

How do you decide... How Much Land to Buy?

As you look for a recreational property to purchase, how many acres should you buy? It's a question many buyers have as they start their search.

There is no magic formula for figuring what size property to purchase, says Tom Smith of [Tom Smith Land & Homes](#) in Ridgeland, Mississippi. "What's important is finding a property that works really well for you," he says. "If you buy it and don't love it, you aren't going to use it. What's the point of that?"

Buyers usually come to Smith, a member of the Potlatch Preferred Broker network, with a budget in mind. But that should only be a starting point to the decision-making process, he says.

"You might have a budget of \$100,000 in cash," he says, "but you may end up getting a property that costs \$250,000, working with a lender to get the perfect property for you and a quality investment."

For many buyers, a good smaller recreational tract is at least 40 acres. (An acre is roughly the size of a football field.) But for those who want more privacy and a variety of hunting opportunities and timber, a larger tract may be a better fit. Two factors to consider are topography and timber: Land that's flat and with fewer trees may offer less privacy from neighbors than a hilly property or one with a lot of timber.



Madison County Pine

And as you consider how price plays into your buying decision, know that many factors impact the sales price of recreational property, from the value of timber, to quality of wildlife, to proximity to public land.

"Remember that everything starts with location, location, location," Smith says. "One way to look at the purchase is to think about what your exit strategy would be if you ever decide to sell the property. Timber value helps in terms of providing value, and so does buying in an area that's always in demand."

Smith advises buyers to resist the temptation to look at the sales price in a vacuum – after all, you get what you pay for. Paying more for a property with quality timber, proximity to recreation, and good roads may well be worth the extra cost.

If this all sounds complicated, it doesn't have to be. The key to success is to work with a land broker who knows the ins and outs of buying recreational land. The experts in the [Potlatch Preferred Network](#) are your perfect partners as you look for the property that is perfect, both in size and in offering the amenities and recreational opportunities you're looking for.