

Public Lands Committee

September 15, 2020 | 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm
Zoom Meeting

MEETING MINUTES

Call to Order

Chair Butts called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm.

Approval of the Public Lands/EELU June 2020 Minutes (Action Item):

Clearwater County Commissioner Rick Winkel moved to approve the Public Lands/EELU June 2020 meeting minutes. Lincoln County Commissioner Rebecca Wood seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Forest Service Update | *Andy Brunelle, Forest Service*

President signed into law the Great American Outdoors Act on August 4th. Within that there was substantial funding provided for agencies to do more upgrading and deferred maintenance work on things like facilities, roads, trails and waste water treatment facilities.

Congress authorized five years worth of funding: 70% to the national park system, 15% to the national forest system, and 5% each to BLM, Fish and Wildlife, and Indian Affairs. The Forest Service amount comes out to be \$285 million per year (\$1.8 to \$1.9 billion in total). The plan is to do maintenance, not build new things.

The Forest Service is looking to work with counties on projects during years 2-5 and is asking counties to consider projects they would like to work with the Forest Service on.

BLM Update | *John Ruhs, BLM*

The BLM is currently dealing with major issues concerning wildfire. In Idaho, most of the wildfire has been on state owned lands. There have been some small fires on BLM in North Idaho, and a few fires in South Idaho have included BLM land. There were about 130 wildfires on 35,000 acres. That is roughly 70% of the five year average for number of wildfires, and 14% of the five year average for acres burned. This downturn is due in large part to great efforts in the initial attack of the fires. Human caused fires are on not on a downturn, however, due in part to lack of education and low moisture.

Idaho's phosphate mining is a critical factor in wildfire suppression nationwide, and Idaho's economy.

PUBLIC LANDS COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES | SEPTEMBER 15, 2020

PILT Tax Equivalency | *Ken Ivory, AEONAI, AI*

The Payment in Lieu of Taxes Act of 1976 states that the federal government should compensate counties for the presence of nontaxable land within their jurisdictions. In 1999 the Forest Service (at the request of the BLM) created a report that stated that PILT held the promise of improving prospects for tax equivalency. The payments in lieu of taxes were meant to compensate counties based on the taxes they would have received as if the lands had remained on the tax rolls.

However, without the proper technology for assessing true tax equivalency, the federal government turned to a PILT formula, which they admit is not adequate.

Idaho generates more property tax in 6 days from 30% taxable land (\$33 billion) than it does in an entire year from the 63% non-taxable land (\$32 billion).

Now that the technology is available to provide accurate estimates of value for federally owned lands, the federal government no longer needs to rely on an inadequate formula to approximate value.

[SJR-601](#) in Utah could provide an example for an Idaho resolution. The Idaho Association of Counties could provide a letter to the Idaho legislature asking them to endorse the efforts for PILT tax equivalency.

The meeting was adjourned.

PUBLIC LANDS COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES | SEPTEMBER 15, 2020

MEMBERSHIP

Members Present:

Chair: Wayne Butts, Custer Commissioner
Ada: Robert McQuade, Assessor
Adams: Michael Paradis, Commissioner
Bear Lake: Mark Bair, Commissioner
Blaine: Jim Williams, Assessor
Boundary: Dan Dinning, Commissioner
Caribou: Bryce Somsen, Commissioner
Clark: Greg Shenton, Commissioner
Clearwater: Rick Winkel, Commissioner
Custer: Steve Smith, Commissioner
Elmore: Josh Dison, Assessor

Gooding: Ron Buhler, Commissioner
Idaho: Skip Brandt, Commissioner
Jefferson: Scott Hancock, Commissioner
Lincoln: Rebecca Wood, Commissioner
Shoshone: Jerry White, Assessor
Teton: Beverly Palm, Treasurer
Teton: Bob Heneage, Commissioner
Twin Falls: Bradford Wills, Assessor
Valley: Sherry Maupin, Commissioner
Washington: Debbie Moxley-Potter, Assessor