

THE GRAND MERE ASSOCIATION

BOX 140 • STEVENSVILLE, MICHIGAN

December 5, 1967

Mr. Lehn
Dear Bob,

I had a call from Glenn Gregg, Conservation Dept., this morning in response to a recent letter of mine. These are some of the points he brought out:

1. There has been a Presidential "hold" order on all funds for Land and Water Conservation Fund program.

2. A recent Federal requirement for funds from the Land and Water Conservation Fund requires that when land is acquired it must be acquired in Fee Title, that is all mineral rights must be acquired with the land. In the case of Warren Dunes where the State has appropriated money to buy some land, they have run into the problem of acquiring the land and the value of the mineral rights (they are dealing with Manley here) has so far made it impossible to acquire the property.

3. Extend this to Grand Mere and the cost becomes very high unless we locally can establish that the value of such sand is offset by expense to mine it, (by local restrictions, etc.)

4. He had not heard anything about a Federal Survey of the area, but would check this through with Mr. Edmunds of the Department of the Interior.

5. Some seven months ago Mr. Gregg discussed Grand Mere with Mr. Joe Hunky of the Chicago Chapter of Nature Conservancy. Mr. Hunky was going to make some contact with the Shapiro people. Mr. Gregg has heard nothing and asks if we have been in contact with Nature Conservancy.

An important point here is this:

Under the best of conditions, the State is faced with soaring land values and speculations when they move in to buy property. In the case of Grand Mere, with hostile owners and hostile politicians (my words not his) the problem is greatly complicated.

Nature Conservancy, operating privately, is often better equipped to acquire land. They then sell it to the State, or some agency such as the Kalamazoo Nature Center, for their cost plus a nominal interest charge.

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6. Grand Mere does not appear on the State's list of projects for next year, or for the long range recreational plan. The reason is a very practical political reason. Sen. Zollar remains hostile (in the view of Mr. Gregg) to any mention of Grand Mere, and he is a very powerful man in the area of fund availability. If we can persuade him to support us, Grand Mere will quickly get a good billing on any list of land acquisition.

So much for my conversation with Mr. Gregg.

I expect, within a month to set up a meeting with Sen. Zollar and our committee of Bert Lindenfeld, Vern Snyder, Judy Larsen, you and me. Prior to this the group should meet without Zollar. I also hope to have a representative of the Area Resources Development Council with this committee.

Best regards,

Frank

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