

MINUTES
HOUSE AGRICULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

DATE: Thursday, March 18, 2021

TIME: 1:30 P.M.

PLACE: Room EW42

MEMBERS: Chairman Kauffman, Vice Chairman Andrus, Representatives Boyle, Kerby (Greig), Giddings, Marshall, Nichols, Hanks, Cannon, Moon, von Ehlinger, Toone, Ruchti, Mathias

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** Reps. Giddings, Nichols, Hanks

GUESTS: Gretchen Hyde, Id Rangeland Resources Commission; Daniel Greig

Chairman Kauffman called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m.

Gretchen Hyde, Executive Director of Idaho Rangelands and Resources Commission stated the commission is led by 5 board members appointed by the Governor and each serves a 5 year term. The advisory members include members from several state agencies. Ms. Hyde discussed the budget and revenues for 2020. The assessment fee was set in 1997 and is paid by ranchers and landowners and can be refunded upon request. She explained the IRRC also receives funds from the sale of specialty license plates, trespass fees, and workshops. She explained most trespassing fines are given in the larger urban areas and to this point has not amounted to a large amount of money collected but has increased awareness which is the main goal. In 2020, IRRC conducted virtual and interactive workshops they were able to successfully share with children in the classroom across the state. She said they were able to reach parts of the state they normally would not have had the opportunity to include.

In response to a committee question concerning challenges faced by the IRRC, **Ms. Hyde** said this year they saw an increase in trash, human waste, and simmering fires as more people were spending more time outdoors during the pandemic. She stressed the importance of education concerning private and public lands and showing respect for the land and land owners.

Teri Murrison, Administrator for Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission, stated their mission is to facilitate coordinated non-regulatory, voluntary and locally led conservation by working with many partners including Idaho's 50 Conservation Districts, Natural Resource Conservation Service and others. Working together they promote voluntary conservation on private lands balancing the economic health of landowners and communities. Ms. Murrison explained the sources of revenue and the expenditures in 2020. She said they provide two types of assistance to the conservation districts including financial and technical assistance and explained how these services were allocated among the districts. The commission has begun a robust outreach process between now and the end of March to brainstorm funding allocation options to determine the preferences of the majority of districts board by board. This past year ISWC loaned out almost \$500,000, a slight increase from the previous year. Although the DEQ reduced the number of TMDL Implementation Plans assigned to them in 2020, 11 plans were completed, seven plans are in progress and five more plans are pending. She thanked the legislature for their support.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 2:19 p.m.

Representative Kauffman
Chair

Joan Majors
Secretary