



**30 YEARS OF RECREATION
IN THE STATE OF IDAHO**

*Created in 1988,
IRTI is an enduring coalition
of state and federal agencies
and non-profit organizations
that work together to provide
Idaho citizens and visitors
with statewide recreation
opportunities.*

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PERFORMANCE STATUS REPORT: 2020

FROM: IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
5657 Warm Springs Avenue, Boise, Idaho 83716-8700

REFERENCE: Grant and Cooperative Agreement #L17AC00334
Bureau of Land Management and Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation

PROJECT TITLE: Idaho Recreation and Tourism Initiative (IRTI) Coordinator

AGREEMENT PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE: 9/12/2007 through 9/30/2022

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THE IDAHO RECREATION AND TOURISM INITIATIVE (IRTI) DEVELOPS PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATES with various agencies, organizations, groups, and individuals to improve public information, services, and projects associated with recreation and tourism in Idaho. IRTI is a coordinating entity for statewide recreation and tourism projects, with the goal of enhanced opportunities for citizens and visitors to enjoy outdoor recreation in the State of Idaho. IRTI is guided by a Steering Committee, which meets quarterly and sets the priorities for collaborative projects. This group is comprised of entities that have on-the-ground expertise in recreation, including land management agencies, recreation providers, natural resource specialists, and tourism experts. IRTI is recognized for its networking and information-sharing, with a commitment to public-private collaboration. IRTI partners contribute funding, in-kind expertise, project coordination, communication, and other collaborative services. This support encourages responsible, healthy, and memorable outdoor experiences for citizens and visitors alike, which ultimately bring economic benefit to communities across the state.

The following entities are signatories to an MOU that expires in 2022: Bureau of Land Management, US Forest Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Reclamation, National Park Service, Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Idaho Department of Commerce (Tourism), Idaho Transportation Department, and the Idaho RV Camp-ground Owners Association. There are other IRTI partners that contribute resources, abilities, and services, but are not included in the MOU, that participate in and assist with projects as needed:

- Idaho Department of Lands
- Bogus Basin (soon to be added to MOU)
- Idaho Heritage Trust
- Boise State University, Andrus Center for Public Policy
- Drake Cooper Advertising
- Red Sky PR
- Idaho Recreation and Parks Association

IRTI ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT: 2020

At the start of 2020, the focus of IRTI was the concept of creating a state-level Office of Outdoor Recreation (OREC), which is still on the table. However, due to the global COVID-19 pandemic, OREC and many projects were put on hold. Despite this, several virtual meetings were held to discuss the future of IRTI and how to keep momentum going. This, combined with a transition in the IRTI Coordinator position, has postponed many of the ongoing projects found on the FY20 budget.

OPERATIONS

- The FY20 Annual Operating Plan and Budget (July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020 signed with projected \$255,690 in support) was disseminated throughout the group for review. As with all things in 2020, many of these items need to be reevaluated.
- The FY21 Annual Operating Plan and Budget will be discussed at the January 2021 meeting.
**In accordance with existing MOU (2016-2021). The operating plan and budget is not an obligating document for federal or state funding, and projections are contingent upon funds being allocated to signatory agencies. Some funding is directed by terms of Cooperative Agreements between IRTI (Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation, lead) and federal agencies with annual performance reporting requirements. IRTI membership is not contingent upon fiscal obligations, and in-kind support is recognized as legitimate operating plan contribution. Some, but not all IRTI partners serve as bankers for collaborative projects. The IRTI coordinator position is paid from funds contributed to IRTI. Of these funds, 50% are dedicated to salary and 50% to operating costs, under the guidance of the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation. Due to the transition of the coordinator position, as of December 2020, none of the IRTI Coordinator funds have been used and remain within the IDPR fiscal account.
- FY20 IRTI Steering Committee Meetings (Minutes and Agendas disseminated: (February 11 [OREC discussion], August 13, and October 29)
- Facilitating additional IRTI members for the 2022 MOU: Idaho Business for the Outdoors, Bogus Basin, and IRPA
- Maintain and coordinate communications, website, social media inquiries about recreation, education, parks, etc.
- Clearinghouse for exchange of information about outdoor recreation statewide
- Connecting organizations, agencies, elected officials, NGOs, non-profits, businesses about recreation
- Advisory capacity on issues pertinent to recreation, conservation education, natural resources, tourism

PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS

- Idaho RV Campgrounds Association Camping Directory was successfully printed and disseminated online and in print.
- Due to COVID-19 impacts, the subcommittee for Be Outside Idaho has decided to postpone the grant cycle until 2021.
- ICORT 2020 was held virtually this year via Zoom. Using a new platform and various breakout sessions over the course of several weeks, participants utilized the time to discuss how to move forward within the pandemic.
- Parks and Recreation successfully kept parks open all year and dealt with record attendance across the board.
- The Friends of State Parks group raised \$5,500 for graffiti damages at City of Rocks National Reserve.
- IBO announces its new Executive Director, Skylar Jett, who is focusing on revamping IBO's financials, strategic plan, and their Idaho Outdoor Challenge.
- The Forest Service is working on funding projects using the new Great American Outdoors Act, which will give them \$1.5 billion over the next 5 years.
- Fish and Game managed a 20% increase in license sales as well as increased attendance at the MK Nature Center.

PARTNER PROJECTS

- The Recreate Responsibly Idaho campaign went statewide during the pandemic.
- The Idaho Trails Supporter Sticker awareness campaign/fundraising effort was initiative on National Trails Day (June 6). To date, well over 1,000 stickers have been bought and additional retailers have been added including REI, JD's Bodega, and George's Cycles.
- Thousand Springs State Park Visitor Center officially broke ground at the Billingsley Creek Park Unit.

As we move into 2021, we anticipate IRTI gaining traction on signing the new MOU, revamping the budget, and heading toward a potential for OREC.

CERTIFICATION: I certify to the best of my knowledge and belief that this report is correct and complete for performance of activities for the purposes set forth in the award documents.

*Submitted 12/29/20 by:
Chelsea Chambers, Acting IRTI Coordinator*