

State takeover of Federal Lands

I would like to make comment on your new plan because I think what you are planning is a very good idea if you will do what you say and make the plan responsive to the local units of government and the citizens.

The BLM was originally created to dispose of the federal lands the citizens wanted to turn into private lands. There are millions of acres not being used in our state that are not scenic and have infrastructure accessible. In my view some of these lands have scenic and recreational value but others of them have more value if they can be made into economic engines of production.

These non-scenic lands should be either disposed of as private lands or the state should decide on an ongoing basis what the disposition of these lands should be. Local control has always benefited the citizenry. Private property ownership is what made the U.S. the wealthiest nation in the world.. One mechanism that should satisfy almost everyone is for the state to trade remote state lands for Federal lands with economic possibility. The state can then sell or lease these lands to individuals. **These lands are earning very little money for the School Endowment Fund.**

BLM is currently trying to buy some scenic lands close to the Snake River for scenic setaside. Why can't they on the other hand sell lands that have no scenic value to willing buyers? There are 100,000 acres in Jerome County that are within 10 miles of an interstate highway and also have a railroad running through them. These lands have the opportunity to be a taxpaying asset and a job-producing asset. Meridian schools are overflowing and ours are at best static.. Some industry may use these lands to bring good jobs to the Magic Valley. Last year the payment in lieu of taxes to the county of Jerome was 85 cents per acre and the worst part is there was very little production for the economy and no jobs were created. One other issue is the high price of building lots for young families. These young families are having to pay \$40,000.00+ for building lots and the BLM is tying up millions of acres for no good reason. The mortgage these families will pay for a home and lot will last their lifetime.

I am a hunter and a fisherman and I am confident there will be better hunting and fishing when Idaho citizens have a say in the lands management.

The State has problems with conflicts of land use. More acres could be a solution.

I am including some articles from the Times News that may help to highlight our problem in Jerome County in respect to land use.

Respectfully,



Del Kohtz
cell: 208-312-1135
email: delkohtzidwc@mindspring.com
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