

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI
Columbia

Office of the Business Manager

November 12, 1964

To the Members of the
Board of Curators

In 1870, the State Legislature enacted legislation "to locate and dispose of the Federal Congressional Land Grant of July 2, 1862, to endow, support and maintain a School of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts". By State Statute, the University was granted the authority, through its Board of Curators, to sell any of the Federal land, hereinafter referred to as Agricultural College Land.

In 1951, the Board approved the discontinuance of the sale and leasing of Agricultural College Land. Since that date, there has been no conveyance of any Agricultural College Land except for rights-of-way and easements to several agencies of both the State and Federal Government and some utility companies. Indicated below is the location and acreage of the remaining Agricultural College Land:

Unrestricted Land

<u>County</u>	<u>Total Acreage</u>
Benton County	400.00
Cedar County	314.62
Dallas County	1,640.59
Laclede County	1,727.00
Phelps County	160.00
Polk County	600.50
Pulaski County	160.00
Ripley County	3,138.91
Stone County	200.00
Webster County	1,076.76
Total	9,418.38

Reserved for School of Forestry

<u>County</u>	<u>Total Acreage</u>
Butler County	5,718.74
Wayne County	2,684.41
Total	8,403.15

The holding of this land has produced a considerable number of problems for the University. First, the University finds itself in the rather embarrassing position of teaching farmers throughout the State how to properly manage their own land, while at the same time our Agricultural College Land lies dormant, unsupervised and unimproved. Second, on many of these tracts

of land, there have been and perhaps still are squatters who have built dwellings and other structures which have become quite unsightly in the eyes of surrounding farm neighbors. Third, the University has been criticized because we are contributing to the very serious forest fire hazards that exist on some of these tracts. Since the land is unsupervised, squatters and other persons have taken it upon themselves to periodically burn off the land which oftentimes results in unnecessary loss due to fire in the surrounding area. Fourth, there has been considerable stealing of the small amount of merchantable timber.

During the period 1956 to 1958 a land reconnaissance was made of approximately 95% of the total acreage comprising Agricultural College Land. In this reconnaissance report, detailed information was provided as to accessibility of each tract, its terrain, the kind and estimated quantity of timber then existing and in some instances, suggestions as to the possible productivity of the land. These reconnaissance surveys were made available to the College of Agriculture for their study and consideration.

In 1961 a committee was appointed by the Dean of the College of Agriculture for the purpose of reviewing the status of our Agricultural College Land. It was the committee's primary responsibility to make recommendations as to what disposition should be made of this land. This committee was composed of academic representatives from Agricultural Economics, Agricultural Experiment Station, Soils, Extension Field Crops, Extension Forestry and Forestry.

In 1962, the Missouri Conservation Commission made an offer to the University to purchase all of the unrestricted Agricultural College Land for \$2.17 per acre. The \$2.17 per acre figure was arrived at by the Commission by their reviewing the University's sale of Agricultural College Land over the years, which approximated 260,000 acres. This offer was on the basis that mineral rights would also be transferred to the Commission.

The University committee held a number of meetings with the representative of the Commission, and in order to get a more current appraisal, the Commission requested its own Foresters to make their own land survey of the acreage within their respective boundaries. This survey produced an estimated average low acreage value of approximately \$4.00 and a high average acreage value of approximately \$6.00. The University committee recommended the high average acreage value. These two averages were based on the mineral rights being conveyed to the Commission.

After a recent meeting with the representative of the Commission, it was decided that there were two tracts of land totaling 363.13 acres which the University might wish to retain for development into special conference facilities, or due to their choice locations, sell to interested persons or firms for development of recreational facilities. We also wish to retain 40 acres for negotiation with the U. S. Forest Service in a proposed land exchange transaction now pending. There is one tract of land totaling 80 acres which the Commission did not desire to acquire due to its location. Not included in the previous deliberations of the University committee and the Commission representative, are 1,142 acres of land presently reserved for the School of Forestry which the School does not desire to retain because of this acreage location in relation to the established University Forest. Considering the three adjustments of unrestricted land with the addition of the 1,142 acres of restricted land, it makes an adjusted total acreage of 10,077.25 acres

which the Commission is desirous of purchasing. This would mean that the University would retain 483.13 acres of unrestricted Agricultural College Land and 7,261.15 acres of restricted Agricultural College Land, the latter being known as the University Forest and used by the School of Forestry in its teaching and research programs.

Also as a result of the latest meeting with the representative of the Commission, an average price of \$5.00 per acre was agreed to as a basis for consideration by both the University and the Commission. As previously indicated, the original offer by the Commission was \$2.17 and subsequently changed to an average low of \$4.00 and an average high of \$6.00. After adjusting the acreage and the estimated selling price for the three deleted tracts from the unrestricted acreage, the average high acreage value is approximately \$5.35. Based on these figures, the average acreage value of \$5.00 was negotiated.

Based on the several surveys, it has been determined that virtually none of the acreage considered to be sold is crop-productive and very little merchantable timber now exists. It was also determined that much of the total acreage is annually burned off and the composition of the soil is such that it is doubtful that merchantable timber could ever be grown. There were some tracts which, under proper supervision and control, could ultimately produce trees and therefore be of specific use to the Commission. In general, the Commission plans to ultimately convert most of the acreage to public hunting facilities with an attempt to produce merchantable timber in the remaining acreage. There are a considerable number of acres which the Commission would acquire for the sole purpose of forest fire prevention.

The University committee deliberated on the possibility of the University retaining this land, but under proper care and control. However, it was determined that this could not be done with existing facilities and staff and it was their belief that the University could never realize enough income from the land to support the needed additional facilities and staff.

In view of the disadvantages to the University in retaining its Agricultural College Land and the desire of the Missouri Conservation Commission to acquire this land, it would seem in the best interest of the University to convey the 10,077.25 acres to the Commission, subject to reservation of 50% of all mineral rights, at the average price of \$5.00 per acre, thus making a total sale price of \$50,386.25. It is our understanding that the Commission, at a recent meeting, approved the acquisition of this land based on the above terms.

It is planned to submit this matter to the Board at its meeting on November 20 for consideration.

Very truly yours,

cc: President Elmer Ellis

Dale O. Bowling