

MINUTES
HOUSE AGRICULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, February 28, 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:** Reps. Boyle, Nelsen, Mathias, Nash

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 committee to order at 1:30 p.m.

MOTION: **Rep. Sauter** made a motion to approve the minutes of February 22, 2023, and February 23, 2023. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

Lloyd Knight, Idaho State Department of Agriculture (ISDA), introduced **Jeremy Varley**, Section Manager, ISDA.

Mr. Varley explained ISDA operates a program to control noxious weeds involving monitoring for new infestations, mapping existing infestations, and implementing control measures to prevent the spread of noxious weeds. A plant is designated noxious in Idaho when it is considered to be injurious to public health, agriculture, recreation, wildlife or property. Eurasian watermilfoil, flowering rush and hydrilla are found in lakes and rivers in Idaho. The program aims to protect natural ecosystems, agriculture, and other industries that may be impacted by these invasive plants. Controlling noxious weeds can be expensive, and involves ongoing management to prevent them from returning. Responsibilities to control noxious weeds lie with the state, county and private citizens.

Gretchen Hyde, Director, Idaho Rangeland Resources Commission (IRRC), said Idaho rangelands are made up of public, private and tribal lands where fences do not necessarily signify ownership. The ecosystems of rangelands are extensive and contain diverse habitats, woodlands and savannas, and non-cultivated lands. Rangelands cannot typically sustain farming because of low precipitation, shallow soils, and rugged topography. The challenges and opportunities of rangelands include drought, energy, production, growth and development, invasive species, livestock grazing, recreation, wildfires, and wildlife habitat. The IRRC works to ensure the public understands the value of public lands grazing. Livestock grazing provides food and fiber for the nation while providing fuel-load reduction to mitigate wildfires.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 2:23 p.m.

Representative Kevin Andrus
Chair

Jayne Feik
Secretary