

**MINUTES OF THE  
NATURAL RESOURCES, AGRICULTURE, AND ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY  
APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE**

Room 25 House Office Building

February 13, 2012

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Sen. David Hinkins, Co-Chair  
Rep. John G. Mathis, Co-Chair  
Rep. Keith Grover, Vice-Chair  
Sen. Casey Anderson  
Sen. Gene Davis  
Sen. Margaret Dayton  
Sen. Ralph Okerlund  
Sen. Kevin T. Van Tassell  
Rep. Roger E. Barrus  
Rep. Susan Duckworth  
Rep. Brad J. Galvez  
Rep. Michael E. Noel  
Rep. Lee Perry  
Rep. Dixon M. Pitcher  
Rep. Stephen E. Sandstrom  
Rep. Christine Watkins

**STAFF:** Mr. Ivan Djambov, Fiscal Analyst  
Ms. Linda Service, Committee Secretary

**Note:** A list of visitors and a copy of handouts are filed with the committee minutes.

Sen. Hinkins called the meeting to order at 8:05 a.m.

**1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

There were no minutes to approve.

**2. DELISTING OF WOLVES**

Mr. Ryan Benson, Big Game Forever, explained that due to a settlement by the federal government and the Center for Biological Diversity, there is a requirement to implement the Mexican wolf plan in September of 2012. He requested \$500,000 funding to enable Big Game Forever to continue to work in Washington D. C. to make sure Utah maintains the authority to regulate its growing population of wolves.

**3. DESILTING OF MILLSITE RESERVOIR**

Sen. Hinkins discussed the Ferron Irrigation and Canal Company's request for \$150,000 a year to dredge the Millsite Reservoir. He stated that the problem of sediment accumulation needs to be addressed over the coming years and indicated that there is a planned upgrade to the dam which is an attempt to restore lost storage capacity due to sediment accumulation.

**4. SUGAR HOUSE PARK TRAILS**

Sen. Davis reported that the Sugar House Park Trail construction under 1300 East has met with problems causing higher than anticipated costs. There is now a \$400,000 shortage to complete that

segment of the trail. The community has raised close to \$80,000 and the RDA in the area has supplied \$150,000. Sen. Davis requested an additional \$150,000 to complete the funding.

#### **5. S.B. 61, INVASIVE SPECIES AMENDMENTS**

Sen. Okerlund explained that invasive species in the state have caused loss of production on grazing and farm lands. He requested \$1,000,000 to attack invasive species in an effort to increase production on lands in the state of Utah. He responded to questions.

#### **6. OGDEN BAY WATERFOWL MANAGEMENT AREA FLOOD ISSUES**

Rep. Galvez introduced Mr. Kerry Gibson, Weber County Commissioner, and Mr. Lance Peterson, Weber County Emergency Director, who reviewed slides showing the flooding issues in the Ogden Bay Waterfowl Management Area in 2011. Weber County is requesting \$750,000 to make improvements on the bird refuge so that water can flow through during the flood season.

#### **7. OFFICE OF ENERGY DEVELOPMENT**

Rep. Barrus requested \$700,000 ongoing for additional staff and \$70,000 onetime to move the Office of Energy Development (OED) from the Department of Environmental Quality to a new location. Ms. Samantha Julian, Director, OED, along with Rep. Barrus responded to questions.

#### **8. BIG HORNED SHEEP**

#### **9. WILDLIFE AND PRIVATE BUYOUT OF SHEEP AND CATTLE GRAZING RIGHTS**

Rep. Noel introduced Mr. Andrew Taft, Wayne Wool Growers, who expressed his frustration over the lack of control of Bighorn sheep southeast of Bicknell, Utah. A removal plan has been in place several times but has never been completed. He asked that the Division of Wildlife Resources (DWR) complete the sheep removal thus prohibiting domestic sheep and wild Bighorn sheep from interacting. Mr. Taft also expressed concern over the proposed purchase of private lands by DWR from the Sandy Ranch in the Bicknell Bottoms. Mr. Verlund King, Wayne County veterinarian and rancher, commented on the purchase of private lands by DWR and thanked the members of the subcommittee for allocating funds in the past for the ongoing Bison Research Project on the Henry Mountain area. Mr. David Brinkerhoff, Wayne County rancher, indicated his interest in the Sandy Ranch and his concern over management of the land.

Mr. Jim Karpowitz, Director, Division of Wildlife Resources, responded to the issues of concern expressed by the Wayne County ranchers. He stated that DWR has removed problem sheep from the area with the intention to complete the process. He also spoke to the issue raised concerning a DWR purchase of land. He advised the subcommittee members that the purchase must follow a very strict 10-step approval process, which includes the county commission, the state legislature, and the Governor's Office.

#### **10. WHIRLING DISEASE**

Mr. Robert Judd, Utah Agriculture Association, and Dennis Blackburn, trout grower in Wayne County, testified on behalf of private hatcheries dealing with Whirling Disease (WD). He stated that it is the perception that if you are a private fishery and get WD, you are out of business; if you are a state facility and get WD, your facility will receive millions of dollars in upgrades. Mr. Blackburn

asked that DWR take a roll in helping endangered fish and in doing research to sustain the species.

Mr. Karpowitz, along with Dr. Chris Wilson, fish pathologist and veterinarian, responded to issues raised by Mr. Judd and Mr. Blackburn. He detailed the history of hatcheries in the state and the efforts made to improve fishing for citizens. He expressed his commitment to deal with the issues which have been raised.

#### **11. REPORT BY THE GREAT SALT LAKE ADVISORY COUNCIL**

Mr. Leland Myers, Chair, Great Salt Lake Advisory Council, discussed the document, "Great Salt Lake Advisory Council, 2nd Annual Report to the Utah State Legislature, Natural Resources Appropriations Subcommittee, February 2012," and summarized a handout titled "Definition and Assessment of Great Salt Lake Health." Mr. Don Leonard, Great Salt Lake Advisory Council representing aquaculture, commented on a handout titled "Definition and Assessment of Great Salt Lake Health" which shows the economic impact of the lake on Utah's economy. Mr. Myers and Mr. Leonard responded to questions.

#### **12. DEQ FEE INCREASES: GREAT SALT LAKE LANDOWNER**

Mr. Richard West spoke on behalf of private land owners around the Great Salt Lake with regard to the fee they are required to pay to spray for noxious weeds. At present the fees deter private entities from dealing with the problem. He asked to have the fees restructured to encourage private participation in controlling the weeds. Mr. Walt Baker, Division of Water Quality, provided clarification to questions from subcommittee members.

**MOTION:** Sen. Davis moved to approve a letter to Mr. Juan Palma, U. S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM), which informed Mr. Palma of the Subcommittee's concern that there is not an ongoing financial commitment from the BLM for support of Edge of the Cedars State Park and he requested that the co-chairs of the Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Environmental Quality Appropriations Subcommittee sign and send it to Mr. Palma. The motion passed unanimously with Sen. Dayton, Sen Van Tassell, and Rep. Sandstrom absent for the vote.

**MOTION:** Rep. Watkins moved to adjourn. Sen. Hinkins adjourned the meeting at 9:45 a.m.

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Sen. David Hinkins, Co-chair

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Rep. John G. Mathis, Co-chair