



# NEWS

**For Immediate Release**

**December 17, 2014**

**Contact: Alex Diekmann, The Trust for Public Land (406) 570-7995**

## **McArthur Lake Forestland Protected For Jobs, Wildlife, and Recreation**

**Sandpoint, ID** – The Trust for Public Land, the U.S. Forest Service, the Idaho Department of Lands, and the Stimson Lumber Company today announced they have permanently protected 6,847 acres of forestland in northern Idaho. The land will remain in active timber production; protect wildlife habitat; and be forever available for public hunting, fishing, hiking and outdoor recreation.

“Protecting these productive forestlands from future development safeguards local jobs, keeps vital habitat intact for wildlife and maintains Stimson’s long tradition of providing free public access for traditional outdoor recreation,” said Alex Diekmann, Project Manager for The Trust for Public Land. “It’s a real win-win for everyone involved.”

The land, most of which is in the internationally acclaimed McArthur Lake Wildlife Corridor, approximately half way between Sandpoint and Bonners Ferry, is owned by the Stimson Lumber Company of Portland, Oregon, who will continue to manage it under a conservation easement that guarantees it will never be developed and will always be open for public recreation.

“This conservation easement fits well with our company philosophy of owning and managing timberlands for our shareholders while benefiting wildlife and supporting jobs and economies in rural communities,” said Ray Jones, Vice President of Resources for Stimson Lumber Company. “Maintaining working forests into perpetuity is a good thing for everyone involved.”

The conservation easement, which was appraised at \$5.461 million, was purchased for a discounted price of \$4.095 million, with Simson generously contributing the difference as donated land value. Funding for the purchase came entirely from the USDA Forest Service Forest Legacy Program, which is specifically

designed to protect environmentally sensitive forestlands that are being threatened by conversion to non-forest uses. The easement will be held by the Idaho Department of Lands, which will be responsible for long-term monitoring and enforcement of its restrictions.

“The Idaho Department of Lands strives to be trusted stewards of Idaho's resources from mainstreet to mountain top,” said Karen Sjoquist, Idaho Department of Lands Forest Legacy Coordinator. “By keeping working forests working, this conservation easement complements our mission by providing the citizens of Idaho with significant economic and environmental benefits.”

Forest Legacy and Stewardship Program Manager Janet Valle echoed this sentiment by saying “The Forest Legacy Program is focused on conserving private forestlands that provide environmental and economic benefits to local communities. This project is a perfect example of how we can sustain local timber jobs, protect important wildlife habitat and provide long-term public recreation opportunities – all while keeping the land in private ownership.”

The land includes one of the largest and most developable blocks of unprotected property left in the McArthur Lake Wildlife Corridor (MLWC), one of the most important wildlife linkage zones in the entire Selkirk-Cabinet-Purcell eco-region, providing secure passage for grizzly bear, elk, wolverine and other wide-ranging species. It also offers exceptional fishing and superb hunting for elk, mule deer, moose, white-tailed deer, waterfowl and upland game birds.

“This easement not only benefits Idaho’s sportsmen, but it also demonstrates how private/public partnerships can do good things for wildlife, private industry and the recreating public all at the same time,” said Gregg Servheen, Wildlife Program Coordinator for the Idaho Department of Fish and Game. “We owe Stimson, the Idaho Department of Lands, The Trust for Public Land and the Forest Legacy Program a great deal of thanks for their long-term vision in making this happen.”

With the McArthur Lake Wildlife Management Area at its center, the area also provides key breeding habitat for at least 13 duck species as well as staging areas for thousands of migratory birds. Bull trout, westslope cutthroat trout and one of Idaho’s only known populations of interior redband trout also thrive here.

The Idaho congressional delegation including U.S. Senators Mike Crapo and Jim Risch, both R-Idaho, supported this conservation effort.

The Trust for Public Land also received generous support from its individual donors and the Wilburforce Foundation and Steele-Reese Foundation to enable this easement purchase.

The Trust for Public Land creates parks and protects land for people, ensuring healthy, livable communities for generations to come. Nearly ten million people live within a ten-minute walk of a Trust for Public Land park, garden, or natural area, and millions more visit these sites every year. To support The Trust for Public Land and share why nature matters to you, visit [www.tpl.org](http://www.tpl.org).

###