



Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

Division of Lands and Minerals

500 Lafayette Road - Box 45

St. Paul, MN 55155-4045



# DNR Land Sales

## Informational Brochure

### How do I learn about the DNR land sales?

Information about state land sales will be posted on the DNR's web page at [www.dnr.state.mn.us](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us). Click on "About the DNR," then "Lands and Minerals" and look for "Land Sale."

If you would like to receive e-mail updates about upcoming sales, you may sign up on the DNR's Cybernews Service "Specialty Sales" list, available through the department's web site.

Information is also available on our land sale information telephone line at 651-259-5432. In addition, DNR land sales are advertised in local newspapers where the lands are located.



Minnesota Department of Natural Resources  
Division of Lands and Minerals  
500 Lafayette Road  
St. Paul, MN 55155-4045  
Telephone: 651-259-5959  
Toll-free from outside Twin Cities: 1-888-646-6367  
Fax: 651-296-5939  
e-mail: [www.landsale@dnr.state.mn.us](mailto:www.landsale@dnr.state.mn.us)

## Does the DNR have land for sale?

The department plans to offer a small amount of land for sale every year. Depending upon the lands offered for sale, one sale or several sales may be held within one year.

## How is the state land offered for sale?

Detailed information on the parcels being offered is available 30 days before the sale date. The department prepares a property data sheet that provides a legal description, acreage, a basic site description, minimum bid price, zoning information, and directions to visit the property.

State-owned land is almost always sold by public auction. This means that everyone has an opportunity at the same time to bid on the property, provided that they meet bidder qualifications. The process can be either a sealed bid or an oral auction.

The property data sheet will specify whether the bidding is by oral auction or sealed bid. The date, time, and location of the auction is listed on the property data sheet.

### Minimum bid

Before being offered for sale, the lands are valued by the commissioner. The lands cannot be sold for less than the determined value. In most instances, sale costs associated with survey, appraisal, and marketing are also charged to the buyer. These charges make up the minimum bid specified for the lands being offered. The land is sold to the highest bidder, but the lands will not be sold for less than the specified minimum bid.

### Minimum payment due

If you are the successful bidder, there is a minimum payment due at the time of the auction of 10 percent of the total amount bid. The balance of the total payment is due in full within 90 days of the auction.

If there are privately-owned improvements on the property and the successful bidder is not the owner of the improvements, the successful bidder must pay the private improvement value to the private owner within 15 days after the sale.

## Are lands ever sold at other than public auction?

School and university lands, which are lands the state was granted by the federal government, can only be sold at public sale. About half of the lands administered by the DNR are school lands.



Acquired lands are lands obtained through purchase, gift, or forfeiture. If acquired lands remain unsold after the public auction, the DNR may decide to continue to offer the lands for sale over-the-counter to the first person who agrees to pay the minimum bid amount. If offered after a public auction, the lands continue to be available until sold, withdrawn from sale, or reappraised. Once the lands are withdrawn from sale or reappraised, they may only be sold after first being offered through public auction.

Also, for acquired lands there are limited exceptions to the public sale requirement, including special legislation, transfer to a local unit of government for public use, and trail lands sold to adjoining property owners.

## How are the state lands selected for sale?

The department units administering the land need to decide that the land is no longer needed for natural resource management purposes. There are a variety of reasons for this determination.

Tracts may be identified by staff as not being utilized for natural resource purposes due to having no public access. Some of the parcels have been sites for state offices that have closed. On occasion, the sale is to resolve an inadvertent trespass on state lands. Sometimes the department will have acquired land from a willing seller for a particular use, and the seller was only willing to sell all that they owned and a portion of the acquired property is not needed for the natural resource management purpose. A few parcels of lakeshore property have been sold in recent years to place some property back on the tax rolls after the state has acquired other private lands in that county. Although not as common, a tract is sometimes offered for sale after an inquiry from the public generates a review of whether the tract could be offered for sale.

## Are there any other public lands available for sale?

The Minnesota Department of Administration sells land and building sites for many state agencies. The Minnesota Department of Transportation, the Minnesota Department of Military Affairs, and Minnesota State Colleges and Universities also have the authority to sell state land under their control.

Tax-forfeited lands are owned by the state in trust for the taxing districts. The individual counties have the legal authority to sell tax-forfeited lands, subject to certain restrictions. In most instances, tax-forfeited lands are sold by public auction. The counties may allow the lands to remain available for purchase for a period of time after the sale date if not purchased on the day of sale.

If you are interested in purchasing tax-forfeited land, you need to contact the county auditor's office in the county in which the land is located. *Tax-forfeited land sale information is not available from the DNR.* If the county has a land department/commissioner, they can also provide information on tax-forfeited land sales and are often in charge of such sales.

