

From: [Marten, Leanne - FS](#)
To: [Crandall, Doug -](#); [Rosenkrance, David - FS](#); [Rasure, Nora -FS](#)
Cc: [Smith, Thomas - FS](#)
Subject: RE: Central Idaho Land Exchange
Date: Monday, February 3, 2020 7:56:06 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)

Copy thanks



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From: Crandall, Doug - <doug.crandall3@usda.gov>
Sent: Monday, February 3, 2020 7:49 AM
To: Marten, Leanne - FS <leanne.marten@usda.gov>; Rosenkrance, David - FS <david.rosenkrance@usda.gov>; Rasure, Nora -FS <nora.rasure@usda.gov>
Cc: Smith, Thomas - FS <thomas.d.smith@usda.gov>
Subject: RE: Central Idaho Land Exchange

Thanks Leanne---I'll send them your direction. U/S Hubbard mentioned the Governor's meeting but didn't go into detail, he asked me to help coordinate with the State, but mostly just to make sure they're making the right contacts. I'll see if I can get more details. Best,
doug

From: Marten, Leanne - FS <leanne.marten@usda.gov>
Sent: Friday, January 31, 2020 7:19 PM
To: Crandall, Doug - <doug.crandall3@usda.gov>; Rosenkrance, David - FS <david.rosenkrance@usda.gov>; Rasure, Nora -FS <nora.rasure@usda.gov>
Cc: Smith, Thomas - FS <thomas.d.smith@usda.gov>
Subject: RE: Central Idaho Land Exchange

Hi

I would be the contact for here in the Region, to start out. Not sure about the WO. We are always open to have conversations and visit with the State.

I am not aware of the meeting between Under Secretary Hubbard and the Governor. Perhaps you can help me out there?

Curious what has changed recently? I have not heard anything in quite some time, probably since we briefed the U/S while he was in Idaho in December 2018. The article I included below summarizes nicely what has been occurring and the approach by the State, but I do not know what, if anything, on this is still occurring. David Groeschle's last day with IDL is February 7th (he took a job with Hancock Timber Company).

Anything you can find out would be of help.

Thanks

<https://www.spokesman.com/stories/2018/apr/14/state-eyes-revival-of-lochsa-land-exchange/>

State eyes revival of Lochsa land exchange

By Eric Barker Lewiston Tribune

The Idaho Department of Lands may retool a failed land exchange that could bring private timber holdings in the upper Lochsa River basin into federal ownership and see other property switch from federal to state hands.

The state agency is quietly assessing the public appetite for such a trade while also attempting to create distance between its idea and the unpopular Upper Lochsa Land Exchange proposal that collapsed in 2016.

"This is not the old Lochsa land exchange," said David Groeschl, acting director of the Idaho Department of Lands.

The version that fizzled two years ago would have swapped about 39,000 acres of private land owned by Western Pacific Timber for Forest Service land of similar value. The private land is intermixed in a checkerboard fashion with land managed by the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest. Officials from the federal agency have long coveted the land because of its important fish and wildlife habitat, its history with the Lewis and Clark expedition and because owning it would simplify management of adjacent public land.

The idea proved wildly unpopular, however, with both the public, many of whom feared they would lose access to the federal land that would become private, and Idaho County commissioners, who said they could not afford to lose any more of their property tax base.

Groeschl thinks the state's involvement may change minds. In his version, the state would purchase the private land and simultaneously trade the property to the U.S. Forest Service for timberland of equal value. The state agency would increase its

endowment holdings, the Forest Service would get the Lochsa land and Western Pacific Timber would get cash.

The federal land that would be traded to the state would remain public and open to recreation such as hunting, berry picking and hiking. Groeschl said state law forbids the agency from selling its timber holdings.

“They would be managed in perpetuity to support the endowment, and they would remain open for recreational use,” he said. “That is where I think it’s different from when the original exchange was being contemplated.”

He called the proposal nothing more than a concept that the agency is sharing with stakeholders to determine if there is enough interest to move forward. Groeschl plans to arrange meetings in the coming weeks with Idaho County commissioners and the Nez Perce Tribe. He already has met with officials from Western Pacific.

“We have asked for them to stay in the background,” he said. “It’s about the Idaho Department of Lands and our desire to look at reinvestment – and really can we facilitate something that would be helpful to everyone?”

The agency has funding available in its “land bank fund” from the recent sale of cottage sites around Priest and Payette lakes and the sale of commercial property. Groeschl enlisted Sandra Mitchell of the Idaho Recreation Council to float the idea with motorized outdoor groups to gauge their interest, and Will Whelan of the Nature Conservancy to do the same with conservation groups.

He wants to see if there is enough support to invest the considerable time and energy it would require to pull off the trade. Any land swap would have to go through the U.S. Forest Service process that includes environmental assessment of the land involved, an appraisal of all parcels changing hands and a public involvement process. It may also require some enabling legislation, he said.

“If there is enough public interest by all parties – recreation groups, conservation groups, county commissioners – to explore it, we would have more dialogue. If the initial sense is ‘No, we are not interested,’ we would say, ‘That is fine, we are not going to pursue it.’ ”

The opposition from the earlier failed effort may prove difficult to overcome. Fear over loss of access may linger despite the fact that land transferred to the state would remain public. The proposal still doesn’t solve Idaho County’s concerns over the erosion of its property tax base.

Gary Macfarlane, ecosystem defense director of the Friends of the Clearwater at Moscow, called the idea a “nonstarter.” He said the state might not be able to sell the land but could dispose of it in a future land exchange.

“There is no guarantee it’s going to stay public,” he said.

Idaho County Commissioner Skip Brandt said the new concept doesn’t look that much different to him. It still includes nearly 40,000 acres of private land in the county coming off the tax rolls. A new deal would have to include a long-term replacement for the lost tax revenue. He suggested state legislation that would divert a portion of revenue from timber sales on the newly acquired endowment land in the county to schools and road departments there.

“I believe that would have to be some component of it. Otherwise Idaho County just loses,” he said.

The last version of the trade, which evolved over several years, included land solely within Idaho County. Groeschl said if the proposal gains enough support for his agency to move forward, it would start by looking at the federal acres the Forest

Service identified as trade candidates several years ago and determine which might fit with its mission. That list also included land in Latah, Clearwater and Benewah counties. He said the trade might also include other land not originally considered, such as federal parcels landlocked within state holdings.



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From: Crandall, Doug - <doug.crandall3@usda.gov>
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Subject: FW: Central Idaho Land Exchange

Well, that was fast. I'm obviously not the point of contact---who would you recommend? I probably need somebody from the WO and one of you?

From: Nate Fisher <Nate.Fisher@gov.idaho.gov>
Sent: Friday, January 31, 2020 5:32 PM
To: Crandall, Doug - <doug.crandall3@usda.gov>
Cc: Brian Wonderlich <Brian.Wonderlich@gov.idaho.gov>
Subject: Central Idaho Land Exchange

Mr. Crandall,

My name is Nate Fisher and I work for Governor Little in Idaho on various natural resource issues. I

wanted to reach out to introduce myself and my colleague, Brian Wonderlich (Cc'd here). We've been working with various stakeholders on a proposed land exchange between the State of Idaho, Western Pacific, and the USFS in what we call the upper-Lochsa region. We understand that Governor Little and under-Secretary Hubbard had a nice meeting last month in Washington and discussed this proposed exchange. We also understand that you may be a point of contact for us moving forward with the project. Is this correct? If so, we'd like to find time to connect with you in the upcoming week or so to connect further and get better acquainted. Please let me know your thoughts and availability when you can.

Best,

Nate

Nate Fisher

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