

MINUTES

HOUSE ENVIRONMENT, ENERGY & TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, February 18, 2020

TIME: 1:30 P.M.

PLACE: Room EW41

MEMBERS: Chairman Vander Woude, Vice Chairman Amador, Representatives Anderson, Anderst, Horman, Moon, Scott, Ehardt, Armstrong, Furniss, Hartgen, Young, Smith, Chew, Mason

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** Representatives Lickley, Raybould, Ellis

GUESTS: Roger Batt, Treasure Valley Water Uses Assoc.; Matthew McBride; Brian Patton, IDWR; Mike Dimmick, Flood District #10; Paul Arrington

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

MOTION: **Rep. Hartgen** made a motion to approve the minutes of February 4, 6, and 10, 2020 meetings. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

Chairman Vander Woude introduced the committees new page **Ashlyn Young**.

Roger Batt, Treasure Valley Water Users Association introduced those who would present the Idaho's Flood Management Program. Mr. Batt thanked the legislature for the last two years of funding that has helped develop projects to prevent flooding in the future. The purpose of the presentation is to show what has been done with the grant money.

Dan Steenson, attorney with Sawtooth Law Offices, representing Flood Control District #10 and several other water agencies in the valley, reminded the committee that 2018 was the first year the legislature funded the Flood Management Program. Flooding is a recurring phenomenon, that needs to be addressed in an ongoing basis to prevent. During flooding years the concerns are: possible channel damage, overland flooding, damage to public infrastructure and private property. These concerns emphasize the need for flood risk reduction. Flood management require coordination and funding among local, state and federal agencies. There is no state flood management agency, and the few flood control districts in Idaho have inadequate funding.

Brian Patton, Idaho Department of Water Resources discussed how the Water Resource Board is managing program funds. In 2018 and 2019 one-time appropriations were made to encourage statewide competitive grants for flood-damaged stream channel repair, stream channel improvement, flood risk reduction, and flood prevention projects. There were 14 funded grant programs in 2018, and 10 funded in 2019. These were all 50% match required. Over those 2 years, 1.8 million dollars in grants lead to \$5.6 million dollars in flood management and flood prevention projects.

John Simpson, an attorney that represents Twin Falls Canal Company, discussed flood management in the Magic Valley. As a result of 2017 flooding, there is now the East Perrine Pone/Wetland Project, which mitigates flooding risk and damage. The project cost almost \$600,000, \$85,340 of it was grant money. The objective of this project was to retain and moderate flood flows, reduce flood damage to properties and remove 3,000 tons of sediment and nutrients from discharge to the Snake River. There are no flood control districts in the Magic Valley, the irrigation entities maintain flood control.

Mike Dimmick, from Flood District 10, emphasized concerns and work done by Flood District 10, which extends from Garden City to the freeway at Caldwell. Total money spent for flood prevention was almost \$1.6 million, of which almost \$540,000 was grant money. After the 2017 Duck Alley Pit Capture, it was realized that Flood District 10 needed to put more money into prevention. Components of District 10's plan includes data acquisition, processing and reporting, model development, documentation, a Boise River Management Plan, deployment and training. Mr. Dimmick described how 2-D hydraulic modeling is being used for the Boise River management, it is a significant tool in helping to plan for future flood prevention.

Paul Arrington, Idaho Water Users Association, shared how the IWRB Flood Management Grant Program has enabled local communities to meet long-standing flood management needs, has benefited State lands and water resources, and has provided multiple water management benefits. The legislature has funded the program with "one-time" appropriations. The 2018 and 2019 program accomplishments provide strong justification for continued legislative funding, preferably through "on-going" appropriation in IDWR's budget for IWRB.

In answer to committee questions, **Mr. Dimmick**, explained the process of working with FEMA. It has been complicated because FEMA has only been using 1-D mapping, and makes decisions based on those maps. FEMA is beginning to recognize the need to add 2-D modeling and using come 2-D modeling to support decisions.

Mr. Steinsen responded to committee questions that the hope is to have 2-D modeling in areas of concern, to show FEMA areas that do not need to be designated as flood plains. Another complicating factor is that FEMA has taken the position that when irrigation districts clean drains they need to get flood development permits. This includes conditions where material that is removed from the drains cannot be put on the banks, but needs to be hauled away. The districts are hoping that 2-D modeling will allow for that to be changed. The state is not providing funding for this, it is paid for by the flood districts and irrigation entities.

In response to committee concerns that there will be a repeat of 2017 flooding issues, **Mr. Steinsen** recognized that flooding will occur again, usually coming every 10 years. The intent of the modeling and the purpose of this funding program is to be better prepared to respond during flood events, to recover from them, to predict what will happen, and to design projects to mitigate flooding. In answer to future needs, Mr. Steinsen felt more money could be used to help prevention and future planning. These grants give access to money and encourages outside investments to be pro-active in flood prevention measures. The need for channel maintenance has been largely neglected in Idaho's history. **Mr. Arrington** specified the goal of IDWR is to have flood prevention funding incorporated into the Department of Water Resources Budget.

Mr. Simpson pointed out the 2017 flooding in the Magic Valley was caused by a rain on snow event. Funding created a greater awareness within this district that irrigation entities can do more. **Mr. Batt** did confirm the Joint Finance and Appropriations Committee has been asked for \$1 million to continue flood mitigation funding.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 2:28 p.m.

Representative Vander Woude
Chair

Maggie Price
Secretary