

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

REPORT

OF THE

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

RELATIVE TO THE

ACQUISITION OF THE PROPERTY OF FOREST

LAKE PARK COMPANY IN THE TOWN OF

PALMER FOR A STATE PARK

(under Chapter 107 of the Resolves of 1967)

January 3, 1968.

The Department of the Interior

REPORT

ON THE

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

RELATIVE TO THE

ACQUISITION OF THE PROPERTY OF

THE LAND COMPANY IN THE

PATENT FOR A STATE

LAND COMPANY IN THE

January 1, 1875

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
STATE OFFICE BUILDING, GOVERNMENT CENTER
100 CAMBRIDGE STREET, BOSTON 02202

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

December 26, 1967.

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives:

The General Court adopted the following measure in the form of Chapter 107, Resolves of 1967.

Resolve for an investigation and study by the Department of Natural Resources relative to the acquisition of the property of Forest Lake Park Company in the Town of Palmer for a State Park and to file the same with the Clerk of the Senate on or before the last Wednesday of December, nineteen hundred and sixty-seven.

In accordance with the authorization given in the above resolve, the Department of Natural Resources submits the following report.

Respectfully submitted,

ROBERT L. YASI, *Commissioner*

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
STATE OFFICE BUILDING, GOVERNMENT CENTER
100 CAMBRIDGE STREET, BOSTON 02202

Chapter 107, Resolves of 1967

A Resolve for an investigation and study by the Department of Natural Resources relative to the acquisition of the property of Forest Lake Park Company in the Town of Palmer for a State Park.

The Department of Natural Resources through the Division of Forests and Parks examined the Forest Lake Park Company property in the Town of Palmer and the following report has been attached.

Respectfully submitted,

ROBERT L. YASI, *Commissioner*

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

The Study

The Division of Forests and Parks of the Massachusetts Department of Natural Resources undertook a study of the property of Forest Lake Park Company in the Town of Palmer, Massachusetts as authorized and directed by Chapter 107 of the General Laws in the year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Sixty-Seven.

Under Mr. Kenneth M. Dubuque, Regional Forest and Park Supervisor, a detailed investigation of the land area, facilities, water quality and building and land values was completed.

Location

Forest Lake is located in the northwestern portion of Palmer in Hampshire County, five miles north of Exit 8 of the Massachusetts Turnpike on the west side of Route 32.

Forest Lake

This lake has a surface area of forty-three acres and a maximum depth of twenty-six feet. The elevation is three hundred and sixty-nine feet. The quality and quantity of the water is good. Gates Brook, which flows from the State Fish Hatchery, a short distance away is the main water supply for the lake. The flowage rights and the dam are owned by Mr. Dwight Holbrook of Palmer. The entire lake shore is in four ownerships.

Buildings and Facilities

The Forest Lake Park Company ownership (parcel A) consists of 55 acres of land and the following buildings and facilities:

- 1 — 70' x 150' wooden structure in fair condition, containing a dance hall, bar, snack bar, kitchen and toilet facilities — bath houses and storage area in the basement.

- 1 — 14' x 24' storage shed, wooden, in poor condition.
- 1 — 8' x 15' toilet (mens) wooden — 2 toilets, 1 urinal and 1 lavatory in fair condition.
- 1 — 10' x 10' toilet (womens) wooden — 4 toilets, 1 lavatory in fair condition.
- 1 — 35' x 120' wood picnic pavilion, poor condition.
- 1 — 20' x 20' wood picnic pavilion, poor condition.
- 1 — Cottage 14' x 30', 1½ story, 4 small rooms & bath, poor condition.
- 1 — Cottage, 18' x 20', 1½ story, 2½ rooms & bath, poor condition.
- 1 — Cottage, 18' x 32', 1½ story, 4 small rooms and bath, poor condition.
- 1 — Cottage, 24' x 20', 1½ story, 4 small rooms & bath, poor condition.
- 2 — Buildings & Facilities
- 2 — Volley ball courts
- 1 — Small ball field with good turf covering.
- 90,000 sq. ft. parking lot with hard top covering, fair condition.
- 20,000 sq. ft of beach area.
- 20,000 sq. ft. of roped off swimming area.
- 1 — pier with 2 level diving and chute.

The depth of the water increases sharply from the beach out into the lake. The present picnic facilities are very limited. The remaining acreage, due to its topography and inaccessibility to the beach area, is unsuited for day use development.

Water Quality

Water samples were submitted to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health to determine the water quality. The bacterial analysis indicated that the water was suitable for outdoor bathing facilities. Past samples had also indicated the suitability of the water for bathing facilities.

Recommendations

It has been determined that the property of the Forest Lake Park Company is not suited to the acquisition and development of a state recreation facility.

The following factors were considered to be controlling influences:

1. Present facilities are in such condition that all structures would have to be removed and new facilities designed and developed.
2. Forest Lake Company Property does not lend itself to expansion due to topography and inaccessibility to the beach area.
3. Water rights to the Lake would have to be acquired and possible improvement of the dam undertaken.
4. More suitable sites are under investigation in the general area.

Introduction

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