



## NASTL SUMMER CONFERENCE SPEAKERS

August 25-28, 2024

### ENDOWMENT RECREATION MANAGEMENT

Michelle Anderson, Montana DNRC ([manderson@mt.gov](mailto:manderson@mt.gov))



Michelle Anderson is the Trust Lands Program Manager for the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, Northwestern Land Office. She oversees and supports the implementation of trust lands program objectives through the activities of five field Units on approximately 350,000 acres of school trust land. Trust revenue in northwest Montana is primarily the result of forest management and real estate activities, with a substantial timber harvest program, many residential properties, and an expanding commercial lease program. Other programs include agriculture and grazing, minerals, and steadily increasing recreational use.

Originally from New Mexico, Michelle earned her bachelor's degree from New Mexico State University and her master's degree in resource conservation from the University of Montana. Previously a contract writer for the Forest Service and a small business owner, she has been with Montana DNRC since 2013. Happy to call Montana home, Michelle enjoys exploring both rivers and trails with her family.

### RENEWABLE ENERGY SUCCESES AND CHALLENGES

John Andrews, Snell & Wilmer ([jandrews@swlaw.com](mailto:jandrews@swlaw.com))



John has over 30 years of practice experience in public lands, real estate, mineral, environmental, and energy law matters. Before joining Snell & Wilmer in 2018, he was chief legal counsel and associate director for Utah's state land management agency, where he provided legal representation and management for a 3.4-million-acre land portfolio. His current practice focuses on land and permitting issues associated with the ongoing energy transition, including utility scale hydrogen, solar and wind projects, geologic carbon sequestration, lithium extraction, and development of low carbon cement products. John continues to work with clients in traditional mining, oil and gas, ranching, and real estate development matters. John also works on complex land and mineral title and royalty issues, federal and state land exchanges, NEPA, tribal law, endangered species and wildlife, state legislative interaction, and other issues involving western lands.

## OPTIMIZING THE WHOLE TRUST

Chris Anton, Idaho Endowment Fund Investment Board ([chris.anton@efib.idaho.gov](mailto:chris.anton@efib.idaho.gov))



Chris Anton currently serves as the manager of investments at the Endowment Fund Investment Board. Previously, he served as chief investment officer and chief operating officer at the Boise State University Foundation, portfolio manager at ClearRock Capital, vice president of finance and administration at the College of Idaho and as chief financial Officer at MCMS Inc., a global electronics manufacturer. He has a BA from the University of Idaho and MBA from Columbia Business School.

## WORKFORCE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Dennis Becker, University of Idaho ([drbecker@uidaho.edu](mailto:drbecker@uidaho.edu))



Dr. Dennis Becker is professor and dean of the College of Natural Resources at the University of Idaho. He previously served as director of the Policy Analysis Group in the college from 2015-2018, and prior to that was an associate professor of natural resource policy at the University of Minnesota. He received a Ph.D. in Natural Resource Sciences from the University of Idaho in 2002, was a postdoctoral fellow with the USDA Forest Service, and a Fulbright Fellow in Norway.

Dr. Becker's research focuses on policy development, evaluation, and analysis of social and economic impacts in the areas of forest management, bioenergy and related natural resource topics.

## SPONSOR PRESENTATION

Karlen Bietman, LandGate ([kb@landgate.com](mailto:kb@landgate.com))



Karlen Bietman is the Senior Director of Real Estate for LandGate. Karlen leads a team responsible for providing LandGate's subscription services, SaaS tools, data analytics and real estate marketplace services to government, institutional and corporate property owners. Karlen is also charged with engaging strategic partnerships between LandGate and external commercial real estate advisory partners. Additionally, Karlen oversees LandGate initiatives involving federal government grants, critical data requests and contracting opportunities.

Before joining LandGate, Karlen was the Mountain-Northwest Regional Manager for CBRE's public institutions and higher education practice and provided strategic planning, development advisory, and brokerage services to government & education clients.

Prior to CBRE, Karlen served as the Director of Real Estate for Denver International Airport and was responsible for generating non-aviation revenue through commercial real estate assets on airport property.

Additionally, Karlen held several roles at McCaffery Inc., a private development company in Chicago, overseeing the asset and property management for a 2 million-sq.-ft. portfolio. Karlen began his career in real estate with Newmark Knight Frank as a GIS Analyst.

Karlen is a Colorado licensed Real Estate Broker and holds a Master of Urban Planning from University of Illinois-Chicago and a Master of Business Administration from Roosevelt University.

## OIL AND GAS

Richard Brantley, University Lands – UT ([rbrantley@utsystem.edu](mailto:rbrantley@utsystem.edu))



Richard Brantley joined University Lands-UT System in 1999 and served both as Associate Director and Executive Director before his current appointment as Senior Vice President, Operations. University Lands manages 2.1 million acres of land in 19 West Texas counties for the benefit of the Permanent University Fund. The PUF endowment benefits more than twenty educational and health institutions across both the University of Texas System and Texas A&M System.

Richard earned his bachelor's degree in biology and chemistry from West Texas State University, in Canyon, Texas. Through his focuses on land and environmental management, he has served the oil and gas industry for more than 30 years and has obtained two US patents.

## CARBON OPPORTUNITIES – FORESTS AND BEYOND

Dawn Buckingham, M.D., Texas General Land Office ([christina.mendoza@glo.texas.gov](mailto:christina.mendoza@glo.texas.gov))



Dr. Dawn Buckingham's family were among the first settlers to Texas nine generations ago, and that tough, independent, pioneer spirit is deeply rooted in her personality.

True to her Texas roots, Dawn's commitment to service began early, serving as a volunteer firefighter, and attending the Texas A&M Fire School. She is also an avid hunter, outdoorswoman, and steward of the land.

Dawn made history in 2016 as the first Republican elected to the Texas State Senate from Travis County, and the first woman to represent Senate District 24. She later made history again in 2022, winning a statewide election to become our state's first female Land Commissioner.

Dawn came from humble roots—growing up on a ranch near the Texas coast. However, she has never settled for less than her dreams. Wanting to attend college, but without the money to do so, Dawn lived at home, working two jobs to pay her own way through UT-Austin. With endurance of spirit, she graduated Magna Cum Laude and debt-free.

During college she met the love of her life and husband of 33 years, Ed Buckingham. Dawn and Ed both went on to receive medical degrees from the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston before having two children and starting successful medical practices within their specialties.

Dawn Buckingham truly embodies the American Dream. Through hard work, a “never quit” attitude and perseverance, she has risen above her circumstances to become a self-made small business owner, serving others in her profession and as an elected official, and always giving back to her community.

Dawn describes herself as “the happiest Land Commissioner ever,” as every day she defends our state's rich history, oil and gas industry, and our national border with Mexico.

As the chief steward to thirteen million acres of state land, Dawn acts as the largest landowner and mineral owner in the state in her capacity as Land Commissioner. The oil and gas revenue generated by mineral rights on these lands fund education and many veteran programs.

In her role as Land Commissioner, she is also vital to Texans recovering from disasters, and to the health of our coast.

Dawn's greatest love is the Shrine of Liberty, the Alamo. Every day she works tirelessly on a large project to make a visit to the Alamo worthy of the significance of the events that happened there and to ensure the Alamo is standing proudly for years to come so our future generations can know and love our proud history.

## CRITICAL MINERALS

Mark Compton, American Exploration and Mining Association ([mcompton@miningamerica.org](mailto:mcompton@miningamerica.org))



his wife Kelley on the outskirts of Coeur d'Alene, Idaho.

Mark Compton is the executive director of the American Exploration & Mining Association (AEMA), based in Spokane Valley, Washington. Mark rejoined AEMA in 2019 after serving seven years as president of the Utah Mining Association. Mark previously spent four years at AEMA (then known as the Northwest Mining Association) as government affairs manager, and he has nearly thirty years of government affairs experience. Prior to joining the mining industry, he served on the congressional and gubernatorial staff of C.L. "Butch" Otter of Idaho, and he also has worked as a forester and public affairs specialist in the forest products industry in Montana, Idaho and Washington. He resides with

## WORKFORCE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Debbie Critchfield, Idaho Supt. Of Public Instruction ([superintendent@sde.idaho.gov](mailto:superintendent@sde.idaho.gov))



Debbie Critchfield was sworn in as Idaho's Supt. of Public Instruction on January 2, 2023. She previously served for seven years on the Idaho State Board of Education and was appointed to education task forces by Governors Brad Little and Butch Otter. Debbie served as an elected school board member in Cassia County for 10 years and was on the executive committee of the Idaho School Boards Assn. She is a former local library trustee and Oakley Valley Arts Council president. She worked as the public information officer for Cassia School District for 9 years. Debbie and her husband Dave live near Oakley, where they raised their four children. They have three grandsons.

## REAL ESTATE MANAGEMENT

Jason Crowder, Wyoming Office of State Lands and Investments ([jason.crowder@wyo.gov](mailto:jason.crowder@wyo.gov))



Jason Crowder is the Deputy Director of the Office of State Lands and Investments (OSLI), an agency within the State of Wyoming dedicated to land management and revenue generation for the benefit of the State's trust beneficiaries, the largest of which being the K-12 public school system. Before being appointed as the Deputy Director, Jason grew his passion for the mission of state trust land management with OSLI beginning in 2007. Jason was initially hired as a Senior Lands Management Specialist, then Field Services Supervisor, and most recently as the Assistant Director of the Trust Land Management Division. Jason was brought into the Assistant Director position to build the Trust Land Management Division from the ground up. He united all surface and mineral leasing activities across the State to increase efficiencies, transparency, and communication. The diverse workload included participation and oversight in all aspects of land management including grazing and agriculture, renewable energy, real estate transactions, oil and gas, hard rock, coal, and sand and gravel lease programs, among many others.

Prior to his time with OSLI, Jason began his career in land management as an intern with the U.S. Forest Service in Jackson, WY, and the State of Idaho, Department of Lands in Boise, ID. He then held the position of Land Use Specialist with the State of Montana's Department of Natural Resources and Conservation in Miles City, MT. Jason's experiences and education have earned him extensive knowledge in all aspects of land management ranging from rangeland ecology, multiple use, real estate sales and acquisitions, and wildfire management - all with a specific focus on sustainable and optimized revenue generation.

Jason graduated in 2002 from the Laramie County Community College with an Associates degree in Agriculture Production, and in 2004 from the University of Wyoming with a Bachelor of Science degree in Rangeland Ecology and Watershed Management.

Jason is married to his beautiful wife, Jessica, and have an amazing daughter, Adelynn.



## OIL AND GAS

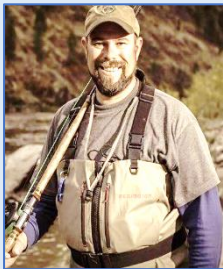
Hope Dalton, Colorado DNR ([hope.dalton@state.co.us](mailto:hope.dalton@state.co.us))



Hope Dalton is the Director of the newly established Colorado Produced Water Consortium which is housed in the Colorado Department of Natural Resources. Hope has extensive experience in state and local government, including service at the Colorado Department of Public Safety, South Platte Renew, Metro Water Recovery, and Tri-County Health Department. Hope has experience in research, policy development, land use, and leading diverse stakeholder groups.

## ESA RULES/SAGE GROUSE MANAGEMENT IMPACTS

Mike Edmondson, Idaho Governor's Office of Species Conservation ([mike.edmondson@osc.idaho.gov](mailto:mike.edmondson@osc.idaho.gov))



Mike Edmondson was appointed administrator by Governor Brad Little in May of 2021. Primary responsibilities include providing the overall direction for agency operations and coordinating Endangered Species Act programs with federal, state and private partners. Mike has served OSC since 2008 and continues to serve as Program Manager and Policy Advisor for OSC overseeing the Governor's Salmon Workgroup, Upper Salmon Basin Watershed Program, the Clearwater Focus Program, Idaho Fish Accords, Snake River Basin Adjudication, and the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund. Areas of responsibility are management of technical and policy issues including recovery funding related to salmon, steelhead, bull trout, and Kootenai River white sturgeon. Before joining OSC, Mike served the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality for 14 years working in Surface Water in various roles from monitoring and assessment to managing federal reporting under the Clean Water Act.

## ENDOWMENT TIMBER MANAGEMENT/OPTIMIZING TRUST LAND TIMBER REVENUE

Jim Elbin, Idaho Department of Lands ([jelbin@idl.idaho.gov](mailto:jelbin@idl.idaho.gov))



Jim Elbin graduated from the University of Idaho in 2000 with a BS in Forest Resources. While in college and for a year afterward, he worked in private industry, gaining experience in both the products and resource aspects of forestry. Jim began his career with the state as a Resource Technician at the Southwest Supervisory Area in Boise. In 2002, moved to a full-time position as a Resource Specialist at the Maggie Creek Supervisory Area in Kamiah, ID, where he broadened his expertise to include range and fire management. In 2012, Jim joined the Coeur d'Alene staff office as the agency silviculturist, and four years later, he was promoted to Timber Bureau Chief. Since May 2020, he has served as the Trust Land Division Administrator, overseeing all policy and procedures related to Idaho's endowment lands.

## ENDOWMENT RECREATION MANAGEMENT

Chris Fausett, Utah Trust lands Administration ([chrisfausett@utah.gov](mailto:chrisfausett@utah.gov))



Chris is the Managing Director of Surface Resources for the Utah School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration. He oversees a variety of programs on Utah's vast portfolio of trust lands including surface leasing, sales, exchanges, livestock grazing, forest management, water rights, and land stewardship. He is privileged to direct a team of dedicated land management professionals who generate millions of dollars for Utah's public schools and other important institutions while enhancing the value of trust lands for the benefit of future generations.

Chris is passionate about the Trust's mission and has spent his entire professional career with the Trust Lands Administration, starting out as a GIS intern in 2003. Over the course of his career Chris

has been involved with virtually every facet of trust lands management, most recently coordinating the implementation of complex multi-million dollar land exchanges with the federal government.

A lifelong Utah resident, Chris was born and raised in rural Carbon County, attended Utah public schools, and graduated from Utah State University with a bachelor's degree in Geography. He currently resides in Davis County with his wife Tiffany where they spend most of their time trying to keep up with their two teenagers.

## WILDFIRES AND RESILIENCY

Craig Foss, Idaho Department of Lands ([cfoss@idl.idaho.gov](mailto:cfoss@idl.idaho.gov))



Craig Foss is the State Forester and Division Administrator – Forestry & Fire for the Idaho Department of Lands (IDL). Craig earned a B.S. in Geology at the University of North Dakota, and M.S. in Forest Resources at the University of Idaho. Craig has more than thirty years of experience leading and administering diverse forestry programs. He has been with IDL since 1995, serving in various capacities including Forestry Assistance Bureau Chief, and Division Administrator, Forestry & Fire position. He was named State Forester in February 2020. In his current position, Craig oversees the Fire Management, Private Forestry Assistance and Good Neighbor Authority Bureaus for IDL. He also oversees the Idaho Shared Stewardship Initiative. Craig and his wife Jill reside in Rathdrum, Idaho.

## WASHINGTON DC UPDATE

Allen Freemyer, Freemyer and Associates ([allen@adfpc.com](mailto:allen@adfpc.com))



Mr. Freemyer established himself as a nationally recognized expert in legislation, appropriations, natural resources, parks, recreation, water, energy, Native American, and environment matters while serving as senior staff for nine years on the Committee on Resources in the U.S. House of Representatives. Mr. Freemyer constituted Freemyer & Associates in February 2002 after serving as the Chief of Staff of the committee under the direction of Chairman James V. Hansen (UT).

Mr. Freemyer represents a variety of clients who interact and do business with Congress, the Department of Interior, the Department of Agriculture, and the EPA. Over the years Mr. Freemyer has successfully led clients through the maze of administrative and legislative issues to grow businesses, promote projects, and establish relationships which add great value to business objectives. Mr. Freemyer has brought success to projects across the nation through his 31 years of experience resolving issues and forming relationships in Washington. He is responsible for multiple successful legislative efforts to exchange and transact millions of acres of federal and private lands throughout the west. His success comes from years of establishing long-lasting and effective relationships with Members of Congress, relevant committee staff and various federal agency officials from both major parties.

Mr. Freemyer was born in Vernal, Utah and grew up in Greeley, Colorado and is a graduate of Utah State University (1986) and received his Juris Doctor from the University of Utah (1989). He is a member of the District of Columbia Bar. Mr. Freemyer resides in Washington, D.C. with his wife Windsor Freemyer and their family.

## REAL ESTATE MANAGEMENT

Bill Haagenson, Idaho Department of Lands ([w Haagenson@idl.idaho.gov](mailto:w Haagenson@idl.idaho.gov))



Bill Haagenson is the Deputy Director for the Idaho Department of Lands (IDL) and is located in Boise. In this role, working with Division Administrators, Bill provides oversight for the Trust Land Management, Operations, Forestry & Fire, and Minerals/Navigable Waters/Oil & Gas divisions. Bill has worked in forestry and natural resource management for more than thirty years beginning as a field forester and progressing through various positions in Wyoming (twice), Washington, South Dakota, and Idaho. Bill has been with IDL since 2015. Bill has a B.S. in Forestry from Colorado State University and a B.S. in Animal Science from South Dakota State University.

## OIL AND GAS

Michael Hightower, NMSU/NM Produced Water Research Consortium ([mmhightower@q.com](mailto:mmhightower@q.com))



Michael Hightower is a civil and environmental engineer with 40 years of experience in research and development. His current efforts include research and evaluation of innovative environmental and energy technologies and the reliability, security, and protection of critical water and energy infrastructures. He has led programs supporting the U.S. in improving the safety, security, and reliability of energy and water infrastructures; managed and coordinated Sandia's marine energy transport safety and security program; managed environmental research and development programs for DOE; has coordinated Sandia's energy water interdependency research program since 2005; and has conducted civil and structural modeling, analysis, and design of penetrating weapons systems, missiles and rockets, and energy generation, mining, and transportation facilities and infrastructure. Michael's background also includes extensive work with public-private partnerships involving water quality, desalination, and water policy. Mike recently received the Multi-State Salinity Coalition 2022 "Salt of the Earth" Award.

## SOCIAL MEDIA/ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Robbie Johnson, Idaho Department of Lands ([rjohnson@idl.idaho.gov](mailto:rjohnson@idl.idaho.gov))



Robbie Johnson has been a trusted voice in Idaho for 24 years. Her experience includes reporting and anchoring at KTVB News in Boise, Idaho, handling public relations and public information for the often-misunderstood Ada County Highway District, and managing major news events related to large-impact winter storms, high-profile wildland fires, and a quadruple murder in Moscow, Idaho. She currently serves as a public information officer for the Idaho Department of Lands and is a member of the Command and General Staff on a Complex Incident Management Team as a PIO. Robbie's speaking topic, "How to Use AI in Public Outreach Before it Uses You," will demonstrate how to integrate AI into state trust land management public information strategies while maintaining the trust of the public.

## TIMBER INDUSTRY PERSPECTIVE

Tera King, Idaho Forest Group ([tera.king@ifg.com](mailto:tera.king@ifg.com))



Tera King has been a Business and Resource Analyst for Idaho Forest Group for nearly 5 years working primarily with their forestry and procurement team. Prior to that, she spent 17 years as a consulting forester working all over the Northwest and beyond. Tera has a Bachelor's degree in Forest Ecosystem Management from the University of Idaho and a Masters of Business Administration from Norwich University in Vermont. She lives with her husband, Chris, and two sons, Levi and Sawyer, in Lewiston, Idaho where they like to do all the things Idahoans do!

## CARBON OPPORTUNITIES – FORESTS AND BEYOND

Greg Latta, University of Idaho ([glatta@uidaho.edu](mailto:glatta@uidaho.edu))



Greg Latta is a Research Associate Professor of Forest Economics and Director of the Policy Analysis Group at the University of Idaho. Dr. Latta's research focuses on the application of economic optimization models for policy analysis, with extensive experience in the forestry, land use, bioenergy, and climate policy domains. He holds a bachelor's degree in economics from the University of California at Santa Barbara, a master's degree in forest resources from Oregon State University and a Ph.D. in forest and resource economics from the Norwegian University of Life Sciences. He is coauthor on multiple forest carbon offset methodologies and one of the founders of the Forest Carbon Quantification Consortium of researchers focused on scientific analyses designed to inform offset methodologies being developed and applied across registries.

## WORKFORCE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Blake Manley, University of Idaho (bmanley@uidaho.edu)



Blake Manley is a 4th generation logger turned educator. He started in the woods 25yrs ago working alongside his dad in Eastern Oregon. After getting his degree at the University of Idaho Blake took several jobs in the forestry industry such as Log Buyer, Timber Sale Layout, and Mill Supervisor. He found his niche when a Career Technical Education job teaching forestry in Sweet Home, Oregon became available. There he was able to combine his passion for forestry and making a difference in young people's lives. During his time there he created the series "Manley Jobs," a video series used to educate during distance learning. He sits on the Future Natural Resources board of directors, has been featured on Fox News and in the SAFs Western Forester magazine. He now works with the University of Idaho as Workforce Development at the College of Natural Resources.

## EFFICIENT MARKETS

Gus Rivero, EnergyNet (gus.rivero@energynet.com)



Gus Rivero serves as the Chief Ventures Officer at Efficient Markets, overseeing its subsidiaries: Government Resources, RenovaNexa, and VeroLands. With 17 years of experience, Gus specializes in assisting governments, institutions, businesses, and individuals in divesting, leasing or funding renewable energy projects, oil and gas ventures, real estate, and other commodities through Efficient Markets' bespoke online platforms.

In 2007, Gus began his career at EnergyNet as part of the Technical Services department. He joined Government Resources in 2011 and has been leading the group since 2018. Under his leadership, Government Resources has successfully sold over \$3.5 billion for 34 government offices.

During his tenure with Government Resources, one of Gus' most significant achievements was expanding the range of commodity types offered to over 30, positioning Efficient Markets as the leading transaction advisor in the energy, real estate, and mining sectors.

Originally from Argentina, Gus moved to the United States in 2001. On December 2, 2010, after a decade-long journey, he proudly became an American citizen.

Gus has been a long-time active affiliate member of the National Association of State Trust Lands (NASTL), a non-profit group of administrators managing over 500 million acres of state-owned trust lands in 21 western states.

## OIL AND GAS

Rusty Smith, Texas Tech (rusty.smith@ttu.edu)



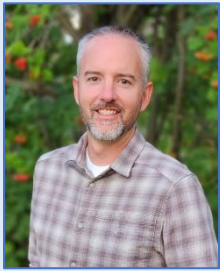
A native of West Texas, Rusty Smith brings a unique blend of experience in both the private and public sectors to the direction of the Consortium. Rusty comes to Texas Tech from the Lubbock Economic Development Alliance where he previously served as a project manager, focusing on recruiting new businesses and fostering innovation in the Lubbock region.

Prior to moving back to Lubbock, Rusty spent several years in Austin working in public policy in both the Texas House of Representatives and the Texas Senate, primarily focusing on natural resources, agriculture, and energy. Most notably, Rusty served as the Committee Director for the Texas Senate Committee on Agriculture, Water and Rural Affairs during the 85th Texas Legislature for Chairman Charles Perry. During that time, he oversaw all legislation under the jurisdiction of the committee, including issues impacting water resources across the state. After the 85th session Rusty was hired to serve as the Director of Government & Regulatory Affairs for the Texas Independent Producers & Royalty Owners Association, a statewide oil & gas trade association serving nearly 3,000 individual and corporate members. Rusty received a BS from Texas A&M University and an MBA from Texas Tech.



## THE PUBLIC TRUST

Andrew Smyth, Idaho Department of Lands ([asmith@idl.idaho.gov](mailto:asmith@idl.idaho.gov))



Andrew Smyth is the Area Manager for the Idaho Department of Lands Mica Supervisory Area. In this role, he oversees the management of endowment land, wildland fire suppression, and the regulatory programs administered out of the Cataldo and Mica Field Offices. He has worked for the State of Idaho since 2008 serving in multiple regulatory programs including the Idaho Department of Lands' Public Trust Program and the Idaho State Department of Agriculture's Organic Certification and Market Development Programs. He holds a BA from Brigham Young University and an MBA from Boise State University. On the weekends, you can find Andrew and his family on the lakeshore and hiking trails of northern Idaho.

## RENEWABLE ENERGY SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

Rich Stover, Idaho Governor's Office of Energy and Mineral Resources ([richard.stover@oer.idaho.gov](mailto:richard.stover@oer.idaho.gov))



Richard Stover is the Administrator of the Idaho Governor's Office of Energy and Mineral Resources. Prior to his appointment to OEMR, Stover provided legal counsel to a broad range of Idaho citizens, businesses, and public entities as a partner with Boise law firm Eberle, Berlin, Kading, Turnbow & McKlveen, Senior Counsel for Govt. Relations at Boise State University, and Assistant City Attorney for the City of Boise. He also served as natural resource policy staff for Idaho Governors Phil Batt and Dirk Kempthorne and a judicial extern for U.S. District Judge Edward J. Lodge. Stover holds a Juris Doctor degree from the University of Idaho and a Bachelor of Arts from the College of Idaho.

## WILDFIRES AND RESILIENCY

Shawn Thomas, Montana DNRC ([sthomas@mt.gov](mailto:sthomas@mt.gov))



Shawn Thomas serves as the Forestry and Trust Land Division Administrator for the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation. This position serves as Montana's State Forester. The Division is responsible managing Montana's Trust Lands and for planning and implementing forestry and fire management programs across the State.

Shawn was born in Butte, Montana. His childhood was split between there and Columbia Falls where his family relocated in the early 1980's. He studied forestry at the University of Montana with an emphasis in Forest Resource Management.

Shawn's forestry career started out working for Plum Creek Timber Company from 1994 through 1999 as a seasonal forester, working on everything from inventory and GIS to timber sale design and layout. In 1999 he went to work as a procurement forester for Thompson River Lumber in Thompson Falls. Shawn's first job with the Montana DNRC was on the Plains Unit in 2003 where he oversaw the Unit's Trust lands timber program. In 2006 he was promoted to the Trust Land Program Manager at the Northwestern Land Office where he expanded his knowledge into real estate matters. In the fall of 2008, he was selected to be the Chief of DNRC's Forest Management Bureau, working statewide on forest and state land policy issues. In November of 2011, he accepted the position as the Division Administrator for Trust Lands. Trust Lands management in Montana includes programs in Real Estate, Forest Management, Minerals, and Agriculture and Grazing. In 2023, through a reorganization combining Trust lands with Forestry, Shawn assumed the leadership role for the now combined Division which now includes fire protection, forestry assistance, implementing the Good Neighbor Authority, and executing the Montana Forest Action Plan.

Shawn has been married to his lovely wife, Deana, for more than 30 years. They have one teenage daughter, Danica. The family spends their free time enjoying the recreation opportunities that living in Montana provides along with travelling to new and interesting places.

## SPONSOR PRESENTATION

Chris White, Ernst & Young ([chris.k.white@ey.com](mailto:chris.k.white@ey.com))



Chris White is the product owner of the Land Management Accelerator at Ernst & Young. She has been transforming enterprise organizations utilizing technology for 25 years and has a passion for the user experience and data integrity using the Microsoft Cloud. Chris leads the EY delivery team of the Land Management Accelerator through the software development lifecycle from discovery of agency requirements through hyper care post implementation. She is originally from South Dakota, and now lives in Colorado with her husband and three girls.

## THE PUBLIC TRUST

JJ Winters, Idaho Department of Lands ([jwinters@idl.idaho.gov](mailto:jwinters@idl.idaho.gov))



JJ is a fifth-generation Idahoan, raised on a ranch and potato farm in Eastern Idaho. She is both a Bronco and a Vandal, with a Bachelor of Business Administration from Boise State University and a Juris Doctor from the University of Idaho College of Law. JJ clerked for District Judge George A. Southworth in Canyon County and practiced at a private firm before transitioning to the Office of the Attorney General as counsel for the Idaho Department of Lands in 2021.

JJ lives in Meridian with husband Scotty, daughter Sloane (15), son Porter (14), and three-quarter horses, Willie (23), Montana (7), and Clifford (7). She spends most of her spare time volunteering and spectating at rodeos, gardening, boating, rockhounding, downhill biking, snowboarding, and horseback riding.

## IDAHO LAND BOARD COMMENTS

Brandon Woolf, Idaho State Controller ([bwoolf@sco.idaho.gov](mailto:bwoolf@sco.idaho.gov))



Brandon Woolf, Idaho's 21st State Controller, was elected by the citizens of Idaho to the position in November of 2014 and re-elected in 2018 and 2022. Brandon started at the State Controller's Office in 1997 as an intern and quickly rose through the ranks prior to his appointment.

Brandon grew up and attended school in Preston, Idaho, merited the rank of Eagle Scout, graduated from Utah State University with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science (Cum Laude) and a minor in Dutch, and earned a Master of Business Administration from Boise State University. In 1994, he married Janalee Balls, who also hails from Preston, and they have three children.

Brandon recently completed a year's service as the President of the National Association of State Comptrollers' (NASC) executive committee and is currently the 1st Vice Chair for the National Association of State Auditors, Comptrollers, and Treasurers' (NASACT).

## OPTIMIZING THE WHOLE TRUST

Janet Becker-Wold, Callan, LLC ([beckerwold@callan.com](mailto:beckerwold@callan.com))



Janet Becker-Wold, CFA, is a senior vice president and the manager of Callan's Denver consulting office and a shareholder of the firm. Her experience at Callan includes all facets of investment consulting including investment policy analysis, asset allocation studies, as well as manager search and structure. Her clients include corporate defined benefit and defined contribution plans; public defined benefit plans; endowments and foundations, as well as cash pools.

Janet co-chairs Callan's Manager Search Committee and is a member of Callan's Management, Institute Advisory, and Client Policy Review committees. She is also a shareholder of the firm. In

2023, Janet was named "Advisor of the Year" in the Allocator Prizes by With Intelligence.

Prior to joining Callan in 1994, Janet worked in the international equity, fixed income, and real estate areas at Qwest's pension fund. While at Callan, she has authored research on a variety of investing issues and is a speaker at industry forums.

Janet received an MBA in finance from the University of Colorado and a BS in biology from the University of Texas. She is a holder of the right to use the Chartered Financial Analyst<sup>®</sup> designation and is a member of CFA Institute and CFA Society Colorado.