

MINUTES
HOUSE AGRICULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

DATE: Wednesday, February 08, 2023

TIME: 1:30 P.M.

PLACE: Room EW42

MEMBERS: Chairman Andrus, Vice Chairman Raymond, Representatives Boyle, Cannon, McCann, Ehlers, Gallagher, Garner, Nelsen, Pickett, Sauter, Mathias, Nash, Roberts

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** None

GUESTS: The sign-in sheet will be retained in the committee secretary's office; following the end of session the sign-in sheet will be filed with the minutes in the Legislative Library.

Chairman Andrus called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

MOTION: **Rep. Sauter** made a motion to approve the minutes of February 6, 2023. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

Delwyne Trefz, Administrator, Idaho Soil and Water Commission (ISWC), explained the mission of ISWC is to assist private landowners in the conservation and enhancement of Idaho's natural resources by facilitating and coordinating local, state, and federal programs to implement locally led, voluntarily initiated, and non-regulatory conservation projects and programs. The Commission is governed by a board of seven commissioners who are appointed by the Governor to staggered five year terms, and they oversee the administrator who manages operations.

The Resource Conservation and Rangeland Development Program (RCRDP) provides technical support to participants in the Idaho Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), and are responsible for developing Total Maximum Daily Load implementation plans for agricultural and grazing land. The Commission's functions are district support, conservation services and programs, administration, outreach and education. From providing information about appropriate conservation practices to assisting with project implementation, grant writing, and navigating the requirements of funding programs, commission staff assist conservation districts to provide Idaho's private landowners with grass-roots level leadership in non-regulatory natural resources conservation.

Chairman Andrus put the committee at ease to clarify information with **Mr. Trefz**.

Chairman Andrus returned the committee to order.

Devin Fielding, President, ISWC, Idaho, explained conservation districts enter into agreements, acquire property, assist private land owners in conserving soil resources, preventing erosion and flooding, and implement water conservation measures. District funding is obtained from grants, contracts, state allocations and county allocations. Officials are elected and strive for voluntary, locally led, non-regulatory conservation in Idaho. Conservation districts seek partnerships between landowners, state and federal agencies, and serve as intermediaries and advocates for conservation on private ground in Idaho. Food production, forestry and mining account for about \$4.5 billion in Idaho's economy, and conservation ensures these vital natural resources will be available for generations to come.

Jill Randolph, Principle Budget & Policy Analyst, Legislative Services Office (LSO), gave introductory remarks and outlined LSO services. LSO is nonpartisan staff and are employees of the legislature. The two known parts are the agency request which was submitted in September and the Governor's recommendation was available in January. LSO is equipped to answer questions about what is in the request and how the request was made.

Nate Osborne, Analyst, University of Idaho (UI), Budget and Policy, Agriculture Research and Extension Service (ARES), explained the function and budget of ARES agency profile. The University of Idaho's (UI) College of Agricultural and Life Sciences has a land grant mandated mission: education, research, and extension. The education component is funded through the UI's portion of the College and Universities' general education appropriation. Research and extension components are funded through specific appropriation to ARES. The Cooperative Extension Service has offices in 42 of Idaho's 44 counties, and operates under the leadership of faculty and staff specially trained to work with agriculture, 4-H programs, families, youth and communities. The education programs of the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences faculty members are supported cooperatively by county, state, and federal funding. Extension offices are sorted into one of four districts headquartered in Coeur d'Alene, Caldwell, Twin Falls, and Idaho Falls. Appropriated funding provides base support for agricultural research and extension programming, and provides leverage for additional grant and contract funding for ongoing program needs.

Alex Williamson, Analyst, Idaho State Department of Agriculture (ISDA), said the mission of the ISDA is to guarantee Idaho agricultural products are of high quality, disease-free, and meet federal and state laws, rules and regulations. The department protects consumers and producers from fraud and provides marketing assistance to the industry. There are eight budgeted programs: 1) The Administration Program coordinates accounting, payroll, legal, and personnel functions; 2) Animal Industries is responsible for veterinary services, range management, dairy laboratory and dairy inspection, animal laboratory, livestock inspection, egg inspection, and animal waste management; 3) Agricultural Resources protects public health, environment, livestock, and wildlife from possible adverse effects resulting from improper use of pesticides and fertilizers; 4) Plant Industries includes plant, fertilizer, and seed laboratories and programs, noxious weeds, the Honey Commission, and Invasive Species Program; 5) Agricultural Inspections include the Bureau of Shipping Point Inspections, Bureau of Warehouse Control, Retail Potato Program, Hops Program, Organic Foods Program, and Bureau of Weights and Measures; 6) The Marketing and Development Program assists Idaho food producers increase their profitability by enhancing marketing opportunities; 7) The United States Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, and Wildlife Services Program operates in Idaho under a memorandum of understanding with the Idaho State Animal Damage Control Board; 8) The Sheep and Goat Health Board provides a comprehensive program involving disease and predator control, and enables the sheep and goat industries to maintain high production standards and economic returns.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 2:59 p.m.

Representative Andrus
Chair

Jayne Feik
Secretary