

State Board of Land Commissioners

Recreation Policy

Background

Article IX, Section 8 of the Idaho Constitution mandates that state endowment trust lands are to be managed to secure the maximum long-term financial return to the endowment beneficiaries. Revenue-generating activities on endowment lands and earnings on invested funds provide millions of dollars annually in support of Idaho's public school system and numerous other state of Idaho institutions. In addition to providing financial support to the beneficiaries of nine endowment funds, endowment lands may also benefit the citizens of Idaho by providing access for recreational pursuits, so long as recreation activities are consistent with the constitutional mandate.

The members of the State Board of Land Commissioners (Land Board) are the trustees of endowment lands and the funds they generate. The Land Board provides direction to the Idaho Department of Lands (IDL) in the management of endowment lands.

Land Board Recreation Policy

Idaho has a history and culture of valuing outdoor recreation opportunities and access to lands not privately owned. The outdoor recreation industry contributes hundreds of millions of dollars to Idaho's economy each year. The accessibility of millions of acres of endowment lands for recreation helps strengthen Idaho's economy.

The Land Board recreation policy directs IDL in carrying out the Land Board's fiduciary obligations while managing for recreational activities on endowment lands where those activities do not conflict with the Land Board's fiduciary obligations.

The Land Board supports a policy of allowing the general public continued recreational access to legally accessible endowment lands, as long as the recreational activities do not degrade the lands, interfere with management activities, or otherwise negatively affect the long-term financial return to endowment beneficiaries. The Land Board authorizes the IDL director to implement limitations to certain recreational activities on endowment lands, including closure when necessary, to protect the public or the underlying value and productivity of the endowment land. The Land Board directs IDL to develop internal policies and procedures to bring uniformity to how endowment land managers handle recreation-related management decisions across the state.

Recreation Funding

- A portion of every Off-Highway Vehicle registration fee currently is directed to IDL to "provide off-highway vehicle opportunities and to repair damage directly related to off-highway vehicle use" (Idaho Code § 67-7126(4)).

- The Land Board directs IDL to pursue mechanisms to compensate the endowment beneficiaries for dispersed recreational uses of endowment lands as a means to help protect continued recreational access to legally accessible endowment lands for the general public.
- Non-exclusive leasing and land use permitting will give due consideration to net revenue and risks to the endowments.

Partnerships

- The Land Board directs IDL to work with law enforcement agencies to ensure compliance with recreation management objectives on endowment lands.
- The Land Board directs IDL to partner with other agencies and organizations to assist in the development of managed and/or organized recreation opportunities on endowment lands.

References

Idaho Constitution, Article IX Section 8
Idaho Constitution, Article I Section 23
Idaho Code § 67-7126(4)

The Idaho State Board of Land Commissioners approved this policy on August 21, 2018.

