

Idaho Department of Lands

Strategic Plan FY2023 – FY2026

Vision

Prepared for tomorrow's natural resource challenges.

Mission

To professionally and prudently manage Idaho's endowment assets to maximize long-term financial returns to the public schools and other trust beneficiaries and to provide professional assistance to the citizens of Idaho to use, protect, and sustain their natural resources.

Guiding Tenets

We believe if we care for our staff, customers, processes, and finances, we will be a healthy, proactive and effective organization. We will ensure important departmental decisions consider the following:

- Fiduciary Duty – Does this decision maximize long term financial returns from the endowment lands and provide for prudent management of state funds and resources?
- IDL Staff – Is this decision consistent with the development and retention of a high performing workforce that is cohesive and accountable?
- Customers – With this decision, are we providing exemplary service to our customers?
- Processes – Is the decision informed by data and consistent with our policies and procedures?
- Forward-looking – Is this decision preparing us for success in the future?

IDL Programs Make Idaho Better!

First and foremost, we are committed to ensuring we meet our mission by executing our core programs with professionalism and a love of Idaho's natural resources.

In the **Timber** program we manage over 1 million acres of productive timberland to produce sustainable revenue for the endowment beneficiaries. Timberland is managed intensively while focusing on long term health and productivity. The Timberland asset class currently provides about 25-30% of timber utilized by Idaho's vibrant \$2.4 billion forest products industry while producing impressive returns on endowment lands. The department develops and follows the IDL Forest Asset Management Plan (FAMP) to attain our sustainable harvest goals.

The **Fire** program is responsible for fire suppression on over 6 million acres of endowment, private, and federal lands in Idaho and provides cooperative fire suppression throughout the state. Our fire suppression operations are conducted safely and aggressively with the goal of suppressing at least 94% of fires at 10 acres or less.

The **Real Estate and Endowment Leasing** programs lease land assets including rangeland, farmland, and residential and commercial real estate. These asset classes (timber excluded) make up approximately 1.4 million acres of land in Idaho. As the department has divested of much of the residential and commercial real estate overtime, the programs continue to explore new ways to generate revenue for the beneficiaries such as alternative energy. Real Estate Services also manages land acquisitions, land disposals and land exchanges for the department which are used to block up endowment lands, improve access to endowment lands, and to add desirable acres to the portfolio.

The **Minerals, Navigable Waterways, and Oil & Gas** programs provide statewide regulatory oversight of active and legacy extraction operations while protecting the public's use of navigable lakes and rivers. We regularly partner with local, state, and federal agencies to ensure Idaho's beautiful outdoors are protected and restored.

The **Forestry Assistance, Shared Stewardship and Good Neighbor (GNA)** programs work with federal, state, county, and private partners to help manage and protect forest and rangelands throughout the state. Since wildfire, insects and disease do not recognize ownership boundaries, it is vital that all owners of Idaho lands collaborate to actively manage their forests and implement fuels-reduction treatments. Healthy forests are more resistant to fire, insect, and disease threats.

External Factors Affecting Future Performance

We believe by maintaining our focus on our core competencies and simultaneously preparing for what a changing and growing Idaho may hold, we will continue to flourish. Some external factors that we will need to monitor, acknowledge, and respond to are:

- Population Growth
 - An increase in residents building homes in the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) creating greater risk of property and lives lost in wildland fires
 - The changing customer expectations for the work we are mandated to do
 - An increased need to educate new residents of the management requirements on endowment and public lands
- Competition for Skilled Labor
 - An increased cost of housing makes talent recruitment difficult
 - Additional shortages of contractors including those that work for our timber purchasers such as log truck drivers
- New initiatives, programs or mandates that increase our workload and create gaps in our expertise
- Changing public priorities that can lead to significant policy shifts in a short time
- World events that create economic challenges such as rising inflation, economic stagnation, or periods of recession

Our Foundational Goals: 2023 - 2026

Under the direction of the Land Board, IDL is primarily concerned with meeting our constitutional mandate to manage state endowment trust lands in Idaho "in such a manner as will secure the

maximum long-term financial return” to the beneficiary institutions. Further, IDL also (1.) administers Idaho’s public trust lands – the lands beneath the beds of Idaho’s navigable lakes and rivers for the benefit of all Idahoans, (2.) ensures protection of water quality and other resources by overseeing forest and mining practices, (3.) remediates abandoned mine lands, and (4.) provides service and assistance to Idahoans through forestry and fire management programs. The following fundamental goals place front and center the required tenacity to meet our obligations.

Foundational Goal 1 – Financial Stewardship

Fulfill the Land Board’s fiduciary duty by maximizing long term financial returns from the endowment lands and through prudent management of state funds and resources.

- Task 1 – Proactively monitor and take appropriate action to impact our ROI on state endowment land in line with Land Board direction.
- Task 2 – Meet our sustainable timber sales goals in accordance with the annual Forest Asset Management Plan.
- Task 3 – Manage our spending through regular communications, reporting and analysis.
- Task 4 – Explore, analyze and (where appropriate) introduce new income streams to the leasing programs.
- Task 5 – Ensure all financial audits are passed without impunity.
- Task 6 – Contain 94% of wildfires to 10 acres.

Foundational Goal 2 – Customer Focus: Deliver programs with professionalism and integrity, providing exemplary service to external and internal customers.

- Task 1 – Produce a variety of educational materials to help the citizenry legally and safely utilize the lands we manage and protect.
- Task 2 – Proudly reaffirm the endowment mission and continue to support the beneficiaries.
- Task 3 – Where appropriate, engage with the potentially affected customers to ensure quality and transparency of our actions.

Foundational Goal 3 – People: Develop a well-trained, high performing workforce focused on carrying out IDL’s mission.

- Task 1 – Ensure we prioritize and fully support employment development from onboarding to professional expertise.
- Task 2 – Grow leaders and reinforce our culture of career long learning and advancement.

Foundational Goal 4 – Process: Implement policies and procedures using integrated systems that support effective and informed decision making.

- Task 1 – Integrate and improve business processes with secure technology systems and infrastructure.
- Task 2 – Establish and update governance, policies, and procedures to direct agency operations.

Our Stretch Goals: 2023 - 2026

Idaho is changing and we anticipate that the state will continue to evolve in both predictable and unpredictable ways. An expanding population creates more impacts in the wildland-urban interface (WUI), changing expectations around land uses and a general increase in the need for our services. Changing weather patterns and political demographics may also continue to impact our work. The Department recognizes that it must be sure-footed but ready to pivot and evolve as needs change.

In addition to our core fundamental goals, IDL leadership seeks to focus on several objectives during the next 4 years that we believe will help prepare us for success in the future. The objectives may evolve over time but will continue to focus on preparing for the future. The objectives are:

Future-Proofing Goal 1 - Classification & Compensation: Intentionally monitor the equity of our pay and benefits to ensure we are utilizing our PC appropriation to hire, develop and retain the right people in the right positions most effectively.

- Task 1 – Create a 5-year employee compensation plan to include the establishment of a compensation committee, class benchmarks, long-term goals for hiring rates, a communication plan, and a CEC implementation plan in line with SCO/DHR guidelines.
- Task 2 – Analyze the use of temporary and permanent staffing levels across IDL programs. Develop and implement guidelines for ensuring appropriate staffing levels.
- Task 3 – Evaluate flexible workplace options including telecommuting, flex schedules and office hours to determine feasibility for implementation for our staff.
- Task 4 – Thoroughly investigate state provided and other potential employee benefits to determine current utilization. Structure a communication plan to improve marketing of benefits to employees and to help them realize the value of our generous benefit plans.

Future-Proofing Goal 2 – Office Facilities: Ensure we are proactively planning to maintain our offices throughout the state.

- Task 1 – Develop a prioritized list of recommended structure replacements or major expansion/remodel projects of IDL facilities.
- Task 2 – Prioritize structure replacements or major remodels and indicate what fiscal year that each structure could realistically be replaced. Note offices that may benefit from relocation.
- Task 3 – Define the primary, secondary and aesthetic expectations for our future structures to provide uniformity and to be financially responsible.
- Task 4 – Contract for a study to determine cost of replacement or alterations to our 1st priority.
- Task 5 – Provide the Land Board with an analysis of facility needs to date.
- Task 6 – Continue to implement the prioritized plan and continue forward planning for the upcoming needs.

Future-Proofing Goal 3 – Seasonal Housing Facilities: Ensure we understand and meet the needs of temporary staff who must have affordable housing options in remote areas of Idaho.

- Task 1 - Examine and update previously collected information about temporary housing needs at each area location.

- Task 2 - Meet with other agencies who may have similar needs and determine if costs could be shared.
- Task 3 – Explore options for new structure types that could potentially serve the workforce (e.g., mobile homes, prefab bunkhouse, etc.) considering feasibility for our sites, cost, pros/cons, lifespan of structure, durability, build time, etc.
- Task 4 – Meet with DPW to determine what we could do internally with our own funding and what role they would play.
- Task 5 – Prepare a prioritized list of needs from most to least urgent and document the best potential solution for each area.
- Task 6 – Pilot a new structure on the highest priority that could benefit from one such as a bunkhouse installation. Evaluate pilot project success and recommend changes as required.
- Task 7 – Establish an annual budget to implement temporary housing solutions. Begin implementation of additional housing units at sites where that was a prioritized solution to the extent allowed by budget.
- Task 8 - Follow a maintenance schedule for structures.

Future-Proofing Goal 4 – Fire: Monitor, understand and respond to changes that are happening in wildland fire organizations across the country due to longer & hotter seasons, fewer firefighters entering the career field, lagging wages and more citizens residing in the WUI.

- Task 1 – Resolve fire boundary and coverage responsibility issues with federal partners that fairly outlines and assigns obligations and responsibilities.
- Task 2 - Create a comprehensive strategic plan within the IDL fire program to include a vision, mission, goals, factual current status data and future-state scenarios that must be met to ensure capacity to protect Idaho’s natural resources. Prioritize work needed to close the gap.
- Task 3 – Create a comprehensive plan for fire prevention including natural resource management tactics, education, and prevention messaging.
- Task 4– Continue to expand the department’s ability to compete for and employ professional firefighters through pay, benefits, housing, and developmental opportunities.
- Task 5 – Draft and execute the Leader’s Intent.

Future-Proofing Goals 5 - Fund Integrity: Ensure our dedicated fund dollars are put to work in the programs for which they are intended and that overhead activities are funded proportionately with the correct programmatic mix.

- Task 1 – Collect data from IDL financial systems and develop an understanding of the existing fund sources supporting the agency. Determine if the current funding structure is congruous with our programmatic responsibilities.
- Task 2 – Develop objectives that support recalibrating the funds sources to be more representative of the program services.
- Task 3 – Create a method to intentionally monitor progress and lapses; correct errors within the department’s appropriated funding.

Future-Proofing Goal 6 - Policy & Procedure: Update and organize the many policies and procedures that inform our daily work while ensuring governance is clearly established and authority is delegated where appropriate.

- Task 1 - Establish a framework for developing, managing, and communicating policies and procedures that fulfill Land Board directives.
- Task 2 - Crosswalk existing directives in multiple formats (e.g., Land Board memos, minutes, governance delineations) into existing or new policy.
- Task 3 - Establish a schedule to review policy on a recurring basis and hold staff accountable to update policy as needed.