

**MINUTES OF THE  
NATURAL RESOURCES, AGRICULTURE, AND ENVIRONMENT INTERIM COMMITTEE**  
Wednesday, May 18, 2011 – 2:00 p.m. – Room 210 Senate Building

**Members Present:**

Sen. Ralph Okerlund, Senate Chair  
Rep. Roger E. Barrus, House Chair  
Sen. Allen M. Christensen  
Sen. Gene Davis  
Sen. Margaret Dayton  
Rep. Joel K. Briscoe  
Rep. Brad L. Dee  
Rep. Jack R. Draxler  
Rep. Brad J. Galvez  
Rep. Neal B. Hendrickson  
Rep. John G. Mathis  
Rep. Michael E. Noel  
Rep. Douglas Sagers  
Rep. Stephen E. Sandstrom

Rep. Evan J. Vickers  
Rep. Christine F. Watkins  
Rep. Ryan D. Wilcox  
Rep. Bill Wright

**Members Absent:**

Sen. David P. Hinkins  
Rep. Melvin R. Brown

**Staff Present:**

Mr. J Brian Allred, Policy Analyst  
Mr. John L. Fellows, General Counsel  
Ms. Kimberly A. Heiner, Legislative Secretary

**Note:** A list of others present, a copy of related materials, and an audio recording of the meeting can be found at [www.le.utah.gov](http://www.le.utah.gov).

**1. Committee Business**

Chair Barrus called the meeting to order at 2:25 p.m.

Chair Barrus recognized the contributions to the Committee and state of Sen. Dennis Stowell who passed away in April of 2011.

Mr. Fellows introduced the committee's new attorney, Tracy Nuttall.

**MOTION:** Rep. Hendrickson moved to approve the minutes of the November 17, 2010 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

**2. 2011 Interim Studies, Reports, and Reviews**

Mr. Allred gave an overview of proposed items for the Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Environment Interim Committee to discuss during this year. He then distributed "Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Environment Interim Committee Draft Interim Plan."

**3. Higher Education Coordination of Energy Research**

Chair Barrus read a section from the Governors "Energy Initiative & Imperatives, Utah's 10-Year Strategic Plan" that said in order to develop the state's energy resources, Utah needed to improve coordination of the state's research universities. Chair Barrus invited representatives from local universities, as well as a representative from the Utah Science Technology and Research Initiative to discuss opportunities to work collaboratively together to develop energy in Utah.

Mr. Alan Walker, Director Technology Outreach and Innovation Program, Utah Science Technology and

Research Initiative (USTAR), spoke on the current and future collaborations on energy research with USTAR and universities in Utah.

Dr. Jack Brittain, Vice President, Technology Venture Development, University of Utah, discussed several energy research initiatives that the University of Utah is currently involved in.

Dr. Robert Behunin, Vice President, Commercial Enterprises and Regional Development, Utah State University, stated that because Utah State University is a land grant university with campuses all over the state, there is an inherent capacity for the university to compliment other agencies research.

Mr. Mike Alder, Director, Technology Transfer Office, Brigham Young University, said Brigham Young University is currently collaborating with other universities on energy research, but said there is room for more collaboration.

The Committee and representatives from energy research agencies discussed ways to provide leadership and greater collaboration on energy research with state universities and energy research entities.

Ms. Amanda Smith, Executive Director, Utah Department of Environmental Quality / Governor Herbert's Energy Policy Advisor, gave an overview of Governor Herbert's energy initiatives. She said that Governor Herbert has asked his Energy Task Force to provide recommendations for specific actions that Utah should take within the next five years on Energy Development in Utah. Ms. Smith responded to questions from the Committee.

#### **4. Update on Snowpack and Potential Flooding**

Mr. Kent Jones, State Engineer, Director, Utah Division of Water Rights, gave an overview of the authority the state engineer can be given by the Emergency Management Advisory Council when water levels are high enough to endanger public safety.

Mr. Todd Adams, Utah Division of Water Resources, introduced Randy Julander, Scott Paxman, and Rich Tullis.

Mr. Randy Julander, Snow Survey Supervisor, Natural Resources Conservation Service, gave an overview of the snow pack levels throughout Utah. He also gave historical examples of floods in Utah and explained how current water conditions compare to previous years. Mr. Julander responded to questions from the Committee.

Mr. Scott Paxman, Assistant General Manager, Weber Basin Water Conservancy District, gave an overview of the water levels of reservoir within the Weber Basin. He then responded to questions from the Committee.

Mr. Rich Tullis, Assistant General Manager, Central Utah Water Conservancy District, gave an overview of the water levels in central Utah. He then responded to questions from the Committee.

#### **7. Other Committee Business**

Rep. John Mathis read from minutes from a recent Regional Advisory Council meeting in Utah that indicated there were budget cuts in the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (DWR). Rep. Mathis asked for

clarification from Mr. Ivan Djambov, Office of the Legislative Fiscal Analyst, on budget cuts to the DWR.

Mr. Djambov confirmed that DWR did not receive any cuts in their base budget this year.

Mr. James F. Karpowitz, Director, DWR, said the division was pleased with their budget this year.

## **8. Adjourn**

**MOTION:** Sen. Hinkins moved to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously, with Sen. Christensen, Sen. Davis, Rep. Briscoe, Rep. Brown, Rep. Dee, Rep. Draxler, Rep. Galvez, Rep. Noel, Rep. Sandstrom, Rep. Vickers, Rep. Watkins, and Rep. Wilcox absent for the vote.

Chair Barrus adjourned the meeting at 4:54 p.m.