

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

Room 25 House Office Building

February 4, 2013

MEMBERS PRESENT: Sen. David Hinkins, Co-Chair
Rep. John G. Mathis, Co-Chair
Rep. Mike McKell, House Vice Chair
Sen. Jim Dabakis
Sen. Margaret Dayton
Sen. Ralph Okerlund
Sen. John L. Valentine
Sen. Kevin T. Van Tassell
Rep. Jerry Anderson
Rep. Roger E. Barrus
Rep. Susan Duckworth
Rep. Brian Greene
Rep. Ken Ivory
Rep. Michael E. Noel
Rep. Lee B. Perry
Rep. Jon Stanard
Rep. Larry B. Wiley

STAFF: Mr. Ivan Djambov, Fiscal Analyst
Ms. Angela Oh, Economist
Ms. Linda Service, Committee Secretary

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

1. CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair McKell called the meeting to order at 8:05 a.m.

2. DIVISION OF WILDLIFE RESOURCES

Mr. Djambov discussed Budget Brief, "Division of Wildlife Resources, Operations." The Division of Wildlife Resources (DWR) manages all fish and wildlife species, regulates hunting, fishing and trapping, and conducts non-consumptive activities. The Analyst recommends for FY 2014 a total appropriation of \$60,008,300. With the public becoming more involved in wildlife-related issues, the division has been experiencing a heavier demand on staff from the Attorney General's Office supporting DWR. The Analyst recommends the Legislature provide \$97,000 ongoing appropriation from the Wildlife Resources restricted account in order to secure additional legal staff. Following are the top measures chosen by the division management to gauge the success of its program: licenses sold over time, depredation payments, cougar/bear claims, and average costs for cougar/bear claims.

The Analyst reviewed the document, "Division of Wildlife Resources (Operations), Budget Details Over Time," which gives history, trends and percentage changes from year to year.

Mr. Djambov commented on Budget Brief, "Wildlife Resources, Capital," which includes the large structural projects or habitat improvements and projects that improve wildlands or related structures. The Analyst recommends a total FY 2014 appropriation of \$4,712,000. The top measures chosen by the division to gauge success of its program are amount of fish stocked and information on hatcheries.

The Analyst summarized Budget Briefs: (1) "Wildlife License Reimbursement," recommending a total FY 2014 appropriation of \$74,800; (2) "Wildlife Predator Control," recommending a total appropriation of \$59,600; (3) "Wildlife Cooperative Agreements," recommending a total appropriation of \$12,143,600;" and (4) "Wildlife

Contributed Research," recommending a total appropriation of \$830,900. Mr. Djambov brought to the attention of the subcommittee the Issue Brief, "Wildlife Resources Fees," showing the proposed fee changes the division is requesting for this year.

Agency Presentation

Mr. Greg Sheehan, Director, Division of Wildlife Resources, introduced members of his staff and distributed a handout detailing primary customers, economic value of wildlife, accomplishments, budget changes and impacts, major policy issues and challenges, and plan of action. He expressed a need to craft a solution to issues relating to recruitment and retention of quality employees. In addition he expressed the intention to continue to monitor and prevent expansion of invasive species and diseases and the listing of Sage Grouse as an endangered species. Director Sheehan responded to questions.

3. DIVISION OF FORESTRY, FIRE, AND STATE LANDS

Mr. Djambov addressed Budget Brief, "Division of Forestry, Fire, and State Lands." The Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands manages the state's sovereign lands and provides forestry conservation and fire control activities on non-federal forest, range, and watershed lands. The Analyst recommends for FY 2014 a total appropriation of \$19,906,400, including two building block requests from non-general fund sources of \$50,000 for Bear River management planning and an ongoing appropriation of \$200,000 for invasive species. In addition, there are two building block requests dealing with general funds: a supplemental increase to FY 2013 of \$13,510,000 for fire suppression costs; and a supplemental increase to FY 2013 of \$5,238,000 for fire rehabilitation and re-seeding costs. Should additional resources become available to the subcommittee, the Analyst would recommend these increases. Following are the top measures chosen by the division management to gauge the success of its program: hazardous fuel reduction, fire season, training, and "Tree City USA."

Mr. Djambov touched upon the document, "Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands, Budget Details Over Time," showing trends over time, and Issue Brief, "Forestry, Fire, and State Lands Fees" stating there are three new fees proposed. He responded to questions.

Agency Presentation

Mr. Dick Buhler, Director, Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands, assisted by Roger Lewis, Finance Director, distributed a handout detailing services, primary customers, issues and challenges for the future, and successes and accomplishments. Director Buhler commented on the extent of the fire season in 2012 noting that 50% of the fires were human caused. Vice Chair McKell requested to hear from a representative from the Utah National Guard concerning the \$61,200 request for costs incurred in the 2010 Machine Gun Fire. Lt. Col. Matt Price, Utah National Guard, commented that the amount requested is for state active duty orders payments for the soldiers activated when the fire started. He then responded to questions.

MOTION: Rep. Perry moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously. Vice Chair McKell adjourned the meeting at 9:55 a.m.

