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About the Institute

The Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation, a research division of Carnegie Mellon University, specializes in the history of botany and all aspects of plant science and serves the international scientific community through research and documentation. To this end, the Institute acquires and maintains authoritative collections of books, plant images, manuscripts, portraits and data files, and provides publications and other modes of information service. The Institute meets the reference needs of botanists, biologists, historians, conservationists, librarians, bibliographers and the public at large, especially those concerned with any aspect of the North American flora.

Hunt Institute was dedicated in 1961 as the Rachel McMasters Miller Hunt Botanical Library, an international center for bibliographical research and service in the interests of botany and horticulture, as well as a center for the study of all aspects of the history of the plant sciences. By 1971 the Library's activities had so diversified that the name was changed to Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation. Growth in collections and research projects led to the establishment of four programmatic departments: Archives, Art, Bibliography and the Library.

May 22, 1953

Dr. David Keck
New York Botanical Garden
Bronx Park
New York 58, N. Y.

Dear Dave:

It appears possible that the Tannersville Bog outside of Bloatsburg, Pennsylvania may be acquired for preservation. It would seem desirable that qualified botanists within the area should take an active interest in such a project if it were to be promoted. I wonder if you would be willing to discuss this matter with some of your friends and colleagues at the Garden and in the Torrey Botanical Club and get their reaction to such a proposition. The cost of acquiring the most important part of the area is likely to be in the neighborhood of \$5000.00. I believe that a good part of this money for the land purchase can be raised without too much difficulty, but the matter of posting the area and having it visited from time to time to see that it was not unduly vandalized might require some local support. Dr. Niering, my colleague here at the college, comes from a town just outside of Tannersville and can do a little spade work locally. The thought occurred to me that it might be desirable to set up an organization similar to the Bergen Swamp Preservation Society in New York State. It would be ideal if we could get a suitable group of people to help us carry through this project. Please let me know what reactions you get to this proposal. With kind regards.

Sincerely,

RRG:msp

Richard H. Goodwin

GOODWIN, R.H.

from Fogg

June 3, 1953

Dr. Richard H. Goodwin
Department of Botany
Connecticut College
New London, Conn.

Dear Dick:

Dave Goddard has just forwarded me your letter of May 22nd concerning the desirability of preserving the Tannersville Bog and has asked me to send the letter on to Red Camp at the Academy of Natural Sciences.

In the course of my studies of the Pennsylvania Flora, I have visited this Bog and consider it one of the most interesting sites of its kind in eastern Pennsylvania. It is located, as you know, near the southern limits of the Wisconsin glaciation and harbors a great many species which are characteristic of cold, acid spruce bogs to the north. I seem to recall, also, that the region is interesting to some of the zoologists and it might be well to endeavor to enlist their support if a project is to be organized to save this area.

This letter is merely to assure you of my own personal interest in this project and to say that I shall be happy to learn more about it, if it continues to develop. Although I shall be on leave of absence the next academic year devoting all of my time to the Pennsylvania Flora and am naturally reluctant to direct any of my time and energy to other projects, I am sufficiently keen about this particular undertaking to be willing to give it such attention as might be possible. Do keep me posted concerning developments.

Sincerely yours,

Professor of Botany

cc: Dr. Goddard

CONNECTICUT COLLEGE
NEW LONDON, CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF BOTANY

June 5, 1953

Dr. John M. Fogg, Jr.
University of Pennsylvania
Philadelphia 4, Pa.

Dear Jack:

* Thanks for your encouraging letter indicating your interest in preserving the Tannersville Bog. Bill Niering, in my department, has ascertained that the most important part of the bog can be acquired from two land owners for around \$5,000. Before acquiring the land, it would be highly desirable to find or form a suitable tax-exempt agency with eastern-Pa. support, which would hold title to the property and give it proper surveillance. There would probably be some modest maintenance expenses. What would be the appropriate agency? Among the possibilities would be the Philadelphia Acad., the Penn. Acad., the Phila. Bot. Club, or a new organization. This could be the "Nature Conservancy of Eastern Pa." -- there is already a western branch -- or a "Tannersville Bog Preservation Society"! I would greatly appreciate your giving this matter some thought and writing me again.

With kind regards,

Sincerely,

Richard H. Goodwin

cc. David Keck

June 5, 1953

Dr. David D. Keck
N. Y. Botanical Garden
Bronx Park
New York 58, N.Y.

Dear Dave:

Thanks very much for your letter of June 3. As you can already see from the enclosed I have been in correspondence with Dr. Fogg. I have hopes that he will come up with some good suggestions. There will be time enough to bring this before the Torrey Botanical Club in the fall after we are a little further along with a plan of organization.

Here's wishing you a fine trip to the West. I hope to be in the Mojave Desert for three weeks in late August.

Best regards,

Richard H. Goodwin

cc. Dr. John M. Fogg, Jr.

COPY

June 9, 1953

Dr. Richard H. Goodwin
 Department of Botany
 Connecticut College
 New London, Connecticut

Re: Preservation of the Tannersville Bog

Dear Dick:

Your letter to Dave Goddard and the enclosed carbon to Dave Keck were forwarded to me — along with a note from Jack Fogg.

Frankly, for some reason I have never gotten more than a peek at the area — and this (if I remember rightly) some years ago when I was cruising for blueberries; and then it was scarcely a peek because of lack of time. So, personally, I know little about this bog. However, in principle, I am quite in favor of preserving such areas when possible.

The minor tragedy of such places, to my way of thinking, is that rarely are they given the proper care and attention after purchase. Unless made into an official preserve and actually patrolled, they sometimes become a local hunter's paradise and so are subject to careless fires and consequent damage, even destruction. Again, the details of the locale escape my memory, but I have seen the margins of such preserves become local dumps — unless patrolled. Then, unless some sort of warden is available, the mere fact that they are "preserves" leads to unnecessary vandalism (usually of the rare plants) by those misguided souls who try to transplant the bog rarities into their gardens.

However, the problems of preserving a bog may be more than ordinary purchase of the area can take care of. For example one might cite the famous Lindenwold Bog in New Jersey, said by Stone to be the most remarkable bog in New Jersey. Recent reports indicate that it has gone over to an alder thicket, now being replaced with red maple. The cause is obvious when one sees that the farmers owning the land near the outlet have drained their own land and so seriously dropped the water table that actual bog conditions no longer exist on the bog proper.

Therefore, if the Tannersville Bog were to be purchased it would seem advisable that enough land also be purchased along the outlet so that the drainage pattern of the bog might be maintained. As we all know, real bogs are somewhat ephemeral things at best, and to do a first class job of "preserving", it might even be necessary to build up a slight dam at the outlet to keep the surface water up to the level where open bog can be maintained over a period of years, and also to raise it a little from time to time, else (as is normal) the area ultimately goes over to forest of one sort or another.

Re: Preservation of the Tannersville Bog - 2.

Of course, in the foregoing I'm doing more than my share of "worry-warting", and it may be that the Tannersville Bog is unusual in that its outlet is so situated that possible future drainage of adjacent land would not affect the water table of the bog and also that natural plugging of the outlet with vegetation would tend gradually to raise the general water table in the bog proper. But this would be a most unusual situation, rarely met with in my ramblings.

In brief, while I would be quite in favor of the preservation of such an area, I'd also want to know if there were good chances that it would remain a bog for a reasonable period of years, or whether it is only an area rapidly turning into forest via an alder thicket. If the latter, it would seem to be a rather poor investment.

In the meantime, rest assured that I'm not trying to run the proposition down or be an obstructionist. It's only that, as an old "bog-hopper" who has hunted blueberries and others of the ericads for years, I have seen so many bogs spoiled by attempts to drain adjacent areas, even those some distance away from the actual bog outlet, and also have seen bogs pass naturally into forest, that these questions came to mind immediately as I read your letter.

Should the project come to some sort of head, no doubt the Philadelphia Botanical Club would lend its moral (if no great financial) support. Mrs. J. Norman Henry is currently President of the Club, but I feel that Dr. Wherry is the one who would wield the greatest influence in such matters in that group because of his keen interest in and great knowledge of the plants of such areas.

Cordially yours,

Red

WHC:r

cc - Dr. Goddard
 Dr. Fogg ✓
 Dr. Wherry