

**United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Missoula Field Office
3255 Fort Missoula Road
Missoula, Montana 59804-7204**

**Decision Record
Stimson-Chamberlain Land Acquisition**

**Environmental Assessment DOI-BLM-MT-B010-2015-0008-EA
January 2016
Case file Number: MTM-107967**

DECISION:

It is my decision to acquire the following 320 acres of land from Stimson Lumber Company by direct purchase, subject to existing rights, for \$105,500.00. The acquisition will include all of Stimson Lumber Company title interest in the property, including any appurtenant access and water rights. Purchase will be funded through the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

T. 14 N., R. 13 W., P.M.M.
Sec. 22, S½SW¼, S½SE¼;
Sec. 24, NW¼.

Powell County, Montana

Future management emphasis for the acquired lands will be implemented through the Garnet Resource Management Plan. The Garnet RMP made land use allocations and identified management areas (MAs) with similar resource potentials and limitations that are designated for management under a common set of goals and guidelines. Until such time as the RMP is revised or formally amended to address these lands, the lands acquired will be managed in accordance with interim MA designations as shown on Map 2. The following table displays the approximate acreage in each Management Area. Complete descriptions of each MA are found in the Garnet RMP.

Garnet RMP Management Area	Name	Acreage
2	Riparian Multiple Use Zone	10 ac.
5	Big Game Summer and Fall Range	310 ac.



Management of the lands will be directed toward managing big game habitats, protecting T&E/Sensitive species and their habitats, managing recreational opportunities, maintaining and/or improving healthy forests, protecting wetlands and riparian areas, and stabilizing the local economy.

BLM actions may include weed control measures, installation of interpretation and recreation facilities, silvicultural treatments such as planting, thinning, and harvest, prescribed fire, and erosion control measures on roads.

Land parcels 1 & 2 are located within Chamberlain Creek area where adjacent lands are listed as not available for livestock grazing under the Chamberlain-Wales EA #DOI-BLM-MT-B010-2013-0017-EA. Consistent with the current RMP direction for surrounding/adjoining BLM lands, the lands proposed for acquisition would not be available for grazing at this time.

Until amendment to the Travel Management is completed, the parcels will be managed the same as adjacent BLM lands (See map 2). Chamberlain Creek area is a Closure 2 which is a yearlong closure.

Development and implementation of specific projects on the acquired lands are subject to the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Endangered Species Act, and public involvement.

Authorities: The proposed land acquisition would be conducted under authority of Section 205 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976. The acquisition is in conformance with the Garnet Resource Management Plan, approved May 1986, and the Land Pattern Review and Land Adjustment, Supplement to State Director Guidance for Resource Management Planning in Montana and the Dakotas, dated June 1984. The proposed land acquisitions would be conducted under authority of Section 205 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976.

NEPA Compliance: This action is covered in Environmental Assessments DOI-BLM-MT-B010-2015-0008-EA and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) signed November 4, 2015.

Alternatives Considered: The EA considered a No Action and Proposed action alternative. The No Action alternative was considered to provide a baseline comparison of effects with the Proposed Action. No other alternatives were considered.

Rationale for Decision:

Chamberlain Creek areas possess a wide range of natural resource values that all contribute to the biological, cultural and economic health of the Blackfoot River Valley. Subdivision and/or development of the land hold the potential for significant adverse impacts to these wide ranging resource values.

Acquisition of these parcels will:

- Maintain and improve recreational opportunities in the area.
- Maintain traditional public access to lands in the Blackfoot Valley.
- Prevent disruptions to wildlife linkage zones.
- Protect critical big game winter range.
- Protect threatened and endangered species habitat.

- Improve manageability and efficiency of Federal lands.
- Assist in maintaining the rural character of the Blackfoot Valley.

Appraisal Value:

The value of the property rights to be acquired was determined through an appraisal prepared by Paraic Neibergs MA, ARA. The appraisal report dated July 23, 2015, was prepared in compliance with the Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisition and approved by the Office of Valuation Services (OVS) on September 4, 2015. Based upon the OVS approval appraisal, the value of the property to be acquired was determined to be \$ 105,500.000.

Appeal Language

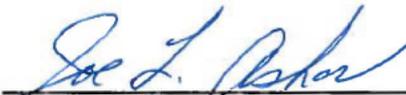
The decision may be appealed to the Interior Board of Land Appeals, Office of the Secretary, in accordance with the regulations contained in 43 CFR Part 4. Public notification of this decision will be considered to have occurred today. Within 30 days of this decision, a notice of appeal must be filed in the office of the authorized officer. If a statement of reasons for the appeal is not included with the notice, it must be filed with the Interior Board of Land Appeals, Office of Hearings and Appeals, U.S. Department of the Interior, 801 North Quincy St., Suite 300, Arlington, VA 22203 within 30 days after the notice of appeal is filed with the authorized officer.

If you wish to file a petition for stay pursuant to 43 CFR Part 4.21(b) (or cite applicable programmatic rules for petition for stay), the petition for stay should accompany your notice of appeal and shall show sufficient justification based on the following standards:

- (1) The relative harm to the parties if the stay is granted or denied,
- (2) The likelihood of the appellant's success on the merits,
- (3) The likelihood of irreparable harm to the appellant or resources if the stay is not granted, and
- (4) Whether the public interest favors granting the stay.

If a petition for stay is submitted with the notice of appeal, a copy of the notice of appeal and petition for stay must be served on each party named in the decision from which the appeal is taken, and with the IBLA at the same time it is filed with the authorized officer.

A copy of the notice of appeal, any statement of reasons and all pertinent documents must be served on each adverse party named in the decision from which the appeal is taken and on the Office of the Regional Solicitor, U.S. Department of the Interior, 2021 4th Ave. North, Suite 112, Billings, Montana 59101, not later than 15 days after filing the document with the authorized officer and/or IBLA.

for: 
Richard M. Hotaling, District Manager
Western Montana District


Date