Want a better land buying experience? Start with a broker.

We get questions about the recreational, hunting and timberland properties we sell all the time, and one of the most popular questions is: Are there advantages to working with a real estate professional during my land search, and in particular, a Potlatch broker?

The simple answer? Yes. There are a number of benefits to working with a broker as you get started with a property search, and Potlatch Preferred Brokers offer distinct advantages of their own.

1. Working with a Potlatch Broker early in the process will save you time, and will make your search easier.

Looking for properties in Minnesota, Idaho, Wisconsin or Arkansas, you could easily get lost looking at all of the recreational properties online. An experienced broker will get you straight to the properties that fit your needs in terms of location, timber value, price and recreational opportunities.

2. A Potlatch Broker will know the ins and outs of recreational property purchases.

The brokers on the Potlatch team all have deep experience in selling recreational property, and this is important. Many real estate professionals say they are experts in recreational property, but aren’t. This expertise should cover everything from understanding timber to knowing how a property could fit into someone’s outdoor passion, such as hunting or snowmobiling.

Financing with an IRA

If you’re thinking about how best to finance your recreational property purchase, you may not realize that you can buy an investment property through a self-directed individual retirement account (IRA).

With this type of IRA, which is often funded by rolling over money from a 401(k) account, you decide where investments are made. And if you invest in property, says Bryan Calderon of Accuplan Benefits Services in Irvine, Calif., there are no immediate tax consequences if you make income from the property.


**Question of the Month**

“What’s your funniest or most unusual/interesting site visit story?”

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<thead>
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<td>&quot;Sometimes the best thing about working with Potlatch properties is in Wadena County. Huntersville is a small town nestled along the Crow Wing River. It’s at the crossroads of just about everything you can do in Minnesota. You can see canoes on the river while motorcycles, 4-wheelers and horses share the road. It’s a delightful place and has become a must-see stop while showing Potlatch properties.&quot;</td>
<td>Crawford tells the story of the one and only time he took his youngest son with him on a site visit. &quot;Kellen was and in fact still is a very outspoken boy. When he was 4 years old, as luck would have it, I had no childcare options on the same day I had a client eager to get out and look at real estate. With Kellen on board in the back seat, the client jumped in the car and we were off. The woman happened to have red hair and a rather large hairdo. “As we drove around things were going amazingly well. Kellen was uncharacteristically quiet. The client seemed to enjoy the tour and was finding properties of interest. The tour came to an amicable end, but before the client left the car I tempted fate, turned to my son, and said cheerfully, ‘So, Kellen, how are you doing?’”</td>
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<td>Neely shares that forester Josh Barkhimer once had to perform a dog rescue while showing a property. He says, “Last year, Josh took a lady out to view a 30-acre tract and she brought her small dog along. They left the dog in the truck while looking around an old house. The dog grew tired of waiting and put his front paws up on the window edge and accidentally locked the doors! It was in the summer and getting hot fast. Thankfully, Josh was able to find a clothes hanger and pry the lock open.”</td>
<td>&quot;Kellen then pointed to the large red hairdo in the front seat and pronounced: ‘Dad, I do not like this woman! I gently tried to redirect him, but he insisted: ‘DAD, I DO NOT LIKE THIS WOMAN!”</td>
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**Broker in the Woods: Mark Knight**

Potlatch Preferred Broker Mark Knight grew up duck hunting with his older brother in the Mississippi River Delta. Now, he’s delighted to share his love of hunting with his two sons, Spencer, 11, and Jackson, 8.

“Both boys have gone deer and duck hunting,” he says. “This year, my oldest shot his first duck. It was an incredible moment! Now, it’s something he really looks forward to.”

While Knight enjoys the relaxing stillness of deer hunting, his sons prefer to hunt duck. “They liked climbing up into the deer stand,” he says. “But they discovered deer hunting involves a lot of sitting still and being quiet.”

Duck hunting is more active. “You can talk with the guys while the ducks are working.” And there’s the fun of wading into chest deep water to pick up the waterfowl.

One of his favorite hunting spots is the White River National Wildlife Refuge. The Refuge offers excellent waterfowl, deer and turkey hunting opportunities. In addition, Knight says, “Some of our Potlatch property near Felsenthal is in a great duck hunting location.”

Knight also owns a cabin on 40 acres where his boys are free to roam, do some fishing and enjoy the outdoors. “It’s great being out on the water or in the woods, watching the birds fly over,” he says. “I hope it’s something the boys will continue to look forward to. Hunting is an activity you can enjoy all your life.”

**Financing with an IRA**

“This can provide a way to diversify your portfolio,” Calderon says, “and since the IRA is the owner of the property, there can be significant advantages from a tax and fee perspective.”

Bear in mind that property bought in this manner cannot be used directly by the IRA owner, or by the owner’s spouse, parents, children or grandchildren. That said, we see people using this method for a passive investment, or they may buy property and allow friends, cousins or siblings to use it.

Calderon, who works with property buyers around the nation, is seeing this type of purchase being done for investments in farms, buildings and recreational property.

Since rules don’t allow someone to use 401(k) funds for property purchases, by using funds from a self-directed 401(k) to fund an IRA, and then making the purchase through the IRA, a property investment is possible.

And after the property is purchased, the land can continue to provide deferral of income and gains inside the 401(k). “Certainly, this type of investment isn’t for everyone, but it is worth looking at as you are considering ways to purchase property,” Calderon says.

If you are wondering about other financing options available, a good place to start in getting more information is with a Potlatch Preferred Broker, who will have relationships with lenders that can help.
Minnesota is headquarters to 19 of the 2013 Fortune 500 companies – a fact that may surprise some, but the state’s appeal is obvious to Potlatch Preferred Broker Natalie Cowart of United Country Real Estate.

“I was born and raised in Minnesota, and moved away after high school,” she says. “But it didn’t take long for me to return to the only place I call home. Sometimes you don’t realize the beauty of where you’re located until you leave.”

It’s no wonder so many companies choose to make their home in the “Land of 10,000 Lakes.” In Cowart’s area of Pine County, a growing number of small light industries are enjoying the benefits of lower real estate costs and the proximity to the Twin Cities and the Twin Ports.

“We’re in the heart of woods and wildlife but close enough to the city to get there when we need to,” says Cowart. And those wooded areas are increasingly popular with those seeking their own piece of property, whether for timber investment or recreation. “Almost all of our Potlatch tracts are near state lands. We’re selling forest-managed properties in the area, too,” Cowart says.

Indeed, Minnesota’s forest products industry is ranked 8th nationally in its per capita contribution to Gross State Product.

Potlatch Preferred Broker Charlie Chernak, of Bear Island Land Co., also knows the lure of Minnesota well. He says, “There’s lots of woods, lots of water and that equates to lots of hunting, fishing and every aspect of recreation.”

His business in Ely, Minn., is near the Superior National Forest and the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, which he calls the “crown jewels” of Minnesota. “Potlatch properties are scattered across the Superior National Forest,” says Chernak. “The Forest features an intricate system of groomed snowmobile and cross-country ski trails.”

Minnesota natives and newcomers are entranced by the plentiful areas of untouched beauty that surround them. Chernak says, “A lot of my clients are looking for property off the grid.”

An additional draw is the promise of four distinct seasons. Potlatch Preferred Broker Rod Osterloh, of Close—Converse Properties, says, “There’s something to enjoy about every season in Minnesota.” For example, The Paul Bunyan Trail runs through the state, with 112 miles of paved trail offering biking, hiking and rollerblading in the spring through fall, and snowmobiling in the winter.

Osterloh says spring is the perfect time to get out on your Potlatch property and see what trees may be ready to harvest, or to scout food plot areas for wildlife.

During the summer, the woods attract hikers and four-wheelers, while the water draws boaters and kayakers. Winter brings out the ice fishermen and winter camping is becoming popular as well. But autumn is Osterloh’s favorite season. “Minnesota is a wonderful place to be in the fall. Cool crisp nights and brilliantly sunny days.”

Not to mention great hunting opportunities. Pheasant, turkey, white-tail deer and bear abound. The desire to have their own hunting property and the proximity of so much public land leads many prospective buyers to contact Potlatch Preferred Brokers.

The unspoiled beauty of acres of forested land makes Minnesota a hidden gem. Osterloh says, “Probably the best thing about this state is that the rest of the world hasn’t discovered it yet.”
3. Understanding the timber part of a purchase is important and requires special skills and experience.

A veteran recreational broker will either know about timber quality and values from personal experience, or will have relationships with experts who can provide this information quickly. Foresters and local real estate professionals seamlessly blend their working knowledge, making the Potlatch team second to none on this point in the marketplace.

4. A recreational broker understands the market.

By being part of the Potlatch network, Potlatch Brokers exchange information and knowledge with each other, helping them as they assist buyers with such questions as: What lending options are there for recreational property in my area? How do I figure out if I can get utilities to a certain property?

5. Using a Potlatch Broker costs the buyer nothing.

The fees related to a Potlatch Broker’s time selling Potlatch property is covered by the company. Potlatch only sells property through its Preferred Broker Network, meaning that these extremely attractive properties in Minnesota, Arkansas, Wisconsin and Idaho are only available through our brokers.

Want to learn more about the Potlatch team? Read profiles on each one of brokers at our website, see the areas each represent or start your search today with a call or e-mail to the Potlatch Broker who works in the area you’re interested in.

Contact information for our broker teams is listed below.

**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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Or, what impact might zoning regulations or CCRs have on a property I am looking at?

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