be obtained.

Nathan Bishop, representing the Herman Bloom Foundation, a non-profit, stated they are **in opposition** to the bill. They do not believe there are accurate population numbers to make this decision to delist and open up a hunting season.

Sara Clemons, representing Indivisible Idaho, stated they are **in opposition** to this bill. Ms. Clemons did not testify but presented a petition with 1,042 signatures and requested it be included in the record. (See Attachment 1.)

MOTION: **Rep. Wood** made a motion to send **S 1027** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote. Reps. Erpelding, Rubel, and Jordan** requested to be recorded as voting **NAY**. **Rep. Blanksma** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

Chairman Gibbs identified a privilege letter from **Speaker Bedke** for the committee to hear and vote on the following two RSs. (See Attachment 2.)

RS 25145C2: **Rep. Erpelding**, District 19, stated he worked with the Idaho Department of Lands to modify the "reasonable access" portion of this Concurrent Resolution as requested by the committee during the February 9, 2017 meeting. The result of this Concurrent Resolution would be an annual report and maps produced by the Idaho Department of Lands detailing the managed uses and locations of State Endowment Lands. The public would be able to find, within this one resource, locations of these lands, what activities are occurring on certain parcels, such as logging, and whether or not parcels are accessible or inaccessible/landlocked. The public would be required to gain permission from land owners to access landlocked parcels, but cannot assume access will always be granted. Because the Department cannot access some parcels at all due to their locations, they are actively working on land trades and sales in order to upgrade parcels that would be better State Endowment Lands in order to provide for schools.

MOTION: **Rep. Kauffman** made a motion to introduce **RS 25145C2**. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

RS 25292C1: **Rep. Erpelding**, District 19, stated this proposed legislation amends **67-7008A**, Idaho Code, increasing the invasive species sticker fee for nonresidents from \$22.00 to \$30.00. He stated as Idaho becomes more popular for tourists, it is critical to ensure that efforts are maintained and even increased in protecting the state from invasive species. This was a recommendation from the Invasive Species Working Group. This proposed legislation would increase proceeds into the General Fund by approximately \$100,000 per year. If passed, the fee increase would go into effect January 2018.

In response to questions, **Rep. Erpelding** stated the State Parks would be unable to manage a fee increase in 2017 due to the production schedule of the sticker system they utilize.

MOTION: **Rep. Wood** made a motion to introduce **RS 25292C1**. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 2:36pm.

Representative Gibbs
Chair

Tracey McDonnell
Secretary