

MINUTES

HOUSE ENVIRONMENT, ENERGY, & TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

DATE: Monday, February 10, 2014

TIME: 1:30 P.M.

PLACE: Room EW41

MEMBERS: Chairman Raybould, Vice Chairman Eskridge, Representative(s) Anderson(1), Hartgen, Vander Woude, DeMordaunt, Nielsen, Thompson, Anderson(31), Anderst, Mendive, Monks, Morse, Trujillo, Smith, Rusche, Woodings

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** Representative Vander Woude

GUESTS: Parker Papworth, Lobby Idaho; Dennis Tanikuni, Idaho Farm Bureau; Elizabeth Criner, NWFPA/FWAA; Lynn Tominaga, IGWA; Jeff Burwell, USDA NRCS

Chairman Raybould called the meeting to order at 1:29 p.m.

RS 22611: **Rep. McMillan** presented **RS 22611** to the committee. She stated the proposed legislation would restrict DEQ from imposing purification requirements on the waters discharged into Idaho waterways which are more strict than the water in it's natural state. She said such requirements place an undue burden on industry, sewer districts, and others. She said the way to ensure the purification standards are not greater than the natural water quality, is that all headwaters, tributaries, and streams be tested to determine the natural quality of the water.

MOTION: **Rep. Anderson(1)** made a motion to return **RS 22611** to the sponsor.

Rep. Anderson(1) stated due to the problems raised by the committee and the potential confusion printing the bill could cause, it would be more appropriate if the legislation was reworked before being printed.

SUBSTITUTE MOTION: **Rep. Nielsen** made a substitute motion to introduce **RS 22611**.

Rep. Nielsen spoke to his motion and felt this RS needed to be introduced because there are several instances which users cannot control and for which the users should not be held responsible. He felt that giving all the parties involved a chance to come before the committee all together and discuss these issues would be the most beneficial for everyone.

Chairman Raybould made a statement regarding the bill saying the ideas behind the bill were good specifically, those putting water back into the system shouldn't have to establish a water quality higher than the original headwaters. However, the way the bill was written, he felt the language could be reworked and there were some questions which needed to be answered before moving forward.

VOTE ON SUBSTITUTE MOTION: **Chairman Raybould** called for a vote on the substitute motion to introduce **RS 22611**. **Motion failed by voice vote.**

VOTE ON ORIGINAL MOTION: **Chairman Raybould** called for a vote on the original motion to return **RS 22611** to the sponsor. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

Teri Murrison Administrator for the Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission, gave the Commission's Annual Report to the committee. She introduced **Ali Hardy** her assistant, **Benjamin Kelly** and **Steve Becker** from the Idaho Association of Soil Conservation Districts (IASCD), and **Jeff Burwell** from the Natural Resource Conservation Service. Ms. Murrison gave a history of the Commission and it's long time four-way partnership between local, state, and federal agencies and the landowners. She detailed the Commission's responsibilities, programs and services. She stated the Commission is responsible for developing appropriate technical, programmatic, informational and educational processes, and guidelines and policies for addressing agricultural pollution. She added the three core functions of the Commission are: providing support to districts, managing incentive-based and other conservation programs, and running a fiscally prudent administration. She gave examples of the various ways the Commission is involved in working and supporting local districts. She then outlined four of the major programs the Commission is currently involved with. These projects include the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), the Rangeland Resource Conservation Development Program (RCRDP), the Total Maximum Daily Load Program (TMDL), and the Ground Water Program.

Steve Becker, Treasurer from the IASCD, gave a presentation regarding the IASCD to the committee. He stated the Association's philosophy is that conservation decisions should be made by local people with technical and funding assistance from federal, state and local governments and the private sector. He gave an overview of the history and scope of the IASCD. He explained the key ways in which the Association supports soil and water conservation districts. These supports include representing districts as their voice on conservation issues, providing an avenue to reach above the local level to develop partnerships with federal and state agencies and other organizations in order to carry out district priorities and programs, keeping individual districts informed on critical and emerging issues and opportunities, and analyzing programs and policy issues that have an impact on local districts. He stated the Association maintains relationships with organizations and government agencies and work with leaders in agriculture, conservation, environment, education, and industry.

Mr. Becker then gave an overview of the Pebble Creek Project the Association has been involved with. This project was brought by the landowner and required the participation of several different agencies and interested parties coming together to reconstruct two channels, which had been straightened for irrigation purposes in the 1940's, to their original meandering pattern. This was done to promote a healthy stream, reduce livestock impacts, to promote exclusionary fencing, off-stream watering, and healthy fish habitat. He stated this project was successful because it showed the Association's ability to promote and participate in projects that enhance and preserve natural resources and their ability to bring a variety of partners together to ensure a larger impact in conservation.

Jeff Burwell, from the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service, gave an overview of the NRCS and it's history. He outlined some of the NRCS duties like providing technical and financial resources to help others protect natural resources. He discussed some of the projects and programs the NRCS has been involved in such as efforts to protect sage grouse and others. He discussed the importance of the conservation partnerships to the goals of all involved.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 2:31 p.m.

Representative Raybould
Chair

Kaela Becklund
Secretary