



**Board Report: November 8, 2023**  
**Susan Buxton, Director**

The Fall of 2023 has seen a lot of activity and collaboration with other agencies stakeholders from both public and private sectors.

**Bear Lake County Board of County Commissioners Meeting**

On September 11, 2023, Troy Elmore, Andrew Stokes and I met with Bear Lake County Commissioners in Paris, Idaho. We had a productive meeting discussing the operations of Bear Lake State Park, visitation, economic benefits, IDPR recreation programs for OHV, boating/marine deputy funds and boat, snowmobile funding sources. We also presented the IDFG award to Andy Stokes and the park staff for their diligent work on the deer feeding program from February – April 2023. The winter was very long, and deep snow was devastating to the deer population in the area. Over 30 tons of feed was distributed each week during that period.

**Idaho Outdoor Recreation Fund Advisory Council (“ORFAC”)– EO 2023-03**

On July 26, 2023, Governor Brad Little signed the executive order and appointed the Council members. The EO designated \$5M from S1196 in IDPR’s Recreation Fund for interagency collaborative projects and for projects to enhance recreation access, non-motorized outdoor recreation for long-term sustainability and to educate the public on responsible recreation. The Council is advisory to the Governor and the IDPR Board to develop additive outdoor recreation access and capacity in Idaho.

The Council held a meeting on September 15, 2023, where the results of a statewide recreation survey and the application for reviewing proposals for use of the ORFAC funding identified in the Executive Order were discussed.

Another ORFAC meeting was held October 19, 2023, at IDPR Headquarters. At the meeting, several stakeholders presented their interests in outdoor recreation in the state to the council. Four preliminary project proposals were presented on behalf of IDPR, IDL and IDFG. The Council took no action. The next meeting is scheduled for November 7, 2023, at IDFG headquarters where additional applications are expected to be presented.

**Capitol for a Day**  
**St. Maries, Carmen, and Montpelier**

I attended CFAD in St. Maries on August 17, 2023. I was able to visit with Heyburn/McCroskey staff the next day to mourn the passing of a cherished park employee. I am very proud of our staff, seasonals, volunteers and friends and how they support each other. I was also able to meet with leaders of the Coeur d’ Alene Tribe to discuss Heyburn and Old Mission State Parks and our work together.

On September 28, 2023, Joanna Hiller and I attended CFAD in Carmen (North of Salmon). After the meeting we visited Land of Yankee Fork State Park and got to visit with manager Ron Jenks and his staff at the visitor center and at Challis Hot Springs. Retired Director Langhorst, former PUC Eliot Werk, and former State Representative Nicole Lefever were enjoying Challis Hot Springs. All were very pleased it is in public ownership.

On October 25, 2023, I attended CFAD in Montpelier. The meeting discussed outdoor recreation and access to Bear Lake outside the park below the high-water mark. The growth of large recreation rental residences and few public accesses to this large lake were discussed as was the recent MOU offered by the Idaho Land Board to the Bear Lake County Commission.

### **Harriman / Henry's Lake**

On September 27, 2023, I attended a meeting in Island Park with IDL Director Dustin Miller, Senator Burtenshaw, Representative Furniss, Representative Raymond and local officials, business owners, residents, and Harriman/Henry's Lake State Park Manager (Jess Brumfield) and Ranger (Annalee Darrington) to discuss glamping and dispersed recreation on IDL lands near Henry's Lake State Park. We also toured the area in question.

#### **Jones House Harriman State Park**



#### **Henry's Lake State Park Crew**



## **America 250 Project**

In celebration of America's 250<sup>th</sup> birthday, the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation (IDPR) is working in collaboration with the Idaho Heritage Trust (IHT) and Idaho Public Television (IDPTV) to produce a coffee table book entitled *Idaho Places*, which will encompass state parks, historic sites, and scenic byways.

The Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation looks forward to working alongside other agencies and members of the A250 Planning Committee on various events and projects across the state.

## **Quagga Mussels**

On September 18, 2023, the Idaho State Department of Agriculture ("ISDA") confirmed the presence of quagga mussel in the Mid-Snake River below Shoshone Falls. ISDA and other State, Federal and local agencies, and other and private stakeholders undertook rapid action to determine the prudent treatment to avoid a larger threat to Idaho's waters and boating facilities. IDPR worked with ISDA to email 200,000 alerts to our boating customers notifying them of the need to "Clean, Drain, & Dry" their boats and notify them of water access closures along a short part of the Mid-Snake River during the evaluation and treatment window. The closures of Niagara Springs, Box Canyon and Crystal Lake, units of Thousand Springs State Spark have been lifted.

## **Legislative Tours**

IDPR will participate with several other Executive Branch agencies on Legislative tours across the state to meet with legislators and discuss matters important to them in their districts. The meeting will be held in November.

- November 13 – Coeur d' Alene
- November 14 – Lewiston
- November 20 – Idaho Falls
- November 21 – Pocatello
- November 27 – Twin Falls
- November 28 – Boise

If any Board Member would like to attend any of the meetings, please let Joanna Hiller or myself know.

## **Natural Resources**

The Natural Resource Interim Committee has asked me to attend their November 6, 2023, meeting in the Lincoln Auditorium at the Capitol to discuss IDPR's participation in the Quagga Mussel treatment.

## **Non-Motorized**

The non-motorized coalition meeting with stakeholders at IDPR HG on November 6, 2023. IDPR has been participating with this group, led by Dan Waugh of the Horse Council looking at a more sustainable funding source for non-motorized recreation.

## **First Responder**

IDPR's proposed First Responder legislation has been put on hold due to the interests of other executive branch agencies and insurance industry concerns. We are working to address our employees' needs with DHR and other agencies for alternative solutions.

## **Reservation/Registration**

The Reservation/Registration vendor RFP should be published in the coming weeks.

## **NASPD**

The National Association of State Park Directors (NASPD) Annual Meeting was held in Lake Tahoe September 12-15, 2023. Troy Elmore and Seth Hobbs attended with me. We glean invaluable information and relationships by meeting with our peers from other state parks and recreation departments, federal partners, recreation stakeholders to stay current on trends, challenges and learning technology to help or agency and Idaho recreation.



## **Other Meetings**

In addition to many Quagga Mussel meetings, regarding the relicensing of the Hells Canyon Complex by Idaho Power, met with Allison Gin, the new USDA – FS, Intermountain Rep Idaho State liaison, the new Director of Water Resources, Mat Weaver and the new Director of the Department of Administration, Steve Bailey.

Adam Zaragoza and I presented IDPR's Permanent Building Fund request on October 3, 2023.

On October 5, 2023, I presented the keynote to the Rangeland Fall Forum. Outdoor recreation is a hot topic affecting our rangelands and their users on public and private lands.

I periodically meet with our HG neighbors, Mark Hofflund from Shakespeare Festival and the Idaho Land Foundation for parks and lands. We welcome the Foundation new Executive Director, Kendra Kenyon.

## **Ranger Roundup**

I attended the South & East Region Ranger Roundup at Ponderosa State Park on October 4, 2023. What a fantastic program the Rangers put together their own curriculum and train each other. They bring in presenters and get to meet each other to help spread best practices among the parks. This networking is a great help to best management and overall camaraderie. Very impressive program!



## **North Region Meeting**

I attended the North Region all staff meeting in Coeur' d Alane on November 1, 2023. I always enjoy the chance to visit with our fabulous employees whenever possible. Heidi Burks and Joanna Hiller and I were able to visit Heyburn State Park and Old Mission after we arrived. Both parks look good. Old Mission's new paint, stairs and stonework look beautiful.

## **Luma**

The new Luma ERP system has been implemented by the State Controller's Office (SCO) since July 1, 2023. It replaces a legacy system that was no longer supported by updated. Luma and its Human Capital Management modernization have posed challenges with payroll, vendor payments, procurement, budget, employee recruitment and evaluations. SCO is working to address many issues. Replacing the legacy system was unquestionably needed and Luma promised to provide a new system to benefit the State government. The startup has been bumpy and IDPR staff in every corner of the State have taken available training, and retraining as it updated while working with SCO and each other to learn the new system.

I am happy to answer any questions the Board may have about my report or any of the other reports submitted by the staff.