

IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF PARKS & RECREATION

“To improve the quality of life in Idaho through outdoor recreation and resource stewardship”

Special Board Meeting Minutes

April 8, 2024

IDPR Headquarters

5657 Warm Springs Avenue

Boise, ID 83716

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 P.M. by Chairman Beckley.

Call to Order - Chairman Roach called the meeting to order and requested a roll call.

- Chairman Beckley – Present
- Board Member Cooke - Zoom
- Board Member Manning - Zoom
- Board Member Roach - Zoom
- Board Member Roady - Zoom

Also present or on Zoom during all or portions of the meeting either in person or on the phone were the following individuals:

Susan Buxton, Director
Troy Elmore, Operations Division Administrator
Adam Zaragoza, Management Services Administrator
Craig Quintana, Public Information Officer
Joanna Hiller, Management Assistant
Joy Vega, Deputy Attorney General
Melanie Schuster, IDPR
Seth Hobbs, IDPR
Kathy Muir, IDPR
Steve Martin, IDPR
Heidi Burks, IDPR
Skylar Jett, IBO
Darren Damon
Lisa Herriot
David White
Amber Worthington
Jordan Idaho Fish and Game
Larry Laxton
Joh Rachel, Idaho Fish and Game
Sandra Mitchell

Welcome and Introductions - Chairman Beckley and Director Buxton

Chairman Beckley and Director Buxton welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Chairman Beckley let everyone know that Ms. Manning had to leave the meeting at 1:30 pm due to another obligation and asked if the Board would motion to adjust the agenda to discuss the Recreational Management System which is an action item before the Director’s update.

Mr. Roach motioned to adjust the agenda to discuss the Recreational Management System. The motion

was seconded by Mr. Roady. The Chairman asked for further questions, hearing none, the Chairman called for a vote on the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Recreational Management System

Seth Hobbs explained that IDPR uses a Software as a Service (SaaS) contractor to manage operational items including camping reservations, moorage reservations, permit sales, and point of sale services. IDPR started with the current SaaS contract in 2008 and has continued renewing the contract without a new price negotiation. Mr. Hobbs explained that the latest contract renewal in 2019 included the addition of online permit/sticker sales and a five-year contract term. Hobbs said that the current contract will expire on December 31st, 2024. With the improvements in technology and greater number of SaaS providers in the market, IDPR determined that it was well past time to explore other SaaS options.

IDPR staff started working on the Request for Proposal (RFP) in 2022 and opened it up for bid on December 19th, 2023. Mr. Hobbs explained that there were four companies that submitted a bid for the contract Aspira, Brandt, Camis, and Tyler Technology. Each bidder conducted demonstrations then Division of Purchasing sent out a best and final offer and clarification request to get the best price from the bidders and clarify how each defined the transaction fee would be charged. Brandt's last offer was selected as it would save IDPR approximately \$331,906.50. The Letters of Intent (LOI) to award were sent to all offerors on April 2nd. The LOI appeal period ends on April 9th at 5pm.

Mr. Hobbs staff recommended the board authorize the IDPR Director to move forward with awarding a three-year initial contract with two possible yearly extensions to Brandt Information Services, LLC. Director Buxton acknowledged that Idaho Fish and Game staff were in the room, and they currently use this software. Director Buxton asked what their experience was with Brandt. Amber Worthington, Deputy Director with Fish and Game introduced herself and said that her experience with Brandt has had some challenges, but they have made every effort to fix any issues that they come across. Ms. Worthington said they have had some issues with big sales this year and Brandt has done a good job providing improvements. Ms. Worthington said Brandt is very responsive. Chairman Beckley and Director Buxton both thanked Ms. Worthington for her input. Chairman Beckley asked about the transition and Mr. Hobbs explained it will be very painful for the staff, but they will get through it. There will be a blackout period (September through January) and retraining with the vendors. The vendors make up about 50 percent of our sales. Mr. Hobbs said they have the resources, and he has a great team and will be able to get this done.

Mr. Roach moved that the board authorizes the IDPR Director to move forward with a three-year contract with two yearly extensions with Brandt Information Services, LLC. The motion was seconded by Ms. Manning. The Chairman asked for further discussion, hearing none, the Chairman called for a roll call vote on the motion.

- Chairman Beckley – Yes
- Board Member Cooke - Yes
- Board Member Roach - Yes
- Board Member Roady – Yes
- Board Member Manning – Yes

Motion carried.

Director's Report

Director Buxton let the Board know that Budget passed with an additional \$20 million dollars in ARPA funds, that must be encumbered by the end of this calendar year and \$5 million of that is earmarked for ORFAC. Director Buxton said that construction at Eagle Island is moving forward, and we are on track for Billingsley Creek to open July 1, 2024. Director Buxton noted the first season at Challis Hot Springs brought \$400,000 dollars to Land of the Yankee Fork State Park. This exceeds IDPR's expectations and helps some of the other construction areas that have issues. Director Buxton said that we are getting people hired and filling positions that are going to be added along with more money for seasonals and other projects including our OHV academy. Director Buxton said she can't thank the employees across the state enough that they exceed any expectations that she certainly has. IDPR had the design team present plans to update the old Mallory Mansion at Heyburn State Park that was built in 1910 and add a campground, day use, docks, and employee housing.

ORFAC

Director Buxton provided the following information regarding the Idaho Outdoor Recreation Fund Advisory Council. Director Buxton said that an Executive Order 2023-03 was signed by Governor Little to establish an Outdoor Recreation Fund Advisory Council, otherwise known as ORFAC.

The purpose of the advisory council is to:

- Advise the Governor and the Idaho Parks and Recreation Board on projects and policies that support expanded access to outdoor recreation opportunities in Idaho, and
- Specifically, IDFG, IDPR, & IDL are tasked to work together to propose projects, and manage under-utilized resources to enhance recreational access, and monetize outdoor recreation for long range sustainability EO 2023-3 51(a) & (b).

The executive order appropriated \$5 million in from Senate Bill 1196 (FY2024) to IDPR's budget for inter-agency collaborative projects. Additionally, Senate Bill 1383 (FY2025) added \$5 million to ORFAC utilizing American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). IDPR staff and its agency partners have been working to determine steps for implementation of proposals once approved by the Board. Recommended Projects Summary.

The following is the list of projects in order of the ranked scoring from ORFAC. ORFAC allocated \$4,953,494 of the \$5 million and was advised to withhold around \$2500 to cover any potential legal fees from the Office of the Attorney General. The following actions were taken:

1. **East Fork Rock Creek:** IDL property that may be leased to IDPR, which would use ORFAC funding to improve primitive campsite locations and add facilities. This site was historically used for primitive camping, but IDL had to close it due to trash, debris, and erosion. Massacre Rocks State Park staff would manage the site as it is about 25 minutes from the park. IDPR would work with the existing IDL grazing permittees to continue grazing where feasible, provide exclosures from the camping area and the creek for multiple uses (e.g., grazing, camping, and fishing). To make the endowment whole. IDPR

has proposed an “endowment fee” to the facilities that are developed on top of fees paid to IDPR. Finally, the Director of IDL is required to present the proposed concepts to the Land Board or other staff.

Proposed ORFAC Capital Funding: \$1,000,000.

2. **Henry’s Lake:** IDPR proposed to construct camper cabins, as opposed to primitive campsites, to reduce the potential of wildlife (bears) encounters and potentially allow winter use of Henry’s Lake or IDL ground near Henry’s Lake State Park. ORFAC liked this location but reduced the funding level to recommend more projects. IDPR may be able to use other available funding as needed for this project. IDPR has proposed an “endowment fee” added to the camping fee go to IDL. Finally, the Director of IDL is required to present the proposed concepts to the Land Board or other staff.

Proposed ORFAC Capital Funding: \$750,000

3. **Horsethief Reservoir:** These campgrounds and docks are currently managed by IDFG and YMCA for a short summer season. Both parties wish to terminate that agreement. ORFAC funding would allow IDPR to make necessary upgrades to campsites and eventually take over management. This would be managed out of Lake Cascade SP and would need additional administrative facilities. Estimates by IDPR showed Horsethief operating in a deficit because of on-going personnel requirements, on-going operations, and maintenance. A variety of factors are still being evaluated including the startup costs to IDPR for equipment and personnel, camping fee structure, day use fees, and an agreement will be entered into with IDFG to address management. We have a similar arrangement at Winchester State Park.

Proposed ORFAC Capital Funding: \$2,000,000

4. **Idaho for All:** Idaho for All is a non-profit that provides adaptive recreational equipment in the form of track chairs and similar devices for individuals with disabilities or limited mobility to enjoy outdoor recreation that was inaccessible before. While the initial request was much higher, this funding would cover the purchase of five adaptive wheelchairs, with additional funding for maintenance and operating expenses for a pilot project. ORFAC removed the request for employee salaries which was agreed to by Idaho for All. Numerous letters of support were provided. IDPR staff anticipate the need for storage and recharge space for the chairs and equipment. The chairs can be reserved via the IDPR reservation system. Idaho for All anticipates some volunteers could be trained to assist users. Maintenance of the chairs and training would be provided by Idaho for All.

Proposed ORFAC Capital Funding: \$112,500

5. **Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention:** IDSA undertook a speedy, efficient, and collaborative job addressing the discovery of the quagga mussel last fall in the Snake River at Twin Falls. IDSA is requested ORFAC money for signage and messaging campaigns regarding aquatic species (AIS) prevention. ORFAC voted to hold funding for this project but tabled a vote on a recommendation pending legislative action. The Legislature passed and the Governor signed legislation that provides more funding to the Invasive Species

Fund. IDPR continues to work closely with ISDA on this matter as these invasive species have a very detrimental effect on recreation, so their prevention is of great importance.
Proposed ORFAC Capital Funding: \$200,000

6. **Trail Restoration:** The Selway-Bitterroot Frank Church Foundation proposes restoration of a 20-mile trail loop in the Frank Church Wilderness/Salmon-Challis National Forest. The proposal is relatively low cost with a match. Despite the project being on federal land, ORFAC found the proposal to be meritorious because it would unlock a loop near Sulphur Creek, Dagger Creek, Boundary Creek, and the Middle Fork of the Salmon River. The Legislative appropriation is for capital so the request for overhead and personnel costs should be reduced from the award. With the need for more trails, this project would attract equestrians and hikers and is supported by outfitters in the area.
Proposed ORFAC Capital Funding: \$40,994
7. **Cooperative Management Recreation Area:** Eastern Idaho Grazing Association proposed the pilot project to establish a travel management plan between EIGA/IDL/IDFG. ORFAC funding would go toward a vault toilet, parking site, trail signage, surveillance, and remediation to mitigate misuse of private lands by recreation users. The Governor encouraged the education and signage to reduce user damage to public and private lands. This project is also encouraged by the Idaho Cattle Association.
Proposed ORFAC Capital Funding: \$300,000
8. **White Pine Heights:** Proposal by the Payette Land Trust (PLT) to secure a right-of-way near Ponderosa State Park by obtaining an easement on IDL property, which would be held by IDPR in perpetuity to preserve public access and a loop trail into Ponderosa State Park. Current proposal focused on securing the Right of Way. The Governor notes this proposal comes before the Land Board and IDL staff.
Proposed ORFAC Capital Funding: \$300,000
9. **Boulder Lake Road:** Valley County Recreation Department proposed recreation area to establish a new trailhead and recreation area on IDL property near the Boulder Lake and Jughandle foothills area in valley county. They proposed a primitive campground, parking lot, trailhead, vault toilets, 2 ADA sites, fire rings, and picnic tables. The proposer notes this project is the start of a recreation area planned for the future as soon as additional financing is secured. Valley County Parks & Rec would charge minimal fees for parking and overnight camping, which the project would bring in roughly \$25,000 annually. None of that money would go back to the endowment. County thought they could update permit, but IDL staff say the land would have to go back out for a lease. IDPR has additional concerns about the accuracy of the construction costs.
Proposed ORFAC Capital Funding: \$250,000

Board Comments

Chairman Beckley asked everyone if Monday, April 15, 2024, at 11:00 AM MST would work for everyone to have a Special Board Meeting to take action on these items.

Old/New Business

There was no old or new business.

Public Comments

Larry Laxton, Valley County Parks and Recreation Director said that what they do is different than what IDPR does. He said IDPR parks are phenomenal. He said that what Valley County does is just camping, they don't blacktop anything, they have gravel roads they have power and water just for the camping hosts. Mr. Laxton thanked IDPR for what they do.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:29 PM.



Chairman Brian Beckley
Idaho Park and Recreation Board



Susan E. Buxton, Director
Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation