



**IRTI Steering Committee
December 7, 2010 Meeting Minutes
IDPR Headquarters, Boise, ID**

Participants

Brett Adler, Boise Rec Connection
Karen Ballard, ID Division of Tourism
Jennifer Blazek, IDPR
Andy Brunelle, FS
Robin Fehlau, BLM
Amy Ferriter, ISDA
Margaret Gorski, FS
Maureen Gresham, ITD
Jon Heggen, IDFG
Terry Heslin, BLM
Kevin Johnston, University of Idaho
Rick Just, IDPR (via phone)
Vicki Jo Lawson, IRTI
Nancy Merrill, IDPR
Diane Norton, ID Division of Tourism
Vicky Runnoe, IDFG
Larry Taylor, IAN

IRTI BUSINESS

IRTI Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Vicki Lawson distributed the most current version of the updated IRTI MOU, which included comments/edits from ITD, USFWS, BLM, IRPA, IRVCA, and ID Division of Tourism. Edits are still requested from FS, BOR, NPS, U of I, IDFG, and IDPR. The existing MOU has 10 agency signatories; the updated one likely will have 13! The anticipated new partners are NPS, U of I, and IRPA.

FY2011 IRTI Budget

Vicki Lawson distributed copies of the final, signed FY2011 IRTI Budget and Operating Plan. Original, signed copies were sent to the agency representatives on September 14, reflecting a slight improvement in timing over FY2010's budget finalization.

FY2010 IRTI Annual Accomplishment Report

Vicki Lawson distributed the draft Annual Accomplishment Report, and asked for comments/corrections within the next two days. Rick Just offered to format the report.

PROJECT UPDATES

Be Outside, Idaho!

Vicky Runnoe reported that the *Be Outside* organization has been busy:

- On Nov. 8, there was a partner meeting, hosted by the Partnership Committee, chaired by Brenda Bielke. Additional "Brown Bag" sessions for partners are planned.
- The *Be Outside* website is being updated.
- The *Be Outside* Steering Committee has new leadership with co-chairs Vicky Runnoe from IDFG and Jamie Heinzerling from Boise City Parks.

- *Unplug and Be Outside Week* is being planned in conjunction with Earth Day.

Free Fishing Day

Vicky Runnoe reported that Free Fishing Day is scheduled for June 11, 2011. Five *Take Me Fishing* trailers from IDFG will be available. IDFG is monitoring effects of trailer use to determine if teaching folks to fish actually increases fishing license sales.

OHV Travel Management and Stay on Trails Campaign

Jon Heggen reported that the Idaho Interagency OHV Coordinating Committee (IICC) is working on these things:

- Staying abreast of unlicensed operator issue and FS roads of concern
- Working to link the IDFG Hunt Planner tool to the new trail map website
- Helping to assure that the new trail map website is complete and accurate

Jenn Blazek reported that the *Stay on Trails* fall campaign did these things:

- Targeted hunters as a primary audience
- Summarized web analytics
- Appeared effective based on a 2010 poll v. results of a 2004 poll

Kevin Johnston asked what percentage of OHV operators drive off of designated trails. He suggested that it is probably a small number, and that using “norms” (e.g., “most people stay on trails”) for future campaigns. He added that he believes that hunters don’t perceive themselves as recreationists. 2010 poll revealed that 80% of those surveyed stay on trails; 8% travel off of trails; and 8% believe that OHVs should be banned on public lands.

Idaho Campground Directory (Directory)

Anne Chambers was not present, but provided a written report. 115,000 copies of the 2011 edition of RV IDHAO were published mid-October, just in time to be shipped to one of the largest RV travel shows in the country, in one of Idaho’s primary feeder markets in Pomona, CA. Anne thanked everyone for updating their agency shipping list information. All boxes have now been delivered per the agency instructions; additional supplies can be ordered as needed throughout the year. IRTI partnership invoices have been sent out, and several have already been paid.

Scenic Byways

Garry Young has retired, so Maureen Gresham and Randy Kyrias will represent ITD on the IRTI Steering Committee until a permanent representative is appointed. The 2010 Scenic Byway grant awards have not yet been announced.

Recreation-Tourism Databases, Websites, and Information Fulfillment

Karen Ballard reported that the www.VisitIdaho.com website will be getting a facelift, making it easier to find on the web. The changes also will provide more emphasis on Idaho’s Scenic Byways. Tourism inquiries are down by 1% this year over last, but unique visitors to the website are up by 7%. The *Adventures in Living* campaign continues to be successful. It has driven about 50,000 people to the site, and the recent contests-with-prizes have attracted 400-600 contest participants each week. Idaho’s 2% bed-tax was up 6% last month, over the same month last year. Also, a disproportionately high number of Idaho map requests have come from Canadians this year. Overall, Karen noted that with fewer advertising dollars available in 2010, product exposure and customer responsiveness have remained steady.

Watchable Wildlife (WW)

Deniz Aygen could not be present, but provided a written report of WW activities which was distributed.

Outfitter and Guide GIS project

Bart Butterfield reported that IDFG has been unable to refill a position key to keeping the outfitter and guide data current. Exiting staff has been filling in, and folks are doing their best to maintain accurate data. Bart hopes that the position will be refilled soon.

Idaho Conference on Recreation and Tourism Conference (ICORT)

Diane Norton reported that she and a planning committee are working on the agenda for the 2011 conference to be held in Lewiston on May 3-5. The theme will be “The New Age of Tourism”; key notes will include Roger Brooks and Dr. Ken Cordell.

State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation and Tourism Plan

Rick Just participated via phone and reported that recreation issues and opportunities are being identified via meetings across the State with recreation and opinion leaders. He noted that he will be establishing a steering committee for SCORTP to guide the effort. He suggested that he will be looking to the IRTI partners to play that role. He will be sending a letter from IDPR to the IRTI agency directors inviting representation and participation. He would like to start meetings in January, with SCORTP completed by December 2011.

Issues identified during the meetings as important to recreation in Idaho include:

- Funding
- Access
- Desire for partnerships (IRTI is a good example)

Issues revealed as less important include:

- Invasive species
- Endangered species
- Wolves

State Visitor Centers (VC)

Karen Ballard reported that she will visit Kathy Ford at IDT to discuss the VC project. Three visitor centers located near Idaho state boundaries--Huetter, Cherry Creek, and Snake River View--are funded in part by ITD (bricks and mortar maintenance) and by ID Division of Tourism (operations). The Centers are operated by volunteers recruited by local Chambers of Commerce. IDPR has helped coordinate and support these operations in the past, but is no longer able to. Snake River View VC is closed now, but a May opening is anticipated. The Lolo Pass VC is being worked on now, with \$1,000,000 in stimulus funds, and is anticipated to open in the summer.

NEW BUSINESS, OTHER BUSINESS, AND UPDATES

Universally accessible outdoor recreation equipment project

Kevin Johnston reported that there are large grants available for universally accessible outdoor recreation equipment projects. U of I is working on some proposals that would include making these things available: walking sticks, motion-eliminating binoculars, all-terrain wheel chairs, and creating opportunities for hunters with disabilities. Such a program would be modeled after an existing program, Montech, at U of Montana.

Invasive species projects

Amy Ferriter discussed the ISDA's programs on "Don't Move *Stuff* Around", including firewood and Quagga mussels. Amy described the data being collected about Idaho boater behavior, as a part of the Quagga mussel program. The data is available in an Excel spreadsheet. Contact Amy at amy.ferriter@agri.idaho.gov or 208-332-8686 if you want to access the data. Amy observed that of the 70,000 inspections conducted to date, only 11 fouled boats have been found. She noted that Colorado's rate is the same as Idaho's.

The five most visited boating areas in the state, in order, are:

1. Priest Lake
2. Lake Pend Oreille
3. Bear Lake
4. Lake Coeur d'Alene
5. CJ Strike Reservoir

Next Boise Rec Fest

Brett Adler, executive director of Boise Rec Connection (brett@boiserecfest.com, 208.412.9095) reported that the first Boise Rec Fest was a success. There were 86 booths, 32 workshops, 200 volunteers, and thousands of participants (though difficult to estimate). Brett indicated that the Boise Rec Fest was able to meet all of its financial obligations, except his salary. Planning for Boise Rec Fest Year 2 is underway. Some changes are anticipated, including: the physical lay-out of the Fest; addition of a skiing simulator, a climbing wall, scheduled races, additional tournaments, and

other things to engage participants. Brett explained that the Fest offers “delayed pay-offs” for tourism in Idaho, in that Fest participants can learn about other Idaho recreation locations and events, and visit and participate in them later.

Date for Next IRTI Steering Group Meeting

Tuesday, April 19, 1 pm to 4:30 pm

Boise National Forest, Supervisor’s Office, 1149 S. Vinnell Way, Suite 200, Boise, ID

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