



## Our Year in Review

December 29, 2014

**Record breaking accomplishments and new initiatives designed to help us better achieve our vision highlighted the 2014 year for the Idaho Department of Lands.**

A summary of some of our 2014 highlights are included below.

You also can [view a video of our 2014 Highlights by clicking here](#). There is a special tribute to outgoing Land Board members Ben Ysursa and Tom Luna in the last minute of the video.

Happy New Year!

### STRATEGY

#### ***Strengthening Investment Decisions & Oversight***

The State Board of Land Commissioners (Land Board) approved a bundle of recommendations in December that enables its members to make **better, more informed investment decisions and improve accountability, transparency, and oversight of those decisions.**

The recommendations came after a year of meetings held by a Land Board-appointed subcommittee and input received from hired independent third-party investment consultant Callan Associates.

In summary, the Land Board formalized a position to **no longer acquire commercial buildings, to continue managing existing commercial buildings and lowest return grazing land but consider disposal as attractive opportunities arise, and to acquire more timberlands that meet or exceed predicted statewide returns.**

The Land Board also voted to **focus its role to making higher level policy decisions**, and delegate more routine land management decisions to experts at the Idaho Department of Lands (IDL). It created new working groups and authorized the hiring of more outside consultants and auditors to improve independent oversight.

[Read more here.](#)

#### ***Assisting Federal Land Managers***

At the direction of Governor Otter following the approval of the 2014 Farm Bill, **IDL led a collaborative process to designate landscape scale treatment areas on Forest Service lands in Idaho.**

Fifty proposed project areas were identified covering 1.8 million acres of Forest Service lands in Idaho that are at high risk of insect and disease mortality.

#### ***Grazing Program Review***

**We initiated an open, transparent process of reviewing the State lands grazing program**, inviting ranchers and other Idahoans to provide input on the grazing program business plan, market rent studies, and rent structure options.

In August 2014, IDL held public meetings in Jerome, Salmon, McCall, Idaho Falls, Pocatello, Lewiston, Nampa, and Jordan Valley.

We encourage continued strong stakeholder participation leading up to the final recommendation to the Land Board on changes to the grazing program, which are expected in Summer 2015.

[Read more here.](#)

### RESULTS

#### ***Record Performance in Land & Fund Management***

**Earnings from lands and funds reached \$330 million**, bringing the **total fiscal year-end balance of the endowment fund to \$1.7 billion.**

\$102 million came from the use and sale of endowment lands. There also was an 18.8 percent return on invested funds, adding \$267 million in investment earnings, the **second highest return in the fund's history.**

[Read more here.](#)

#### ***2014 Fire Season***

IDL and the timber protective associations put out 351 fires in 2014.

**Nearly half of the 183,000 acres that burned in Idaho this year were suppressed by the State.** Only 7,400 acres of state endowment ownership burned.

We utilized the most Type I and Type II incident management teams we have ever used in a single fire season. Our suppression costs reached \$28,483,000 with a General Fund obligation of \$24,503,000.

#### ***Rangeland Fire Protection Associations***

Two Idaho rangeland fire protection associations (RFPAs) and the Bureau of Land Management received the **Pulaski Award, a prestigious national award that recognizes outstanding contributions to wildland firefighting.** The Saylor Creek RFPA and Three Creek RFPA, along with the Boise and Twin Falls Districts of the BLM accepted the award in May.

[Read more here.](#)

Five RFPAs are now formed in Idaho and an additional six areas are being considered. Two hundred thirty ranchers now are trained and equipped to fight range fires in Idaho.

#### ***Record Timber Harvest & Receipts***

Logging contractors harvested a **record 347 million board feet of timber valued at \$72 million.**

The harvest supported **6,200 jobs, \$183 million in wages and salaries, and \$1.1 billion in sales of goods and services.**

Along with growing and planting more than **1,900,000 tree seedlings**, our reforestation practices take advantage of the forests' natural ability to regenerate to ensure endowment forests keep working into the future for the people of Idaho.

[Read more here.](#)

## CUSTOMER SERVICE

**We renewed our focus on providing respectful, accurate, and prompt customer service.**

We provided customer service training for our employees. Employee development plans now incorporate specific customer service expectations and objectives. We also are exploring ongoing methods to survey and collect regular feedback from our customers.

## LEADERSHIP

**We initiated a leadership development program.**

A high potential group of 12-15 IDL staff who already are skilled in management and ready to hone their leadership skills participate each cycle. They learn five sections over an 18-month period.

## *New Shade Rule implemented*

The rules for harvesting timber near fish bearing streams were approved by the Idaho Legislature in 2014, and implemented in July 2014.

The new "Shade Rule," or streamside tree retention rule as part of the Idaho Forest Practices Act, took 10 years of negotiation with multiple stakeholders to reach.

[Read more here.](#)

## *Cottage Site Auctions*

**Two auctions for ownership of State cottage site lots were held in 2014, bringing in nearly \$33 million in sales in 2014 alone.**

Twenty-one Payette Lake lots and 59 Priest Lake lots sold at auction. An additional auction of 35 Payette Lake lots is set for Jan. 31, 2015. The Land Board also approved a three year auction plan that will result in 180 more leased lots being sold before the end of 2017.

[Read more here.](#)

## *Oil & Gas*

We held **three auctions for State oil and gas leases in 2014, bringing in \$2,106,038** in bonus bids for the State of Idaho and **adding 31,754 acres** to the list of those leased for oil and gas development.

To date, IDL manages 498 oil and gas leases that cover 85,422 acres.

We also **conducted negotiated rulemaking to update Idaho's oil and gas rules.** The pending rule will be presented for legislative approval in 2015.

## *With Gratitude*



Ben Ysursa served as Idaho's 26th Secretary of State and a member of the Land Board for 12 years. However, his involvement in Land Board issues spans beyond his years in elected office. For nearly three decades he was the Chief Deputy Secretary of State under long time Secretary of State Pete Cenaarussa.

Tom Luna served as Idaho's Superintendent of Public Instruction and a member of the Land Board for eight years.

**The year 2014 marked the end of Secretary Ysursa and Superintendent Luna's tenures on the Idaho Land Board. Their service and contributions to the State of Idaho are deeply appreciated.**



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