



Owyhee Land Exchange

Owyhee Canyonlands Wilderness

The Owyhee Canyonlands Wilderness Areas are part of the 109 million acre National Wilderness Preservation System. This System of lands provides clean air, water, and habitat critical for rare and endangered plants and animals.

The United States Congress designated six wilderness areas in Owyhee County:

1. Big Jacks Creek Wilderness Area,
2. Bruneau-Jarbidge Rivers Wilderness Area,
3. Little Jacks Creek Wilderness Area,
4. North Fork Owyhee Wilderness Area,
5. Owyhee River Wilderness Area, and
6. Pole Creek Wilderness Area.

The six wilderness areas total approximately 517,000 acres and are collectively and informally known as the Owyhee Canyonlands Wilderness Areas.

Reasons for the Land Exchange Between the State of Idaho and Bureau of Land Management

As a result of the Owyhee Canyonlands Wilderness designation, there are rules and regulations that affect the management, use, and occupancy of wilderness areas. Specifically, the wilderness areas shall be managed in accordance with the Wilderness Act of September 3, 1964 ("Act"), which generally prohibits commercial enterprise and permanent roads. However, there are private and state owned inholdings, within the wilderness, that do not fall under the same restrictions. As such, transitioning state ownership out of the wilderness areas aligns with the Act's purpose and intent.

The state's goals are:

- To reduce management risk, cost, and restrictions faced by the Endowments by disposing of lands within sage grouse habitat and within the wilderness areas.
- To secure legal access to State Endowment Trust lands.
- To reduce management costs by consolidating State Endowment Trust lands.

Both IDL and BLM will acquire lands better suited to their missions and objectives.



Photo of Owyhee County, Courtesy Idaho Tourism

IDL Contacts on the Land Exchange

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See reverse for additional information on the exchange

PRIMARY ISSUES

Will IDL honor the length of my federal permit?

The BLM issues 10-year grazing permits for federal lands. IDL will honor the remaining duration of the grazing permit when transferred from federal to state ownership.

How will IDL address the concerns of permittees, who are worried about the potential impact of losing their federal permit ?

Should a grazing permit have less than five years remaining, upon the closing of the exchange, IDL will issue a five year land use permit for grazing, unless the permittee requests a term for less than five years. After the expiration of the IDL issued permit, a lease will then be offered. As such, leases would become subject to a potential competitive process **only** at the end of the land use grazing permit term **and if** others are interested in leasing the same tract.

Why are lands not within the wilderness areas being identified for exchange?

IDL included parcels outside the wilderness areas that are within core sage grouse habitat. The Idaho State Board of Land Commissioners' Greater Sage-grouse Conservation Plan provides for land exchanges with the BLM for lands located within core and important Sage-grouse habitat.

Will roads that cross the state lands that are outside but adjacent to or abutting the wilderness remain accessible once exchanged?

Federal lands that are adjacent or abutting the wilderness are managed as wilderness. During the closing process, the lands that are bisected by a road will be transferred by deed separately, which will allow the road to remain accessible.

TIMELINE

October 2001

The Owyhee Initiative Work Group was formed.

August 2006

Idaho State Board of Land Commissioners (Land Board) resolution supports "the prompt passage of the Owyhee Initiative Implementation Act of 2006."

July 2008

IDL and BLM begin preliminary discussions on the merits of a land exchange.

November 2008

IDL holds open house and contacts IDL lessees affected by the proposed exchange.

December 2008

IDL and BLM representatives sign the Agreement to Initiate.

July 17, 2012

IDL & BLM attend an Owyhee Initiative Task Force meeting with Owyhee County Commissioners and ranchers affected by the exchange.

July 28, 2012

IDL attends Owyhee Cattlemen's Association meeting in Silver City.

September 29, 2014

IDL staff provide Owyhee County Commissioners update on the exchange process.

February 16, 2016

The Land Board approves the *Restated Agreement to Initiate* which included updates to the schedule, rights and encumbrances, legal descriptions, parcel identification, and the total acreage proposed for exchange.

May 12, 2016

John Frome & Associates was awarded the contract to perform the appraisals for the land exchange.

November 29, 2016

John Frome & Associates completed appraisals.

December 7, 2016

Dept. of Interior's Office of Valuation Services (OVS) completes review of appraisals.

January 2017–September 2018

IDL and BLM discuss and agree on the proposed lands to exchange. The proposed lands are provided to John Frome & Associates for appraisal revision. Consultation with tribes and SHPO.

September 2018–Spring 2019

IDL prepares due diligence analysis of property to be exchanged.

Summer 2019

BLM published Environmental Assessment.

Summer 2020

IDL to request final Land Board approval to proceed with the closing process.

Summer 2020

BLM to publish Notice of Decision.

Fall/Winter 2020

Closing on the exchanged properties.

QUICK FACTS

⇒ Final exchanged lands will be based on equal value not equal acres.

Proposed exchange acres:

IDL – 23,878.16 (40 parcels)

BLM – 31,030.66 (11 parcels)

⇒ Currently, the total difference in value is around one percent of the value of the BLM land.

⇒ Approximate number of grazing instruments affected:

IDL – 17

BLM – 18

⇒ Current and historic IDL and BLM AUM rates:

BLM AUM rate	IDL AUM rate
2016 – \$2.11	2016 – \$8.09
2017 – \$1.87	2017 – \$9.01
2018 – \$1.41	2018 – \$8.02
2019 – \$1.35	2019 – \$7.56
2020 – \$1.35	2020 – \$7.32