

**UNSEATED LANDS, PURCHASE AUTHORIZED BY COMMONWEALTH - REPEALED**  
**Act of Mar. 30, 1897, P.L. 11, No. 10**  
AN ACT

Cl. 32

Authorizing the purchase by the Commonwealth of unseated lands for the non-payment of taxes for the purpose of creating a State Forest Reservation.

**Compiler's Note:** Section 302(h) of Act 18 of 1995, which created the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and renamed the Department of Environmental Resources as the Department of Environmental Protection, provided that the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources shall exercise the powers and duties conferred upon the Commissioner of Forestry by Act 10 of 1897.

**Section 1. Notice of tax sale of unseated lands**

From and after the first day of January, Anno Domini one thousand eight hundred and ninety-eight, whenever any unseated lands within this Commonwealth shall, under existing laws, become liable to sale by the respective county treasurers or the county commissioners for nonpayment of taxes, it shall be the duty of such treasurers and commissioners to publish a notice once a week for six successive weeks in at least two newspapers of general circulation within the county in which the lands lie, and if two newspapers be not published in said county, then in one newspaper in or nearest to the same, which notice shall contain the names of the owners when known, the warrant numbers, names of warranties when known, the number of acres contained in each tract, the township in which the same is located, and the sums due upon each tract for taxes; and, further, to mail to the Secretary of Agriculture and the Commissioner of Forestry, each, ten copies of such printed advertisement immediately upon the publication thereof. 1897, March 30, P.L. 11, Sec. 1.

**Section 2.** It shall be the duty of the Commissioner of Forestry to inquire into and examine the location and character of unseated lands advertised by the respective county treasurers and the county commissioners of this Commonwealth for sale for the non-payment of taxes, and if in his judgment the same are so located and are of such a character as to make them desirable for the Commonwealth for the purpose of creating and maintaining a Forestry Reservation, he shall have power, at his discretion, to purchase any such lands for and in behalf of the Commonwealth at such tax sales, subject to the right of redemption under existing laws: Provided however, That the bid made and the price paid for said lands, shall in no case exceed the amount of taxes for the non-payment of which the same are being sold, and the costs. For all purchases so made in behalf of the Commonwealth, the Auditor General shall draw his warrant upon the State Treasurer to the order of the county treasurer, upon certificate filed by the Commissioner of Forestry with the said Auditor General: Provided further, That the Commissioner of Forestry shall have power to purchase unseated lands other than such as are advertised for sale for the non-payment of taxes, upon such

terms and conditions as may be agreed upon with the owners of such land: Provided, That such purchase shall be approved by the Governor and the Board of Property, consisting of the Attorney General, Secretary of the Commonwealth, and Secretary of Internal Affairs. And provided further, That in no case shall the price paid for such unseated land exceed the assessed value of the same. For all purchases so made in behalf of the Commonwealth the Auditor General shall draw his warrant upon the State Treasurer to the order of the grantor, upon certificate filed by the Commissioner of Forestry, with approval as aforesaid: Provided, That in no case shall the amount paid for any tract of land purchased under the provisions of this act exceed the sum of five dollars per acre.

(2 amended Apr. 28, 1899, P.L.98, No.81)

**Compiler's Note:** Section 504 of Act 164 of 1980 provided that section 2 is repealed insofar as it is inconsistent with Act 164.

Section 3. Disposition of redemption money

In the event of redemption of said lands, the redemption money paid shall be remitted to the State Treasurer by the county treasurer, with a statement describing the tract of land so redeemed. 1897, March 30, P.L. 11, Sec. 3.

Section 4. Title to vest in Commonwealth; record

The title to all lands so purchased, and not redeemed after the expiration of the time limited for redemption, shall be taken as vested in the Commonwealth to the same extent, and with like effect as though such purchase had been made by an individual at such sale, and the county treasurer shall certify to the Secretary of Agriculture, lists of all lands purchased in behalf of the Commonwealth and not redeemed within the time limited for such redemption, with a description of each tract as required by section one of this act, and thereafter such lands shall not be subject to further taxation while the same are owned by the Commonwealth. It shall be the duty of the Secretary of Agriculture to keep a record in a book, to be especially provided for that purpose, of all the lands so acquired by the Commonwealth, with full description of each tract, the character of the same, the date of purchase, the price paid when the title became absolute, or if redeemed, the date of redemption. 1897, March 30, P.L. 11, Sec. 4.