



Taking burned trees to the bank

Timber that burned in 2015 fires on 6,000 acres of state endowment land in Idaho will be salvaged to make millions of dollars for the endowment funds that support Idaho's public schools and other state institutions.

Dec. 15, 2015

(BOISE) - The Idaho Department of Lands (IDL) will salvage **83.5 million board feet of timber killed by 2015 wildfires on State endowment lands.**

Thirteen of 15 IDL timber fire salvage sales were sold this fall for more than **\$17.5 million**, and **two more sales that will be auctioned before the spring will bring in even more money for Idaho's public schools** and other state institutions. Harvesting activities already have begun on some of the salvage sales, and will continue through the winter and into next year.

New tree seedlings will be replanted or natural regeneration will occur on the salvaged acres so the forests can **continue to provide sustainable, renewable forest products for future generations.** Responsible timber harvests **support jobs and earn income for Idaho's endowment beneficiaries** while **improving long-term forest health.**

Nearly **80 percent** of the IDL salvaged timber from 2015 fires will come from **Idaho County.**

New Life for Burned Forests

After they burn, forests become susceptible to infestations of bugs, disease, and rot.

Teams of IDL foresters, specialists and other staff work overtime after a fire to administer fire salvage sales rather than allowing the fire-killed timber to rot and lose its value.

State endowment forests are **replanted or seed trees are left in place so the forests can naturally regenerate**, ensuring the forests remain productive not just for this generation of Idaho public school children, but generations far into the future as well.

In general, the State of Idaho manages its forests under a **sustained yield harvest model** in order to maximize *long-term* financial returns to public schools and other endowment beneficiaries, which also promotes the health and productivity of the forests.



Salvaged timber from the Woodrat Fire.

Selway Salvage Sale wraps up

Harvesting activities on one IDL fire salvage sale in Idaho County from earlier this year were completed successfully in November, **despite a lawsuit by a neighboring landowner and environmental group.**

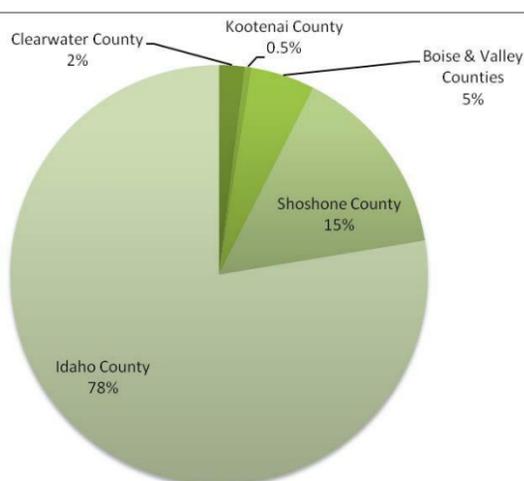
The Selway Salvage Sale near Kamiah was a result of the 2014 Johnson Bar Fire. Idaho Rivers United and a neighboring landowner brought a legal challenge against the Forest Service over the use of a road required to complete the timber sale by ground, so IDL adjusted the sale to enable **helicopter logging.**

The Arbor Day Foundation partnered with IDL and contributed funds to fully cover the cost of more than 50,000 tree seedlings that will be replanted in the burned forest.

The Selway Salvage Sale earned more than **\$635,000 for the public school endowment fund.** It gives the forest a new future through **replanting** and **stabilizes the area to reduce the chance for landslides, protecting waterways in the area.**

2015 IDL Fire Salvage Sales

Fire Salvage Sale Volume by County



- **65.1 million board feet** across **4,617 acres** in **Idaho County** will be salvaged from endowment lands that burned in the **Carrot Ridge, Lolo 2, Woodrat, and Tepee Springs fires**
- **12.2 million board feet** across **750 acres** in **Shoshone County** will be salvaged from endowment lands that burned in the **Avery Complex fire**
- **1.8 million board feet** across **266 acres** in **Clearwater County** will be salvaged from endowment lands that burned in the **Municipal and Lolo 2 fires**
- **3.9 million board feet** across **243 acres** in **Boise and Valley Counties** will be salvaged from endowment lands that burned in the **West Scriver fire**
- **490 thousand board feet** across **60 acres** in **Kootenai County** will be salvaged from endowment lands that burned in the **Cape Horn fire**

The Work That Goes Into a Fire Salvage Sale

Teams of IDL staff that include experienced **foresters, fire wardens and technical specialists in hydrology, wildlife biology, fish biology, and geotechnical engineering** are out on the ground conducting site assessments **almost immediately** after it is safe to access a burned area. Sometimes when the ground and vegetation are still smoldering when IDL crews arrive within a week or two of a fire being controlled.

They determine the fire's level of severity and what salvage harvesting techniques are appropriate for the species of trees and the area's terrain and characteristics. They identify special mitigating measures, if needed, to **prevent landslides** after the area is harvested and to **maintain wildlife habitat, protect ecological integrity, and comply with water quality standards.**



Helicopter logging on the Selway Salvage Sale.

After the site assessment, a team of foresters starts laying out the fire salvage sale boundaries. They decide if new or repaired roads will be needed to carry out the harvesting of the dead timber, and they estimate the volume of timber to be removed. They put together the sale package, which is **reviewed expeditiously** by staff at various levels of the agency - right up to the State Forester.

All the while, our foresters and field staff **constantly are talking to potential purchasers of the salvage sale** so they remain interested in participating in an auction. After the sale is sold at auction and the purchaser's bonds and insurance are in place, the **purchaser can begin harvesting the burned timber as soon as possible.**

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