

MINUTES
HOUSE RESOURCES & CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

DATE: Monday, January 27, 2014

TIME: 1:30 P.M.

PLACE: Room EW40

MEMBERS: Chairman Denney, Vice Chairman Gibbs, Barrett, Moyle, Eskridge, Raybould, Andrus, Shepherd, Wood(27), Boyle, Vander Woude, Gestrin, Miller, Anderson(1), Pence, Erpelding, Rubel

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** Representative Wood(35)

GUESTS: Norm Semanko, Idaho Water Users Association; Rex Barrie, Water District #63; Vern Case, Water District #63; Jim Unsworth, Idaho Department of Fish and Game; Courtney Washburn, Idaho Conservation League; Daren Coon, Nampa and Meridian Irrigation Districts; Stephen Goodson, Governor's Office; John Jameson, Idaho Wool Growers; Sean Ellis, Wolf Leg.; Ken Cole, self; Tom Arkoosh, SWC; Lynn Tominaga, IGWA; Dennis Tanikuni, Idaho Farm Bureau; Stan Boyd, IWGA/ICA; Parker Papworth, Lobby Idaho; Raleen Welton, RMP/ICOA; Russell Westerberg, RMP/ICOA; Larry Thorngre, self.

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

RS 22499: Norm Semanko, Idaho Water Users Association, represents water providers and supporters from around the state. Mr. Semanko stated **RS 22499** would increase the minimum water user fee that water districts may assess an individual water user for water master services. The water master regulates storage rights and flow diversions from the river. Mr. Semanko and the water users have proposed to raise the fee at their annual meeting to not more than \$250. Water users pay through assessments based on size of owned land.

MOTION: **Rep. Gibbs** made motion to introduce **RS 22499**. **Motion approved through voice vote.**

RS 22515: **Norm Semanko**, Idaho Water Users Association, presented **RS 22515** to update irrigation district election laws through clarification of the district director election. He stated if one person is running for the district director position, the irrigation district does not go through the expense of holding an election. Mr. Semanko stated that if there is only one qualified candidate, this candidate would be declared elected and there would be no further proceedings beyond this point. He stated the qualified candidate is elected, sworn in, and handed a certificate of election. He explained if there is no qualified candidate, the incumbent irrigation district director will continue his term until a successor is elected. Mr. Semanko indicated this legislation would remove an outdated requirement of an immediate delivery of a certificate of election and will change Idaho Code so a certificate of election is presented upon the start of the new director's term.

MOTION: **Rep. Wood(27)** made motion to introduce **RS 22515**. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

RS 22584C1: **Rep. Gibbs** stated **RS 22584C1** establishes a Wolf Control Fund with a Board to direct and to manage this fund. There is a need for this fund as the federal government has delisted the wolves and transferred authority to manage wolves to the State. The State of Idaho no longer receives federal funding for the management of wolves. He explained the board members would consist of the Director of the Idaho Department of Agriculture, Director of the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, members to represent sportsmen, livestock, and the general public. The Idaho Wolf Control Board members will receive expenses for attending meetings only and are basically volunteers. He said the Wolf Control Fund is not for damages sustained by livestock producers, but to control wolves. He further asserted that sport hunting, trapping and aerial gunning will not control the wolf population. **Rep. Gibbs** stated the funding will be received from the Idaho Department of Fish and Game through the sportsmen dollars and livestock producers (cattle and sheep) through increases in brand registration and wool assessments.

Senator Brackett said he is cosponsoring this proposed legislation with **Rep. Gibbs**. He indicated the Animal Damage Control (ADC) Board's oversight is for predatory animals made up of livestock interests. The Wolf Control Board is for the sole purpose of managing and controlling wolves and the Wolf Control Fund could be spent on lethal control. The State of Idaho must demonstrate adequate state management practices regarding wolves so they are in line with the approved 2002 wolf management plan. **Senator Brackett** addressed the issue of creating another board for wolf control in addition to the ADC Board, and if not, the need to dramatically change the makeup of the ADC Board members. He explained the ADC Board is made up of livestock interests, has numerous responsibilities, and multiple revenue sources. The direction and goals of the Wolf Control Board are to bring the wolf population down as expected by the majority of Idaho's populous. He stated the Wolf Control Board is in line with Idaho's wolf management plan. He said the Idaho Department of Fish and Game is on record of supporting removal of wolves if there is detriment to wildlife and the wildlife's ability to recover in a given area.

MOTION: **Rep Raybould** made a motion to introduce **RS 22584C1**.

ROLL CALL VOTE: **Rep. Raybould** requested a roll call vote. **Motion carried by a vote of 9 AYE and 8 NAY**, one absent/excused. **Voting in favor** of the motion: **Reps. Gibbs, Eskridge, Raybould, Andrus, Wood(27) Miller, Anderson, Pence, and Chairman Denney**. **Voting in opposition** to the motion: **Reps. Barrett, Moyle, Shepherd, Boyle, Vander Woude, Gestrin, Erpelding, and Rubel**. Representative Wood(35) was absent/excused.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 2:47 p.m.

Representative Denney
Chair

Jennifer Smith
Secretary