

Oronoco Park Land Deeded, All Flowage Rights Obtained

Area to Be Under Control of State—10 Additional Acres Projected

Dam Construction Rushed, But Sponsor Necessary—Lake to Cover 230 Acres

Olmsted county has a state park entirely within its own boundaries today as a result of negotiations completed which transferred a 20-acre tract of wooded land at Oronoco to the state.

Title was conveyed from Mr. and Mrs. Roy W. Allis of Oronoco and Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Clapp of Los Angeles, by a quit claim deed recorded with the register of deeds.

Described as the east one-half of the Southeast quarter of the Southeast quarter of Section 17 in Oronoco township, the naturally wooded strip of land lies on what will be the northeast shoreline of Lake Shady.

It is known as the Oronoco park and is under the jurisdiction of the state department of conservation.

Under State Control
Inclusion of the park within the state system was made possible by an opinion of Attorney General W. S. Ervin who in an interpretation of the law appropriating state funds for acquisition of the land held that, since it was to be for the "perpetual use of the state," it should be under state control.

The original intention was that it would be a township park, operated and maintained by the Oronoco town board.

Of the 20-acre tract, approximately two-thirds is park proper. The remainder will be inundated when the Oronoco dam is completed and closed some time this fall, according to Charles Schueur, director of WPA operations in this area.

Additional Acres Planned

The total area of the park is expected to be increased to about 17 acres, however. H. O. Christensen, who pushed negotiations to a completion this week, said that the Allis interests have agreed to deed another 10 acres to the state.

Final conveyance of the additional 10 acres, part of which will be under water, is contingent upon an arrangement yet to be worked out, whereby a WPA project will be set up to develop the park, Christensen said.

Mr. Schueur said that when and if the additional land is conveyed and a responsible sponsor for the development project is found he will recommend such a project.

Flowage Rights Obtained

Completion of negotiations transferring the land to the state came almost a year after the drive for the dam and park was started by a group of Oronoco and Rochester citizens.

All flowage rights have now been obtained, Mr. Christensen said, and impounding of the waters of what will be Lake Shady awaits only completion of the dam and clearing of the lake bottom.

Schueur said a diversion dike for construction of the final wier is now being built and that actual formation of the lake will commence sometime between now and September 15. The dike will divert the water through the completed wiers, each of which is six feet high. As a result,

a body of water six feet deep at the dam will be impounded.

After the final weir has been poured, all that remains to be done is placing of the steel gates. If work proceeds as anticipated, it might be possible to close the gates around October 15, according to Schueur.

When fully completed, a body of water estimated by WPA engineers at 230 acres will be created.

Before a development project will be set up it will be necessary for the state department of parks to draw up and submit a set of plans to WPA officials, Schueur said. The project must have a responsible sponsor or co-sponsors, as under WPA regulations, federal funds can be expended only for labor, the engineer stated. Funds for materials and equipment must be furnished by sponsor.

He estimated the cost of a development project at around \$25,000.