

MINUTES
SENATE RESOURCES & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

DATE: Thursday, March 20, 2014

TIME: 1:00 P.M.

PLACE: Room WW55

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Pearce, Vice Chairman Bair, Senators Cameron, Siddoway, Brackett, Heider, Tippetts and Lacey

ABSENT/ EXCUSED: Senator Stennett

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 Pearce** called the meeting of the Senate Resources and Environment Committee (Committee) to order at 1:00 p.m.

RECOGNITION OF PAGE: **Chairman Pearce** asked the Committee Page, Lydia Workman, to come forward so that she could be honored by the Committee. He presented her with a letter of recommendation, signed by all the Committee members, and a monetary gift, also from all the members. Lydia is very involved in Business Professionals of America, qualifying recently for a national competition in advanced accounting tests, which will be held in Indiana. The Committee thought she might enjoy some spending money in Indiana as a reward for her good work during the last half of the Legislative Session.

Lydia thanked the Committee for their generosity and also for their helpfulness in teaching her how to "peaceably disagree with one another" and still get the job done. She said she plans to go to BYU Idaho to study business and accounting to become an accountant. **Senator Cameron** stated that he was honored to sponsor Lydia. He said that she is a very bright young lady and is following in her sister's footsteps (her sister served as a Page for Senator Darrington several years ago).

MINUTES: **Senator Heider** moved that the Minutes of March 12, 2014 be approved. The motion was seconded by **Senator Siddoway**. The motion carried by unanimous **voice vote**.

MINUTES: **Vice Chairman Bair** moved that the Minutes of March 14, 2014 be approved. The motion was seconded by **Senator Cameron**. The motion carried by unanimous **voice vote**.

HCR 62: **Senator Nonini** presented **HCR 62**. He read the first paragraph of the Statement of Purpose which says: "The Coeur d'Alene-Spokane River Basin Adjudication (CSRBA), now pending in the Fifth Judicial District Court, is currently at a procedural stage which would be conducive to resolution, through negotiation between the State of Idaho, Coeur d'Alene Tribe and the other water users in the Basin to determine the nature and extent of the valid water rights within the Basin."

Senator Nonini said there are three things he wanted to point out regarding this legislation and that is: 1) That any proposed settlement must be ratified by the Legislature of the state of Idaho; 2) That legislators from the legislative districts of 2, 3, 4, 5 and 7 shall develop a process; and 3) That there will be open and equal participation.

Through this concurrent resolution, the Legislature encourages and requests that negotiations be held between the parties, that they will be successful and will best protect existing water uses, and address the unique characteristics of the region. Negotiations, in hope of avoiding litigation, is in the best interest of all stakeholders.

Senator Nonini thanked Neil Colwell for his help in putting this resolution together. The first resolution that was brought before the House failed.

TESTIMONY: **Mr. Lynn Tominaga**, Executive Director, Idaho Ground Water Appropriators (IGWA), said he wanted to give the Committee some background information regarding previous agreements. In the late 80s, he was involved in the Sho-Ban Water Right Agreement and also with the Nez Perce Agreement when it started out. Both processes took over ten years and he advised the Committee to keep the adjudication process moving. He feels Idaho has a good reputation working with the Indian tribes. Some people are optimistic, thinking it will only take four years, but Mr. Tominaga said with his past experience, it will take ten years or more. The IGWA is in support of **HCR 62**.

MOTION: **Vice Chairman Bair** moved **HCR 62** to the 10th Order with a **do pass** recommendation. The motion was seconded by **Senator Brackett**. The motion carried with unanimous **voice vote**. Senator Nonini will be the sponsor.

REPORT FROM IDFG: **Chairman Pearce** stated that he requested that Ms. Sharon Kiefer, Deputy Director, Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG), provide an update on the sage-grouse/raven project today. Ms. Kiefer could not attend (nor could any other employee) today's meeting, as the Idaho Fish and Game Commission is in town, and they are required to be there. Ms. Kiefer did provide a report on the raven control project, including a map of the various zones (see attachment 1).

Highlights from her report are as follows:

- * IDFG is evaluating lethal control of ravens as a tool to benefit sage-grouse populations;
- * IDFG has received a permit from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to remove common ravens at three study sites in Southern Idaho;
- * Greater sage-grouse are currently a candidate for listing as a threatened or endangered species under the federal Endangered Species Act;
- * Data indicate that ravens have increased an average of 4.2 percent per year since 1966;
- * Ravens are a documented primary nest predator of sage-grouse eggs and chicks; and
- * Raven control is planned to take place in 2014 and 2015 and would occur from mid-March to mid-June, which coincides with the sage-grouse nesting season.

Senator Brackett thanked Chairman Pearce for pursuing this issue. It was important last year when funding became available and nothing happened then, and he is disappointed now that very little has happened.

TESTIMONY: **Mr. Stan Boyd**, representing the Idaho Wool Growers and Cattle Association, said he is glad the IDFG is working on the raven project, but it looks like it might be 2015 before much will be done on the ground.

PRESENTATION: **Chairman Pearce** presented the Secretary, Juanita, with a beautiful basket of spring flowers as a thank you token for her contribution of hard work for him, as well as for the Committee. Juanita was a bit overwhelmed by the gesture and kind remarks from everyone. She thanked the Chairman and all the members of the Committee.

ADJOURNED: **Chairman Pearce** adjourned the meeting at 1:35 p.m.

Senator Pearce
Chair

Juanita Budell
Secretary