

MINUTES
SENATE RESOURCES & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

DATE: Monday, January 13, 2025

TIME: 1:30 P.M.

PLACE: Room WW55

MEMBERS PRESENT: Vice Chairman Hart, Senators Guthrie, Harris, Okuniewicz, Cook, VanOrden, Kohl, and Taylor

ABSENT/ EXCUSED: Chairman Burtenshaw

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: **Vice Chairman Hart** called the meeting of the Senate Resources and Environment Committee (Committee) to order at 1:30 p.m.

GUBERNATORIAL REAPPOINTMENT: **Committee Consideration of the Gubernatorial Reappointment of Brent Baker of Athol, Idaho to the Lake Pend Oreille Basin Commission** for a term commencing July 24, 2023 and expiring July 24, 2026. **Mr. Baker** presented before the Committee and shared some of his background. He expressed his commitment to caring for the water systems in northern Idaho and his admiration for his fellow Lake Pend Oreille Basin Commission (Commission) members.

DISCUSSION: **Senator Harris** asked what Mr. Baker thought were the biggest issues facing the Commission. **Mr. Baker** responded that the Commission recently passed a resolution to support an economic impact study to be conducted by the University of Idaho, who donated half of the cost. This would provide data the Commission needed to have more influence in discussions with the Army Corps of Engineers and the power operator. He added that extending the season on Lake Pend Oreille, addressing the challenges of emergency response preparedness around the lake, maintaining the Commission website, and keeping the local public informed were also big issues facing the Commission.

Senator Guthrie commended Mr. Baker for his perfect attendance at his Commission meetings, and thanked him for his diversified efforts to give back to his community.

Vice Chairman Hart asked how many jurisdictions were considered stakeholders of the Commission. **Mr. Baker** explained that Commissioners do not deal directly with anyone, but stakeholders represented by the Commission concern Washington, Idaho, Montana, British Columbia, and Oregon. He added they were currently monitoring the renegotiation of the Columbia River Treaty.

GUBERNATORIAL REAPPOINTMENT: **Committee Consideration of the Gubernatorial Reappointment of Marc Brinkmeyer of Sandpoint, Idaho to the Lake Pend Oreille Basin Commission** for a term commencing July 24, 2023 and expiring July 24, 2026. **Mr. Brinkmeyer** presented before the Committee and shared that he has served on the Commission since its inception. He explained that as the owner of Idaho Forest Group and with his experience around the Intermountain Forest, it was natural for him to be involved with the Commission. He shared some memorable events he enjoyed watching as part of the Commission. He clarified that with respect to other states, Montana had a representative on the Commission, and that the Commission was also involved in representing the interests of the Indian tribes.

DISCUSSION: **Senator Cook** asked how much artificial intelligence he used in his forestry business. **Mr. Brinkmeyer** responded with some history of using technology to increase production in the timber industry. He spoke about using satellite technology and artificial intelligence to map forests, to understand species distribution, to anticipate manufacturing requirements, and to understand the age of trees and diseases occurring in trees in order to prevent forest fires. He explained how drone technology could be used to view land before it was treated, during treatment, and five and ten years in the future to compare results and review and adjust treatment decisions.

Senator Harris asked Mr. Brinkmeyer to share some successes he had seen while on the commission. **Mr. Brinkmeyer** responded some successes were working with Idaho Fish and Game to restore Lake Pend Oreille, restoring and rebuilding the Clark Fork and the Pack River Deltas, and the Committee's success in working to facilitate conversations with respect to development. **Vice Chairman Hart** shared that two years ago he toured Mr. Brinkmeyer's facility in Lewiston, and he was impressed by how well the facility tracked a log, including its length, its configuration, and where its knots and checks were.

Senator Cook asked what the Boone and Crockett Club was. **Mr. Brinkmeyer** explained that the Boone and Crockett Club was established by Theodore Roosevelt, and he was involved in the group because of their conservation efforts.

Senator Guthrie commended Mr. Brinkmeyer for bringing his skill set and his experience to serve the Commission.

ADJOURNED: There being no further business at this time, **Vice Chairman Hart** adjourned the meeting at 1:57 p.m.

Senator Hart
Vice Chair

Shelly Johnson
Secretary