

MINUTES
JOINT FINANCE-APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

DATE: Wednesday, March 11, 2026
TIME: 8:00 A.M.
PLACE: Room C310
MEMBERS: Senators Co-Chair Grow, Woodward, Cook, Bjerke (Bjerke), Hart, Rundhaug (Carlson), Zuiderveld, Galloway, Ward-Engelking, Wintrow
Representatives Co-Chair Tanner (14), Miller, Furniss, Petzke, Manwaring, Mitchell, Price, Bruce, Harris, Green
**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** Representative Miller

Co-Chair Tanner (14) called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

Mr. Noah Peterson, Analyst, LSO Budget & Policy, reviewed updated projections for the General Fund budget. He stated FY 2026 population supplementals increased appropriations by approximately \$110M, leaving an estimated ending balance of \$45.3M.

Mr. Peterson reported FY 2027 enhancement costs increased to approximately \$141.1M based on actions taken to date, resulting in an estimated ending balance of \$37.9 million, with additional budget decisions pending. He highlighted major remaining budget areas, including Public School Support and the Department of Health and Welfare, and reviewed policy bills with fiscal impacts along with updated cost estimates.

Ms. Janet Jessup, Principal Analyst, LSO Budget & Policy, presented a language correction and FTP adjustment for the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). She explained the committee had approved \$400K in dedicated funds earlier in the week to support the Solid Waste Regulatory Program being centralized within the agency pursuant to **H 555**; this motion added the associated FTPs.

MOTION: **Rep. Furniss** made a motion, seconded by **Sen. Cook**, for the Department of Environmental Quality, for FY 2027, an additional 4.00 FTP for the Solid Waste Regulatory Program.

**ROLL CALL
VOTE ON
MOTION:** **Motion carried by a total vote of 18 AYES, 1 NAY, 1 ABSENT/EXCUSED.**
Senators voting in favor of the motion: **Grow, Woodward, Cook, Bjerke (Bjerke), Hart, Carlson, Galloway, Ward-Engelking, Wintrow.** **Senators voting in opposition** to the motion: **Zuiderveld.** **Representatives voting in favor** of the motion: **Tanner (14), Furniss, Petzke, Manwaring, Mitchell, Price, Bruce, Harris, Green.** **Representatives voting in opposition** to the motion: **None.**
Representatives Absent/Excused: Miller.

Ms. Jessup presented a revised section of language associated with the FY 2027 enhancement budget. She explained the new language limited the cash transfer from the Hazardous Waste Emergency Fund to \$400K, as the full balance was not needed for the Solid Waste Regulatory Fund.

**UNANIMOUS
CONSENT
REQUEST:** **Rep. Furniss** requested and it was granted by unanimous consent, to adopt the following language:

LANGUAGE: SECTION __. CASH TRANSFER FOR SOLID WASTE. There is hereby appropriated and the Office of the State Controller shall transfer ~~the balance of~~ \$400,000 from the Hazardous Waste Emergency Fund to the Solid Waste Regulatory Fund on July 1, 2026, or as soon thereafter as practicable for the period of July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027.

Ms. Jessup presented a FY 2026 supplemental request for the Soil and Water Conservation Commission (SWCC). The SWCC requested \$12,900 in onetime funding from the Miscellaneous Revenue Fund to supplement payments for the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), which supported long-term conservation contracts through a state and federal partnership. She stated rising land values had increased contract costs, leaving the agency unable to meet its required share. A \$100K transfer from the Idaho Water Resources Board helped offset the shortfall; this supplemental request covered the remaining amount needed for FY 2026.

MOTION: **Rep. Furniss** made a motion, seconded by **Sen. Cook**, for the Soil and Water Conservation Commission, for FY 2026, the addition of \$12,900 onetime from the Miscellaneous Revenue Fund for the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program.

ROLL CALL VOTE ON MOTION: **Motion carried by a total vote of 18 AYES, 1 NAY, 1 ABSENT/EXCUSED.** **Senators voting in favor** of the motion: **Grow, Woodward, Cook, Bjerke (Bjerke), Hart, Carlson, Galloway, Ward-Engelking, Wintrow.** **Senators voting in opposition** to the motion: **Zuiderveld.** **Representatives voting in favor** of the motion: **Tanner (14), Furniss, Petzke, Manwaring, Mitchell, Price, Bruce, Harris, Green.** **Representatives voting in opposition** to the motion: **None.** **Representatives Absent/Excused: Miller.**

Ms. Jessup presented the FY 2027 enhancement budget for SWCC and outlined a two-step budget action. **H 503** moved SWCC from the Department of Agriculture to the Department of Water Resources while maintaining it as a distinct budgeted division. She noted the action would shift funding from the current structure to the new one and then consider the CREP funding enhancement. The FY 2027 enhancement budget would use the remaining balance in the Miscellaneous Revenue Fund to support CREP, consistent with the previously approved supplemental request.

MOTION: **Rep. Manwaring** made a motion, seconded by **Sen. Cook**, for FY 2027, for the Department of Agriculture, Soil and Water Conservation Commission, a reduction of \$3,535,000 from the General Fund and \$447,700 from dedicated funds, for a total reduction of \$3,982,700, and a reduction of 16.75 full-time equivalent positions.

ROLL CALL VOTE ON MOTION: **Motion carried by a total vote of 19 AYES, 0 NAYS, 1 ABSENT/EXCUSED.** **Senators voting in favor** of the motion: **Grow, Woodward, Cook, Bjerke (Bjerke), Hart, Carlson, Zuiderveld, Galloway, Ward-Engelking, Wintrow.** **Senators voting in opposition** to the motion: **None.** **Representatives voting in favor** of the motion: **Tanner (14), Furniss, Petzke, Manwaring, Mitchell, Price, Bruce, Harris, Green.** **Representatives voting in opposition** to the motion: **None.** **Representatives Absent/Excused: Miller.**

MOTION: **Rep. Manwaring** made a motion, seconded by **Sen. Cook**, for FY 2027, for the Department of Water Resources, Soil and Water Conservation Commission, to add \$87,100 from dedicated funds for the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program; to add 16.75 FTP, \$3,535,000 from the General Fund, and \$447,700 from dedicated funds to relocate the office within the Department of Water Resources; and to add \$300,000 onetime for unspent balances for the CREP and WQPA program. This motion included, for FY 2027, for the Department of Water Resources, Soil and Water Conservation Commission, an additional \$3,835,000 from the General Fund and \$534,800 from dedicated funds, for a total of \$4,369,800, and an additional 16.75 full-time equivalent positions.

In response to committee questions, **Mr. Mathew Weaver**, Director of the Department of Water Resources and Acting Administrator of the Soil and Water Conservation Commission, explained the initial savings from the merger were primarily from personnel costs, with additional savings expected over time from combining operations, equipment, and services. He noted further budget reductions would likely be reflected in future fiscal years as efficiencies from the merger were realized.

Sen. Wintrow emphasized the importance of a more balanced cost-benefit analysis in budget decisions, noting discussions often focused on immediate savings instead of long-term costs or cost shifts. She encouraged the committee to consider both in future decisions, while acknowledging this merger had been thoroughly analyzed.

ROLL CALL VOTE ON MOTION: **Motion carried by a total vote of 19 AYES, 0 NAYS, 1 ABSENT/EXCUSED. Senators voting in favor of the motion: Grow, Woodward, Cook, Bjerke (Bjerke), Hart, Carlson, Zuiderveld, Galloway, Ward-Engelking, Wintrow. Senators voting in opposition to the motion: None. Representatives voting in favor of the motion: Tanner (14), Furniss, Petzke, Manwaring, Mitchell, Price, Bruce, Harris, Green. Representatives voting in opposition to the motion: None. Representatives Absent/Excused: Miller.**

Ms. Jessup presented a section of language associated with the FY 2027 enhancement budget. She explained the committee had reviewed standard language for the Soil and Water Conservation Commission, previously included in the maintenance bill. She noted the existing language no longer aligned with current funding after recent committee actions, and the updated version redirected distributions to funds within the Department of Water Resources. She also stated the language included conditions and required unanimous committee consent.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST: **Rep. Manwaring** requested and it was granted by unanimous consent, to accept the following language:

LANGUAGE: SECTION __. TRUSTEE AND BENEFIT PAYMENTS DISTRIBUTION. Of the amount appropriated to the Department of Water Resources, Soil and Water Conservation Commission in Section __ of this act for trustee and benefit payments, \$300,000 shall be distributed equally among the 50 soil and water conservation districts in addition to the amounts authorized pursuant to Section 22-2727, Idaho Code.

SECTION __. CONDITIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND RESTRICTIONS. Appropriations made pursuant to this act are subject to the conditions, limitations, and restrictions specified in this act.

Ms. Jessup presented the FY 2027 enhancement budget for the Department of Water Resources. The budget, as requested and recommended by the Governor, included a single enhancement: a \$716,000 transfer from the Revolving Development Fund to the Aquifer Planning and Management Fund to support personnel costs for monitoring, measurement, and modeling. This transfer was an annual, onetime adjustment included in the budget for several years.

MOTION:

Rep. Manwaring made a motion, seconded by **Sen. Cook**, beginning with the FY 2027 JFAC Program Maintenance Budget, to add \$716,000 from the Revolving Development Fund and transfer to the Aquifer Planning and Management Fund for aquifer monitoring and measuring; and to add \$390,000 onetime from the General Fund to restore the FY 2027 rescission. This motion included, for FY 2027, for the Department of Water Resources, an additional \$390,000.

Rep. Manwaring explained the \$390K addition restored previously rescinded funding to prevent reductions in stream gauging services used for water monitoring, flood control, and water rights administration.

Sen. Wintrow stated onetime adjustments made it more difficult to maintain agency stability and predictability. She added such adjustments could limit operations instead of reflecting the agency's actual needs.

**ROLL CALL
VOTE ON
MOTION:**

Motion carried by a total vote of 14 AYES, 5 NAYS, 1 ABSENT/EXCUSED. Senators voting in favor of the motion: Grow, Woodward, Cook, Bjerke (Bjerke), Carlson, Galloway, Ward-Engelking. Senators voting in opposition to the motion: Hart, Zuiderveld, Wintrow. Representatives voting in favor of the motion: Tanner (14), Furniss, Petzke, Manwaring, Mitchell, Bruce, Green. Representatives voting in opposition to the motion: Price, Harris. Representatives Absent/Excused: Miller.

Co-Chair Tanner (14) put the committee at ease at 8:43 a.m.

Co-Chair Tanner (14) resumed the meeting at 8:45 a.m.

Ms. Jessup explained the multi-step process to consolidate the Office of Species Conservation and the Office of Energy and Mineral Resources into one new entity, the Office of Species, Mineral, and Environmental Coordination. She explained the FY 2027 enhancement for the Office of Species Conservation included a onetime request of \$3M for trustee and benefit payments from its federal grant fund for fish habitat restoration. The funding was provided by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and would be subgranted to the Department of Fish and Game to carry out restoration projects.

MOTION:

Rep. Furniss made a motion, seconded by **Sen. Cook**, beginning with the FY 2027 JFAC Program Maintenance Budget, for FY 2027, for the Office of Species Conservation, a reduction \$1,761,100 from the General Fund, \$50,000 from dedicated funds, and \$18,155,200 from federal funds, for a total reduction of \$19,966,300, and a reduction of 16.00 full-time equivalent positions.

**ROLL CALL
VOTE ON
MOTION:**

Motion carried by a total vote of 18 AYES, 0 NAYS, 2 ABSENT/EXCUSED. Senators voting in favor of the motion: Grow, Woodward, Cook, Bjerke (Bjerke), Hart, Carlson, Zuiderveld, Galloway, Ward-Engelking, Wintrow. Senators voting in opposition to the motion: None. Representatives voting in favor of the motion: Tanner (14), Furniss, Petzke, Manwaring, Mitchell, Price, Bruce, Harris. Representatives voting in opposition to the motion: None. Representatives Absent/Excused: Miller, Green.

Mr. Peterson presented the second step of the consolidation of the Office of Energy and Mineral Resources and the Office of Species Conservation.

MOTION:

Rep. Petzke made a motion, seconded by **Sen. Cook**, beginning with the FY 2027 JFAC Program Maintenance Budget, for FY 2027, for the Office of Energy and Mineral Resources, to reduce \$1,138,800 from dedicated funds and \$11,642,500 from federal funds, for a total reduction of \$12,781,300, and to reduce 11.00 full-time equivalent positions.

Co-Chair Tanner (14) put the committee at ease at 8:56 a.m.

Co-Chair Tanner (14) resumed the meeting at 8:57 a.m.

**ROLL CALL
VOTE ON
MOTION:**

Motion carried by a total vote of 17 AYES, 0 NAYS, 3 ABSENT/EXCUSED.
Senators voting in favor of the motion: **Grow, Woodward, Cook, Bjerke (Bjerke), Hart, Carlson, Zuiderveld, Galloway, Ward-Engelking, Wintrow.**
Senators voting in opposition to the motion: **None.** **Representatives voting in favor** of the motion: **Tanner (14), Furniss, Petzke, Manwaring, Price, Bruce, Harris.** **Representatives voting in opposition** to the motion: **None.**
Representatives Absent/Excused: Miller, Mitchell, Green.

Mr. Peterson presented the FY 2027 enhancement budget for Species, Mineral, and Energy Coordination (SMEC), finalizing consolidation of the Office of Species Conservation and the Office of Energy and Mineral Resources. He noted the enhancement request for Idaho Orchestrating Nuclear (ION) totaling \$106,900 from the Miscellaneous Revenue Fund for personnel costs to support nuclear energy efforts, including work with the Idaho Advanced Nuclear Energy Task Force. The request allowed existing staff—currently funded through federal grants with restrictions—to assist with nuclear-related projects while remaining compliant with federal requirements.

**ORIGINAL
MOTION:**

Sen. Cook made a motion, seconded by **Rep. Furniss**, for FY 2027, to add 11.00 FTP and \$12,781,300 to consolidate the Office of Energy and Mineral Resources; to add 16.00 FTP and \$19,966,300 to consolidate the Office of Species Conservation; to reduce 2.00 FTP and \$145,700 to capture efficiencies from the consolidation; to reduce 0.43 FTP and \$21,400 from the Indirect Cost Recovery Fund and increase 0.43 FTP and add \$21,400 from dedicated funds to align personnel funding within the agency as requested; to add \$106,900 to support Idaho Orchestrating Nuclear; to add \$3,000,000 for statewide fisheries projects; and to add \$10,609,800 onetime from the Miscellaneous Revenue Fund for Energy Resiliency Grants. This motion included, for FY 2027, for the Office of Species, Mineral, and Energy Coordination, \$1,747,600 from the General Fund, \$11,871,300 from dedicated funds, and \$32,699,700 from federal funds, for a total of \$46,318,600, and 25.00 full-time equivalent positions.

In response to committee questions, **Mr. Peterson** explained the \$10.6M for energy resiliency grants was a onetime appropriation replacing prior reappropriations, since the new entity had no existing funds to carry forward. He noted the agency could request reappropriation the following year. He further explained the funding consisted of state match dollars in the Miscellaneous Revenue Fund, while corresponding federal funds were maintained separately in an ongoing appropriation. He confirmed the reappropriated amounts were dedicated state funds used for matching and were not part of the federal funds.

SUBSTITUTE MOTION:

Rep. Harris made a substitute motion, seconded by **Rep. Price**, for FY 2027, to add 11.00 FTP and \$12,781,300 to consolidate the Office of Energy and Mineral Resources; to add 16.00 FTP and \$19,966,300 to consolidate the Office of Species Conservation; to reduce 4.0 FTP and \$291,400 to capture efficiencies from the consolidation; to reduce 0.43 FTP and \$21,400 from the Indirect Cost Recovery Fund and increase 0.43 FTP and add \$21,400 from dedicated funds to align personnel funding within the agency as requested; to add \$106,900 to support Idaho Orchestrating Nuclear; to add \$3,000,000 for statewide fisheries projects; and to add \$10,609,800 onetime from the Miscellaneous Revenue Fund for Energy Resiliency Grants. This motion included, for FY 2027, for the Office of Species, Mineral, and Energy Coordination, \$1,734,100 from the General Fund, \$11,837,100 from dedicated funds, and \$32,601,700 from federal funds, for a total of \$46,172,900 and 23.00 full-time equivalent positions.

Rep. Harris referenced pending legislation reducing the agency by 4.0 FTP and noted the agency was involved in the decision, stating JFAC should honor the legislation. He added his intent was to follow the policy bill and assumed the agency had determined how to manage the reductions within its existing budget.

In response to committee questions, **Ms. Cally Younger**, Administrator of the Office of Energy and Mineral Resources, explained the original Statement of Purpose for the pending legislation was based on a November 2025 presentation, and updated figures were reflected in the original motion. She stated the original motion included approximately \$80,000 in General Fund savings and \$356,000 in total savings, primarily from federal funds, with a minimal impact to the General Fund. She said 2.0 FTP would be repurposed rather than eliminated to support a new energy-focused structure. She added Idaho's expanding mining sector had increased workload, and the office was assisting projects like American Tungsten by coordinating permitting through multiple agencies, serving as a central point of contact to improve efficiency while operating under reduced resources.

ROLL CALL VOTE ON SUBSTITUTE MOTION:

Substitute motion failed by a total vote of 9 AYES, 10 NAYS, 1 ABSENT/EXCUSED. Senators voting in favor of the motion: Hart, Carlson, Zuiderveld, Galloway. Senators voting in opposition to the motion: Grow, Woodward, Cook, Bjerke (Bjerke), Ward-Engelking, Wintrow. Representatives voting in favor of the motion: Tanner (14), Mitchell, Price, Bruce, Harris. Representatives voting in opposition to the motion: Furniss, Petzke, Manwaring, Green. Representatives Absent/Excused: Miller.

The majority having failed to vote in the affirmative in the Senate Finance Committee, the motion failed.

ROLL CALL VOTE ON ORIGINAL MOTION:

Original motion failed by a total vote of 13 AYES, 6 NAYS, 1 ABSENT/EXCUSED. Senators voting in favor of the motion: Grow, Woodward, Cook, Bjerke (Bjerke), Hart, Carlson, Galloway, Ward-Engelking, Wintrow. Senators voting in opposition to the motion: Zuiderveld. Representatives voting in favor of the motion: Furniss, Petzke, Manwaring, Green. Representatives voting in opposition to the motion: Tanner (14), Mitchell, Price, Bruce, Harris. Representatives Absent/Excused: Miller.

The majority having failed to vote in the affirmative in the House Appropriations Committee, the motion failed.

Ms. Frances Lippitt, Senior Analyst, LSO Budget & Policy, presented the FY 2027 enhancement budget for the Idaho Division of Occupational and Professional Licenses. The division requested funding for nine replacement vehicles and computer hardware.

MOTION: **Rep. Harris** made a motion, seconded by **Sen. Cook**, beginning with the FY 2027 JFAC Program Maintenance Budget, to add \$310,000 for replacement items and to add \$162,700 for replacement IT hardware. This motion included, for FY 2027, for the Division of Occupational and Professional Licenses, an additional \$472,700 from dedicated funds.

ROLL CALL VOTE ON MOTION: **Motion carried by a total vote of 17 AYES, 1 NAY, 2 ABSENT/EXCUSED.** **Senators voting in favor** of the motion: **Grow, Woodward, Cook, Bjerke (Bjerke), Hart, Carlson, Ward-Engelking, Wintrow.** **Senators voting in opposition** to the motion: **Zuiderveld.** **Senators Absent/Excused: Galloway.** **Representatives voting in favor** of the motion: **Tanner (14), Furniss, Petzke, Manwaring, Mitchell, Price, Bruce, Harris, Green.** **Representatives voting in opposition** to the motion: **None.** **Representatives Absent/Excused: Miller.**

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 9:48 a.m.

Representative Tanner (14)
Chair

Alyson Jackson
Secretary