

MINUTES
HOUSE RESOURCES & CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Thursday, February 11, 2021

TIME: 1:30 P.M.

PLACE: Room EW40

MEMBERS: Chairman Gibbs, Vice Chairman Lickley, Representatives Moyle, Wood, Boyle, Vander Woude, Gestrin, Mendive, Kauffman, Blanksma, Addis, Moon, Manwaring, Okuniewicz, Yamamoto, Rubel, Davis, Mathias

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** Representative(s) Vander Woude, Gestrin

GUESTS: Brian Patton, Idaho Department of Water Resources; Benn Brocksome, Idaho Sportsmen; Chyla Wilson, Idaho Farm Bureau; Paul Kline, Idaho Department of Fish and Game

Chairman Gibbs called the meeting to order at 1:30pm.

Jerry Rigby, Water Rights Attorney, Mitigation, Inc., provided an overview of the ongoing efforts to modify the flood control curves at Ririe Reservoir. He explained the Ririe Reservoir, located on Willow Creek in eastern Idaho, was constructed in the mid 1970's primarily for flood control, but also for irrigation, recreation, and fish and wildlife benefits. As part of the flood control operations, a mandated 40,000 acre-feet of water must be released every fall with an additional 10,000 acre-feet of space held exclusively for flood control; a total of 50,000 acre-feet of flood control space or 60% of the entire reservoir. No other reservoir in Idaho has such stringent, inflexible, and conservative flood control operations. He explained, since the construction of Ririe Dam, conditions have changed on Willow Creek which have substantially reduced flood risk including updated annual maintenance schedules to keep waterways (floodway channels) free of ice in the winter and development of off-stream storage facilities. Mr. Rigby stated being able to save some portion of the 50,000 acre-feet for use by water users would provide valuable benefits to the entire region.

Mr. Rigby stated water users have begun efforts with the Bureau of Reclamation and Army Corps of Engineers to review and revise Ririe Dam flood operations. The WIIN Act of 2016 (Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act), authorizes the Corps to conduct studies and make modifications. The Corps required Mitigation, Inc. provide funding for the studies and as a result, \$480K was provided for the Phase I feasibility study which confirmed that modifying Ririe Dam's flood control operations could provide valuable benefits while maintaining sufficient flood control protections for the region. Mr. Rigby explained a further flood risk study is necessary to revise Ririe Dam flood control operations and the anticipated cost of that study to water users is \$1.7M. Mitigation, Inc. applied to the Idaho Water Resource Board for funding in order to pay for this flood risk study. Mr. Rigby requested support from the Legislature that the Board give full consideration in funding the flood risk study.

Chairman Gibbs explained the \$1.7M would be spread out over 3 years for the feasibility study.

Chairman Gibbs turned the gavel over to **Vice Chair Lickley**.

RS 28508: **Rep. Gibbs**, District 32, stated this proposed legislation would authorize the Legislative Council to continue the Interim Natural Resources Committee. He explained this interim committee must be re-authorized every two years and the Speaker of the House and Senate Pro Tempore desire to keep this committee active.

MOTION: **Rep. Wood** made a motion to introduce **RS 28508** and recommend it be sent directly to the Second Reading Calendar. **Motion carried by voice vote.** **Rep. Gibbs** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

Chairman Lickley turned the gavel over to **Chairman Gibbs**.

H 91: **Rep. Lickley**, District 25, stated this legislation adds clarifying language to **Idaho Code 36-1103, Section 1.(a)**, to allow for the use of non-edible portions of game for bait when trapping. It also clarifies the use of salvaged wildlife for bait while trapping. She explained this legislation includes the use of bait for fur-bearing and other animals mirroring the same methods and processes used for other species including wolves and predators which are now included in this Section of Idaho Code. She concluded this will enable the trapping regulations to be consistent, uniform, and prevent confusion in the field.

MOTION: **Rep. Blanksma** made a motion to send **H 91** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation.

Benn Brocksome, Idaho Sportsmen, stood **in support** of **H 91**.

Chyla Wilson, Idaho Farm Bureau, stood **in support** of **H 91**.

Paul Kline, Deputy Director, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, stated the Fish and Game Commission is **in support** of **H 91** and indicated they appreciate all the work done by **Rep. Lickley** and others to make this happen.

Chairman Gibbs requested the record reflect no one signed up for remote testimony and no one else from the audience came forward to testify.

VOTE ON MOTION: **Chairman Gibbs** called for a vote on the motion to send **H 91** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote.** **Rep. Lickley** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

H 93: **Rep. Okuniewicz**, District 2, stated this legislation implements fee increases only for nonresidents when visiting Idaho State Parks. He explained, fees for nonresident camping will be twice those of residents at a minimum of five parks and entry fees for nonresidents will also be twice those of residents at a minimum of five parks. Additionally, Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation will have the ability to increase fees for nonresidents at all other parks. He indicated an emergency provision is included in this legislation so that the Department can begin raising nonresident fees before the start of the 2021 peak season.

Chairman Gibbs requested the record reflect no one signed up for remote testimony and no one from the audience came forward to testify.

MOTION: **Rep. Rubel** made a motion to send **H 93** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote.** **Rep. Okuniewicz** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 2:06pm.

Representative Gibbs
Chair

Tracey McDonnell
Secretary