

MINUTES
HOUSE AGRICULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

DATE: Monday, February 14, 2022
TIME: 1:30 P.M.
PLACE: Room EW42
MEMBERS: Chairman Kauffman, Vice Chairman Andrus, Representatives Boyle, Kerby, Giddings (Carlson), Marshall, Nichols, Hanks, Cannon, Moon, McCann, Toone, Ruchti, Mathias
**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** None
GUESTS: The sign-in sheet will be retained in the committee secretary's office; following the end of session the sign-in sheet will be filed with the minutes in the Legislative Library.

Chairman Kauffman called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

MOTION: **Rep. Cannon** made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 8, 2022 meeting. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

Lloyd Knight, Administrator, Division of Plant Industries, explained the four invasive species program areas; prevention, early detection, management and control, and education and outreach. He reviewed the program budget pointing out the three main sources of funding from the General Fund, the Dedicated Fund and federal cost share matching funds. **Nic Zurfluh**, Section Manager, Invasive Species, explained that recent contaminated zebra mussels found in moss balls used in aquariums, and spoke to their response locally as well as the regional and national response in acting quickly to contain it. This is the 12th year of the watercraft inspection program, and they have the support of local law enforcement and Idaho State Police for each station. Relationships with surrounding states have increased over the years with coordinated cooperation. He explained the Idaho rapid response plan that aligns with the regional state and the Columbia River Basin Interagency Plan. **Jeremy Varley** spoke of aquatic noxious weeds and treatments. Eurasian watermilfoil, flowering rush, and hydrilla are found in lakes and rivers in Idaho. Eurasian watermilfoil was identified in the Blue Heart Springs area of the Snake River near Hagerman, Idaho. By October the Eurasian watermilfoil had been removed.

William Fuchs, Maximized Water Management, developed Aquatic Vegetation Rake (AVR) to remove targeted water weed or obstruction from the water quickly. AVR is being used to remove water weeds and water obstructions from canals and waterways. Idaho canal systems divert water from Fall River that flows from Yellowstone National Park through private properties where the owners have livestock, crops, fishponds, and limited budgets for water delivery maintenance. The AVR was developed in Idaho to solve water weed problems in an irrigation canal and has been in use since 2008.

Brad Griff, Executive Director, Snake River Sugar Beet Association (SRSBA), explained sugar beets are a root crop grown below the soil, usually weighing up to 3-5 pounds and are harvested in the late fall to increase sugar content. Sugar beets are grown in 11 states, primarily in the northern states where warm days and cooler nights produce the best crop. Idaho is the largest producer of sugar beets in the nation and accounts for 18% of sugar beet production in the country. SRSBA employs 17000 employees. Mr. Griff spoke to the importance of using the best farming practices to achieve sustainability by decreasing the use of pesticide, reducing fuel usage, improving soil health and increasing efficiency.

Jessica Anderson, Public Affairs Manager, Amalgamated Sugar (AS), said AS is the second largest beet sugar company in the nation producing 10% of the nation's real sugar. They were founded in 1897 and now have three processing factories, employing 1,800 employees. She spoke concerning the three legislative priorities which are transportation, recruiting talent for employment opportunities in the industry, and continuing agricultural research. She explained sugar is more than just sweetness. Along with fat and protein, sugar provides the body with energy and should be included in moderation and portion control in a healthy diet. No part of the beet is wasted; beet pulp is a feed source, and betaine is used in cosmetics.

RS 29452: **Rep. Ferch** presented **RS 29452**, proposed legislation to allow "Allied Health Professionals" who are not licensed veterinarians to perform certain treatment on, and provide services to animals. Under current law, the Allied Health Professional is not permitted to advertise those services to the public. This legislation would allow qualified Allied Health Professionals, who are authorized to provide certain services, the ability to advertise and offer service to the public.

MOTION: **Rep. Boyle** made a motion to introduce **RS 29452**. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

RS 29566: **Rep. Troy** presented **RS 29566**, proposed legislation that revises provisions for how Commissioners are appointed to the Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission, increases the number of Commissioners from five to seven, and repeals the ability to establish any new Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

MOTION: **Rep. Toone** made a motion to introduce **RS 29566**. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 3:40 p.m.

Representative Kauffman
Chair

Jayne Feik
Secretary