

IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

“To improve the quality of life in Idaho through outdoor recreation and resource stewardship.”

**Teleconference Board Meeting  
Director’s Regular Monthly Update  
Thursday, March 6, 2014**

Originating at Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation Headquarters  
Boise, Idaho

**Telephone Number: (208) 514-2259 (Port 7414)**

*Consent Agenda CA	*Information Only IO	*Action Item AI
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**AGENDA**

- 8:30 a.m.** Call to Order
- 8:30 a.m.** Roll Call
- 8:35 a.m.** Additions or Deletions to the Printed Agenda
- 8:40 a.m.** Friends of Idaho State Parks Foundation, IO  
(MOU, Information Request, Letter)  
FY2015 Budget, IO  
Vardis Fisher Property, IO  
John Wayne Pioneer Trail, IO
- 9:30 a.m.** Adjourn

**THURSDAY, MARCH 6, 2014**

**8:30 a.m.** Board Chairman Charlie Correll called the March 6, 2014, Teleconference Board meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

- 8:30 a.m.** Roll Call showed the following Board members in attendance:
- Charles Correll, Jerome
  - Robert Hansen, Menan
  - Tom Crimmins, Hayden Lake
  - Randy Doman, Cottonwood
  - Jean McDevitt, Pocatello
  - Susan Buxton, Boise

Also present during all or a portion of the meeting was the following individuals:

- Nancy Merrill, Director
- Steve Strack, Deputy Attorney General, Natural Resources Division
- Keith Hobbs, Operations Administrator
- Anna Canning, Management Services Administrator
- Evelyn Mason, Projects Coordinator
- Bruce Smith, From Susan’s Firm

**8:35 a.m. Additions of Deletions to the Agenda:**

*Randy Doman moved to add a discussion on the John Wayne Trail; Buxton seconded. All Ayes; motion passed.*

**8:40 a.m. Friends Group Discussion (IO)**

Director Merrill provided background on the Friends of Idaho State Parks Foundation activities thus far:

1. In December, FIDR made a public information request of ten (10) finance-related questions.

2. In February, FIDR requested the Governor establish a Task Force to look at the Board and Agency operations ten (10) specific items. FIDR sought without Board approval or discussion.

3. In February, Friends of IDPR provided staff with a draft MOU. Evelyn Mason and Director Merrill met with Friends of IDPR board to discuss agency concerns. Among concerns is a paid lobbyist, Sandra Mitchell, on the Friends Board; and more general concerns with the operation and communication of the Board relative to the Task Force request and the draft MOU. The Friends Board had not reviewed the draft MOU and was not aware it had been sent to IDPR. Director Merrill further explained that Evelyn had prepared a draft MOU from IDPR standpoint that the Board could consider.

Correll queried if an MOU was necessary. Discussion led to defining relationship between Friends of IDPR and IDPR with an MOU. Transactions between IDPR and Friends of IDPR portray a good relationship with a request from Friends of IDPR offering to do more. Strack commented on advantages to define the relationship through an MOU. An example provided about Fish & Game where the partner organization raises money, builds facilities, and leases them back to the Department. Evelyn added that we can add financial accountability as well.

Correll stated he would like Administration to work with the Board and develop an MOU. Merrill stated Evelyn can bring an MOU to the Board for review and approval. Doman stated a need to determine our relationship then build the MOU based on that relationship.

Merrill stated that perhaps the Board can invite the Friends Board to visit in Lewiston. Board expressed agreement.

*No Staff Action taken.*

No draft MOU for now, but we will continue conversations. If they specifically request help on an MOU, staff will provide comments and suggestions.

#### **FY 2015 Budget (IO)**

Director Merrill announced that the IDPR budget for FY2015 was JFAC approved unanimously with no changes. Merrill spoke of her approach by outlining past plans and results to legislators, which proved very effective. Director Merrill requested permission to focus on personnel and on replacing the \$1.5M RV funds with General Funds. She will provide legislators with details on what staff does and the fiscal impacts facing personnel cost.

Crimmins: Focus on people that are serving the public. Visually show level of service before and after—particularly the 24/7 staff and their ability to respond when needed.

Doman: Focus on parks and recreation. Not just about parks. Unfortunately, the recreation users are not a user group we can bill (other than registration stickers). Need to explain how we are fighting to keep recreation opportunities available.

Buxton: Agrees with Doman. Compelling way to show JFAC the efforts we take to maintain our recreation opportunities and the positive economic impact that has for the state. She gave Owyhee County as example. She also highlighted the Bayhorse event and the positive economic benefit it provides to the city of Challis.

Merrill: Explained the 1% CEC and the 1% lump sum bonus that will be effective July 1, 2014. She also noted that Passport revenue is up \$20,000 this February.

Buxton: Commented that she received many positive reports regarding IDPR as she walked the halls of the Statehouse this year.

Merrill: The Jones House at Harriman will be in the DPW Budget. This is another example of legislative support.

### **Vardis Fisher Property (IO)**

Buxton declared a conflict of interest due to her business partner, Bruce Smith, having been retained as legal counsel for IDPR on this matter. Requested that the Board amend the agenda to discuss Pioneer Trail before Vardis Fisher so that she might leave after that discussion.

*Randy Doman moved to place the Vardis Fisher item at the end of the agenda; Bob Hansen seconded. All AYES; motion passed.*

### **John Wayne Pioneer Trail (IO)**

Keith Hobbs provided background information on the issue. Leo Hennessy was contacted by Judy Westall (WHO?) regarding possible purchase of right-of-way to extend the John Wayne Trail. Currently there is about a nine (9) mile gap between the terminus of the John Wayne Pioneer Trail and the Trail of the Coeur d'Alenes. Purchase of the right-of-way currently for sale would shorten the gap, but it would not complete the connection. We have asked the Tribe for the GIS coordinates so that we might better understand how much it would connect. We will then look at liabilities and evaluate options to acquire this as a public use trail. Staff felt it was worth tracking down as far as we can. Staff expects to have an updated by the April meeting. Director Merrill queried the Board as to whether or not they would like us to pursue this opportunity.

*Bob Hansen moved that we send a letter of interest; Crimmins seconded. All AYES; motion passed.*  
Buxton left the meeting.

### **Vardis Fisher Property (IO)**

Merrill notified Board that she requested permission from Chairman Correll earlier this week for permission to work with Bruce Smith on the issue of how to value our water rights at Vardis Fisher. Bruce Smith then introduced himself and thanked the Board for the opportunity to provide counsel on this important issue. He explained that he was recently involved in the sale of fish hatcheries in the Hagerman area. He went on to discuss the Rangen's Water Call and how it generated a lot of movement in water rights (which we are currently seeing). Smith explained that, because of the scope of the Rangen's Water Call, the situation will call for a bigger solution than can be accomplished with the sale of individual rights. That is why the Legislature will get involved. Smith explained that Merrill would be meeting with Legislators this afternoon. It was his advice that he not attend in order to not inhibit an open discussion. He recommended that a Board member accompany Merrill. Clive Strong from the AG's office will be there to answer any specific questions related to water rights.

Hansen: Asked for verification that the Vardis Fisher property in a different aquifer than Rangen's Water Call. Smith replied that he was not sure on the exact water rights in question. His experience is that the solution had a lot to do with relationships. As he reviews the water right he will have more information.

Correll: Asked how the Rangen's Water Call will affect us. Smith answered that he did not believe it affects IDPR at all. IDPR is not a part of the Rangen's Water Call.

Correll: Asked how we currently use our water. Merrill answered that it is currently used in our year-to-year lease with CPAC for Vardis Fisher and some irrigation. Correll asked about our current use: Strack replied 26 cubic feet per second. Smith questioned if that were spring flows: Strack replied that he believed so. Strack went on to discuss the \$1.5 million value of the Hatchery property and other lands included in the original Vardis Fisher purchase (aside from the value of the water rights).

The Board then returned to the issue of who might attend the meeting with Merrill that afternoon. It was decided that at a minimum Keith Hobbs would accompany Director Merrill.

### **Other items.**

Merrill gave an update on the plans for the May meeting and where she was in the process of hiring a new administrative assistant. She expressed appreciation for the work the staff has done to fill in during the absence of an administrative assistant.

**Adjourn.**

*Crimmins moved to adjourn. Doman seconded. All AYES; motion passed.*  
9:30 a.m. Meeting adjourned.



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Charles Correll, Chair  
Idaho Park and Recreation Board

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Nancy Merrill, Director  
and Ex-Officio Member of the Board