

STANDARDS FOR PARK SITE LOCATION

Reprinted from PENNSYLVANIA'S NEW STATE PARKS, A Report to the General Assembly on Act 256, prepared by the Department of Forests and Waters.

Criteria for the selection of park sites have been established. Many elements have been considered.

Water

Water is of prime importance. The center of attraction in our most heavily used State Parks is a body of water.

It must be good water, free from contamination. A forested or agricultural watershed, where intelligent conservation practices are used, is most desirable.

The quality of the water must be matched by quantity.

There must be enough water. If there is not enough water to provide an adequate flow during and after a dry period, a lake that is crystal clear in spring may become an unhealthy stagnant pool in late summer.

Water temperature is another factor that must not be overlooked. It should be warm enough to permit comfortable bathing.

Accessibility

A Park located where you can't get to it is "good for the birds," but of little service to people. State Parks must be accessible over good highways.

Location

Parks are for people. Therefore, they should be located near where people live—near centers of great population concentration, but also near smaller communities.

Every individual is important, whether he lives in a big city or a small town. The goal of this program is a State Park within 25 miles of every resident of the Commonwealth.

Topography

Pennsylvania is blessed with varied and interesting topography highly desirable for park purposes. Our mountains, forests, streams and rivers are of tremendous recreational value.

When land is developed for park use, some areas must be level enough to park automobiles, locate roads, and provide facilities for picnicking, camping and launching boats.

Subsurface Conditions

To be sure of a good park site, we must also look under the ground. If a dam is to be built, the sub-surface soil and rock structure must be of a character that will support such construction. This can only be determined by drilling test holes and analyzing the soil.

Availability

The best potential park site is not worth much to the State if the available land is of insufficient acreage or its cost is excessive. Small parcels of land often appear attractive, but our new State Parks, to be economically developed and efficiently operated, should be large enough to accommodate 25,000 people a day.

Scenic and Historical Interest

Like a "home with a view," a beautiful vista is a desirable feature for a State Park. Still another factor which is considered in the selection of sites for park development is historical significance.

If we waited until we found sites which would meet all these qualifications, we would never have any new State Parks and the recreational requirements of our expanding population would not be met.

So, the program of park development is not only to study and plan carefully, but to make decisions and to move ahead. Parks are needed not only for posterity but now and for the living. We are moving ahead and selecting the best State Park sites we can find.