

MINUTES
SENATE RESOURCES & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

DATE: Wednesday, February 17, 2016

TIME: 1:30 P.M.

PLACE: Lincoln Auditorium Room WW02

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Bair, Vice Chairman Vick, Senators Siddoway, Heider, Nuxoll, Bayer, Stennett and Lacey

ABSENT/ EXCUSED: Senator Hagedorn

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 Bair** called the meeting of the Senate Resources and Environment Committee (Committee) to order at 1:30 p.m.

MINUTES APPROVAL: **Senator Bayer** moved to approve the Minutes of February 3, 2016. **Senator Siddoway** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

MINUTES APPROVAL: **Senator Siddoway** moved to approve the Minutes of February 8, 2016. **Senator Nuxoll** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

MINUTES APPROVAL: **Senator Lacey** moved to approve the Minutes of February 10, 2016. **Senator Siddoway** seconded the motion. The motion carried by **voice vote**.

RS 24548 **Senator Siddoway** said he had been asked to talk about **RS 24548**, as Senator Brackett (the author of the RS) had a speaking commitment out of town. **Senator Siddoway** said **RS 24548** provides a process for the Idaho Department of Fish and Game to have an independent entity carry out drawings for tags for controlled hunts. The department shall contract with a private entity to conduct the drawings, which must be conducted using a computer program that awards permits based on a random order of selection. The estimated cost is approximately \$102,500 depending on the number of applications and the level and type of service desired. Fourteen Senators and 16 Representatives are co-sponsors of this legislation.

MOTION: **Senator Heider** asked for unanimous consent to send **RS 24548** to the State Affairs Committee for printing, and have it returned to this Committee. There was no opposition to the request.

GUBERNATORIAL APPOINTEE HEARING: Chris Charles Beck, Mayor, Hayden Lake, Idaho, was reappointed to the Oil and Gas Commission to serve a term commencing July 10, 2015, and expiring July 1, 2019. Mayor Beck is a registered professional engineer and obtained his education at:

- Meridian High School, 1978, Meridian, Idaho
- University of Idaho, B.S. Geological Engineering, 1983
- University of Idaho, M.S. Geological Engineering, 1988

Mayor Beck was named the "Outstanding Young Engineer" in 1993 by the North Idaho Chapter of the Society of Professional Engineers and was awarded a "Certificate of Merit" in 1983 by the Nez Perce National Forest, U.S. Department of Agriculture. He has also had one publication: *Geological Engineering Maps of the Boise Foothills, Ada County, Idaho*.

Civic involvement includes the following:

- Mayor, Hayden Lake, 2012 to present
- Councilman, Hayden Lake, 2010-2012
- Vice Chairman, Hayden Urban Renewal Agency, 2005-2011
- Councilman and Council President, Hayden, 1999 and 2003
- Vice Chairman, State Trustee, Panhandle Health District, Board of Health, 1996-2011
- Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer Protection Committee, 2009-2011
- President, Leadership Coeur d'Alene, 1995; Board of Directors, 1994-1996
- Coeur d'Alene Area Chamber of Commerce, Board of Directors, 1996-1998
- Kootenai County Site Disturbance Committee, 1996-1998
- Coeur d'Alene Public Golf Course, Board of Directors, 1996-1997
- Coeur d'Alene Sunrise Rotary Club, Charter Member, 1995

Mayor Beck said the two years that he has been on the Oil and Gas Commission have been a steep learning curve. **Mayor Beck** said one of the challenges facing the Commission is the development of a well-structured method of handling applications.

Chairman Bair thanked Mayor Beck for appearing before the Committee and said they would consider his appointment at the next meeting. **Chairman Bair** then welcomed Mr. Prescott.

PRESENTATION: **Wyatt Prescott**, Executive Vice President, Idaho Cattle Association, presented an overview of the wildlife depredation of farm crops that the ranchers and cattlemen are dealing with. The three main issues are: 1.) consolidation of ungulate herds; 2.) valuation of feed; and 3.) the compensation program.

Russ Hendricks, representing the Idaho Farm Bureau, provided a four-minute video of some problems encountered with wildlife (see attachment 1).

Ed Schriever, Deputy Director, Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG), provided information regarding big game depredation prevention and compensation. The existing program was developed by recommendations from the IDFG Advisory Committee in 1989, and legislation was passed in 1990. The Department responds to approximately 700 depredation or nuisance complaints annually, most of which are addressed without need for compensation. With a higher snow pack this winter, it has caused big game to be concentrated at lower elevations.

As of February 12, 2016, IDFG staff responded to 236 depredation complaints: 189 involving elk; 25 involving turkeys; and 22 involving deer. Regional supervisors have issued 76 kill permits and authorized 22 depredation hunts. Fencing materials, hazing assistance and other depredation techniques have been provided to 215 private landowners. Emergency winter feeding sites have been established in 5 locations for 650 elk to reduce damage to private property.

Funding for prevention amounts to \$900,000; a fund of \$255,000 is used for compensation. During the past ten years, \$2.45 million has been paid on 304 claims. Crop losses account for 91 percent of payments, livestock payments account for 6 percent and rangeland forage 3 percent.

Three challenges facing the IDFG are:

- dedicated funding for depredation prevention has not kept up with inflation and only provides 45 percent of the purchasing power originally available in 1990
- changes in private land ownership, uses and access
- greater use of private lands by deer and elk

Following are testimonies of wildlife depredation of farm crops:

TESTIMONY: **Tom Mosman**, Nezperce, Idaho, provided oral testimony. A copy of his talk is attached (see attachment 2).

Helo Hancock, Idaho Falls, Idaho, provided oral testimony and also represented the Larson Farms (see attachment 3).

Mike Frei, Managing Director, Harvest West Investments (see attachment 4).

Mark Frei, Idaho County Commissioner, Grangeville, Idaho, (see attachment 5).

Don Alt, Naples, Idaho, (see attachment 6).

Jim and Deb Dahlberg, Bonners Ferry, Idaho, (see attachment 7).

Tom and Sandy Daniel, Bonners Ferry, Idaho, (see attachment 8).

Keith Daman, Damon Brothers Farm, DeSmet, Idaho, (see attachment 9).

J.P. Schlader, Nezperce, Idaho, (see attachment 10).

Cole Smith and Drue Smith, (see attachment 11).

Kurt Bird, Leadore, Idaho, (see attachment 12).

Bryce and Jodi Campbell, Juniper, Idaho, (see attachment 13).

Cleve G. Smith, Malta, Idaho, (see attachment 14).

Robert A. Piva, Challis, Idaho, (see attachment 15).

Adam Deckott, Zack Hasenoehrl, James Whittaker and Sid Cellen all provided oral testimony regarding wildlife depredation to their farm crops.

Chairman Bair thanked the audience for their attendance and their testimonies.

ADJOURNED: **Chairman Bair** adjourned the meeting at 3:10 p.m.

Senator Bair
Chair

Juanita Budell
Secretary