

**IDAHO OUTDOOR RECREATION FUND ADVISORY COUNCIL**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
 August, 8, 2024

<b>Advisory Council Members</b>	<b>Guests</b>
Chair, Tom Schultz, Idaho Forest Group	Heather Eastman, IBO
Susan Buxton, Director IDPR	Darren Damon
Jim Fredericks, Director	Todd Wernex, IDL
Dustin Miller, Director IDL	Dave Bingham
Rep. James Petzke	Larry Laxson
Gretchen Hyde, Director Rangeland Commission -zoom	Kaniksu Land Trust
Mark Pratt, Past President Idaho Cattle Association - Zoom	Allison Ginn - USFS
Kari Kostka, Nature Conservancy	
Benn Brocksome, Founder Idaho Sportsman	Skylar Jett, ORFAC Coordinator
Senator Lent - Zoom	
Laurel Sayer- No present	
Sandra Mitchell, Motorized Trails -zoom	
Seth Griggs-Not Present	

**Call to Order**

Tom Schultz called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

**Welcome**

Tom Schultz welcomed Idaho Outdoor Rec Council to the August meeting, introduced himself and background and went through roll call.

**Consent Agenda**

Approval of May 8 2024 Minutes

**Mitchell moved to approve the minutes; Hyde seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.**

## **Review of APRA Funds- Information only**

Director Buxton gave an overview of the ARPA funds and the discussion with DFM to use the new ARPA funds allotted for projects in 2024 to cover previously approved projects. This would free up general funds that don't have to be incurred by a certain date like the ARPA funds. Buxton reiterated that the ARPA funds must be incurred by the last day of 2024 and all money must be spent by the last day of 2025. Buxton has spoken with DFM and they have verbally approved the use of ARPA funds on the previously approved projects but she would like to receive this confirmation in a written letter. DFM said that they are fine with APRA funds being used first and the other general surplus funds could be used on other projects. Senator Lent asked for clarification on why the projects that have been funded aren't happening yet. Buxton explained that they were waiting on IDL and their leasing agreement. Miller reminded Buxton that his staff and IDPR staff have been working on an agreement to allow the agencies to complete some projects outside of the standard IDL leasing process, as allowable under Idaho Code. Lent said since the ARPA funds have a time limit that he wants to make this a priority so that the funds are not lost. Damon said that he had confirmation from DM that they are good with the interchanging of funds, and it is found to switch ARPA & General funds. Buxton stated that all of these funds are a gift and that everyone's staff has been working really hard to make sure these funds are used and also meeting the federal and state requirements.

## **Update on IDPR Board approved projects:**

Buxton gave an overview of the previously approved projects. East Rock Creek is approved and in design. Working on lease now and she believes that this project can use ARPA funds.

Lent asked why the process was taking so long. Buxton stated again that IDPR and IDL are working on an agreement to allow for completion of certain projects on state endowment lands. Miller said that IDL and IDPR staff are working on it.

Henry's Lake is also a project with IDL that could fall under the IDL/IDPR agreement. .

Horsethief: Adam is working on this with Fish & Game. Fredericks stated that if an agreement for this is worked out then ARPA funds could be used for this, but he would need the help of IDPR to get funds incurred by the APRA funds deadline.

Frank Church Trail restoration: IDPR working with them.

Idaho For All: Also, in progress.

Buxton believes the ORFAC board should vote on how funding is paid out as stated in the grant application. She thinks that instead of reimbursement the group should pay invoices out of the fund instead of reimbursing the group after. Fredericks said this makes sense to him and fully supports that but asked from a procedural standpoint how this would work? Buxton said that this would be an action item and since it isn't on the agenda ORFAC could meet to approve this item in the next few weeks. Buxton will work on this draft language for payment in advance as some groups don't have the funding to pay for projects and then be reimbursed.

White Pine Heights: working on securing right of way and \$300,000 could come from ARPA if we need to. IDL ROW staff are working to complete the appraisal for the easement on the property.

Boulder Lake Road: needs a lease from IDL and Valley County

Miller asked about the E. Idaho Grazing project. Miller said this is a great project and now we need to work on a contract for road and trail inventory work but was wondering where this project is at. Pratt said the delay is with them, but they are working on another big project with a wind development and conservation easements on the same lands and he believes recreation management would fit into this plan. They are just delayed in this planning. Buxton asked if we could take \$300,000 and incur that to cover some of the infrastructure so that we don't lose that money and this project fits well under ARPA. Pratt said it is a matter of obligating and not spending it, correct? Buxton said yes, and asked if there was a way to enter into contract to work on some of the project such as a parking lot, vault toilets, etc. Fredericks said the issue is if we get funds do we know where the grazing association is at and have, they decided where they want recreation access. Fredericks isn't clear where we would obligate the funds. Pratt wants to know how much detail is needed to incur funds because he wants to make sure the project is done right. Buxton said basic designs are needed and maybe this project could be model after Kelly Canyon.

Schultz summarized the discussion and stated that there is a verbal agreement with DFM to fund previously approved projects and that he would like to see a follow-up meeting to change application guideline to pay for projects in advance and not reimbursement.

### **ARPA Guidelines & New Funding Discussion**

Schultz asked if there were any other ARPA limitation that needed to be discussed. Buxton: Yes, that it clearly states the need to increase recreation capacity. The Executive Order for the ORFAC council lays out what the money was given for. Fredericks, is there clarity on whether ARPA funds can be used on capital equipment? Is ARPA eligible for that? Buxton said she would look into that more and the federal law on this. Buxton is not comfortable saying yes or no to that. Fredericks said it would be good to clarify on that as it is a need.

New Project timelines:

Kostka said it was a crunch last time and wanted to open the application as soon as possible to give more people time to put projects together. She also asked how is the group going to commit to promoting that applications are open. Pratt said he would also like to see about extending the deadline too. Pratt said it is still vague in what the group is trying to accomplish. He would like to see the group talking to Idaho Cattlemen's Association and other cattle groups. Buxton said as far as timing we can't lose the ARPA funding. Pratt, if we can get previously approved which would free up the general funds and that would give the group more time to ask for projects.

Kostka stated that the group doesn't have a clear number for how much could be used to fund new projects. Kostra stated it would be better if we could see what projects ARPA funds can be used for and what is needed to make funds incumbered.

Pratt and Kostka would like clarity on what projects can use ARPA funds and what funds can be transferred. Schultz said it might be good to open up to have groups submit projects. Schultz said it could also help with justification with a list of projects and so projects in a queue when asking the legislature for future funding.

Mitchell said it is imperative to give them as much time as possible to allow them as much time as we can since a lot of groups don't have a grant writing person.

Schultz would recommend at the next meeting we move forward with a 30-day application period starting at the end of the month so that we can start looking at projects.

Miller said he just received an update for his team and the draft agreement between IDPR and IDL is nearly finalized. Kostka asked if this agreement would allow the group not to have to go out through the whole process would this speed up the projects? Miller said yes but the board will want to reserve the right to go through the normal advertising and leasing process for certain projects that could potentially yield a higher return for the endowments.

Next steps were decided that Buxton would come up with a draft application with the new payment options to have the council vote on. IDL and IDPR would also continue to work on the agreement and Buxton or Damon would work to secure a letter from DFM to allow the APRA funds to be used on previously approved projects. The council will meet again soon to also vote on opening applications and setting a deadline for project submission.

Schultz Motion to adjourn meeting at 11:00am. Pratt moved