REPORT

OF

GOVERNOR'S COMMITTEE

ON

NEEDS AND USES OF OPEN SPACES

1927

CHARLES S. BIRD, Jr., Chairman
LAURENCE B. FLETCHER, Secretary

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COMMITTEE PERSONNEL

GOVERNOR'S COMMITTEE ON NEEDS AND USES OF OPEN SPACES

WILLIAM A. L. BAZELEY
Commissioner of Conservation

CHARLES S. BIRD, JR.
Trustees of Public Reservations

ALLEN CHAMBERLAIN
Appalachian Mountain Club

HENRY M. CHANNING
Trustees of Public Reservations

ARTHUR C. COMEY
Boston Society of Landscape Architects

RICHARD K. CONANT
Commissioner of Public Welfare

CHARLES W. ELIOT, 2ND
Trustees of Public Reservations

LAURENCE B. FLETCHER
Federation of the Bird Clubs of New England, Inc.

CHARLES B. FLOYD
Northeastern Bird Banding Association

WILLIAM R. GREELEY
Massachusetts Federation of Planning Boards

JOHN S. LAWRENCE
New England Council

JOSEPH LEE
Playground and Recreation Association of America

HON. HERBERT PARKER
Trustees of Public Reservations

JOHN C. PHILLIPS
Massachusetts Fish and Game Association

HARRIS A. REYNOLDS
Massachusetts Forestry Association

JOHN L. SALTONSTALL
Associated Committees for Wild Life Conservation

JUDGE ROBERT WALCOTT
Massachusetts Audubon Society

This Committee was appointed by Governor Alvan T. Fuller on November 1, 1927

REPORT BY THE COMMITTEE ON NEEDS AND USES OF OPEN SPACES IN MASSACHUSETTS, AS RENDERED TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR OF MASSACHUSETTS.

At a National Conference on outdoor recreation, called by the President of the United States in 1924 and attended by representatives of 128 national organizations, the President said:

The prime objective for which I feel we should strive is to endeavor to make available for the average American outdoor recreation with all that it implies, and to preserve our facilities for outdoor recreation for our children and children's children.

In their annual report for 1927 The Trustees of Public Reservations say:

The present (State) holdings cannot by any stretch of the imagination be considered as being well distributed for use, or adequate in number or extent. To determine the areas which should be included in the future system of State Parks, Forests and Reservations, a comprehensive survey of the present uses of land, accessibility and potential values of sites for different purposes should be made. Based on this survey, a plan should be prepared showing future open spaces, urban areas and transportation and communication facilities.

State-wide surveys and plans of this sort have been undertaken in New York and Michigan. It is worth while to analyze the tendencies of growth, the natural resources, and the arrangement of our transport system so that we may plan ahead to seize new opportunities, prevent mistakes, and make the most of what we already have.

The above statement outlines the situation upon which our Committee was requested by His Excellency Governor Fuller to investigate and report.

PART I.

What Had Already Been Done.

In 1925, under the auspices of The Trustees of Public Reservations, together with others interested in open space needs and uses, a conference was called in Massachusetts. The result of this conference was the appointment of a Committee. The aim of this Committee was "co-operation among existing organizations and government departments interested in the provision, distribution and development and maintenance of public reservations in Massachusetts."

The Committee compiled a record of existing public areas upon a map printed in 1927 showing all the readily discoverable existing open spaces in Massachusetts of a public or semi-public nature. This map was distributed to all affiliated organizations, and copies may be secured from the office of C. W. Eliot, 2nd, Secretary, 9 Park Street, Boston. This work was greatly facilitated by the co-operation of the Playground and Recreation Association of America.

Appointment of Our Committee.

By vote of this Committee His Excellency the Governor was asked to give its work official recognition, and in 1928 the present Committee was appointed by Governor Fuller, composed of representatives from the leading Massachusetts organizations interested in open spaces, as follows:

Charles S. Bird, Jr.
Trustees of Public Reservations
John S. Lawrence
New England Council
John L. Saltonstall
Associated Committee for Wild Life Conservation
John C. Phillips
Massachusetts Fish and Game Association
Judge Robert Walcott
Massachusetts Audubon Society
Harris A. Reynolds
Massachusetts Forestry Association
Hon. Herbert Parker
Trustees of Public Reservations
Laurence B. Fletcher
Federation of the Bird Clubs of New England, Inc.

Charles W. Eliot, 2nd
City Planner for National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Arthur C. Comey
Boston Society of Landscape Architects
Henry M. Channing
Trustees of Public Reservations
Charles B. Floyd
Northeastern Bird Banding Association
Allen Chamberlain
Appalachian Mountain Club
William A. L. Bazeley
Commissioner of Conservation
Richard K. Conant
Commissioner of Public Welfare
William R. Greeley
Massachusetts Federation of Planning Boards
Joseph Lee
President of the Playground and Recreation Association of America

State Parks and Forests.

State Parks and Forests, with their recreational opportunities, cannot be too fully or broadly planned for their ultimate need. It is a mistake often made by taxpayers to feel that State Parks are an expensive luxury. There are many instances of the development of State Reservations which have already commenced to show a cash return in excess of money needed for their maintenance. Irrespective of the material side, however, as trustees of posterity we should plan for the future, and it is our duty to make it possible for generations to come to enjoy outdoor recreation. The use of motor vehicles and airplanes will increase as years go on, and large areas will be in reach of more and more people. *If private property is not to be trespassed upon and abused, an alternative must be provided for those who cannot afford or do not wish to patronize holdings of hotels and of amusement parks.* The temporary spread of the population of cities into the country along highways on all week-ends, holidays and vacation periods will increase.

More and more privately owned areas are being closed to the public. City population is steadily growing. New transportation facilities are extending the areas of the country within reach of populous centers. These are increasing reasons

for such publicly controlled areas as State and town forests and parks, motor camp places, scenic and historic sites, beaches, pond reservations, and wilderness areas for bird, mammal and fish preserves — for wild life conservation, scenic preservation and for outdoor recreation. We must plan for this today.

Expenditure on Recreation.

Visitors bring to New England its greatest cash business. In a circular issued by the National Conference on State Parks in 1926, it is estimated that the sum spent annually for outdoor recreation by the Nation is $2,500,000,000, and that New England's share of this total is $300,000,000. It is safe to say that this sum has grown considerably since 1926. So the health, well-being and recreation of the inhabitants of New England coincide with her great commercial interests as the Playground of America. It is also true that the value in dollars of the reduction in wastage of health and life which New England wins by her Open Spaces for her own people is considerably in excess of the sums which she spends in acquiring and maintaining these health-producing facilities.

National and State Activities.

With the coming of the automobile, interest in State Parks throughout the United States has enormously increased. The 1928 Report of the National Conference on State Parks, Inc., entitled "State Recreation Parks, Forests and Game Preserves," gives a summary of activities. It is an inspiring document. The reports concerning activities in the States of New York, Connecticut, Pennsylvania and Michigan give an impressive outline of some of the best work that is being done in this field throughout the Union.

Massachusetts the Pioneer.

Mr. Raymond H. Torrey, in his report to the National Conference on State Parks (1926), shows that Massachusetts, nearly three hundred years ago, became the pioneer in this great movement. He says:

The earliest form of a public preserve devoted to outdoor recreation in the territory of the present United States was a city park, Boston Common, acquired in 1634. But the next earliest example of public

action of this kind covered a field related to that at present generally held by State agencies, — the reservation to the people for "fishing and fowling" by an ordinance of the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1641 of "great ponds," water surfaces of ten acres or more.

In the following table, showing the acreage of organized public reservations per thousand of inhabitants, Massachusetts occupies eighth place:

1. New York	207
2. Minnesota	183
3. Wisconsin	170
4. Pennsylvania	130
5. Michigan	97
6. Vermont	87
7. New Hampshire	65
8. Massachusetts	23

Massachusetts, number eight in these classes, has been a leader in the past in park and forest development. We should keep abreast of the needs before opportunities for further acquisition are made more difficult or lost entirely.

PART II.

Preliminary Report of Committee.

The Committee presents herewith a preliminary report to indicate the scope that a complete comprehensive survey and plan of State-wide dimensions should cover. This section consists of a plan for the location throughout the State of open spaces on the basis of some concrete policy and purpose. A final plan must be preceded by a survey, and a survey should be preceded by a clear understanding, by all of the interests involved, of the ultimate objective. In order to arrive at such an understanding, we have made and shown the preliminary survey. This is not to any large degree a field survey; it is chiefly a bringing together, in concrete form, in a series of maps, of the data bearing on the subject which were available from present records.

On the basis of this study a policy is suggested of aggressive acquisition of a series of open spaces following a comprehensive plan to build up a system of recreational areas. A classification of open areas is given in Appendix A. This classification

has been made to clarify the views of the various interests involved, — Forestry, Water Supply, Outdoor Recreation, Wild Life Conservation, Wilderness camping and Motor camping.

Map and Recommendations.

We show upon the attached map the locations of proposed additions to the public reservations, whether held by the State or by unofficial agencies. Certain scenic and historic sites may most appropriately be held and administered by agencies other than the State.

I. *The Bay Circuit.*

As 3,500,000 of the 4,150,000 people of Massachusetts (1925 Census) live within forty miles of the State House, we give emphasis to a series of connected reservations in a semicircle about midway between Worcester and Massachusetts Bay, and suggest a wide parkway beginning with Duxbury Beach on the south, via Charles River Narrows, Walden Pond, Bedford Meadows and Boxford to Plum Island and Salisbury Beach on the north. This would provide an Eastern Massachusetts Circuit of Parks, and as it utilizes chiefly land of comparatively low value it is our judgment that it can be gradually developed without undue expense. Nine public tracts and nine (out of thirty-two) projects recommended in the report lie within the confines of this proposed parkway. Within the area which we show upon the map, there are certain portions impossible or impracticable to secure. In the development of this parkway a careful field survey will be made and these areas would not be included in a final plan. We present this connected project under the title of "The Bay Circuit."

II. *State Beaches.*

1. Salisbury Beach (recommended by report of Legislative Committee, 1929), especially for Lowell (110,000), Lawrence (94,000), Haverhill (50,000) and Newburyport (15,500).

2. Duxbury Beach (recommended by report of Legislative Committee, 1929), especially for Brockton (65,343), Whitman (7,857), and Rockland (7,966) districts.

3. Westport Beach, Buzzard's Bay, especially for Fall River (128,000), New Bedford (120,000) and district.

III. *State Forests.*

The recommendation is for a complete program for consolidated State Forests, taking only portions of those areas shown on the map where land is relatively cheap or unsuited for other purposes. (Existing State Forests are listed in the Appendix.)

1. Fall River, New Bedford and Taunton Forest.
2. Douglas Woods.
3. Otis — Granville Forest.
4. October Mountain — Beartown Forest.
5. Mohawk Trail — Savoy Forest.
6. Warwick — Wendell Forest.
7. Moose Hill region, Sharon.
8. Myles Standish Forest extension.
9. Yarmouth Forest.

IV. *State Parks.*

1. Tri-State Park, including Bash-Bish Falls and Sage's Ravine, in connection with proposed activities by New York and Connecticut.
2. Jacob's Ladder, land adjoining highway.
3. Westfield River Gorge, on Middle Branch.
4. Windsor Jambs.
5. Mohawk Trail, land adjoining upper part.
6. Gorge of Upper Deerfield Valley.
7. Holyoke Range.
8. Doane's Falls, Royalston.
9. Mount Watatic.
10. Willard Brook, Ashby and Townsend.
11. Lake Chaubunagungamaug, part.
12. Rocky Narrows, Charles River, enlarged.
13. Dogtown Common, Gloucester.

V. *Wild Life Sanctuaries.*

1. Boxford Reservation, enlarged.
2. Plum Island, southern portion, and marshes.
3. Fowl Meadows, Bedford and Concord.
4. Sudbury Meadows.
5. Upper Neponset Meadows and Purgatory Swamp.
6. Raynham Great Cedar Swamp.
7. Barnstable Neck and marshes and Shootflying Hill.

8. Pilgrim Lake, Truro.
9. Monomoy Island, part.
10. Nantucket Moor.

VI. *Foot Trails.*

1. Appalachian through Trail, Connecticut to Vermont.
2. Wachusett — Watatic Trail.

Land for Memorials.

Much can be done to encourage gifts as memorials of scenic and historic sites in areas which are suitable for permanent park reservations.

The Trustees of Public Reservations in Massachusetts, organized in 1891 as a semi-public State agency, would be more effective if their purpose were better appreciated. With greater public interest the usefulness of the Trustees could be considerably extended. We recommend that this group be given greater recognition.

We have been helped in Open Space work by the national government and by the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests and the Appalachian Mountain Club. The great trail work of the Appalachian Mountain Club is one of the outstanding accomplishments in New England in opening forest areas for recreational purposes. The Club hopes to see similar opportunities developed in Massachusetts through the construction of trails across State Parks and Forests with connecting links between, and would co-operate in the development of such a trail system.

New England Plan.

In the study of open spaces in Massachusetts the need to include areas beyond the State boundaries involves the problem of a New England plan. It is expected that a New England plan to establish the interconnection of national forests, State Forests, State Parks and Interstate foot and horse trails, highway development and reservations will some day be undertaken. The one great asset of New England in the future will increasingly be its recreational advantages. To make such an investment today will pay large dividends in the future.

Recommendations.

To sum up we make the following recommendations:

1. Add a Division of Parks to the Department of Conservation (bill submitted to Legislature 1929) (see Appendix B).
2. Continue study of Open Space areas to complete preliminary survey and lead the way toward development of a comprehensive State plan.
3. With particular emphasis upon Beaches, add as many as practicable of the Open Spaces recommended.
4. Recognize The Trustees of Public Reservations as the Organization to co-operate with State Departments and voluntary agencies in execution of plans.

Conclusion.

We beg to record our indebtedness to all the organizations and public-spirited individuals who have rendered assistance to our Committee. We would express our hope that the vast amount of work which remains to be done will continue to attract the active interest and support of all citizens.

All inquiries and suggestions should be addressed to —

The Secretary,
The Committee on Needs and Uses of Open Spaces,
50 Congress Street, Boston, Mass.

or

The Secretary,
The Trustees of Public Reservations,
18 Tremont Street, Boston, Mass.

CHARLES S. BIRD, Jr.
Chairman.

LAURENCE B. FLETCHER
Secretary.

May 4, 1929.