BUYING ALL-SEASON PROPERTY: Winter Edition

If you are looking to buy rural property in a Northern state, this is the time of year where you may be thinking about opportunities for recreation in the snow.

In Minnesota, Idaho and Wisconsin, the northernmost states where Potlatch sells recreational property, snowmobiling and cross-country skiing are extremely popular. But you can’t participate in these sports just anywhere.

“It’s important for buyers to do their homework, especially if they want to have convenient access to recreation in the snow,” said Rick Musick of United Country Musick & Sons Auction and Real Estate Services in Grangeville, Idaho, part of the Potlatch Preferred Broker network.

And as you gather information about trails for snowmobiling, this information can also be helpful if you are thinking about areas where you can run four-wheelers when snow isn’t on the ground.

“Most people are looking for property they can use for recreation year-round,” said Rod Osterloh of Brainerd, Minnesota-based Close-Overseas Properties, also part of the Potlatch Preferred Broker network.

If you are a land buyer looking to play in the snow, here are three tips for finding the right property for you:

1. Find out about the locations of trails for snowmobiling and cross-country skiing in your area, and work with your Potlatch broker to find a property nearby. “A lot of buyers want to be able to go right from their land to a snowmobile trail,” Osterloh said. “And even if there is a bit of distance involved, there may be fields or other trails you can use to get access to a groomed trail.”

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There’s no place Pottatch Preferred Brokers Rod and Jody Osterloh of Close-Converse Properties, would rather be than on the lakes or in the woods of Minnesota.

“We enjoy camping and spend a lot of time exploring the Minnesota woods in the heart of the state,” said Rod Osterloh. But recreational land sales have kept them hopping this summer. “I’m not getting enough time on the boat!” he said.

That’s okay, because they still have had plenty of time to spend in the woods with their grandchildren. And while hiking through the woods can be all in a day’s work for the busy brokers, camping offers them time to simply enjoy the outdoors with people they love.

Osterloh said Minnesota is filled with state and national parks and they all have something different to offer, but their destination of choice is often Itasca State Park. “We try to camp there at least once a year.”

Home to the headwaters of the Mississippi, Minnesota’s oldest State Park features more than 32,000 acres and 100 lakes. A big draw is being able to walk across the Mississippi River at Itasca. “Our grandkids have walked across it,” said Osterloh.

Over the years camping has changed for the family. “We graduated from a tent to a pop-up camper. This year we bought a 30 ft. long camper.”

However, the love of the experience remains unabated. “It’s great to wake up to the smell of sizzling bacon and hash browns,” said Osterloh. “Everything tastes better when you’re outdoors!”

Their packing strategy hasn’t changed much, either. “It always seems like a minor disaster. We just put it all in a pile and see how much we can stuff in.”

Other favorite camping destinations include Mille Lacs Kathio State Park and Cuyuna Country State Recreational Area. “There’s a fire tower at Kathio that the grandkids climbed and they love to mountain bike the world-class trails at Cuyuna.” While those activities keep the younger set busy, the adults are content to hike the trails and enjoy the beauty of the North Woods.

Osterloh said, “Camping is about exploring and understanding what this great area is all about.”

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**BROKER NEWS**

**BEAR ISLAND LAND CO. CELEBRATES 20th ANNIVERSARY**

Congratulations! Happy to have them as part of our Preferred Broker Network and wish them continued success and at least 20 more years!

**UNITED COUNTRY GIBSON REALTY RECEIVES TOP HONORS**

Joining the broker network in Mississippi this year, United Country Gibson Realty was the #1 office in the United Country network in 2014. Well done!!

**TOM SMITH LAND & HOMES REPRESENTS POTLATCH**

Just a few months after making it official, Tom Smith and his team promoted Pottatch recreational properties at the Mississippi Wildlife Extravaganza & Show in Jackson, MS in late July.
Idaho Ranchland: Boise Timber Ranch

LEGACY-INSPIRING ALL-SEASON ACREAGE

Among the largest deeded properties on the market in Idaho, the 10,400-acre Boise Timber Ranch is 40 miles northeast of Boise, Idaho in Boise County. An easy 60-minute drive takes you to this 16-square-mile panorama that adjoins National Forest and Idaho Department of Lands property, with elevations ranging from 4,400 feet to 6,470 feet.

Mostly forested but featuring excellent wildlife habitat and grazing potential, the property has been carefully managed by Potlatch Corp. over many years, with a quality timber asset that will only increase in value over the years.

Only a small percentage of Potlatch’s land is available for sale, and this special property is being offered exclusively by United Country Musick & Sons, a member of Potlatch’s Preferred Broker Network.

Boise Timber Ranch is unimproved, which is an opportunity for the buyer to create a unique getaway. “This gives the new owner unlimited choices of beautiful sites to build a dream cabin, home or ranch compound,” says listing agent Rick Musick.

The property has easy access to the Boise, Idaho area and is surrounded by recreational opportunities such as biking, hiking, water sports, hunting and fishing.

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-Rick Musick

BUYING ALL-SEASON PROPERTY

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2. Check the snowfall averages in the area where you are looking for property, to make sure there is enough snow in the area to offer recreational opportunities. One good resource is the USClimateData.com website, which will give annual snowfall averages by city.

3. Make sure you have proper licenses in the area where you are going to ride trails. In many areas, both snowmobiles and ATVs need to be registered, and if you plan to take your ATV on city and county roads, there may be other requirements to be met. “Be sure to check the specific rules in the area where you plan to ride,” Musick said.

Now is the time to be thinking about getting a special piece of land that will give you recreational opportunities year-round, whether it’s snowmobiling or cross-country skiing in Minnesota, Idaho or Wisconsin, or hunting, fishing and four-wheeling in any state, including in Arkansas, Mississippi and Alabama, where Potlatch also sells recreational property. And Potlatch brokers are an excellent resource to help.
INTO THE FOREST

Q: As recreational property buyers consider the timber value of potential tracts, what is the short-term and long-term outlook for timber prices?

A: Softwood sawtimber prices have taken a big hit since the housing market bust in 2008. However, we should see a dramatic increase in these prices in the short term. This prediction is based on three factors: 1) a substantial increase in housing starts, 2) a decrease in the amount of lumber being imported from Canada due to forest devastation caused by the Mountain Pine Beetle in British Columbia, and 3) continued good export markets to China and other developing countries.

Hardwood sawtimber prices did not decline during the recession like softwood sawtimber prices. In fact, over the last 12 months we have seen hardwood sawtimber prices hit historic highs in some parts of the country.

As for the long term, worldwide demand for paper and wood products is expected to continue to increase while the number of acres devoted to growing timber is decreasing. Thus, landowners who are investing in timber now should be assured of good markets and high demand for their forest products into the foreseeable future.

For more information and insights, please visit our Online Resource Library and see Bob’s full presentation on “The Fundamentals of Timberland Investing”.

Bob King has been in the land brokerage and forest management business for over 25 years. He has achieved the esteemed Accredited Land Consultant designation awarded by the Realtors Land Institute (RLI). Bob is currently the national instructor for the “Timberland Evaluation” course for RLI. In 2004, Bob was named “Land Broker of the Year” by the South Carolina RLI Chapter, and he was President of the South Carolina RLI Chapter in 2003, 2004 and 2007. We are pleased to have him as a contributor.

POTLATCH PREFERRED BROKER NETWORK

Let us show you why your Potlatch Preferred Broker is the only name you’ll need to know when it comes to buying property. Please contact the broker nearest your area of interest or visit us at www.PotlatchLandSales.com. We look forward to helping you with your property search!

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