



Office of the Governor

Doug Burgum
GOVERNOR



NEWS: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Department of Trust Lands Commissioner Jodi Smith announces resignation effective Oct. 28

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BISMARCK, N.D. (OCT. 12, 2021) – North Dakota Department of Trust Lands Commissioner Jodi Smith has announced her resignation to the state Board of University and School Lands (Land Board), effective Oct. 28.

Smith said she has accepted a public sector position outside of state government. She has offered to be available to the Land Board on a consultation basis after Oct. 28 to aid in the transition to new leadership.

“I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude for the support and opportunities you have provided me during my time as the Commissioner and Secretary for the Board,” Smith stated in her resignation to the Land Board. “I will always remember my time as the leader of the Department of Trust Lands with great fondness. The team working at the Department is full of talent and fortitude. I am exceptionally proud of our accomplishments, proud of my team for their tireless dedication and I am looking forward to my next steps in my own career after these significant accomplishments.”

The Land Board appointed Smith as trust lands commissioner in November 2017 and reappointed her to a second term in June. Under her leadership, the Department of Trust Lands modernized its technology, grew its managed assets by \$3 billion and its managed oil and gas leases by more than 1,500, created administrative rules for the agency and fulfilled over \$13 million in unclaimed property claims in the last biennium.

“We thank Commissioner Smith for her service to the State of North Dakota and the Department of Trust Lands over the past four years as the agency saw significant growth in assets and leases,” said Gov. Doug Burgum, who chairs the Land Board. “Jodi and the Trust Lands team oversaw multiple IT system upgrades related to financial management, unclaimed property and citizen-facing websites to better serve the public.”

State law requires the Land Board to appoint a commissioner for the remainder of Smith's four-year term, which ends June 30, 2025.

The five-member Land Board consists of Burgum as chair and State Superintendent Kirsten Baesler, State Treasurer Thomas Beadle, Secretary of State Al Jaeger and Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem as members. Its next meeting is scheduled for Oct. 28.

The Department of Trust Lands manages the permanent educational trust funds and assets under the Land Board's control as outlined in the North Dakota Constitution. The department also is responsible for managing several funds and mineral acres in addition to the trust assets, operating the state Unclaimed Property Division and the Energy Infrastructure and Impact Office.

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