

https://www.gazetterecord.com/news/article_ce21fe24-a251-11ed-be89-a772775e0f22.html#tncms-source=login

St. Maries Gazette Record

IDL buys more timberland

- By Tyson Juarez The Gazette Record

Feb 1, 2023

Earlier this month the Idaho Department of Lands announced the purchase of around 18,000 acres of timberland in Idaho's five northern counties.

Out of the 18,000 acquired in the \$50.4 million deal, 4,563 acres were purchased in Benewah County, 6,222 acres in Shoshone County and 40 acres in Kootenai County. Additionally 4,005 acres were purchased in Bonner County and 3,216 acres in Boundary County.

The purchase was finalized in November 2022.

A press release from the IDL says almost 84 percent of the new endowment land acquired will benefit Idaho's public schools.

The IDL also expects the land to impact timber sale volumes and revenue over a long period of time.

"The new lands feature a younger age-class of trees which means more of the endowments mature timber can be harvested in the near term while also allowing us to increase our timber sale volumes into the future," IDL director Dustin Miller said in the press release.

"Adding an additional 18,000 acres of timberland to the endowment portfolio increases future revenue for the beneficiaries while also supporting Idaho's broader economy," he added.

According to the IDL press release, endowment timberlands account for around six percent of Idaho's forests and is responsible for about 25 percent of sawlogs and fiber harvested in the state. Miller said the purchase provides an opportunity to continue to support the lumber industry in the five northern counties.

A timber sale and revenue impact model is planned to be available in 2024.

The purchase of the land also benefits recreational opportunities for the public and will allow for activities such as hunting, fishing and camping.

Endowment lands are not subject to taxation. According to the press release the taxes on the acquired properties totaled \$46,138 in 2022.

For Benewah County about \$14,000 in property taxes were collected in 2022 on the 4,563 acres recently purchased by the IDL.

According to Benewah County Assessor Donna Spier, the tax shift may put a small burden on tax payers in the county.

"In reality it's a tax shift," Spier said. "It doesn't really have much of an impact but it takes the land off of the tax roll and it's picked up by everyone else."