When you're looking for recreational property, it's important that you think about how you are going to use it. Are you going to hunt? Will you be bringing the kids regularly? Do you plan to build a second home on the property?

There are so many choices in properties, you want to focus on finding a place where the property matches your interests,” says Ed Patrías, Potlatch’s Real Estate Manager for the Minnesota region.

With that in mind, here are some things to think about related to three potential uses for a recreational property:

Hunting
- Proximity to water and to food sources is essential for quality wildlife.
- Consider the neighbors. Do you adjoin public land, which could dramatically increase your hunting options? And if not, are you next to owners who practice responsible land management?
- What types of wildlife are you interested in hunting? A good broker, and/or your state government’s experts on natural resources, can identify geographic areas that match what you’re looking for.

An age-old question:
“Is the sales price fair?”

It’s one of the most common questions asked by recreational property buyers: “Am I paying a fair price?” The answer isn’t necessarily simple. Each recreational property is unique, making it tougher than if you were coming up with what you consider a fair price by looking at comparable sales, say, in a subdivision.

Natalie Cowart of United Country Banning Junction Real Estate in Minnesota, part of the Potlatch Preferred Broker network, recently wrote a column on this topic, offering some thoughts on what buyers should think about as they evaluate the sales price of a property.

Among her tips? Make sure you work with a real estate professional with deep experience in selling recreational property, and don’t wait around for the “deal of the century” on a distressed property, because they are few and far between in recreational real estate.

To read Natalie’s column, visit the LandThink.com website or click here.
“We can electronically show clients a property they’ve called about on the spot…”

United Country – Musick & Sons Auction & Real Estate Services has been selling property in Idaho since 1977, but the company is hardly old school.

With a state-of-the-art office, team members embrace technology with comprehensive property databases and online meeting software, allowing them to share information and hold remote meetings with clients from anywhere.

At Musick & Sons, a Potlatch Preferred Broker for Idaho, it’s all about narrowing down selections based on a client’s wish list, then checking out properties virtually with clients before they visit to tour in person.

“We can electronically show clients a property they’ve called about on the spot,” says Brandi Spencer, a Realtor with the Nampa-office of Musick & Sons, and the niece of Rick Musick, the president of the family-run real estate company. “Usually, discussions lead to other properties that might fit their goals. And the great thing is that they can preview several parcels online in just a few minutes.”

While Rick’s three sons run the company’s Nampa location in the Boise area, Rick is in the Grangeville office with Nita Musick, his wife and the company’s co-founder.

“In much the same way that their family reputation has tied into the brokerage’s success, the credibility and quality of the Potlatch name has helped the company, Rick says.

The Potlatch land selection in Idaho is like a big store for buyers, he says, with something for every taste. For example, a buyer might prefer property that’s close to the water, near a town, or with complete privacy.

“To us and our clients, Potlatch land translates to untouched ground,” Rick says. “It has value and meaning, and has been well-managed and cared for.”

For more information about Musick & Sons Auction & Real Estate Services or its Potlatch land listings, contact the team at 208-983-0069, or visit www.ucidaholand.com.
Minnesota
Rod & Jody Osterloh

Around Minnesota, the Camp Ripley area is known for some of the highest-quality bucks in the region, and for one of the best-known archery deer hunts in the country. And now, hunting enthusiasts are about to get an opportunity to own property next door. Potlatch is working on creating four recreational land parcels for sale, 190-350 acres each, that feature big game, upland birds, food plots and trails. The property, located less than 20 miles southwest of Brainerd, is offered through Close-Converse, a Potlatch Preferred Broker.

For more information about the opportunity, contact Jody Osterloh at 1-866-403-LAND (5263).

Idaho
Bob Crawford

People looking for recreation opportunities around the town of McCall often don’t know where to go for a list of things to do in the area. Certainly, there are different ways to get this information, but one website that can be extremely helpful is at http://www.gonorthwest.com/Idaho/southwest/McCall/activities.htm. The site, part of the Go Northwest group of travel guides for the Pacific Northwest, lists everything from bike trails to hunting outfitters to golf courses.

Arkansas
Ben Ballard

Several Southern forest economists have expressed the opinion that pine saw timber stumpage prices will increase slowly but steadily for the next few years. Meanwhile, hardwood saw timber markets have remained strong, driven by an increased need for railroad ties as well as a thriving export market for the best grades of hardwood lumber. Forest economists point out that timber returns are driven primarily by the biological growth of trees coupled with timber prices. Bottom line: Ensure that your timber is growing at its optimum rate to reach your goals. Ben Ballard, a forester with Kingwood Forestry and a member of the Potlatch Preferred Broker network, will be glad to field any questions – feel free to call him at 1-800-308-3831.

Q&A

JOSH BARKHIMER
Neeley Forestry Service

Q
What types of services does Neeley Forestry provide?

A
We work with Potlatch on brokerage and real estate, but our firm has two other specialties as well: certified general appraisals and timber management. Timber management is where our firm got its start 35 years ago. We have about 180,000 to 200,000 acres under management, and that could be overwhelming if we didn’t have a GIS (geographic information system).

This type of system includes GPS, but isn’t just for mapping – it helps us manage the land, whether for a 100-acre family farm, or for a larger, privately-owned parcel.

Q
How has this type of technology changed the way you manage and show properties?

A
Years ago we would have to dig through a filing cabinet to find information about a certain piece of property, but GIS keeps information at our fingertips. This field started with larger timber companies, but has really evolved over the last 10 years, thanks to technology companies like Esri that have made it affordable and usable for private landowners.

We can retain a history of what’s going on with a piece of land, no matter what the intention of a landowner – investment, hunting or recreation – in a couple of clicks. Using GIS management also helps with historical data for timberland, tracking things like acreage, tree planting, timber harvesting and sales, and wildlife and habitat.

Q
What type of wildlife is popular in your area of Arkansas?

A
In south Arkansas, most of the people getting into a hunting lease or purchase want to create a deer hunting camp. While whitetail deer hunting has always been popular in our state, turkey hunting has grown in popularity over the last 15 years. Small game hunting, including squirrel hunting, is also more popular.

Modern deer hunting usually ends in mid-December, but squirrel hunting allows hunters a longer season with two or three more months of enjoyment. With a larger game population, people with any level of hunting experience can try it at a much smaller expense.

Outstanding Achievers

2012 United Country Convention

The Musick & Sons brokerage was recognized for outstanding achievement at the 2012 United Country Convention. From L to R: Dan Duffy (CEO, United Country), Nita Musick, Rick Musick, and Mike Duffy (President, United Country).
Bringing the Kids
- If you plan to hunt, and the kids are interested in hunting, that’s terrific. But if not, you should think about other things for them to do.

If you don’t have opportunities for recreation on site, think about whether there are areas nearby, such as ski areas, bike trails or a lake or river.

Many families enjoy four-wheeling together, and it can done safely. If that’s of interest, think about the possibility of creating trails on the property.

Building a Second Home
- First, make sure the local governmental entity would grant a building permit for the property. (That isn’t always the case.)
- See if power and other utilities are available, and what’s involved in bringing them to a building site.
- In locations that have heavy snowfall in the winter, figure out what snow-plowing access roads will involve.

A Potlatch Preferred Broker can help guide you through this thought process, matching you with the recreational property that is the best fit for you.