

MINUTES

HOUSE ENVIRONMENT, ENERGY & TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

DATE: Thursday, January 18, 2018
TIME: 1:30 P.M.
PLACE: Room EW41
MEMBERS: Chairman Raybould, Vice Chairman Thompson, Representatives Hartgen, Vander Woude, Anderson, Anderst, Mendive, Chaney, Nate, Cheatham, Horman, Malek, Moon, Scott, Ehardt, Smith, Jordan, Rubel
**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** Representative(s) Vander Woude
GUESTS: Lloyd Knight, Idaho Department of Agriculture (ISDA); Nic Zurfluh, ISDA; Jim Fodren, ISDA; Neil Colwell, Avista

Chairman Raybould called the meeting to order at 1:32 p.m.

MOTION: **Rep. Smith** made a motion to approve the minutes of January 16, 2018. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

Matt Morrison, CEO, Pacific NorthWest Economic Region (PNWER) introduced, **Rep. Mike Cuffe**, Montana, and Vice President of PNWER, and **Senator Arnie Roblan**, Oregon, and President of PNWER. Mr. Morrison informed the committee that Idaho's watercraft inspection stations are models that led the whole nation. He discussed the territory and size of the region making up PNWER, as well as gave a brief history of PNWER, including their meetings with Idaho's executive and legislative branches and the private sector, and an update on federal funding. Mr. Morrison advised in April 2017 the US Congress released to Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington \$4 million they appropriated in 2015 for use in the 2017 watercraft inspection season for quagga/zebra mussel prevention, as well as appropriated \$5 million for FY2017 for the four states. The four states spent \$3.7 million of the FY2016 funds on watercraft inspections and \$373,000 FY2017 funds on monitoring. He advised that PNWER requested a \$6 million appropriation for FY2018, with \$1 million to be allocated to Idaho. He reported that funds are now able to be used along the perimeter of the Columbia River Basin, as well as for early detection and rapid response.

Senator Cuffe addressed the history of the 2016 Montana invasion of mussel larva and advised that currently they have a new-formed Montana Mussel Response Team and invasive species prevention funding for the 2017-2019 biennium was increased from \$2.2 to \$13 million. No new mussels have been found even though Montana did more extensive testing. Montana is critical as a "firewall" to the region. Allocation of the 2017 federal funds received is \$1.9 million to Montana; \$1 million to Idaho; \$450,000 to Oregon; and \$250,000 to Washington.

In response to committee questions, **Senator Cuffe** replied that Montana's portion of the 2017 federal funds is larger because it reimburses for state funds spent on mussel larva prevention and because the purpose of the funds is protection of the Columbia River System, of which Montana is unique because it has tributaries coming to them from Missouri. Senator Cuffe further responded to committee questions by advising there are currently no studies for eradicating mussel infestation.

Mr. Morris introduced **Lloyd Knight**, Administrator, Plant Industries Division, Idaho Department of Agriculture, who spoke about the work being done with the Department of the Interior, **Secretary of the Interior Zinke** and **Governor Otter** on containment at the source, which includes Lakes Powell, Mead, Havasu and Mojave.

In response to committee questions **Senator Cuffe** replied that increased funds from the federal government could go toward increasing the hours and number of watercraft inspection stations. Committee members discussed optimal methods of combating quagga/zebra mussel infestation. Senator Cuffe informed the committee that **Secretary of the Interior Zinke** sent a letter to the head of the Army Corps of Engineers the day after Christmas saying he wanted funds dedicated to invasive mussel source containment immediately and had an interagency task force setup within six months.

Senator Cuffe and **Mr. Morrison** provided information about the Legislative Energy Horizon Institute, which has an extensive 60-hour program and holds an annual summit. Mr. Morrison also updated the committee on the progress of a new power treaty with Canada.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 2:56 p.m.

Representative Raybould
Chair

Lorrie Byerly
Secretary