



ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COUNCIL 67th Montana Legislature

SENATE MEMBERS

Pat Flowers
Steve Hinebaugh
Tom Jacobson
Mike Lang
Cary Smith
Mark Sweeney

HOUSE MEMBERS

Willis Curdy
Paul Fielder
Steve Gunderson
Jedediah Hinkle
Jim Keane
Marilyn Marler

COMMITTEE STAFF

Joe Carroll - Attorney
Joe Kolman - Legislative
Environmental Analyst
Nadine Spencer - Secretary
Hope Stockwell - Research
Analyst

PUBLIC MEMBERS

John Brenden
Dave Galt
Bradley Hamlett
Monica Tranel
Mike Freeman, Governor
Designated Representative

MINUTES LOG

January 25, 2022
State Capitol Building, Room 137 and Zoom
Helena, Montana

Please note: This document is a Minutes Log and provides annotation of the time elapsed between the beginning of the meeting and the time at which the item was presented or discussed, a motion was made, or a vote was taken. The narrative presented here is provided only as a guide to the audio or video recording of the meeting. The official discussion, motion, or vote is available on the audio or video archive of this meeting. The Legislature does not prepare a transcript of the meeting activities. The time designation may be used to locate the referenced discussion on the audio or video recording of this meeting.

Access to an electronic copy of these minutes and the audio or video recording is provided from the Legislative Branch home page at <https://leg.mt.gov>. From the home page, select the "Committees" drop down menu at the top, then select Administrative or Interim, and the appropriate committee. The written minutes log can be located by expanding the accordion menu for the date of the meeting. Links to the audio/video files can be located by selecting the Video/Audio button on the same page, then the "past/current recordings" button. From there, use the calendar to select the date of the meeting you wish to view/listen to. The written Minutes Log, along with links to the audio and video recordings, is listed by meeting date on the interim committee's web page. Each of the Exhibits is linked and can be viewed by clicking on the Exhibit of interest. All Exhibits are public information and may be printed. Please contact the Legislative Services Division at 406-444-3064 for more information.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Sen. Mike Lang, Presiding Officer (R)
Bradley Hamlett, Vice-Presiding Officer
John Brenden, Public Member
Rep. Willis Curdy (D)
Rep. Paul Fielder (R)
Sen. Pat Flowers (D)
Dave Galt, Public Member
Sen. Steve Hinebaugh (R)
Rep. Jedediah Hinkle (R)
Rep. Jim Keane (D)
Rep. Marilyn Marler (D)
Sen. Cary Smith (R)
Sen. Mark Sweeney (D)
Monica Tranel, Public Member
Mike Freeman, Governor Designated Representative

MEMBERS EXCUSED:

Rep. Steve Gunderson (R)
Sen. Tom Jacobson (D)

STAFF PRESENT:

Joe Carroll, Attorney

Joe Kolman, Legislative Environmental Analyst

Nadine Spencer, Secretary

AGENDA [\(Attachment 1\)](#)**VISITORS' LIST** [\(Attachment 2\)](#)**CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

08:02:00 Sen. Mike Lang called the meeting to order at 8:02 AM. The committee secretary took roll.

WILDLAND FIRE & AIR QUALITY**Air Quality Reporting**

08:04:03 Bo Wilkins, Air Quality Bureau chief, Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), presented information on wildland fire and air quality. [\(Exhibit 1\)](#)

Health effects of smoke

08:13:30 Jessie Fernandes, Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion Bureau, Public Health and Safety Division, Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS). [\(Exhibit 2\)](#)

08:21:18 Erin Landguth, associate professor, University of Montana School of Public and Community Health Sciences. [\(Exhibit 3\)](#)

08:30:35 Katelyn O'Dell, postdoctoral research scientist, George Washington University. [\(Exhibit 4\)](#)

Public comment

None

EQC questions and discussion

08:41:56 Mr. Brenden asked Ms. O'Dell if any of the studies on deaths in Montana compare smokers with non-smokers.

08:42:59 Rep. Fielder asked Mr. Wilkins how the number of days of health quality is calculated for different monitoring stations.

08:45:39 Rep. Fielder asked Mr. Wilkins about DEQ's control over forest fire burning on U.S. Forest Service (USFS) land.

08:46:26 Rep. Fielder commented on the hazards of forest fire smoke and the need for legislation to better protect Montanans and provide a healthy and safe environment.

08:47:24 Sen. Hinebauch asked Mr. Wilkins to explain the difference between smoke from a forest fire and smoke from a coal-fired power plant.

08:48:41 Sen. Hinebauch asked Mr. Wilkins how the smoke from burning coal for 50 years at Colstrip equates to one-day of forest fire smoke. [\(Exhibit 5\)](#)

08:49:22 Sen. Hinebauch commented on the effect that wildfire smoke has on the environment versus smoke from other sources.

08:50:59 Mr. Galt asked Mr. Wilkins about the National Air Quality Standards and if there are any PM-10 or PM-2.5 non-attainment areas still active in western Montana.

08:51:35 Mr. Galt asked Mr. Wilkins how the DEQ zeros out wildfire smoke and how that impacts decisions on non-attainment areas.

08:52:34 Rep. Hinkle asked Mr. Wilkins if prescribed burns are included in the Clean Air Act.

08:53:44 Rep. Hinkle asked Mr. Wilkins if there are instances when an air quality application submitted by the USFS is denied and if so why.

08:54:21 Mr. Hamlet asked Mr. Wilkins about the correlation between visibility and pollution and if the DEQ puts out a warning when visibility reaches a certain range.

08:55:51 Rep. Hinkle asked Mr. Wilkins about the information that is required on air quality applications submitted by the USFS.

08:57:12 Sen. Flowers asked Mr. Wilkins if DEQ has looked at long-term trends in health effects and the change in percentage of days in the unhealthy range.

08:58:30 Ms. Tranel asked Mr. Wilkins about the ability to increase monitoring.

09:00:32 Ms. Tranel asked Mr. Wilkins where additional monitors would be located.

09:01:18 Rep. Keane asked Mr. Wilkins about funding from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) for air quality monitors.

09:02:33 Rep. Keane asked Mr. Wilkins about the amount of funding needed to operate monitors.

09:03:37 Mr. Hamlet asked Mr. Wilkins to provide additional data on the amount of mercury released from a 10,000-acre forest fire in heavy timber versus a 10,000-acre grass fire.

09:05:02 Mr. Hamlet asked Mr. Wilkins about the difference in emissions from forest fires versus grass fires.

09:06:02 Rep. Fielder commented on the health effects of wildfire smoke and the need for legislative action to reduce future smoke.

09:07:10 Sen. Lang thanked the panelists for their participation.

FIRE SEASON & WATER SUPPLY UPDATE

09:07:57 Sonya Germann, Forestry Division administrator, Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC), thanked the previous presenters and said DNRC has a strong partnership with DEQ and DPHHS. Ms. Germann provided information on the 2021 fire year.

09:20:48 Michael Downey, Water Planning Section supervisor, DNRC, provided an update on water supply and drought. ([Exhibit 6](#))

Public comment

None

EQC questions and discussion

09:38:10 Rep. Curdy said he participated in the Drought Task Force meeting in December and asked about next steps.

09:41:01 Rep. Curdy asked Mr. Downey if building storage will be part of the process to mitigate drought.

09:43:14 Ms. Tranel asked Mr. Downey about available water resources.

09:45:15 Mr. Brenden asked Ms. Germann if the department has compared the number of fires on state land versus federal land.

09:47:09 Rep. Curdy said he is concerned about being able to have resources available during critical times. He asked Ms. Germann if the state has considered exclusive use contracts with other state agencies in order to share aviation resources.

09:52:10 Rep. Curdy asked Ms. Germann about fire training for members of the National Guard.

09:53:20 Rep. Curdy asked Ms. Germann if there are enough qualified burn bosses to manage crews.

09:55:26 Rep. Curdy asked Ms. Germann if the DNRC has any Type 3 organizations.

09:57:04 Ms. Tranel asked Ms. Germann about cost recovery for human caused fires.

09:58:25 Ms. Tranel asked Ms. Germann who decides if an investigation will take place.

09:59:02 Mr. Hamlett asked Ms. Germann about replacement for the DNRC helicopter lost during the 2021 fire season.

10:00:09 Mr. Hamlett asked Ms. Germann if the DNRC has any plans to obtain a water scooper.

10:01:20 Mr. Hamlett asked Ms. Germann about initial attack and if the DNRC will consider reaching out to game wardens who have local knowledge about access and where roads and trails are located.

10:02:51 Mr. Hamlett commented on the use of water scoopers.

10:03:37 Mr. Hamlett commented on human caused fires.

10:04:25 Rep. Keane asked Mr. Downey about leasing water from Canyon Ferry reservoir.

10:06:52 Ms. Tranel asked Ms. Germann about utility line maintenance on public lands.

10:08:34 Ms. Tranel asked Ms. Germann about shared management and how costs are allocated.

10:09:02 Rep. Hinkle asked Ms. Germann if the DNRC can provide information on the cost for purchasing a water scooper versus the cost to contract one.

10:09:41 Mr. Hamlett asked Mr. Downey about measuring the amount of ice in snowpack.

10:12:17 Mr. Hamlett commented on water storage.

10:13:10 Rep. Keane asked Mr. Downey about changing the model for measuring snowpack.

10:16:10 Recess

10:33:22 Reconvene

FEDERAL LAND MANAGEMENT AND STATE COORDINATION

U.S. Forest Service

10:34:07 Leanne Marten, regional forester, USFS, provided an overview of the agency and Region 8.

10:39:20 Ms. Marten discussed forest management. ([Exhibit 7](#))

10:47:21 Sen. Lang commented on the work done by state and federal partners.

Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry

10:47:53 Ms. Germann provided information on forest management and restoration.

11:01:29 Sen. Lang commented on agency coordination.

Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks

11:01:42 Quentin Kujala, chief of staff, Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks (FWP), discussed the agency's coordination with the DNRC and the USFS.

Public comment

11:05:00 Rod Bullis, Helena Hunters and Anglers

EQC questions and discussion

11:08:10 Sen. Flowers asked Ms. Germann about the number of acres with significant fuel loads that need treatment.

11:09:52 Sen. Flowers asked Ms. Germann about the increase each year in the number of acres that need treatment.

11:13:44 Sen. Flowers commented on the scale and the challenge associated with forest management issues.

11:14:46 Rep. Hinkle asked Ms. Marten about the negative health effects of wildfire smoke and if the USFS has conducted its own studies on how to cut down and mitigate the effects.

11:18:25 Rep. Hinkle asked Ms. Marten if prescribed burns require an environmental assessment (EA).

11:18:55 Rep. Hinkle asked Ms. Marten about the perception that the USFS allows fires to burn in order to avoid the EA process.

11:26:29 Rep. Hinkle asked Ms. Marten about contacting forest supervisors and district rangers regarding decisions made to place fire lines farther out and burn as much land as possible.

11:27:56 Mr. Galt asked Ms. Marten about a memorandum dated August 2, 2021, from USFS Chief Randy Moore, and how the policy statement aligns with current policy.

11:32:33 Mr. Galt asked Ms. Marten if the USFS was actively doing initial attack on the fires in Montana prior to August 2.

11:33:45 Mr. Brenden asked Ms. Marten what is included in the definition of treatment.

11:35:34 Ms. Germann answered the same question.

11:36:31 Mr. Brenden asked Ms. Marten and Ms. Germann about the percentage of area currently being litigated that could be logged.

11:37:17 Ms. Marten.

11:39:06 Ms. Germann.

11:41:42 Mr. Brenden commented on the effects of litigation.

Public comment continued

11:44:08 Julia Altemus, Montana Wood Products Association

EQC questions and discussion continued

11:46:41 Rep. Curdy commented on how prescribed burns can help contain fires. He asked Ms. Marten to respond to criticism regarding the new document put out by the USFS on its wildfire crisis strategy.

11:53:10 Rep. Curdy asked Ms. Marten about the change in USFS forest policy management.

11:59:42 Rep. Fielder asked Ms. Marten to provide information on the administrative strategy used to fight the Thorne Creek fire.

12:02:27 Rep. Fielder asked Ms. Marten about lack of access to the fire.

12:03:58 Rep. Keane commented on the economic effect that fires in Washington and Oregon have on Montana.

12:05:05 Rep. Keane commented on using ARPA funding to replace the DNRC helicopter.

12:05:44 Sen. Flowers commented on collaboration between different agencies on forest management. He said he would like to include the effects of heat in a future discussion on wildfire.

12:07:02 Sen. Lang said staff can investigate it.

12:07:41 Mr. Hamlett asked Ms. Marten and Ms. Germann about the Good Neighbor Policy and if the agencies are looking at natural terrain and forest treatment as fire breaks to mitigate the effects of forest fires.

12:08:20 Ms. Marten.

12:09:22 Ms. Germann.

12:10:06 Mr. Hamlett asked Ms. Marten about SNOTEL sites and how important the information is to the USFS.

12:10:56 Mr. Hamlett said the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) seems to be relying more on technology and asked Ms. Marten about having someone check the SNOTEL sites in person.

12:12:15 Sen. Lang asked Ms. Germann about the Woods Creek fire and incidence command between local volunteer firefighters and federal firefighters.

12:16:28 Sen. Lang commented on the forest fire management plan and ability for increased fire safety in Montana.

12:17:16 Recess for lunch

13:07:25 Reconvene

EQC questions and discussion continued

13:08:00 Rep. Keane asked John Hagengruber, Montana liaison, USFS, about federal funding opportunities for a replacement helicopter.

13:09:20 Sen. Lang opened discussion on committee action.

13:09:35 Rep. Curdy said he recommends helping state fire managers investigate the development of a robust Type 3 team.

13:11:14 Sen. Lang asked Rep. Curdy if he thought the problems associated with the Woods Creek fire were due to the lack of a Type 3 team.

13:14:36 Sen. Lang said the request is for the DNRC to put together information on a Type 3 team, the cost, and how to fund it.

13:14:59 Rep. Curdy agreed. Sen. Lang requested staff to investigate it.

COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT REPORTS

Overview

13:15:32 Mr. Kolman.

Agriculture

13:19:05 Ian Foley, Agricultural Science Division administrator, Department of Agriculture. [\(Exhibit 8\)](#)

13:24:15 Mr. Foley discussed the groundwater protection program. [\(Exhibit 9\)](#)

EQC questions and discussion

13:25:44 Sen. Lang asked Mr. Foley about the amount of revenue generated from licensing pesticides in Montana.

13:26:13 Sen. Lang asked Mr. Foley about regulations pertaining to “big box” stores.

13:27:03 Sen. Lang asked Mr. Foley about monitoring air quality standards inside facilities that store pesticides.

13:28:13 Rep. Marler complimented Mr. Foley and his staff on the process for pesticide applicators.

13:29:31 Sen. Lang also complimented the division.

DNRC

13:29:50 Amada Kaster, director, DNRC. ([Exhibit 10](#))

EQC questions and discussion

13:35:28 Sen. Flowers asked Ms. Kaster if the DNRC has any regulatory authority over Hebgen Lake dam.

13:36:23 Rep. Keane asked Jim Halvorson, administrator, Board of Oil and Gas Conservation, about federal funding available for capping abandoned wells.

13:38:50 Rep. Keane asked Shawn Thomas, Trust Lands Division administrator, DNRC, about the cabin site sales program.

13:39:52 Rep. Keane thanked the members of the Land Board for supporting the program.

13:41:00 Sen. Lang asked Mr. Thomas to explain how the revenue generated from the management of school trust lands is allocated.

13:42:33 Sen. Lang asked Ms. Kaster about the number of dams the state regulates. Ms. Kaster redirected the question to Anna Pakenham-Stevenson, Water Division administrator, DNRC.

13:44:24 Sen. Lang asked Ms. Pakenham-Stevenson about dam safety regulations and how the state interacts with federal agencies. Ms. Pakenham-Stevenson redirected the question to Steve Story, Water Operations Bureau chief, DNRC.

13:46:09 Ms. Tranel asked about the number of high hazard dams.

13:46:27 Mr. Story provided an answer to Sen. Lang’s earlier question regarding the entity responsible for dam repairs.

13:48:52 Rep. Keane thanked Mr. Halvorson for his service to the state of Montana and the Board of Oil and Gas Conservation.

DEQ

13:50:40 Chris Dorrington, director, DEQ, said Chad Anderson will present the department's enforcement and compliance report later.

AGENCY LITIGATION REPORTS

13:52:03 Mr. Kolman said the EQC requests litigation reports from DEQ ([Exhibit 11](#)), FWP ([Exhibit 12](#)), and the DNRC ([Exhibit 13](#)) as a part of its agency oversight. He said Angie Colamaria, chief legal counsel, DEQ, Brian Bramblett, chief legal counsel, DNRC, and Becky Dockter, chief legal counsel, FWP, are available to answer questions.

EQC questions and discussion

- 13:53:59 Rep. Fielder asked Ms. Dockter about litigation filed by Trap Free Montana and the Wolves of the Rockies regarding wolf management legislation passed during the 2021 Legislative Session.
- 13:56:42 Rep. Fielder asked Ms. Dockter about legislation regarding aerial hunting of wolves.
- 13:57:55 Sen. Lang asked Ms. Dockter about litigation regarding the Hell Creek State Park marina.
- 13:58:56 Ms. Tranel asked Ms. Colamaria about *Ksanka Elders Advisory Committee et al v. DEQ*.
- 14:03:20 Sen. Lang asked Ms. Colamaria about the status of *Fort Belknap Indian Community et al v. DEQ and Blue Arc, LLC*. Mr. Dorrington provided the information.

Public comment

None

COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT REPORTS CONTINUED

- 14:05:25 Chad Anderson, DEQ. ([Exhibit 14](#))

EQC questions and discussion

- 14:08:53 Sen. Flowers asked Mr. Anderson about the permits authorizing the discharge of pollutants into state waters, the compliance rates for 2020 and 2021, and how far back the non-compliance rates go for groundwater permits.
- 14:10:19 Sen. Lang asked Mr. Anderson about air quality permits and activity around salt flats.

AGENCY UPDATES FROM DIRECTORS

- 14:12:40 Mr. Kolman provided an introduction.

Department of Environmental Quality

- 14:13:09 Chris Dorrington, director, DEQ.

EQC questions and discussion

- 14:17:55 Mr. Freeman said the Governor's office appreciates the efforts of Director Dorrington, Director Worsch, and Director Kaster and their outreach to stakeholders and the citizens of Montana.
- 14:18:49 Rep. Curdy asked Mr. Dorrington about SB 358 (2021) and if the department is currently following numeric standards or narrative standards for water quality.
- 14:19:33 Rep. Fielder asked Mr. Dorrington when the department will change to using narrative standards.
- 14:20:30 Mr. Galt asked Mr. Dorrington to explain the narrative standards and the effect on water quality.
- 14:23:12 Rep. Fielder said he was disappointed to learn that smoke from wildfires is exempt from DEQ regulation and management. He said he will continue to try and work with the DEQ to try and influence forest management in order to control the causes of air pollution. Mr. Dorrington said the department is willing to look at whatever it can do.

14:26:40 Mr. Hamlett asked Mr. Dorrington if the department will set an average nutrient standard for individual streams or a standard for all waterways.

14:28:06 Rep. Keane asked Mr. Dorrington about the adaptive management plan and keeping with legislation that was passed to not apply a standard to a water body that is more stringent than what occurs naturally.

14:29:23 Sen. Lang asked Mr. Dorrington if the Missouri river will be part of the nutrient standard.

14:30:39 Sen. Flowers asked Mr. Dorrington to explain the nexus between narrative standards for nutrients and total maximum daily load (TMDL).

14:31:36 Sen. Flowers requested that Mr. Dorrington provide an explanation on how a narrative standard can be used in the TMDL calculation and know that the TMDL requirement will be met.

14:33:15 Mr. Hamlett asked Mr. Dorrington about creating a baseline for narrative standards and if the department will look at waterways seasonally or on a month-to-month basis.

Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks

14:34:33 Hank Worsch, director, FWP.

EQC questions and discussion

14:40:40 Mr. Freeman said the Governor's office appreciates the approach FWP has taken over a variety of issues and in looking to develop a management strategy plan that will last for a long time.

14:41:38 Rep. Keane asked Dustin Temple, deputy director, FWP, if the department will take a more adaptive management approach regarding Dingell-Johnson and Pittman-Robertson money.

14:45:31 Rep. Keane asked Mr. Temple about using federal funding and saving state dollars.

14:46:32 Sen. Hinebaugh thanked the department and said they have been open and transparent and good to work with. He said he is excited about the changes being made.

14:47:15 Rep. Hinkle asked Mr. Temple about the software being developed for the licensing system and if there will still be restrictions on GPS locations.

14:48:11 Rep. Hinkle asked Mr. Temple about complaints regarding paper carcass tags.

14:52:14 Mr. Worsch provided additional information.

14:53:41 Rep. Hinkle asked Mr. Worsch about law enforcement issues regarding paper tags.

14:56:23 Rep. Hinkle commented on a digital only option. Mr. Worsch said there will always be a non-digital option.

14:57:05 Mr. Hamlett asked Mr. Worsch about using metal carcass tags.

14:58:09 Mr. Hamlett asked Mr. Worsch how many licenses the department sells in a year.

14:58:46 Mr. Hamlett asked Mr. Worsch to provide data on the number of licenses sold last year and a breakdown of the categories. He also requested data on Dingell-Johnson money the state received.

14:59:41 Sen. Lang asked Mr. Temple to include the retail value of sales and asked about mandatory reporting for hunter success.

15:01:49 Sen. Flowers asked about the pheasant production program. Mr. Temple provided an update.

15:03:52 Sen. Flowers asked Mr. Temple how the department advertises its contracts for birds.

15:04:55 Sen. Flowers commented on bird quality.

15:05:19 Sen. Flowers commented on the wolf harvest in the two districts around Yellowstone National Park. He asked Mr. Worsech how the department will guide the Fish and Game Commission and consider the management needs and goals of the park as well as the goals for managing Montana's wildlife.

15:09:22 Rep. Keane asked Mr. Temple how the pheasant program was named.

15:10:46 Rep. Fielder asked Mr. Temple about the legislative intent of the bills passed during session and the rulemaking process.

15:12:48 Rep. Fielder asked Sen. Lang what is included in legislative intent.

15:13:54 Ms. Tranal said legislative intent is defined in case law.

15:14:19 Sen. Lang said the audio and video recordings of committee hearings have been referenced for intent.

15:14:32 Rep. Curdy said a golf course was developed in Missoula using a grant from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). He asked Mr. Temple what the obligation would be if the golf course is converted into a housing development.

15:17:11 Rep. Curdy asked Mr. Kujala how much money the department has saved by testing for chronic wasting disease in-state.

15:18:17 Rep. Marler asked Mr. Worsech about the decision to spend \$1 million on the R3 initiative for pen-raised pheasants instead of other programs. She also asked about changing hunter safety education requirements so they can be satisfied online.

15:25:28 Mr. Temple provided additional information about the department's R3 program.

15:27:05 Rep. Hinkle asked Mr. Temple about the new muzzle loader season and the decision to not collect harvest data. Mr. Temple redirected the question to Mr. Kujala.

Department of Natural Resources and Conservation

15:28:59 Amanda Kaster, director, DNRC.

EQC questions and discussion

15:35:59 Rep. Curdy commented on ARPA funding for irrigation projects and said it only allows for improvement of water quality and not quantity.

15:38:07 Rep. Keane commented on the cabin site sale program and requested that the department support the program as it is currently designed. He commented on funding to replace the DNRC helicopter lost during the 2021 fire season.

15:39:42 Mr. Hamlett reiterated the comments made by Rep. Curdy regarding ARPA funding for irrigation projects.

15:40:34 Ms. Kaster said the Infrastructure Advisory Commission did weigh in on the rule regarding funding for irrigation projects and its negative impact for rural states like Montana.

15:42:22 Sen. Flowers asked Mr. Worsech to provide a list of the different types of non-resident licenses the department sells. He also encouraged the department to be responsive to information requests.

15:44:15 Mr. Worsech provided information on non-resident licenses.

15:46:20 Mr. Worsech commented on public outreach.

15:48:48 Sen. Flowers said one of the best things about the department is its relationship with landowners, sportsmen, outfitters, and conservationist. He encouraged the department to continue to be responsive to all interest groups.

OTHER BUSINESS

Instructions to staff

15:49:29 Sen. Lang said to include the effects of heat on wildfires and to send a letter to the DNRC about the Woods Creek fire and development of a Type 3 team.

15:49:55 Rep. Hinkle said he would like to follow up with the DNRC on data for purchasing a water scooper versus leasing one.

15:50:28 Mr. Hamlett said he recommends that the EQC consider writing a letter to the NRCS about SNOTEL sites.

15:51:16 Sen. Lang said the Council has requested that the NRCS, Department of the Interior, and the Bureau of Land Management present at a future meeting.

15:51:30 Rep. Keane said it would be more appropriate for the NRCS to come to a meeting and provide information on SNOTEL sites in-person.

15:52:12 Sen. Lang said he would like to know how they coordinate with other agencies.

15:52:20 Rep. Curdy said he would like the DNRC to compare the cost of purchasing equipment versus an exclusive use/shared contract with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and the Idaho Department of Lands.

15:53:01 Rep. Keane said a report was issued during the 2007-08 interim on the price of smoke that considered equipment contracts. He said he does not see the value for purchasing one piece of unique aviation equipment.

15:53:56 Sen. Lang asked Rep. Keane if the DNRC should include the data from 2007 in its report to the EQC.

15:54:49 Sen. Flowers asked Mr. Kolman about next steps on conservation district funding.

15:56:18 Sen. Lang said the discussion can also include an explanation of the coal severance tax and where the money is going.

15:56:36 Rep. Keane said there is going to be a delta between the coal tax this year and 5-years from now. He commented on filling the delta with money from the sale of marijuana.

15:58:37 Mr. Kolman said the next EQC meeting is scheduled for March 22-23.

ADJOURNMENT

15:58:45 Sen. Keane adjourned the meeting at 4:57 p.m.