

MINUTES
SENATE RESOURCES & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

DATE: Monday, February 21, 2022

TIME: 1:30 P.M.

PLACE: Room WW55

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Vick, Vice Chairman Heider, and Senators VanOrden (Bair), Blair (Johnson), Patrick, Guthrie, Burtenshaw, Stennett, and Semmelroth

ABSENT/ EXCUSED: None

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: **Vice Chairman Heider** called the meeting of the Senate Resources and Environment Committee (Committee) to order at 1:37 p.m.

MINUTES APPROVAL: **Vice Chairman Heider** moved to approve the Minutes of February 2, 2022. **Senator Blair** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

GUBERNATORIAL APPOINTMENT VOTE: **Senator Stennett** moved to send the Gubernatorial appointment of Ray Hinchcliff to the Oil and Gas Conservation Commission to the floor with recommendation that he be confirmed by the Senate. **Senator Patrick** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**. Senator Harris will carry the appointment of Mr. Hinchcliff on the floor.

GUBERNATORIAL APPOINTMENT: **Committee Consideration of the Gubernatorial Appointment of Michael Roach of Fairfield, ID to the Parks and Recreation Board. Mr. Roach** introduced himself and shared he had a degree in Wildlife/Fisheries Resources. He worked for five years while he was going to school for Fish and Game, but somehow ended up in banking. He worked in banking until 2009, when he began work as State Natural Resources Director for United States Senator Jim Risch. He retired in January 2021.

DISCUSSION: In response to a question from **Senator VanOrden, Mr. Roach** explained how he came to work for Senator Risch. **Senator Stennett** asked Mr. Roach what he might bring to this position, considering that his wife held the position before him. **Mr. Roach** responded current parks are overcrowded, so he would like to expand the availability of recreation around the State, and he would like to help parks get what they need to do their jobs. **Senator Blair** asked with the increase in Idaho's population and the increased demand caused by COVID, what Mr. Roach believed were the biggest needs of Parks and Recreation. **Mr. Roach** answered the enhancement of Idaho's current parks and retention of its employees.

GUBERNATORIAL REAPPOINTMENT: **Committee Consideration of the Gubernatorial Reappointment of Randy Doman of Cottonwood, ID to the Parks and Recreation Board. Mr. Doman** introduced himself and shared he was looking forward to working with the new director and serving the people of Idaho.

DISCUSSION: **Senator Stennett** asked Mr. Dorman what he feels he uniquely brings to this position. **Mr. Doman** responded the last few years showed where access to Parks and Recreation services was problematic and he hoped to hold people accountable in resolving these issues. In response to a question from **Senator Patrick, Mr. Doman** spoke about actions to address the invasion of quagga mussels.

PRESENTATION: **Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation (IDPR) Fiscal Year Budget Overview.** **Susan Buxton**, Director, Parks and Recreation, presented on the IDPR proposed fiscal year 2023 budget and reviewed how additional funding received from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act and Governor Little's Leading Idaho Program received in fiscal year 2022 was spent (Attachment 1). She provided an overview of the financial impact of IDPR services and the significant maintenance backlog (Attachment 2, Attachment 3).

PASSED THE GAVEL: Vice Chairman Heider then passed the gavel to Chairman Vick.

DISCUSSION: In response to questions from **Vice Chairman Heider, Senator Stennett, Senator Patrick, and Chairman Vick, Ms. Buxton** shared on how IDPR was working with other organizations to inform park users on how to recreate responsibly and on the appropriate use of trails. She clarified that the 19,500 miles of public trails noted on Attachment 1 was miles of trails on public lands in the entire state, not just in the state parks, and stated the largest park in the Idaho State Park system was Harriman State Park. She stated IDPR's largest difficulties were recruitment and retention of employees, and longer visitor seasons. She believed dedicated funding was sustainable and would allow for the requested increase of 11.58 full time employees, although IDPR was also asking for increased funding for recruitment and current staff. She agreed to provide a list of pending maintenance projects (Attachment 3).

To illustrate the visitation impacts on State parks, **Ms. Buxton** shared the top ten Idaho State Parks for visitation in 2020:

- Lucky Peak State Park - 1.1 million
- City of Rocks State Park - 687,000
- Farragut State Park - 654,000
- Lake Cascade State Park - 650,000
- Eagle Island State Park - 532,000
- Ponderosa State Park - 471,000
- Coeur d'Alene Parkway - 481,00
- Hells Gate State Park - 327,000
- Thousand Springs State Park - 321,000
- Bear Lake State Park - 315,000

ADJOURNED: There being no further business as this time, **Chairman Vick** adjourned the meeting at 2:33 p.m.

Senator Vick
Chair

Shelly Johnson
Secretary