



## Preserving Forests for Future Generations

### Leaving a Forest Legacy

June 19, 2014

**Nearly 63,000 acres of productive forestland in Idaho are being maintained as working forests thanks to 13 conservation easements secured through the Forest Legacy program, and thousands more acres are in the line up for preservation.**

The easements also **preserve recreational opportunities** for hiking, biking, hunting, and other activities on nearly all of the lands.

Forests provide clean water, abundant wildlife and fish, forest products, employment, improved forest health, clean air and protected soils. **Private forest landowners face pressure to develop their lands.** With development or changes in use, forestlands are taken out of production and the benefits they provide diminish.

**Idaho's Forest Legacy Program provides a way to protect these forest resources through conservation easements.**

With the support of the USDA Forest Service, land trust organizations, conservation groups, the Idaho Department of Lands (IDL) and willing landowners, **the lands will be maintained as working forests in perpetuity.** The forests will continue to grow trees to provide forest products, homes for wildlife, recreation, and clean water that support Idaho's economy.



More than 90 percent of IDL Forest Legacy Projects are located in the northern part of the state.

### Project near Sandpoint expected to close within two years

A project that will preserve 15,000 acres of working forest between Sandpoint and Bonners Ferry is expected to close in 2014 and 2015.

More than \$9.32 million in conservation easements will keep the McArthur Lake Wildlife Corridor forested in perpetuity. The IDL is in various stages of securing the easements. By the end of 2014, IDL, in partnership with the Trust for Public Land and The Nature Conservancy, expects to complete easements for 6,800 acres, with easements for the remaining acres to be completed in 2015.

The wildlife corridor is a national, state and local conservation priority area, critical for the survival and recovery of several threatened and endangered species, most notably the grizzly bear.

### Boundary and Bonner County projects in the queue

The **Hall Mountain Project in Boundary County** and the **Clagstone Meadows Project in Bonner County** ranked second and sixth, respectively, as national priorities to protect timber resources and wildlife habitat.

If federal Forest Legacy Program funding levels remain near the expected mark, **another 15,000 acres of economically and environmentally important forestlands will be protected after 2015.**

The Nature Conservancy submitted the 2,000-acre Hall Mountain project. It includes six privately owned parcels valued at \$3.6 million in Boundary County. The project, located in the Selkirk-Purcell wildlife linkage area, an area recognized as an international conservation priority, provides critical connectivity for three federally listed threatened and endangered species.



Partners meet on a Hall Mountain property where active timber management provides a significant revenue source in rural Boundary County.



The wetlands on the Clagstone Meadows property have been identified as one of the highest priorities for wetlands conservation in northern Idaho.

Stimson Lumber Company partnered with the Trust for Public Land to protect the **Clagstone Meadows Property, the largest contiguous block of privately owned land in Bonner County.**

With important wetlands on the property, the Clagstone Meadows conservation easement valued at \$12.6 million will protect 13,000 acres from being developed into 1,200 parcels.

## Partnerships make it happen

Sponsorship and funding for the Forest Legacy Program comes from the USDA Forest Service, with the USDA providing up to 75 percent of the total value and cost of a project.

Experts from The Nature Conservancy, Trust for Public Land, the Vital Ground Foundation, Idaho Fish and Game and other conservation organizations work with landowners, IDL and other agencies to put Idaho projects together.

These organizations identify areas that would benefit from conservation, conduct scientific and economic analysis, coordinate partnerships, work with potential landowners, and secure additional project funding.

### About the Forest Legacy Program

Created in the 1990 Farm Bill, the Forest Legacy Program provides funding to states to protect privately owned and environmentally important forests threatened by conversion to non-forest use. Participation in the program enables landowners to capture part of the value of their land for development and, at the same time, keep working forests working. In Idaho, it is an important tool to protect the economic and environmental values associated with private forestlands.

The Forest Legacy Program makes significant contributions to Idaho forestland conservation by:

- Maintaining cultural and economic stability of rural communities by conserving working forest landscapes
- Conserving and enhancing water quality
- Maintaining unique forest habitats
- Protecting and providing habitat for native fish, wildlife and plants
- Protecting social values such as recreation, cultural, scenic and historical values

For more on Idaho's Forest Legacy program, visit <http://www.idl.idaho.gov/forestry/forest-legacy/index.html>

### Partner Organizations

USDA Forest Service, Forest Legacy Program: <http://www.fs.fed.us/spf/coop/programs/loa/flp.shtml>

Vital Ground Foundation: <http://www.vitalground.org/>

The Nature Conservancy: <http://www.nature.org/>

Trust for Public Land: <http://www.tpl.org/>

Idaho Fish and Game: <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/>

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