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State Buying Moreau Lake for Public Camping Area

A new public campsite will be established in Saratoga County when the State Conservation Department completes purchase of Moreau Lake from Willard J. Grande, Saratoga Springs contractor. The State plans to develop the 640-acre site into a restricted camping area similar to Hearthstone at Lake George. Grande purchased the property, which includes the mile-long lake, 22 years ago with the late Royal J. Dyer. Development has been severely restricted to retain the natural beauty of the section.

The site is located just west of where the Northway crosses Route 9, about 12 miles north of Saratoga Springs. The purchase price was not revealed but is believed to be in the six-figure range. Preliminary negotiations have been completed and will be finalized after the examination of title by the attorney general's office, it was reported. Howard Cline, of the Howard Cline Real Estate Agency, was the realtor in the transaction.

Grande's own story, concerning his acquisition and decision to sell the Moreau Lake property is as follows:

"Twenty – two years ago, J.B. White, local realtor, dropped in to take me for a ride. He said he had a lake he wanted to sell me. I replied I would take a ride with him, but was not interested in purchasing a lake. It was a beautiful sunny day in October when J.B. White drove me to Moreau Lake. The sun, glistening on the clear, blue water was a breath-taking sight. Here, in my backyard, was this beautiful lake that I had never seen or knew about. J.B. was right. I was interested. I decided to buy it. After having discussed financing with several local businessmen, I found the late Royal J. Dyer was the only one interested, and he became a partner. Mrs. Dyer still retains her husband's interest in the project."

"The property which consists of 640 acres, was purchased from the McAdam estate. The search revealed that it had taken George McAdams 37 years, a man's lifetime, to buy fifteen farms and wooded lots from various owners in order to own the land under the water and all the land surrounding the lake. Here, he made his summer home and brought his family each year to enjoy the lake and the mountains around it. The lake of crystal clear water, is a mile long and three fourths of a mile wide. It is fed entirely by springs and water from the mountains. Since it has no inlet or outlet in can be privately owned. It has several natural sand beaches and affords excellent fishing, swimming and boating."

"Shortly after it was purchased, Colter and Ashley of Glens Falls surveyed the area and plotted it into building lots. It was our intention to sell the lots with rigid restrictions to keep the development very exclusive. Much thought was given to drawing up the restrictions to keep the atmosphere "rustic" and blending with the natural surroundings. The cottages had to be built with logs, stone or other rustic materials. No paint was to be allowed on any buildings. The dwellings were placed several hundred feet apart and each in a setting to blend in with nature. As you drive into the estate, you are hardly aware of any cottages."

Halted Development

"After selling two lots and building six log cottages of our own, we decided if we developed the lake any further we would spoil one of nature's loveliest creations. All construction was stopped. Last winter, Howard Cline approached me about selling Moreau Lake, and I informed him I was not interested because I did not

want the property developed commercially. He said this would not be the case, but rather the State of New York was interested the entire area for a park and camp site, thereby allowing more people to enjoy it. Mr. Cline's father was a friend of Mr. McAdam's and as a boy, Mr. Cline camped at the lake. He always had a high regard for the property, and it pleased him to think others might have a chance to enjoy it. After much consideration, I gave him permission to contact the State, and the deal was made."