



# Selway Fire Salvage Timber Harvest

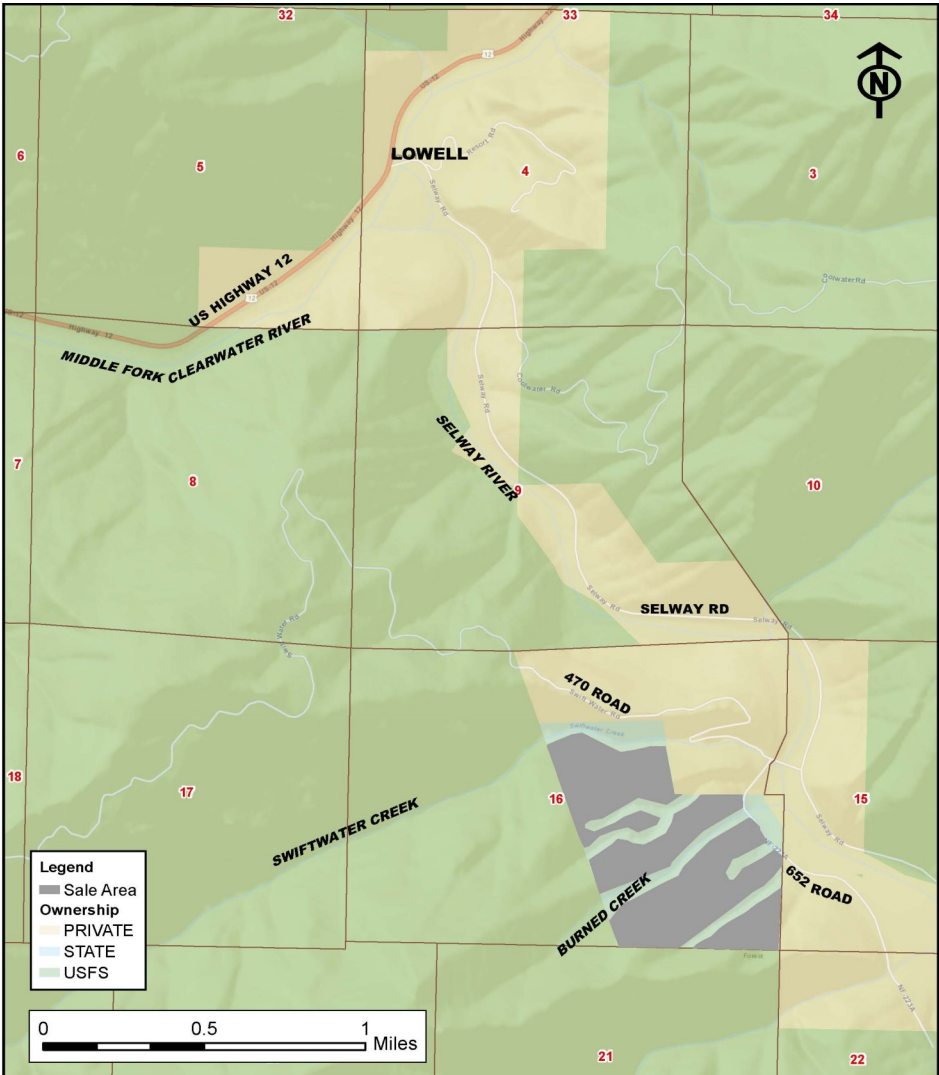
Harvesting of Burned Timber and Reforestation near Kooskia in Idaho County

Fire-burned, dying timber on **167 state endowment acres near Lowell in Idaho County will be harvested in 2015**. The timber sale is located **25 miles east of Kooskia**. The harvest area is **400 feet west of the Selway River**. The trees were burned in the Johnson Bar Fire in 2014.

Trees will be salvaged (removed) to **capture value before the timber decays** and to **minimize bark beetle activity**.

New forest will grow after the harvest — 40,000 new trees will be planted in the years following the harvest, and natural regeneration also will occur.

The harvest of 6.8 million board feet of burned timber will bring in about **\$1.6 million** to the endowment fund that supports **Idaho’s public schools**.



## WATER QUALITY & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

- ⇒ There are **no fish bearing streams** within the timber sale boundaries. Streams within the sale area will be protected in accordance with the Idaho Forest Practices Act.
- ⇒ All of the streams within or near the harvest area, including the nearby Swiftwater Creek, are tributaries to the Selway River. Swiftwater Creek and the Selway River are listed as critical habitat for Bull Trout and Steelhead. However, **the harvest will create no short-term or long-term adverse impacts to water quality** in the streams or rivers.
- ⇒ Measures will be taken to **minimize or mitigate the potential for stream sedimentation**. Surfacing work and road drainage features will minimize road tread erosion. Grass seeding will stabilize exposed road surfaces both in the short-term and long-term.
- ⇒ **All applicable environmental standards and guidelines will be used** in road construction.
- ⇒ **Branches and limbs will be scattered** over the ground to provide extra soil stability and lessen effects of runoff. Planted and natural trees also will stabilize the ground.

## TRUCK TRAFFIC

- ⇒ Traffic along the FS 652 Road, FS 470 Road and Selway River County Road is expected to increase during hauling operations. **Caution signs will be posted during hauling for safety**.
- ⇒ **Logs will not be hauled on weekends or holidays during peak recreation season**.
- ⇒ There will be **dust abatement** measures on graveled roads.

## WILD AND SCENIC?

- ⇒ The sale area is adjacent to an area designated as “recreational” under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.
- ⇒ There is **no Wild and Scenic easement on state endowment trust lands** in the area, and the **mission of state endowment lands is to manage the forest in a prudent manner to maximize financial returns and ensure the long-term health of the forest for continued productivity**.

## AESTHETICS

- ⇒ **Visual impacts of the harvest will be minimal** because stringers of standing timber will break up visual impacts. **The sale is not one contiguous clearcut**.
- ⇒ There is no one place from a road or the river where the entire harvest can be seen.
- ⇒ Travelers along Selway River County road will be able to see portions of the harvest across the river. However, **prior to reaching any point where the public could see the harvest area, travelers will see federal forest lands that have burned and portions of private lands that have burned and already been harvested**.
- ⇒ Between the river’s edge and the FS 652 Road there is a **5-7 acre cedar grove that will not be harvested**. This area will **buffer views** of the sale area from individuals who float the river.
- ⇒ Within a few years, young healthy trees will grow.



### **Why are you cutting down the trees?**

In 2014 a forest fire, which was started by lightning, burned the Idaho endowment forest property and the adjacent private and U.S. Forest Service forest property. The trees are dying and are being infested by bugs which will continue to spread and do harm.

It is the Idaho Department of Land's (IDL) mission to manage the forest in a prudent manner to maximize financial returns and ensure the long-term health of the forest for continued productivity. We are quickly losing value in the fire- and insect-damaged trees. Harvesting the burned trees now will bring in about \$1.6 million into the endowment fund for Idaho schools. We will replant trees so a healthy forest returns for future use and investment for our schools.

### **Will all the trees be removed?**

There will be some areas where trees will remain. There are 5-7 acres of timber that did not burn and will be left between the Selway River and the IDL access road. There are also trees that did not burn along some of the creeks that run on the state property. Those trees will remain as well. This will help lessen the visual impact of the harvest. The harvest boundaries have been placed to capture the most damaged timber, but take into consideration the slopes in the area, the deeply incised draws, and the level of timber damage across the property. When the area was evaluated, it was found that the draws were relatively untouched by fire and so undamaged timber will be left where appropriate in these areas.

### **What type of trees will be removed?**

The harvest will include western redcedar and grand fir, with some western white pine and Douglas-fir.

### **Will you plant more trees?**

Yes. As many as 40,000 seedlings will be planted and will become a renewed investment for the state endowment and the school children of Idaho.

### **How soon will it be replanted?**

We will be replanting as quickly as possible with western white pine. We do have to grow the new seedlings, so it will take about two years. In the meantime, we also expect quite a bit of natural reforestation by the grand fir and western redcedar.

### **Many of the trees still look green; can't you just cut down the dead trees?**

Looks can be deceiving. The fire destroyed vegetation under the trees and burned the base of the trees beyond the bark. The trees in that area are primarily western redcedar and grand fir, with some western white pine and Douglas-fir. These types of trees, especially the cedar and fir do not survive this type of damage and they will continue to die and more trees will turn from green to brown. Insects have discovered the weakened trees and an infestation is underway. If the insects are not dealt with quickly, they will likely cause problems for forested areas on and around the endowment land.

### **How much endowment money will it mean for our schools?**

This salvage timber operation will bring in about \$1.6 million to the Idaho Endowment Fund for schools.

### **What about the streams running through the state endowment property?**

The streams running through the property are considered Class 2 streams, which mean there are no fish in the streams. The streams have been excluded from the area that will be harvested. We are more than meeting all state environmental standards with our stream protection.

### **Isn't the Selway River a Wild and Scenic area?**

The state forestland is adjacent to the "recreational" designated section of the river, which means there are roads which parallel the river, encroachment upon the river, and development like homes and cabins built along the shorelines. The fire did not burn a 400 feet wide section of timber between the Selway River and the IDL access road. That wide section of healthy trees will help to buffer the area.

### **What will we see when we drive along the road, camp or float the river?**

During the timber harvest there will be a short stretch where the new road and a section of the harvest area will be seen. Other small sections of the fire salvage will be seen from different points along that stretch of the river, however, with the terrain and topography of the area, there is no one place along the river where the entire harvest can be seen. The 5-7 acre tree buffer along the river itself and trees along the streams also help with the view. The good news is when the harvest is completed, instead of dead and insect infested trees you will soon see new, healthy little trees growing in their place.

### **What about erosion and landslides? What will you do to prevent them?**

When fire destroys all the ground cover it can make the soil unstable. If nothing is done to the land there will be erosion and possibly landslides. IDL's goal is to rehabilitate the forest which will ultimately stabilize the soil. The department's Interdisciplinary Team (ID Team) made up of an engineering geologist, a fisheries biologist and a forest hydrologist carefully evaluated the area. They put strict guidelines in place for building a road, the harvest itself and protection of streams. In addition to those guidelines, the loggers will use a cutting technique of lop and scatter, which means leaving branches, limbs and tree tops scattered over the ground to provide extra soil stability and lessen the effects of runoff and overland flow. Replanting the land with seedlings will also stabilize the ground.

### **Will you be building roads? If so why?**

Yes, roads will be built so the timber can be harvested. All state environmental standards and guidelines will be used for road construction. Full-bench construction will be used on steep slopes, which means the entire road surface is excavated into the hill, helping decrease erosion and soil instability. Oversized culverts will also be installed when building the road to create plenty of room for spring run-off in the streams.

### **Will the road be removed after the logging?**

No. The road will stay in place and be used for future management of the property.

### **Selway River Road is a two lane road, won't logging trucks and other big trucks be too dangerous?**

No. The trucks will operate with safety in mind and the contract will require signs be posted to bring awareness of the large trucks to those who use Selway River Road.

### **Will the work be completed before the peak recreation season? The road is the busiest on weekends and holidays, will big trucks be going through then?**

The work will not be completed before the peak recreation season; however, the contract will specify that there won't be any logs or anything else hauled on the weekends or holidays during the peak recreational season. There will also be dust abatement required on graveled roads.