



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 10, 2018

No proposed land exchange involving Idaho's State lands and HiTest Silicon

(SANDPOINT) – Inaccurate statements are circulating in northern Idaho and northeastern Washington that the Idaho Department of Lands (IDL) is considering a proposed land exchange that would result in HiTest Silicon owning the State endowment lands adjacent to a proposed smelter location.

The IDL has not received an application for a proposed land exchange or access easement involving HiTest Silicon.

Canada-based HiTest Silicon wants to build a silicon smelter plant near Newport, Washington, a short distance from the Idaho-Washington border and near Oldtown in Idaho's Bonner County. The IDL has no permitting responsibilities related to the proposed plant, but does manage a piece of endowment land adjacent to the Washington border and the lands now owned by HiTest Silicon to the west.

In the spring of 2017, before HiTest Silicon purchased the Washington property, a staff member with Washington's Pend Oreille County approached the IDL about the endowment lands on the Idaho side of the border and the potential for the IDL to divest the property.

By law, the IDL cannot sell endowment timberland, so IDL staff engaged in preliminary discussions with Pend Oreille County about the potential for another party to enter into a land exchange with the IDL for other lands in Idaho, if certain criteria are met. Discussions ended early last summer, and the IDL has received no applications for a proposed land exchange or access easement.

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