

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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SEVENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE

HOUSE

NO. 1

House of Representatives, Jan. 9, 1919.

Referred to Committee on State Lands and Forest Preservation and five hundred copies ordered printed. Sent up for concurrence.

CLYDE R. CHAPMAN, Clerk.

Presented by Mr. Barnes of Houlton.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD ONE THOUSAND
NINE HUNDRED AND NINETEEN

REPORT.

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives, assembled:

Report of the Land Agent and Forest Commissioner on House Order dated March 23, 1917, instructing the Land Agent and Forest Commissioner to make investigation, search out and find townships and parts of townships of the wild lands in Maine suited for settlement for purposes of husbandry, and advantageously located with reference to railroad facilities, secure options of purchase from the owners thereof, and report to the next Legislature, recommendations for suitable legisla-

tion to open up the timber lands and wild lands of the State of Maine to settlers and home-makers, with description of townships or portions of townships upon which he has an option of purchase in the name of the State and the terms of such option.

The so-called wild land counties of our State are Aroostook, Franklin, Hancock, Penobscot, Piscataquis, Oxford, Somerset, and Washington. We corresponded or interviewed practically all of the wild land owners in these eight counties. A large majority of the owners expressed a willingness to sell such of their lands as would be suitable for agricultural purposes at a reasonable price to be agreed upon. A small part of the owners expressed a decided unwillingness to sell any of their land for farming purposes. The greater part of the wild land sections of Franklin, Hancock, Penobscot, Piscataquis, Oxford, Somerset, and Washington are not suitable for farming but are mountainous, rocky, and poor soil. This does not mean that there is no good farm land whatever in the wooded sections of these seven counties, for there are small territories along the streams that are fertile and level, but most of these small sections are remote from the railroads and public highways.

In Aroostook County the situation is somewhat different and we have the following towns with their respective acreage in which there is a great deal of good farm land.

Township	Location	Acreage
Twp. 8, Range 3	Howe Brook Station	21,048
Twp. 9, Range 3	East of D Township	22,897

Twp. 10, Range 3	West of Westfield	25,424
Twp. 7, Range 3	On the Ashland Branch	22,040
Twp. 17, Range 3	South of Grand Isle	20,564
Twp. 17, Range 4	South of Madawaska	20,482
Twp. 16, Range 4	West of Stockholm	22,040
Twp. 15, Range 4	West of New Sweden	23,040
Twp. 15, Range 5	West of Westmanland	22,040
Twp. 17, Range 5	South of St. Agatha	22,308

There is also good farm land that is not taken up in the following plantations:

New Canada Plantation

Wallagrass Plantation

Eagle Lake Plantation

St. John Plantation

Winterville Plantation.

It may be that we have not carried out the full spirit of the order in not taking options from any of the land owners but we had no funds with which to bind options. We had not one dollar to work with in this investigation and it all had to be done in connection with the everyday work of the department. In view of the fact that there is so much agitation in reference to taking up abandoned farms by the State for settlement, the Commissioner does not feel competent to recommend suitable legislation for this important undertaking of buying wild lands for settlement purposes. With suitable funds at the command of the forestry department, agricultural department, or a special committee, lands can be purchased in the farming sections of

Aroostook County at a reasonable price for the purposes of husbandry. Especially would we recommend that section in the vicinity of New Sweden in Aroostook County. You all are more or less familiar with the settlement of the town of New Sweden in which the Honorable W. W. Thomas did so much good work. To carry out a work of this kind and to buy any great amount of land would require a large sum of money. It would seem to me that whatever may be done might best be carried on by the Agricultural Department or perhaps by the Agricultural and Forestry Departments working together.

Respectfully submitted,

FORREST H. COLBY,

January 8, 1919.

Forest Commissioner

STATE OF MAINE.

IN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, March 23rd, 1917.

Ordered, the Senate concurring, that the Land Agent and Forest Commissioner make investigation, search out and find townships and parts of townships of the wild lands of Maine suited for settlement for purposes of husbandry, and advantageously located with reference to railroad facilities, secure options of purchase from the owners thereof, and report to the next Legislature, recommendations for suitable legislation to open up the timber lands and wild lands of the State of Maine to settlers and home-makers, with description of townships or portions of townships upon which he has an option of purchase in the name of the State and the terms of such option.

IN SENATE CHAMBER,
March 24, 1917.
Read and passed
in concurrence.
W. E. LAWRY, Secretary.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
March 23, 1917.
Read and passed.
Sent up for concurrence.
W. R. ROIX, Clerk.

A true copy,
Attest:

W. E. LAWRY, *Secretary*.

Name Sisson.
Town Island Falls.