

DOCUMENT RESUME

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05230 - [B0725642] (~~Restricted~~)

[Federal Surplus Real Property Acquired by the State of Wisconsin for the Bong Recreation Area]. LCD-78-321. March 9, 1978. 2 pp.

Report to Rep. Les Aspin; by R. G. Rothwell (for Fred J. Shafer, Director, Logistics and Communications Div.).

Issue Area: Facilities and Material Management (700); Land Use Planning and Control: Federally-owned and Federally Supported Recreation Areas (2310).

Contact: Logistics and Communications Div.

Budget Function: Natural Resources, Environment, and Energy: Conservation and Land Management (302).

Organization Concerned: Department of Housing and Urban Development; General Services Administration; Wisconsin.

Congressional Relevance: Rep. Les Aspin.

Two sites were proposed for prisons in the Bong Recreation Area of Kenosha County by the State of Wisconsin. The sites involved property conveyed to Wisconsin by the General Services Administration (GSA) for conservation and property purchased from GSA by Wisconsin. Clear title to the property was partly financed with grant funds received from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Proposed development of property conveyed to the State for wildlife conservation would not be in accordance with the approved program and related Federal restrictions. GSA has the responsibility for monitoring the use of property conveyed under such circumstances but has not done so. Conversion of the land sold to the State by GSA would require approval of the Secretary of HUD, and the State would have to substitute other comparable open-space land for it. (RRS)



UNITED STATES GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

LOGISTICS AND COMMUNICATIONS
DIVISION

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B-178618

The Honorable Les Aspin
House of Representatives

Dear Mr. Aspin:

Reference is made to your inquiry of December 9, 1977, requesting information on prison sites proposed by the State of Wisconsin in the Bong Recreation Area, Kenosha County, Wisconsin. Sites being considered were (1) property conveyed to Wisconsin by the General Services Administration (GSA) for wildlife conservation, and (2) property purchased from GSA by Wisconsin. Clear title to the property was partly financed with grant funds received from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

We obtained information and met with your office on February 17, 1978. This will confirm that meeting and highlight the major points discussed.

Property Conveyed to Wisconsin by GSA

Approximately 1,986 acres was conveyed without costs to the State in 1966 for wildlife conservation purposes. The deed transferring the property contains the following covenant:

"The property conveyed by this deed is to be continuously used only as and for the conservation of wildlife, and is conveyed upon the condition that if at any time after delivery of this deed it is not used for such purpose, the title to said property shall thereupon revert to the United States of America, . . ."

Our review disclosed that existing and proposed development of this property is not in accordance with the approved program and related Federal restrictions providing for continuous use of the deeded property only for conservation of wildlife. GSA has responsibility for monitoring the use of property conveyed under such circumstances, but had not done so. GSA officials acknowledged, however, that the

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proposed uses of the property (recreation and possibly a correction facility) appear to be contrary to the purpose for which the property was conveyed. Those officials said they would follow up on it to determine if the property should revert to the U.S. Government.

Property Sold to the State by GSA

This property was sold to the State in 1967. Some of the funds used to purchase the property has been obtained from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), under the Federal Open-Space Land Program. Conversion of land from open space requires approval of the HUD Secretary, and the State must substitute other comparable open-space land for it. A State official advised us that HUD approval has not been requested.

The property referred to above which GSA conveyed to the State was included in a review we are making of GSA activities in monitoring the use of surplus property transferred to public agencies and non-profit institutions. We will send you a copy of any report we issue as a result of this review.

As requested, the documents accompanying your request are being returned.

Sincerely yours,


for F. J. Shafer
Director

Enclosure