



IDAHO FOUNDATION *for* PARKS AND LANDS

Idaho Foundation for Parks and Lands is Idaho's oldest land trust. We protect lands for the people of Idaho.



Four Master Plan Consulting Finalists Visit the Barber Pool Conservation Area

Welcoming people to our Barber Pool Conservation Area is always fulfilling and rewarding; we love what we've done and continue to do. With four world-class planning consultants, it was also an opportunity to see our work through fresh eyes, reflect on

the past, and peek into the future.

The Barber Pool Master Plan selection committee welcomed four finalists on day-long site visits to help them prepare to submit their proposals to us by mid-July. With strict attention to COVID-19 protections, we also welcomed a limited number of the stakeholders who will be engaged in the planning process, including local agencies and adjacent landowners, to meet the consulting finalists and provide their perspective on the Barber Pool and the master planning process.

The four finalists—whittled down from a field of 14 firms—represent a range of size and approach.

SWA Group (Laguna Beach CA) is an employee-owned international landscape architecture, planning, and urban design firm. swagroup.com

studioOutside (Dallas TX) is an independent landscape architecture company leading a team of other small companies with whom they've worked before on multiple projects across the country. studiooutside.us

Design Workshop (Aspen CO) is a planning and landscape architecture firm with projects in 30 countries, specializing in the interface between people and the environment. designworkshop.com

All three of these firms plan to partner with Biohabitats, a firm that specializes in ecology and wildlife. biohabitats.com

The fourth company, Ramboll (Phoenix AZ), is a 16,000-person international consulting firm of planners, engineers, architects, and scientists and would use its in-house ecologists ramboll.com

The people from each of the firms along with our stakeholders asked insightful questions. As we told stories by the Boise River, **one consultant asked, “Have you written these stories down, or are they in your head?”** He emphasized the importance of sharing stories to create that sense of buy-in that attracts community investment in preservation.

Another consultant noted the impressive legacy of IFP&L, and asked, **“How do you plan to pass that on? Is educating children important to you?”**

One of our stakeholders asked, **“If it might be time to consider a name change to something more descriptive that “conveys the peaceful nature we are trying to create,” as many may find the term “pool” recreation-oriented and human-**

centric?

Another consultant asked, **“Have you considered the importance of biodiversity in making the area resilient to climate change?”**

All of these questions and many more are **key** as we go forward.

How do we create a place of peace for wildlife, while the city grows at a breakneck pace around it?

What species will be present and how do we make sure the habitat functions well in 50 years?

How do we cultivate the next generation of land stewards?

While protection and enhancement of wildlife habitat is IFP&L’s central mission in the Barber Pool Conservation Area—serving a critical ecological function next to the Boise Front Wildlife Management Area—we **cannot achieve that mission without a shared vision of how each piece around the Barber Pool works together**. Whether it is a **future Boise City park**, the existing **Ada County-owned Greenbelt**, the **Boise State University Intermountain Bird Observatory**, or the **Idaho Shakespeare Festival**, each of these gathering points offers an opportunity for people in the Barber Valley neighborhood and beyond to respect and allow space for the wildlife in our midst.

Creating that shared vision is exactly what we hope to accomplish in this Master Planning process. We are indebted to our stakeholders, many of whom attended the field tours—four separate times over two weeks—to provide their insights. This dedication demonstrates how important this plan is, not just to IFP&L, but to the surrounding landowners and neighbors.

The selection committee is thrilled for the opportunity to make this tough choice, knowing that all four firms have much to offer and that this is the right time to do the work with the momentum to carry it to fruition.

To review the Request for Proposals for the Barber Pool Conservation Area click [here](#)



The Idaho Foundation for Parks and Lands

Mission Statement

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