



Idaho Grape Growers & Wine Producers Commission
Board of Directors Meeting | May 15th, 2025

Mission Statement:

The Idaho Wine Commission is a united voice to market, promote and champion all of Idaho's wine growers and winemakers.

Present

Board members present: James Nederend, Koenig Vineyards/SCORIA; Will Wetmore, VEER Wine Project; Jay Hawkins, Lanae Ridge Vineyard

Board members present via Zoom: Mark Pasculli, Rolling Hills Vineyards; Martin Fujishin, Fujishin Family Cellars

Idaho Wine Commission staff present: Moya Dolsby, Juls Germain, Ashlee Struble, Sarah Maples

Others present via Zoom: Roger Batt, Legislative Educator for IWC; Julie Pond, Northwest Center for Small Fruit; Heather Dunning, Dunning Estates

Others Present: Nicola Griffin EA, IWC Accountant

Call To Order

Dolsby called the meeting to order at 9:03 am. Dolsby welcomed everyone to the May Board meeting and reviewed the open meeting law.

Approval of Minutes

Dolsby presented the following meeting minutes:

- Board Meeting March 27th, 2025
- Board meeting executive session March 27th, 2025

Hawkins moved to approve the minutes from the March 27th, 2025 Board Meeting. Seconded. Motion carries.

Hawkins moved to approve the executive meeting minutes from the March 27th, 2025 Board meeting. Seconded. Motion carries.

Financial Report

Dolsby presented the current financials to the Board.

Hawkins moved to approve the financial report as presented. Seconded. Motion carries.

Hawkins moved to approve increasing Juls Germain's IWC credit card by \$1,000. Seconded. Motion carries.

- Discussion about the excise tax form: The board agreed it would be in the best interest of the IWC to contact each winery and educate them on the correct way to fill out the form.

IWC 2025 / 2026 Draft Master Budget

- Discussed the draft master budget and the 2025 / 2026 fiscal year projections.

Legislative Report - IWC

2025 Legislator Boot Camp

- IWC will begin working on logistics for this
- Possible sponsors: FARE Idaho and Snake River Wine Tours
- Possible vineyard tours: Skyline
- IWC will work with Roger Batt for the guest list

Camber Agribusiness Committee - Local Elected Officials and Media Tour

- Juls Germain on the committee to plan this and involve IWC
- First meeting May 30th

Legislative Report

Roger Batt

Each year, we're reminded just how important it is to have a voice at the Capitol—standing up for agriculture and defending the future of Idaho farming. Significant turnover in the Legislature this past election resulted in a session full of challenge and opportunity: the challenge of reintroducing agriculture's value to new lawmakers, and the opportunity to educate and build new champions for our industry.

I'm proud to say that the **2025 Idaho Legislative Session** was, overall, a success. From water infrastructure investments to expanded protections for farming operations, the Idaho Grape and Wine Commission remained actively engaged—ensuring that the unique needs of our growers were heard loud and clear.

Senate Bill 1133aa - Agricultural Protection Areas

In 2024, the Idaho Legislature passed the Agricultural Protection Area Act, giving landowners the opportunity to apply for a 20-year Agricultural Protection Area (APA) designation if they own at least five acres of land that has been actively farmed or forested

for the past three years. This voluntary designation signals a strong commitment to keeping land in agricultural production.

However, current county ordinances in some areas have prevented landowners from applying if their property lies within or near a city's Area of Impact. Senate Bill 1133aa addresses this issue by clarifying that APA applications may be submitted for land located both inside and outside of a city's Area of Impact. This change ensures broader access to the program and gives landowners more flexibility to preserve their land.

During committee hearings, several growers and industry representatives testified to the importance of this clarification. They emphasized the need for tools like APAs to demonstrate their long-term commitment to farming and voiced frustration with existing restrictions that disqualified eligible land simply because of its proximity to city limits.

S1133aa was signed into law by Governor Brad Little and went into effect on March 31, 2025. The original version of the bill (S1133) included a voluntary APA Fund, which would have offered financial incentives to encourage landowner participation. Unfortunately, after concerns were raised by legislators, that provision was removed. While it's disappointing not to see funding included in this year's legislation, we are grateful for the clarifying language that now enables more landowners—regardless of their location relative to city boundaries—to participate in this important program.

Farmland preservation remains a top priority, and we are committed to working with policymakers and stakeholders to continue building on this voluntary program to protect Idaho's agricultural lands for generations to come.

Right to Farm Expansion – S1033

In a win for production agriculture, Senate Bill 1033 strengthened Idaho's Right to Farm Act, which protects lawfully conducted agricultural operations from nuisance complaints. While the original law provided essential protection, it lacked practical recourse for farmers facing meritless lawsuits or complaints—until now.

Passed during the 2025 legislative session and signed into law on March 21, 2025, this new legislation provides that if an agricultural operation is sued for nuisance and prevails in court, the farmer is entitled to recover attorney's fees. This long-overdue provision helps deter frivolous lawsuits and ensures that growers aren't burdened with the cost of defending their lawful practices.

The bill also targets repeated, unfounded complaints filed with state or local agencies. Under the new law, penalties include:

- 2nd meritless complaint within two years: Infraction & \$150 fine
- 3rd meritless complaint within two years: Infraction & \$300 fine

- 4th or subsequent meritless complaint within two years: Misdemeanor

These provisions aim to reduce farmer harassment by reinforcing the legal protections that agriculture needs to operate effectively and without undue interference.

Idaho Agriculture is excited to see these meaningful updates to the Right to Farm Act—particularly the long-sought ability for growers to recover legal fees when prevailing in court. This legislation marks a significant step toward ensuring farmers can continue to do what they do best without fear of unnecessary legal obstacles.

House Bill 445 – Investing in Idaho's Water Infrastructure

Idaho's House Bill 445 marks a significant step forward in addressing the state's critical water infrastructure needs. The legislation appropriated \$30 million in ongoing funding from the General Fund to the Water Management Fund, supporting many projects including aquifer recharge, groundwater management, and the development and rehabilitation of water storage systems.

This investment reflects the growing urgency surrounding water availability and sustainability in Idaho, especially as agricultural demands increase and climate variability presents ongoing challenges.

A key component of the bill is the cash transfer to the Idaho Department of Water Resources, which will manage the planning, construction, and execution of water projects statewide. The bill also provides for the reappropriation of unspent ARPA State Fiscal Recovery Funds, ensuring that available resources are directed toward non-recurring water infrastructure improvements.

Despite broad support from the agricultural community and water users across the state, the bill did receive opposition from a group of lawmakers. Those voting against H445 included:

Representatives: Alfieri, Bruce, Cayler, Harris, Hawkins, Hostetler, Leavitt, Marmon, Price, Rasor, Scott, Thompson, and Wisniewski

Senators: Bjerke, Carlson, Coho (Lenney), Foreman, Hart, Keyser, Kohl, Nichols, Okuniewicz, Toews, Zito, and Zuiderveld

Continued investment in water infrastructure is vital for Idaho's agricultural future. With House Bill 445, the state is making a meaningful down payment on long-term solutions, and the Idaho Grape and Wine Commission remains committed to supporting efforts that strengthen water sustainability for farming operations across the region.

I am thankful for the continued opportunity to advocate for Idaho's grape and wine industry and look forward to building on this year's momentum in the session to come.

- Roger Batt suggested meetings prior to the legislative session for 2026 with these members
- 10 members of JFAC are located in the Treasure Valley

IWC Team Update

Current Projects:

Education

- Promotion of all upcoming seminars
- Boot Camp dates confirmed

Marketing

- Savor Idaho planning
- Idaho Wine and Cider Month planning
- Year of Tempranillo planning

Grant Application

- Still awaiting results

Legislative Session

- Beginning stages of planning the legislative Boot Camp

IWC team members provided an update on individual workloads.

Education Report

Tasting Room Field Trip - April 29th - May 1st, 2025

- Successful trip
- 31 attendees total
- Positive verbal feedback
- Survey sent out to industry

Educational Seminars

- March 24th - Tasting Room 201 with Kat House
 - Hosted by Cinder Wines
 - Attendance: 31
- April 14th - Social Media 201 with Sonnay Alvarez
 - Hosted By VEER Wine Project
 - Attendance: 9
- April 22nd - Water Management Seminar with Stan Grant
 - Hosted by SCORIA (Caldwell location)
 - Attendance: 15
- April 22nd - Crush Crew Collective - NEW Cellar Group
 - Hosted by Cinder Wines
 - Attendance: 20
- April 28th - Pruning with Brooke Robertson
 - Hosted by Fujishin Family Cellars
 - Attendance: 13

- May 5th - VIRTUAL Tasting Room Consultant Seminar with Craig Root
 - Virtual
 - Attendance: 26

Upcoming Seminars

- May 19th - Climate Change Seminar
- May 19th - Pour It Out Series Meeting
- May 27th - Round Table With Kade Casciato
- June 2nd - BSU Seminar - Public Speaking
- June 9th - Fritz Westover
- June 23rd and 24th - Tony Domingos in Southwest Idaho

Annual Meeting

- Date held for 2026 - **February 24th, 2026**
- Ashlee and Juls meeting with Boise Centre on possible NEW LOCATION
- \$4,000 made with sponsorship/exhibitors

Marketing / PR Report

Savor Idaho June 8, 2025

- VIP (200 tickets) sold out
- Reserved Tables (16) sold out
- **Please help spread the word!**
- **2025 Glass Sponsor D.L. Evans**
- 2025 Savor Idaho Candle inspired by the Year of Tempranillo
 - Created by Idaho Candle Company
- LIVE music confirmed Red Light Challenge
 - **Sponsored by Mom Jeans Wine**
- **Current Ticket Sales As Of: May 5th, 2025**
 - GA - 386
 - Charcuterie Boards - 79 sold

Savor Idaho Sponsors



Idaho Wine and Cider Month

- New banners for Lewiston
- Checked into Banners for Nampa

- Their program is not exactly what they want, so they will be in touch when they have that updated
- Please send events in the month of JUNE to Ashlee

Year of Tempranillo

- Video made and on the home page of our website
- FM created a graphic
- FM created a shelf sticker
- Wine to be highlighted at Savor Idaho
- Wine tastings at local wine shops
- Booth at Jaialdi
 - Rolling Hills Vineyard
 - Fujishin Estate Winery
- Pouring Opportunity at Bogus Basin - July 19th, 2025

Media Visit/Opportunities

- Chastity Cooper
 - Scheduled to visit Snake River / Eagle Foothills
 - June 24th - 27th, 2025
 - Ashlee will coordinate and schedule all winery visits
 - Hotel accommodations were made for Hotel 43
 - Grant-funded visit
 - Received wine during the Best Case Scenario campaign

Discussion

- Discuss scholarship applicants
 - Debbie Dale - SCORIA Vineyards
 - WSET Level 2 funds requested \$899
 - Daniel James Kimball - Dude DeWalt Cellars
 - Washington State University Enology Certification Course funds requested \$6000

Hawkins moved to award a \$500 scholarship to Debbie Dale with SCORIA vineyards and \$500 to Daniel James Kimball with Dude DeWalt Cellars. Seconded. Motion carries.

James Nederend moved to make the maximum amount of scholarships funds awarded per person to \$500. Seconded. Motion carries.

- Discuss Board members volunteering at Savor Idaho
- Discuss July Board meeting date. The Board agreed to change the date to July 10th, 2025.
- Julie Pond, Northwest Center for Small Fruits (NWCSF)
 - USDA update regarding the NWCSF and positions that have been eliminated
 - 14 of 38 projects NWCSF funds are viticulture projects

Hawkins moved to adjourn the open meeting at 10:30 am. Seconded. Motion carries.

Wetmore moved to enter into Executive Session. Seconded. Motion carries.

Dolsby called the open meeting back to order at 11:29am.

Hawkins moved to approve the draft budget for the 2025 - 2026 fiscal year. Seconded. Motion carries.

Fujishin moved to adjourn the open meeting at 11:35 am. Seconded. Motion carries.

Respectfully Submitted,
Julianne Germain
Idaho Wine Commission