



**Director Report: May 11, 2022
Susan Buxton**

2022 Legislative Session

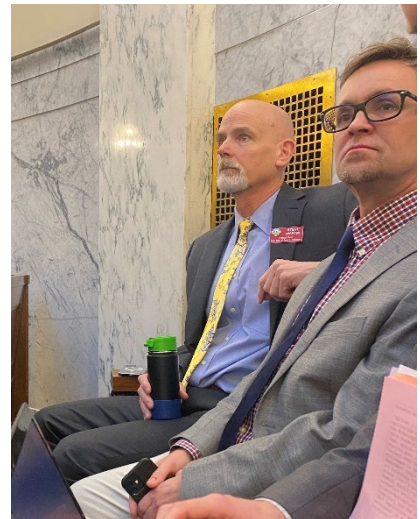
We successfully presented and received legislative approval and the Governor’s signature on H519 which consolidated and updated the Boating requirements in statute. This eliminated reference to boating in the administrative rules (IDAPA).

We had H568 printed which would have increased the administrative fees for registration from \$1.50 - \$3.00. After working with several key legislators, Association of Counties, Sheriff’s Association, and IRC, we elected to do some additional outreach, working with ITD and the DMV’s for next year.

H751 is the IDPR budget bill which passed both the House and Senate and was signed by Governor Little on March 24, 2022. It is the largest budget (\$76,911,800) ever appropriated by IDPR which represents needed employee salary increases, operations funding increases, employee housing, increased capacity and deferred maintenance projects.

Thank you to all the Board members for your outreach to legislators, and to staff for their work educating me about IDPR. Now the work begins to execute the FY23 budget.

The construction climate, inflation, fuel costs, supply disruption, and workforce shortages compound the degree of difficulty to get work done. Our staff has fantastic relationships in the construction industry which will help get projects bid and underway.



Troy Elmore and Steve Martin at JFAC Budget Setting

Voting on - H 751		<u>AYE</u>	<u>NAY</u>	<u>ABS</u>
		45	23	2
Adams	Chew	Giddings	McCann	Ruchti
Addis	Christensen	Green	McCrostie	Scott
Amador	Clow	Hanks	Mendive	Shepherd
Andrus	Crane	Harris	Mitchell	Skaug
Armstrong	DeMordaunt	Hartgen	Monks	Syme
Barbieri	Dixon	Holtzclaw	Moon	Toone
Bedke	Ehardt	Horman	Moyle	Troy
Berch	Erickson	Kauffman	Nash	Vander Woude
Blanksma	Ferch	Kerby	Nate	Weber
Boyle	Furniss	Kingsley	Necochea	Wisniewski
Bundy	Galloway	Lickley	Nichols	Wood
Burns	Gannon	Manwaring	Okuniewicz	Yamamoto
Cannon	Gestrin	Marshall	Palmer	Young
Chaney	Gibbs	Mathias	Rubel	Youngblood

IDPR Budget Bill Passes the House

Stakeholder Outreach

Before and since the February Board meeting, I have been working with many stakeholders to bolster IDPR's relationships during my first year as the Director. These groups and agencies include: Idaho Foundation for Parks & Lands, Idaho Heritage Trust, Idaho Shakespeare Festival, Idaho Sportsmen, Idaho Historical Society, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Office of Species Conservation, Idaho Department of Lands, Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, state legislators, congressional staff, several cities and counties, the National Park Service, National Association of State Park Directors, University of Idaho College of Natural Resources, Boise State University, Lewis Clark State College, CTE, and private land owners near several of our parks, Friends of Harriman, Idaho Business for the Outdoors, several corporations, Boise Metro Chamber of Commerce, Division of Financial Management, Division of Human Resources, Legislative Services Office, Information Technology Services, Department of Administration, Risk Management, Department of Commerce, and Friends of Idaho State Parks. I know I may have missed listing some of our partners but that does not diminish their importance to IDPR.

Change in Employee Compensation

With the Legislature and Governor's office approving a statewide 7% CEC and the 2% CEC in IDPR's budget, the average was a 10% increase to IDPR employees starting FY23 (July 1). A 3% increase was awarded to all State employees and IDPR was able to implement that increase 6 pay periods before the next fiscal year. The remainder of the statewide merit-based CEC and the IDPR CEC was implemented 4 pay periods early. We continue to work to be sure our revenue can support the increases ongoing.

We also realize salary is not the only factor necessary to recruit and retain IDPR employees. We have been making leadership and employee development opportunities available throughout the year and expect to continue to provide more opportunities to create a positive culture for IDPR permanent, seasonal and volunteer staff. Fiscal, HR and supervisory staff have all been instrumental in working on a continuing positive culture in the agency. We had a leadership meeting on May 10th to brainstorm some more ideas for recruitment and retention.

National Association of State Park Directors – Rocky Mountain State Parks Conference Omaha, Nebraska – March 2022

Troy Elmore (Operations Administrator), Jason Oliver (Ranger - Farragut), Andy Stokes (Ranger, now Manager - Bear Lake) attended RMSPC in Omaha, Nebraska in March. The conference is for the Rocky Mountain states. The sessions included: National Park Service - Land and Water Fund, historic sites, Resource Management, Women in Outdoor Recreation, Interpretation and several tours. Being able to meet with our peers from other states was informative and gave us lots of ideas about things we can improve and see what we are doing well too.

I was honored to be nominated by my State Park Director peers to a position as Regent for a three-year term of the State Park Leadership School. My first meeting is a planning session on May 13th via zoom as I was not



required to present this year. I will be more conversant about this opportunity at our Board meeting on May 18th in Moscow. I believe having Idaho represented is a benefit to our employees.

Travel Around the State

Since the February Board meeting, I have been able to meet up with the trail ranger crew out on the Owyhee Front. They were working with the BLM to replace trail signage and work on trail repairs. Mike Robinson, Troy Elmore and I also rode some other trails and the Stage Road at the request of SIDRA (Southwestern Idaho Desert Racing Association) to see where IDPR could work with that group and Owyhee County to improve trail conditions and identification. Troy Elmore and I also attended the National Hare and Hound event.



In the Owyhees with the Trail Crew



Trail Dozer in the Owyhees

I attended a nature walk with Matt Cooper and some Girl Scouts at Eagle Island. The girl scouts, their leaders and parents really enjoyed the program from Matt, Andrew and Dominic. I learned a lot too about gophers and squirrels!



Girl Scouts with Matt Cooper at Eagle Island State Park



Lake Walcott with Ryan Buffington & Travis Thompson

Adam Zaragoza and I got to travel to Idaho Falls via Walcott State Park, Massacre Rocks State Park and the Minidoka National Historical Site. I suggest the Board visit that new visitor center for the November 2022 Board tour when we meet in Twin Falls.



Minidoka National Monument



Lake Walcott frozen over

I traveled to Ponderosa State Park with Idaho Department of Lands Director, Dustin Miller and Nate Fisher from the Governor’s Office. We were able to have Matt Linde, Park Manager, show us a couple areas where the legal description for the park property was probably mistaken in the conveyance documents so we will be working with IDL to address that situation.

We were also able to meet with some representatives from United Payette to discuss the endowment lands and the park. It was amazing how much it snowed the one night we were staying in the Ponderosa cabins!



Ponderosa Snowstorm April 14, 2022

The Thousand Springs State Park/Fossil Beds National Monument ribbon cutting was held on April 28, 2022, in Hagerman. We estimate that about 200 people were there. Governor Little was the guest of honor with Wade Vagias (NPS), Jared Hillier (Hagerman City Council President), Board Chair Brian Beckley, Board member Mike Roach and Park Manager Dave Landrum provided remarks supporting the joint project and the community partnership. Board members Lou Fatkin and Pete Black were also in attendance. We had many other local dignitaries from the city, county, legislature, Sheriff, IDPR staff, NPS staff, neighbors, friends... too many to try to list. I was very pleased at the enthusiastic crowd. It is a beautiful facility and grounds. What a wonderful accomplishment for IDPR and NPS over the last several years getting this planned and executed. Kudos to Director Dave Langhorst and Wade Vagias!



Thousand Springs Dedication



Thousand Springs Dedication

Upcoming Events

- Submit Strategic Plan
- Submit Legislative Ideas
- Submit Performance Management Report
- Ongoing Employee & Leadership Training
- Employee Engagement & Recruitment
- Development Projects
- Interpretation Updates with a Revitalized Committee



Mallard in the Snow at Headquarters
May 9, 2022