

The Idaho Foundation for Parks & Lands

A statewide public benefit privately-funded organization can provide for safekeeping of land assets as part of land conservation. These property assets, as they are acquired, may be held and then either conveyed to a public agency or stay in protective status and management permanently with the Idaho Foundation for Parks & Lands. Founded in 1972 the Foundation has been the recipient of more than \$ 15 million in land assets recorded at the time of donation. The reason we are called a "Foundation" is that we can hold land that can be "granted" to a public entity or we can continue to act as a permanent owner and manager of land in perpetuity.

Generally, individuals and corporations donate because they want to give something back to their community, state, or region and the Foundation can be the gift acceptance vehicle for that process. A perpetual conservation easement grants that the property will never be subdivided and limited land developed. As a grantee/holder of conservation easements the Foundation has certain obligations for baseline documentation and monitoring to ensure compliance.

A sampling of land donations follows:

In 1973 the Hemingway family made the first gift to the Foundation, a 450-acre fishing preserve along the Little Wood River named after Taylor "Bear Track" Williams who was Ernest Hemingway's favorite guide. It is now managed by Idaho Fish & Game. Under the impetus of the Harriman gift in the Island Park area of eastern Idaho involving 15,000 acres and a share of voting capital stock the Foundation was formed and, at an agreed-upon time, orchestrated delivery of the stock to the State as part of the acquisition of what is now Harriman State Park of Idaho. The Foundation also received approximately 1,000 acres known as Harriman East through which two and one-half miles of the world famous Henry's Fork fishery flows. In partnership with the Henry's Fork Foundation, a smooth wire, solar-powered, high tensile fence was placed along both sides of the river to protect the fishery. This cooperative effort earned the foundation the Take Pride in America National Award as a semi-finalist in demonstrating that man, cattle and the environment could work together.

Contiguous to Sun Valley and Ketchum, the Reinheimer Ranch's 110 acres is a gateway to the world famous ski and summer resort area. In the midst of highly valued-real estate development the Reinheimer Ranch functions as a reminder of the area as it looked in the 1880s. The Big Wood River and Bald Mountain on one side, Dollar Mountain on the other, the ranch came to the Foundation by bequest of Eleanor Reinheimer. It was her stipulation that no structures ever be built. In 1988, the Foundation worked with Union Pacific in the purchase of the 100-foot railroad right-of-way adjoining the Reinheimer Ranch allowing for another segment of the Wood River Trail system to be completed.

The Barber Pool Conservation Area donated by Boise Cascade Corporation located six miles east of downtown Boise consists of 400 acres bisected by the Boise River. Chosen as one of the top twelve Unique Wildlife Ecosystems in Idaho, the Barber Pool provides excellent habitat for wildlife and plant species as well as a high concentration of wintering bald eagles. Alongside the Barber Pool is the Penitentiary Canal Bike Path funded in 1988 by the Land & Water Conservation Fund through an exchange of land with Ada County. The Foundation also holds an appurtenant conservation easement of 10.75 acres, which directly overlooks and buffers the Barber Pool.

Another property in the Sun Valley area that merits discussion is the River's Edge Ranch, quite literally located at the bend of Highway 75 where it crosses the Big Wood River. A 67-acre nature preserve, much of which contains benchmark habitat is owned by the Foundation. With assistance of neighbors on the north in Lane Ranch this property that contains predominately natural values has regular maintenance oversight. We have Helen Fassett, mother of Robert Sherwood and the Thomas Hormel Trust to thank for the legacy of this land.

Turning again to the Barber Pool Conservation Area the Foundation is pleased and proud to be chosen as the recipient of two Conservation Easements donated by the Harris Family Limited Partnership. The first is a property along the Boise River which is a passive area containing the future Dallas Harris Legacy Walkway. The second is ten acres of wetlands which are currently taking shape. The monitoring and oversight of the wetlands will be a partnership with ACHD, The Wetlands Group, Harris Family Limited Partnership and the Idaho Foundation for Parks and Lands.

Managed by a Board of Directors, all private citizens, the Foundation protects and enhances Idaho land. In the reality of today's world there are not enough tax dollars to go around. A land conservation organization such as the Idaho Foundation for Parks & Lands can be the conduit to channel monies for the acquisition and management of lands and not forfeit lifetime opportunities. The Foundation will continue to operate in the private/public niche that partners so well with getting things done effectively and at a lower cost. Idaho's future will depend on having resources through these public/private partnerships to support wildlife habitat, develop trails and sustain native plant and animal species.

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