

**MEADOW FOREST AND STREAM
· FOR ·
PLAY PROFIT AND PURE WATER**



**A REPORT
BY THE PARK AND PUBLIC RESERVATIONS COMMITTEE
OF THE
REGIONAL PLANNING FEDERATION
OF THE
PHILADELPHIA TRI-STATE DISTRICT**

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MEADOW FOREST AND STREAM
· FOR ·
PLAY PROFIT AND PURE WATER

BEING A SUGGESTION FOR THE USE
OF CERTAIN NEGLECTED LANDS
OF THE TRI-STATE DISTRICT AS
PARKS, PUBLIC FORESTS, AND
WATER SUPPLY PROTECTION



· BY ·
THE PARK AND PUBLIC RESERVATIONS COMMITTEE
OF THE
REGIONAL PLANNING FEDERATION
OF THE
PHILADELPHIA TRI-STATE DISTRICT
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"Regional planning is, it seems to me, a stirring challenge to all of us. It is an acid test of how far we are the captains of our fate. Planning under a democracy is a determination by the majority of the way in which they desire their community to develop. Regional planning is a hand on the rudder of evolution; it is our hope for defiance of chaos and blind chance; it is our determination to hold fast to the good that we have and develop it equitably, for the good of the future. Our liberty to do this is the greatest and noblest liberty we possess."

WALTER PRITCHARD EATON

In "Landscape Architecture"

FOREWORD



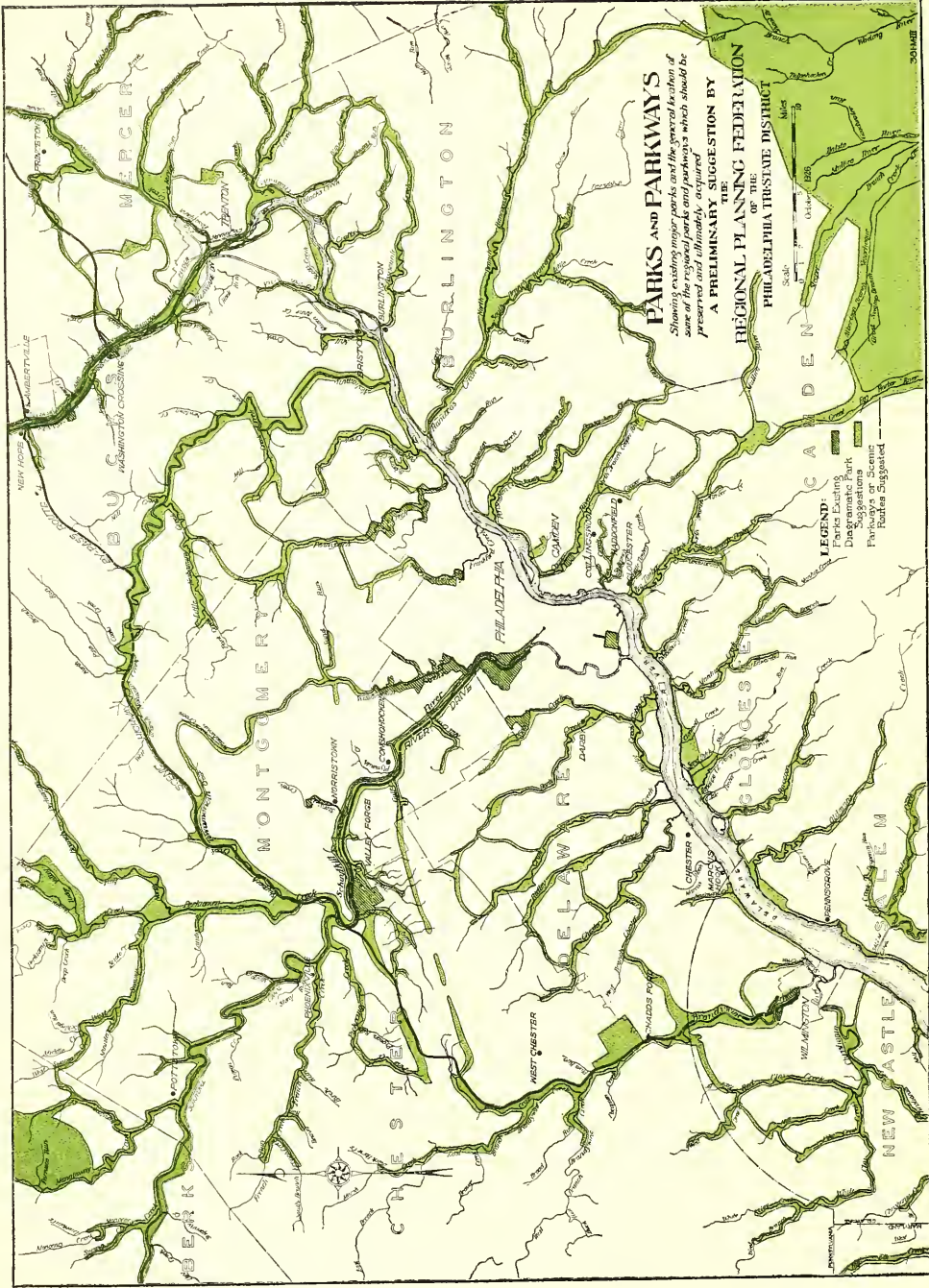
THE HERITAGE OF THE PHILADELPHIA TRI-STATE DISTRICT

“UNTO him who hath shall be given, and from him who hath not shall be taken away, even that which he hath.”

No region was ever more originally blessed than this Philadelphia Tri-State District with that sort of natural beauty which makes for livability. Upon its fertile soil forests flourished with a rare variety of trees and other plants. Through this area ran a sort of biological temperate zone where things that would not grow farther north thrived in its mild winters and long summers. Here, too, grew northern things which could not withstand the hot and long summers of the south. Plentiful moisture and fertile soil brought luxuriant growth. Such were and, in a few increasingly rare instances, still are the forests of the Philadelphia Tri-State District. Clear streams, a half hundred of them, alive with fish and so pure that the traveler might drop to his knees to drink wherever thirst overtook him, meandered over the region with scarcely a square mile that was not touched by one of them or its tributaries. Over much of this area stretched rolling hills, high enough to please the eye and to provide shelter for the nestling homestead, and yet not high enough to repel the physically frail or to interfere with the building of roads and the extension of homes and industry. Such was the heritage of beauty and material wealth of this Region that fell to the lot of its early settlers.

Two hundred and forty-seven years have passed since Penn drew his first plans for his “Greene Towne.” Today we make an accounting. In all these 3500 square miles of the Tri-State District no virgin timber and scarcely a sizable forest remains outside the semi-waste pine lands of New Jersey. Every stream has its share of pollution making it unsafe for drinking unless treated, and frequently unfit for any recreational use. As our cities have pushed out into fresh lands they have, with few exceptions, laid low the natural beauty that came in their paths, substituting for this their gridiron streets, artificial parks, and rows of struggling street trees. Millions of dollars have been spent in futile effort to restore or copy the things we have destroyed; things which frequently of necessity had to be sacrificed to expansion, but which in other instances might have been saved. Many miles are being traveled to attain, and great lengths of expensive road are being built to make accessible, out-of-door play and recreation which once existed in greater measure near at hand. A time is approaching when the flooding population now rooted here must look to more distant and more costly sources of water. We have been a prodigal people.

We have wasted our resources and abused our talents. Can we, will we, profit from this experience of the past? The following pages suggest one step toward preserving and retrieving a part of the natural wealth of this great community.



A DIAGRAM OF POTENTIAL REGIONAL PARK AND OTHER PUBLIC RESERVATIONS

THIS IS IN SUGGESTION OF THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE SORT OF LANDS DEALT WITH IN THIS REPORT AND INDICATES HOW THESE AREAS MIGHT BE LINKED TOGETHER TO FORM CONTINUOUS SYSTEMS OF PARKWAYS. A SCENIC HIGHWAY IS SHOWN COMPLETELY ENCLICING THE REGION TO THE WESTWARD AND CONNECTED WITH CENTRAL PHILADELPHIA BY THE SUGGESTED SCHUYLKILL RIVER DRIVE. THIS HIGHWAY IS ROUTE NO. 4 AS DESCRIBED IN THE FEDERATIONS RECENT REPORT ON BY-PASS HIGHWAYS

THE COMMITTEE'S SUGGESTION

THE SITUATION

THERE are not less than 200,000 acres of comparatively wasted land in the Philadelphia Tri-State District—this exclusive of the pine lands of New Jersey. This land consists of the steep or marshy banks of streams and bottom-lands subject to periodical floods, of area more or less inaccessible because of rough topography, and land of soil types unfavorable to productive cropping. It has now and probably always will have little or no agricultural value. In close proximity to growing cities or along main lines of transportation it may be found profitable to reclaim a certain amount of this land for residential and industrial uses. But, even in such favorable location there will be frequent instances where it is not worth the large cost of its improvement for building sites.

On the other side of the picture, this same land, in its natural condition, is picturesque and beautiful. Much of it is wooded and a great deal more could be reforested and made to pay some return from salable timber. A small percentage of the land is now held as protection for public water supplies. A great deal more should be so held. There are more than fifty sizable streams in the Tri-State District, all of them having more or less value as potential sources of pure water. Their immediate watersheds should be protected to prevent pollution. Some of this land, particularly along the stream valleys and within the City of Philadelphia, has already been acquired and partially developed as park land. Much more should be obtained for this purpose, especially in proximity to the more rapidly spreading cities where there are both the recreation needs of a dense population and the immediate danger of destruction of these natural park areas.

Nothing in any one of these three suggested uses: as public forest, as protection of watersheds for future water supply and in the interest of flood control, and as park land for recreation, is inconsistent with the best interests of the other two. Some of the park land would be too intensively used and developed to be of any great value either for forestation or as source of potable water, but all lands reserved as public forest or as watershed protection would have more or less of recreational value. From this point of view the Committee suggests that the public acquisition of all or a major part of these 200,000 acres for these purposes would be of great and lasting benefit to the Tri-State District. Acknowledging that instances will occur where the taking of this land for any single one of the above uses might not be warranted, the Committee contends that in consideration of the threefold possibilities of much the greater part of the area in question, there is little that

the public would not be justified in acquiring, and at once, before further depredation has taken place.

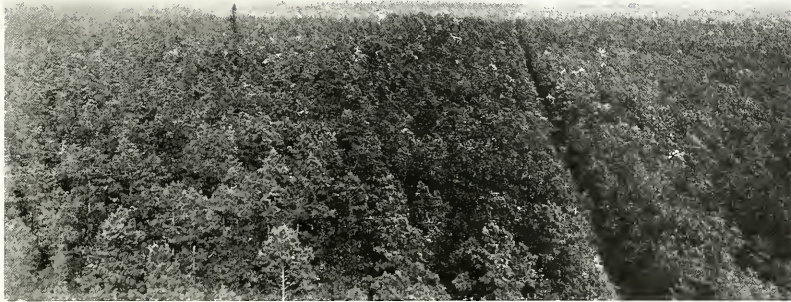
SUPPORTING REASONS WHY THIS LAND SHOULD BE ACQUIRED FOR PUBLIC USE

There are other, and supporting reasons for the acquisition of all or a large part of these lands, only a few of which can be developed in this brief report and at this early stage of the Committee's studies. Foremost among them are the following:

1. Practically all of the great metropolitan regions of the United States, either through their own foresight and progressiveness or because of the bounty of nature, are now provided with large natural play and recreation places for their people. Boston has three such areas within easy access of the City and ranging from five to eight thousand acres each. New York has its 34,000 acre Interstate Palisades Park and has several other large areas in the vicinity already acquired or under contemplation. San Francisco and Los Angeles, even with their proximity to National Forests and State and National Parks, and rugged mountains which can never be entirely despoiled, are taking the precaution to acquire sizable mountain parks of their own. The Tri-State District has nothing of the sort with the exception of its comparatively small and sophisticated city parks and the state parks at Washington's Crossing and Valley Forge. Is its need or its capacity for enjoyment any less?

2. There is at present no certain means of limiting the size and spread of cities. Endless miles of streets, paving, and houses become spiritually stultifying. The sort of interruption of city blocks that would come from the maintenance of strips of green woodland and open spaces would do much to alleviate this condition and would bring increased health and happiness to the people of this District beyond calculation.

3. Much of the land suggested for acquisition cannot be economically sewered or provided with streets. If developed, even at private expense, it must ultimately become a public obligation and place an undue burden upon the public treasury. In many instances it will be found cheaper for the community to buy this land and maintain it as park or forest than it would be to render the service necessary to human habitation. As illustration, engineers for the City of Philadelphia find that in the case of a small stream in the northeastern part of the city it will cost \$4,788,000 to build a storm water sewer to carry the waters of the creek, necessary if the land is fully developed. The cost of land along the creek for a park, eliminating necessity of the storm sewer, would amount to \$975,000.



A VAST CARPET STRETCHING TO THE HORIZON AS ONE LOOKS DOWN ON "THE PINES."



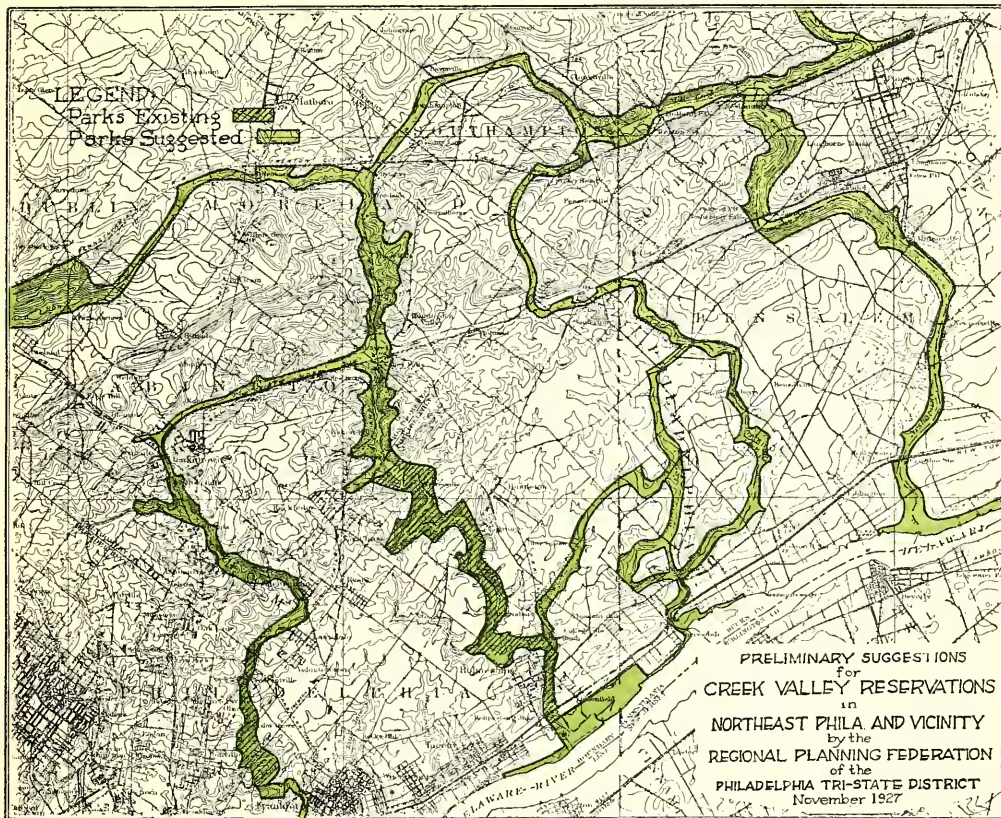
WHERE FIRE AND AXE HAVE SPARED THEM, SPLENDID PINE FORESTS STILL REMAIN IN SOUTH JERSEY. THEY CAN BE REPLACED EVERYWHERE BY PROPER CARE.



A VISTA OF A TRANQUIL STREAM TYPICAL OF THE NEW JERSEY SECTION
OF THE TRI-STATE DISTRICT



A TYPICAL WOODS ROAD IN THE PINE AND OAK FOREST OF SOUTH JERSEY. SUCH ROADS,
WHETHER IN FOREST OR IN CREEK VALLEY ARE FREQUENTLY ALL
THAT IS NEEDED TO MAKE THESE AREAS ACCESSIBLE.

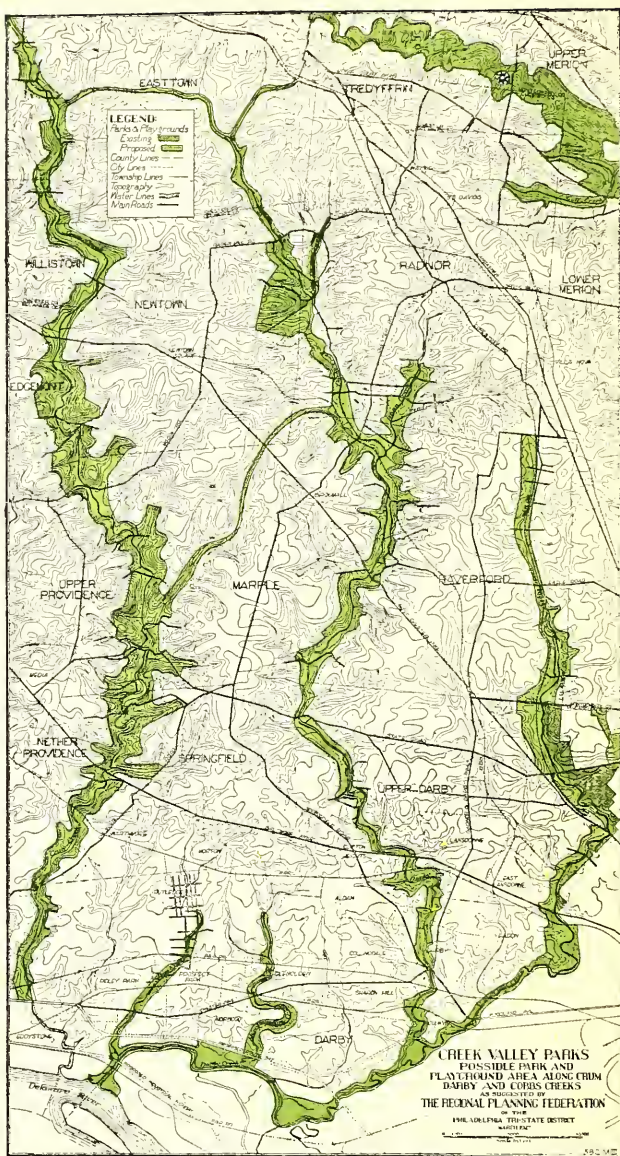
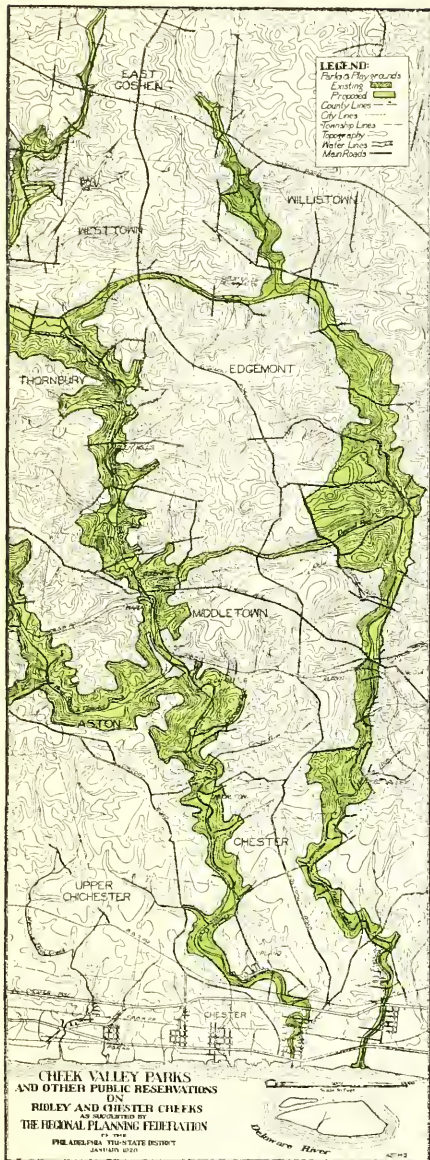


PARKS FOR NORTHEAST PHILADELPHIA AND VICINITY

THE NORTHEAST AND OLD YORK ROAD CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS ARE VERY PROPERLY CONCERNED WITH THE PRESERVATION OF THESE CREEK VALLEYS AND OTHER NEEDED PARK AND PLAYGROUND AREAS IN NORTHEAST PHILADELPHIA AND ADJOINING TERRITORY. A GOOD START HAS BEEN MADE IN THE TACONY AND PENNYPACK CREEK VALLEYS BUT THERE IS NEED FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION IF THE MOST IS TO BE MADE OF THE NATURAL OPPORTUNITIES OF THIS LOCALITY.

4. Under public control much of this land would soon begin to yield a small economic return while in private management it will in all probability remain relatively waste land, sometimes an eyesore and a menace and never accessible to the public except under pain of trespass.

Regarding the advantages of taking a part of this land as public forest the New Jersey State Forestry Department has this to say:



CREEK VALLEYS OF DELAWARE COUNTY

DELAWARE COUNTY RIVALS WESTCHESTER COUNTY, NEW YORK, IN PICTURESQUE BEAUTY OF FOREST, STREAM, AND ROLLING HILL. IT HAS BEEN LIKENED IN THIS RESPECT TO RURAL ENGLAND. AND YET THIS BEAUTY HAS BEEN ALMOST ENTIRELY DISREGARDED. STUDIES HERE ILLUSTRATED SHOW THAT IN THE NEAR PROXIMITY TO CITIES, LITTLE OF THIS NATURAL BEAUTY REMAINS. THE STREAMS THEMSELVES AT THESE POINTS HAVE BECOME VIRTUALLY OPEN SEWERS. BACK, A LITTLE OUT OF LINE OF DEVELOPMENT, A GREAT DEAL OF NATURAL BEAUTY STILL EXISTS AND MAY YET BE SAVED IF IMMEDIATE ACTIVE STEPS ARE TAKEN TO DO IT.

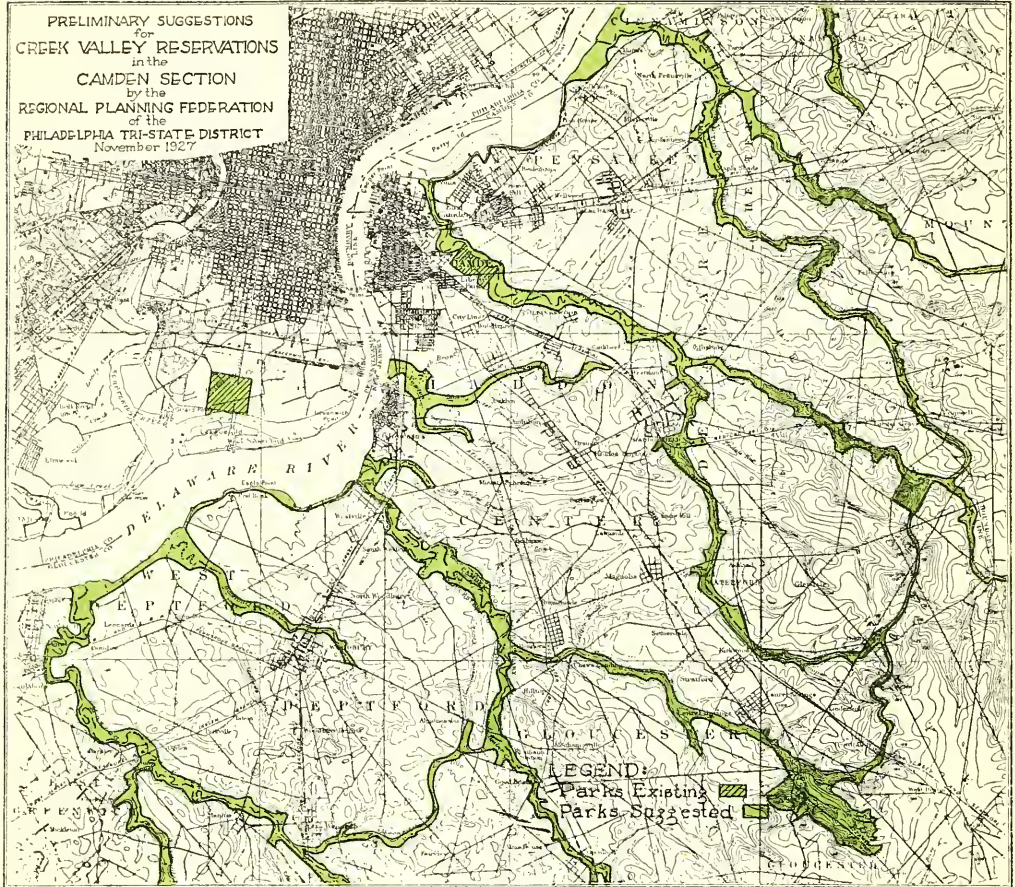
“An actual timber famine is extremely unlikely, but an acute timber shortage is assured to America. The United States is now exhausting its timber four times as fast as it is growing it. Our local timber production is now negligible and is rapidly shrinking. New Jersey imports nine-tenths of her lumber needs and two-thirds of her whole timber consumption, including lumber. With the waste and semi-forested land she has available, New Jersey can be self-supporting in her timber needs after 35 to 40 years of proper management.”

6. Well-located recreational areas, one or more nearby each major concentration of population, will eliminate much of the necessity for long distance motor travel to distant places of recreation thereby removing a part of the burden from the highways and decreasing holiday costs. Masses of recreation seekers will be able to find their play place near at home and accessible without passing through miles of congested traffic as is now so frequently the case. General traffic density should thereby be considerably decreased. Certainly the enjoyment of the holiday will be immeasurably greater.

7. Parks and other adequate provision for recreation pay big dollar and cent dividends, both in helping a city or a region in their competition with other cities and regions in attracting new and worth while citizens, and through a direct increase in land value. Population is more mobile than ever before in history. People have a wider choice of where they are to live and work and invest their earnings and are demanding something of beauty in their lives and more of pleasure. The greatest future prosperity will come to that city and to that region that recognizes these demands and meets them. The penny-wise and pound-foolish city or region that neglects these things, whether through indifference or in the name of economy, must give way to other, more progressive communities.

As evidence of the dividend potentiality of wisely distributed parks there is the statement of Mr. Jay Downer, Engineer for the Westchester County Park Commission:

“Real estate values in Westchester County have increased \$579,000,000 since the adoption of our park program five years ago. It is generally agreed that the park program is responsible for a large part of this increase and I think that our best-informed real estate men would be inclined to credit parks with as much as 75 percent. of it. This gain in values has come through an expenditure to date of \$46,804,901.00 including cost of land and construction. If taken up earlier, the cost would have been still less. Twenty-five years ago land could have been bought for not more than 15 percent. of its present cost.”



SUGGESTIONS FOR THE CAMDEN DISTRICT

HERE THE PRESENT PARK PROGRAM OF CAMDEN COUNTY MIGHT LOGICALLY EXPAND INTO AN INTER-COUNTY PARK SYSTEM CONNECTED BY PARKWAYS WITH ONE OR MORE OF THE GREAT FOREST-PARKS PROPOSED BY THE NEW JERSEY STATE DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT.

PROGRESS WITH STUDY

The Park and Public Reservations Committee of the Federation has not made completely exhaustive study of the problem in the Tri-State District. It has, however, given months of thought to the matter, has taken such advantage as it could of previous studies made by other bodies and submits this preliminary and partial report in order that the



ONE OF THE FIRST OF CAMDEN COUNTY'S PARKS NOW UNDER CONSTRUCTION—
THE MUNN MEADOW SECTION OF SPRING BROOK VALLEY.



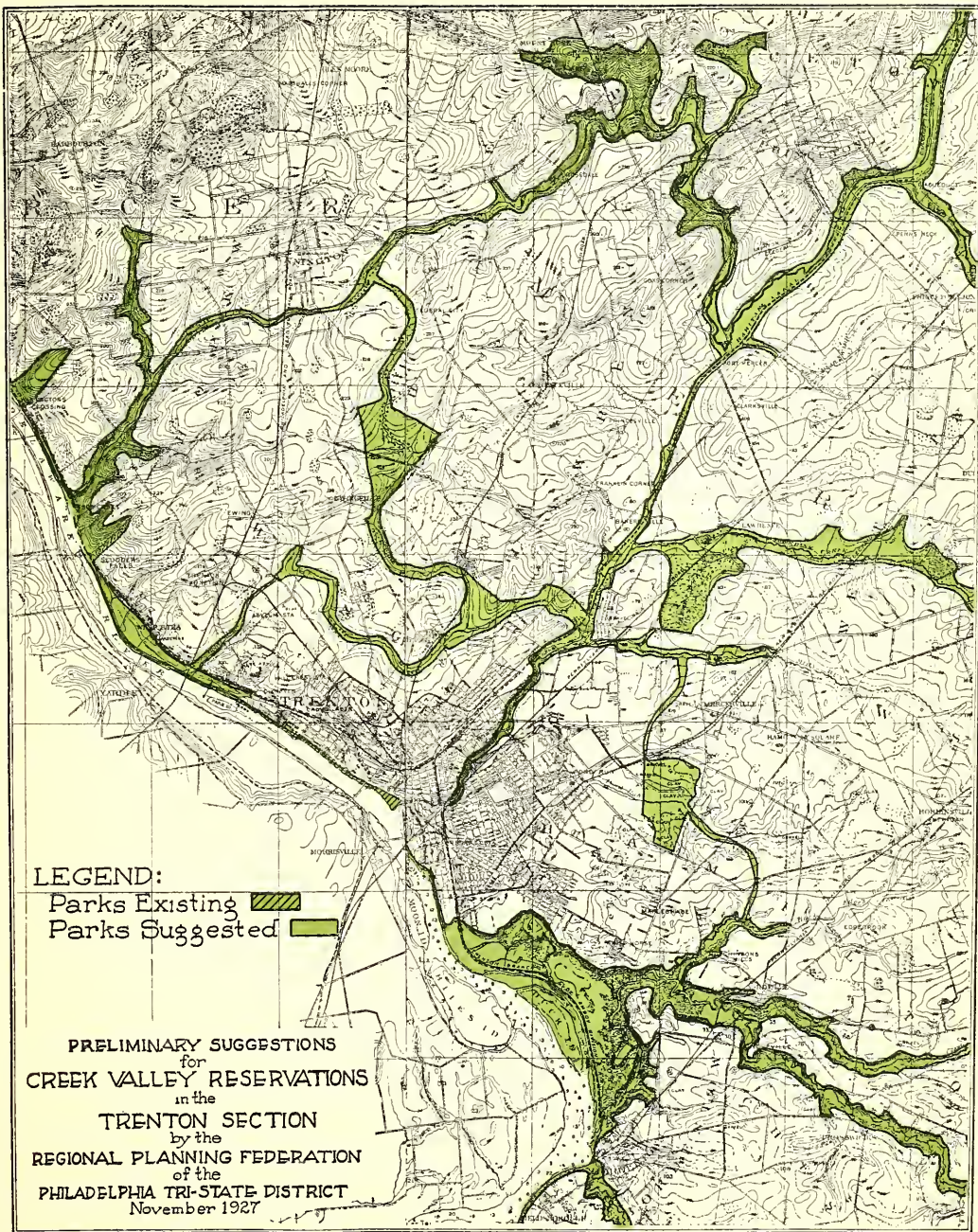
PLACES LIKE THIS SHOULD BE LEFT UNTOUCHED EXCEPT FOR THE BUILDING OF
OCCASIONAL PATHS TO MAKE THEM ACCESSIBLE OR SUCH MEASURES
AS ARE NECESSARY FOR FIRE PROTECTION.



TYPICAL OF THE STREAM VALLEYS OF A GREAT PART OF THE TRI-STATE DISTRICT—TREES, POTENTIAL WATER SUPPLY AND, IF NEED BE, A PARK, WITHOUT THE ADDITION OF EXPENSIVE IMPROVEMENT.

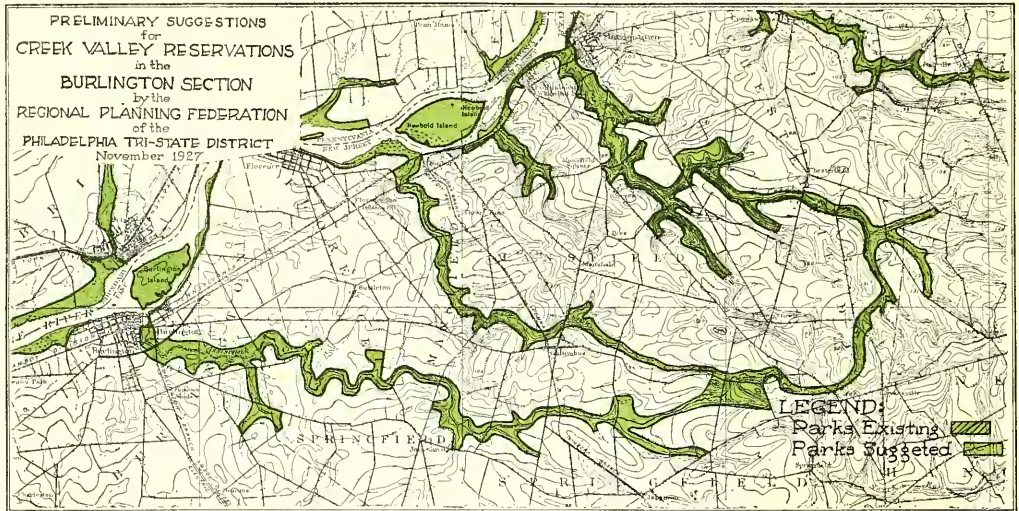


WE HAVE BEEN A PRODIGAL PEOPLE.



SUGGESTIONS FOR THE TRENTON DISTRICT

SOME BY ACQUISITION AND SOME BY PLAN, TRENTON HAS THE NUCLEUS OF WHAT MIGHT BE DEVELOPED INTO A SPLENDID SYSTEM OF REGIONAL PARKS. A PICTURESQUE NON-NAVIGABLE RIVER EXTENDING NORTHWARD FROM THE CITY, EQUALLY PICTURESQUE LITTLE-USED CANALS, AND NUMEROUS SMALL STREAMS TOGETHER WITH UNIQUE STRETCHES OF HILL AND SWAMP, ALL OFFER SPECIAL OPPORTUNITY.



SUGGESTIONS FOR THE BURLINGTON DISTRICT

NOT SO PRESSING PERHAPS, AS IN OTHER INSTANCES, BUT NEVERTHELESS EXISTING IS THE OPPORTUNITY FOR DEVELOPMENT OF PARKS AND OTHER PUBLIC RESERVATIONS IN THE BURLINGTON DISTRICT. THE PROTECTION OF WATERSHEDS AND THE POSSIBILITIES OF PUBLIC FORESTS TOGETHER WITH THE NECESSITY OF EARLY ACQUISITION OF PARK LANDS IN THE IMMEDIATE VICINITY OF BURLINGTON AND ONE OR TWO OTHER COMMUNITIES IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD WARRANT EARLY ATTENTION.

people of the region may have the matter placed before them without further delay and in order that they may be giving the question consideration while the Committee continues with its studies. This further effort will be made in co-ordination with the other studies of the Federation including those for highways, air, rail, and water transportation, sewage disposal, future water supply, et cetera.

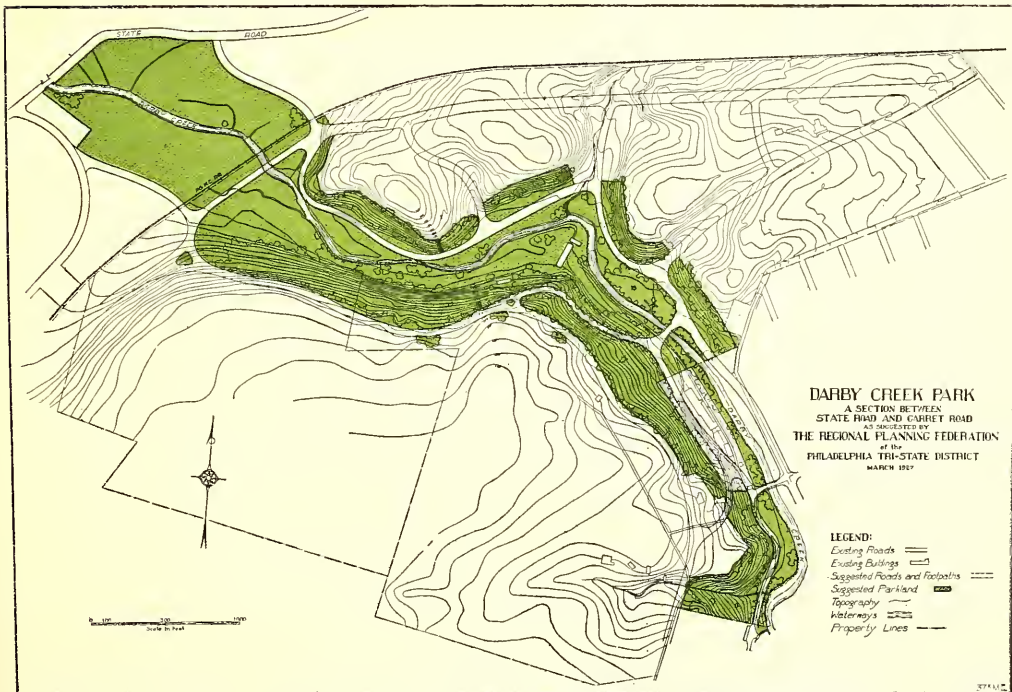
SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS

The Committee has prepared a number of diagrams and mapped studies to illustrate its suggestion. These show the approximate location of land which should be acquired in several parts of the region and are submitted with this report. These plans cover some of the more immediately endangered creek valleys and several of the more populous sub-regions including the areas immediately adjacent to Trenton, Camden, Chester, Wilmington, Burlington and Northeast Philadelphia as well as one or two areas such as the Middle Schuylkill Valley, from City Line to Valley Forge.

The above studies have been largely limited to creek valley reservations and the principle followed has been to show, as possible public land,

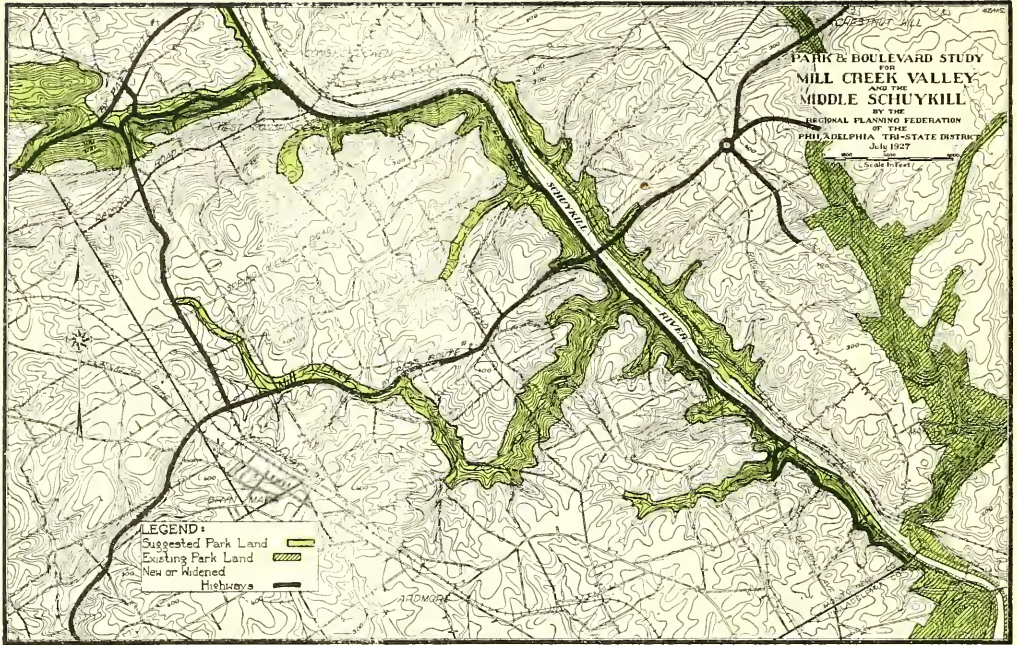
all land lying between the crests of the bluffs of high hills on either side of the stream. Where land further back is too rough for any other use or is particularly adaptable to park purposes, the line has been extended to include such land. Where the slope to the creek is sufficiently gradual for farming or housing development only enough land has been shown within the park taking line to protect the actual bank of the stream. However, where there is involved the protection of a watershed or the need of a playfield or similar feature, modification will be necessary. Wherever possible, reservations in close proximity to one another are shown connected to form a continuous system. In many instances these connecting links would be nothing more than parkways or attractively planned roads.

No specific mention is being made at this time of the playground requirements of the region although it may be assumed that play-



THE GIVING OF PARK LAND AS A REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT

HERE IS A SUGGESTION OF THE TYPE AND EXTENT OF LAND WHICH MIGHT ADVANTAGEOUSLY BE DEDICATED TO PARK USE BY THE PROGRESSIVE LAND DEVELOPER. THE STEEP WOODED HILLSIDES AND THE CREEK BOTTOM LAND HERE INDICATED AS PARK ARE THE MAKING OF THE ABUTTING LAND AS DESIRABLE AND READILY SALABLE RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY. AT THE SAME TIME THIS LAND WOULD BE EXPENSIVE TO DEVELOP AND BUILD UPON.



IMPROVEMENT OF THE MIDDLE SCHUYLKILL AND TRIBUTARY VALLEYS

A STRANGE ANOMALY OF THE TRI-STATE REGION IS THE TREATMENT OF THE SCHUYLKILL RIVER WHICH, EXCEPT FOR THE SHORT STRETCH OF FAIRMOUNT PARK IN PHILADELPHIA, IS ALTERNATELY DISREGARDED, INDUSTRIALIZED, AND USED AS SEWAGE CARRIER, WHILE ALONG ITS LENGTH MIGHT HAVE BEEN AND STILL COULD BE BUILT ONE OF THE FINEST PARKWAYS IN THE WORLD. FAIRMOUNT PARK SHOULD NOW BE CONNECTED WITH VALLEY FORGE PARK BY PARK AND PARKWAY AND ALONG WITH THIS SHOULD COME THE PRESERVATION OF THE MORE IMPORTANT OF THE TRIBUTARY VALLEYS INCLUDING THOSE OF MILL CREEK AND GULF MILLS CREEK.

grounds will be a large factor in the ultimate development of such a system of public reservations as is here suggested. The matter of playgrounds will be a part of the Committee's contemplated further study.

HILLTOP RESERVATIONS

Scattered throughout the region, particularly on the Pennsylvania side of the river, are many beautifully wooded ridges and hills, difficult and expensive of economical development and yet affording splendid views across picturesque country and having in themselves large recreational value. All of these could be forested to advantage and many of them should be acquired as forest-park reservations.

A GREAT FOREST-PARK

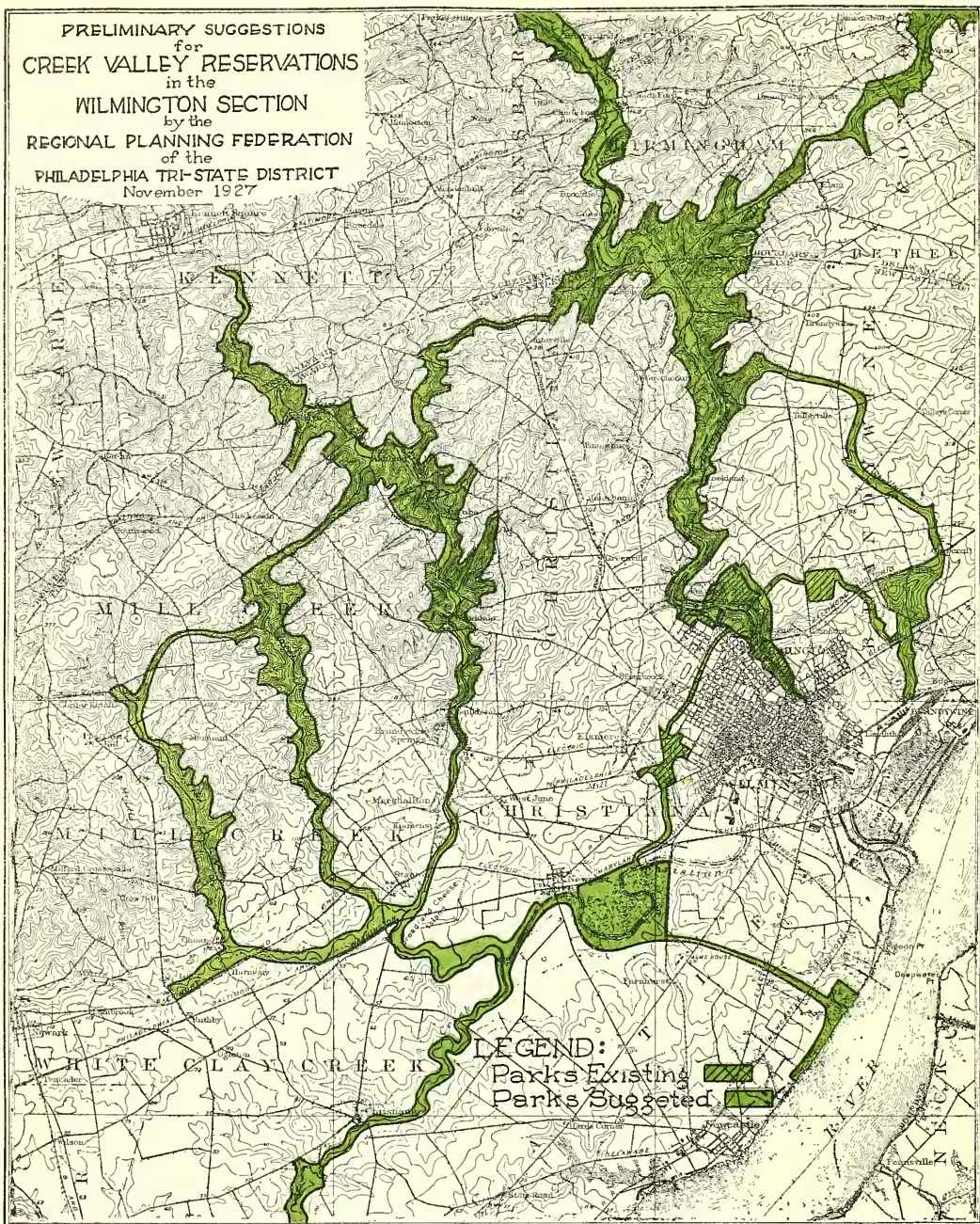
The Tri-State Region is without any large natural forest or park reservation such as have most of the other great populous areas of this country. We need not stress the fact that as the drive and scramble of big cities increase, the demand for places where people can get away for a little while to lose themselves in primitive surroundings grows greater. Provision must be made to permit city populations to reach some such recreation spots within an hour or two from the center of every sizable community. These reservations should be large enough to permit of hours of wandering without reminder of the proximity of civilization, and large enough not to be easily worn and spoiled by their users.

Few possibilities for such reservations now remain to the Tri-State District. In its Pennsylvania section there exist one or two more or less broken areas among the hills in the vicinity of Boyertown and in the upper reaches of the valley of Perkiomen Creek and its tributaries. Greatest opportunity now lies in the New Jersey pine lands where there are two or three areas of a hundred thousand or more acres each. These are still intact and unspoiled and could be forested to great advantage. They also have some possibilities for future water supply and, with their streams, wide stretches of forest, flowers, shrubs, and wild life, would offer increasing measure of recreation to the people of the Tri-State District. Much of this land now makes no considerable economic return and probably, in normal and private use, never will. Its greatest possibilities lie in the direction of state or interstate forest-park.

PLANS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THESE PUBLIC RESERVATIONS

The Committee does not go so far as to suggest how any of the lands shown on the accompanying plans might be developed. Its thought is that, where these lands occur within or closely adjacent to densely populated areas and are immediately needed for more or less intensive park use, they might very appropriately be developed somewhat after the fashion of the Wissahickon Creek section of Fairmount Park or of the park along the Brandywine in Wilmington. In some instances the treatment might be even more formal. But where there is no immediate need for intensive use, as is true of most of the areas shown, the Committee suggests that development be limited to occasional paths or roadways to make the areas a little more accessible. In many instances attention might well be limited to such measures as may be necessary to give adequate protection from fire and to the reforestation of depleted sections. Every possible effort should be made, always to preserve the natural beauty and charm of this land. Where

PRELIMINARY SUGGESTIONS
for
CREEK VALLEY RESERVATIONS
in the
WILMINGTON SECTION
by the
REGIONAL PLANNING FEDERATION
of the
PHILADELPHIA TRI-STATE DISTRICT
November 1927



SUGGESTIONS FOR THE WILMINGTON DISTRICT

WILMINGTON HAS MADE A SPLENDID START UPON A SYSTEM OF CITY PARKS AND PLAYGROUNDS. HER NEXT STEP IS TO EXTEND THESE HOLDINGS TO THE VALLEYS AND HILLS OF THE MORE IMPORTANT OF THE NEAR-BY STREAM VALLEYS. THERE SHE MAY PROTECT HER FUTURE WATER SUPPLY, HAVE HER CITY FORESTS, AND PROVIDE DELIGHTFUL PLAY PLACES, ADEQUATE FOR GENERATIONS TO COME.

parkways or scenic drives must be built they should be located with great care to avoid destruction of the very things sought to preserve. In many instances these roadways would be carried along the rims of creek valleys rather than down in the bottoms so leaving to these bottomlands all their beauty of seeming isolation and wildness.

HOW MAY THE LAND BE ACQUIRED AND HOW MAINTAINED

How the land involved in these several suggestions of the Committee is to be acquired and maintained must depend largely upon its location, probable use, and cost. Some of the larger areas, particularly the great natural forest-parks mentioned above, might be acquired by the states to be developed and maintained by the respective State Departments of Forestry. Many states in this country are now doing this sort of thing with success. There is sufficient precedent for the acquisition of such lands by counties. One of the counties of the Tri-State District, Camden, is already launched upon a park program. Other counties in New Jersey including Hudson, Bergen, Essex, Union, and Passaic are making splendid progress with their county park work. Counties of Pennsylvania as well as those in New Jersey now have authority to appoint County Park Boards, to make county wide plans and to acquire park lands. The unusual progress of Westchester County in New York State has already been referred to as an example of what can be accomplished in this direction. New York State has also combined with New Jersey to create an interstate park commission and has several sectional park commissions. One of these latter has the responsibility of the acquisition and preservation of the more picturesque stream valleys and gorges and other spots of unusual interest in the entire Finger Lakes Region, an area embracing several counties. Another outstanding example of effective approach to the problem is to be found in the Boston Metropolitan Park Board. Furthermore, there is no reason why some of the land should not be acquired by cities either as park land, as protection for watershed, or as city forest. Many of the cities of Europe are partially, and in some instances reported to be entirely, self-supporting through their city forests. More than 200 cities in the United States now have city forests. Only three of these occur in the Tri-State District although few regions are so naturally adapted to forest growth.

Much of the land must be acquired through purchase and yet, if the experience of other cities and regions and some little experience in this region are to be used as criteria, we may expect a great deal to come through gift, either from those philanthropically minded or from those who see direct profit in so doing. For the latter, the giving of land for park purposes is proven good business. The assured presence of a strip of



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park land through a real estate development, if made properly accessible through the layout of streets, increases the salability and selling price of the land. This is particularly good business where the strip of land dedicated to park purposes happens to be the irregular valley of a stream or other land expensive of development. The gift of such land for park purposes is almost equally advantageous in the case of land held for future development in that there is relief from taxes and assurance that the remaining property will some time reap the benefit of adjacent park improvement. As philanthropy, there is little that offers so much for the good of a community as the assured preservation and use, for all time, of its great natural recreation places. A park outlasts all monuments of stone or bronze.

Whatever the procedure, the Committee does not advocate the disturbance of present use of land except where this use is detrimental to general welfare or except where the pressure of spreading population necessitates the immediate taking of this land to insure reasonable openness and play place for coming generations. There are, for instance, many miles of creek valleys and some stretches of forest which are being maintained by private interests quite in line with the suggestions contained in this report. Wherever this land is not immediately needed for park purposes there is no particular object in turning it from private to public ownership. The important thing is to insure that such land is not lost or does not turn to objectionable use when it ultimately changes hands and is redeveloped.

THE PART TO BE TAKEN BY THE FEDERATION

Through the efforts of the Regional Planning Federation, a Board of Trustees has been created and duly authorized under the Laws of Pennsylvania to receive and hold lands given for park purposes until such time as the official bodies of the respective jurisdictions concerned are in position to take over and administer these park lands themselves.

Furthermore, the Federation stands ready, in every way within its power, to encourage and assist the three states, the counties, cities, boroughs and townships, and groups of citizens or individuals to put forward such a program as is herein suggested. The Park and Public Reservations Committee, through the Federation's technical staff, will continue with its studies in co-operation with all other interested agencies in the region and in co-ordination with the broader studies and plans of the Federation.

"As our towns grow, the spots of remarkable natural beauty, which were once as the gems embroidered upon the fair robe of Nature are one by one destroyed to make room for railroads, streets, factories, and the rest. The time is coming when it will be hard to find within a day's journey of our large cities a single spot capable of stirring the soul of man to speak in poetry. Think of what this will mean for the race, and start tomorrow to secure for your children and your children's children some of these scenes of special natural beauty."

CHARLES ELIOT

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