

MINUTES
SENATE AGRICULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

DATE: Thursday, February 01, 2024

TIME: 8:00 A.M.

PLACE: Room WW53

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Hartgen, Vice Chairman Nichols, Senators Foreman, Hart, Schroeder, Carlson, Zuiderveld, Semmelroth, and Taylor

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: **Chairman Hartgen** called the meeting of the Senate Agricultural Affairs Committee (Committee) to order at 8:00 a.m.

MINUTES APPROVAL: **Senator Zuiderveld** moved to approve the Minutes of January 25, 2024. **Senator Taylor** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

RS 31122 **Relating to Veterinarians. Braden Jensen**, Director, Idaho Farm Bureau, presented **RS 31122**. He expressed veterinarian programs out of state had been brought up several times in past years. This related to Veterinarians - States findings of the Legislature and authorized the State Board of Education to commence preliminary conversations with the state of Utah to establish an operating agreement for Idaho students to participate in Utah's veterinary program. **Mr. Jensen** requested the Committee consider **RS 31122** for printing.

DISCUSSION: **Vice Chair Nichols** asked Mr. Jensen if Utah was receptive to the veterinary program and what they expected from the collaboration.

Mr. Jensen stated these were beginning stages to get a program started with Utah State University. He suggested Utah State University was in favor of moving forward.

Senator Taylor questioned Mr. Jensen, if the students that participated in an out of state program would be required to return to Idaho for a period of time after graduation to address Idaho's shortage of large animal veterinarians.

Mr. Jensen stated there was not a requirement for students to return to Idaho. It was an issue being addressed with requirements added to future legislation.

MOTION: **Senator Carlson** moved to send **RS 31122** to print. **Senator Schroeder** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**.

PASSED THE GAVEL: Chairman Hartgen passed the gavel to Vice Chair Nichols.

RULES REVIEW: Voting and Discussion on rule presented January 30, 2024. Sam Eaton Presented, IPC. **Vice Chair Nichols** instructed the Committee to ask questions before voting on the Committee's last docket.

DOCKET NO. 29-0101-2301 Rules of the Idaho Potato Commission (ZBR Chapter Rewrite) - Proposed Rule.

MOTION: **Senator Schroeder** moved to approve **Docket No. 29-0101-2301**. **Senator Taylor** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**.

PRESENTATION: Idaho Rangeland Resources Commission (IRRC) 2023 Audit Report. Gretchen Hyde, Director, IRRC, opened with a quick acknowledgement of a full time educator hired in fall of 2023. The addition had been a huge benefit to the IRRC education program. The primary mission was to sustain and enhance Idaho's rangelands and ranching heritage through public education. She stated the agency was led by five board members nominated by the members of the University of Idaho's College of Natural Resources, Idaho Cattle Association, and the Idaho Wool Growers Association. Each board member served a five-year term and was appointed by the governor.

Ms. Hyde talked about how the funding had been consistent since 1997. The \$0.10 an animal unit a month (AUM) and \$0.02 an acre on private "category 5 / dry graze" deeded land had not changed. These were assistance agreements, and critical to IRRC expansion programs. The "Life on the Range" license plate brought in roughly \$80,000 dollars per year.

Ms. Hyde mentioned the IRRC's mission was education and outreach on livestock and rangeland issues. Nearly 75 percent of rangeland was public land mixed with private land. The concern was the population growth and the public not understanding fences and gates were property boundaries. Ranchers and farmers painted fence posts orange to alert the public to no trespassing on their property.

Ms. Hyde introduced three main programs.

1.

Care and Share Campaign. A partnership between the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and IRRC . The theme of the campaign was "Care for Idaho's rangelands and share them respectfully with others". It was directed at recreational users about the authorized and historic use of public and private lands.

2.

Idaho Rangeland Outdoor Adventure Mobile (IROAM). An IRRC education partnership with the University of Idaho, BLM, Laura Moore Cunningham Foundation, U.S. Forest Service, and the Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission. It was designed to take students on a seasonal adventure through Idaho's rangelands. It was complete with rangeland ecology classroom exhibits and curriculum that included hands-on activities.

3.

Life on the Range video series. An educational project that showcased real stories about the ever-changing landscape of ranching, multiple-use management, entrepreneurial spirit, family, and stewardship on Idaho's rangelands. It produced more than 100 educational videos that featured BLM topics of range monitoring, fire suppression, sage grouse habitat, multiple-use land management, post-fire restoration, recreation, and livestock grazing. With so many newcomers to the area education of rangelands was critical.

Ms. Hyde presented a video on the use of spray drones. The versatility of drones and their sophisticated sensors enabled accurate monitoring of noxious weeds. Drones produced 3D maps quickly and inexpensively. It covered large areas of terrain with ease, applying liquids with great precision. The drone replaced labor-intensive, time-consuming, and potentially harmful use of backpack sprayers and other equipment.

DISCUSSION: **Senator Taylor** inquired what the "LV2ROAM" on the license plate stood for.

Ms. Hyde responded the plate meant "Live" or "Love" to roam.

Chairman Hartgen asked if the money raised from the license plates went towards education.

Ms. Hyde responded yes, the money went towards education.

Vice Chair Nichols asked about the profitability of the license plate and how long it had been in circulation

Ms. Hyde responded the license plate generated approximately \$80,000 in additional revenue. The license plate had been in circulation since January 2, 2009.

Senator Carlson applauded the addition of drones as a cost affective way to spray and control noxious weeds.

Senator Schroeder inquired about the cost of a drone to the program.

Ms. Hyde responded she did not have the exact cost of the drones.

ADJOURNED: There being no further business at this time, **Chairman Hartgen** adjourned the meeting at 8:29 a.m.

Senator Hartgen
Chair

Melissa Price
Secretary