

FLOOD CONTROL, REFORESTATION
Act of Aug. 7, 1936, Special Session 1, P.L. 116, No. 47 Cl. 32
Special Session No. 1 of 1936
No. 1936-47

AN ACT

Authorizing and directing the Department of Forests and Waters to investigate, survey, and report on the location and availability for purchase of certain lands suitable for reforestation with flood control as the objective.

WHEREAS, The continued efficiency of any water impounding dams which may be constructed by the State or Federal Government as flood control projects is dependent upon reducing to a minimum the silt deposited in them; and

WHEREAS, A forest cover with its honey-combed soil and thick humus bedded surface is the most effective agent known to prevent soil erosion and the silting of streams and dams and to retard the water run-off; and

WHEREAS, There are upwards of two million three hundred thousand acres of submarginal, idle and abandoned farm lands in this State, located largely on the upper river watersheds, which are subject to serious soil erosion and rapid water run-off, which constitute a growing menace during flood seasons and are of little value except for reforestation; and

WHEREAS, The rate of fire damage on private unmanaged and unattended wild lands is six times that on State-controlled forest lands, and such burned-over lands constitute an additional menace from soil erosion and water run-off; therefore

Section 1. Be it enacted, &c., That the Department of Forests and Waters is hereby authorized and directed to make an investigation and reforestation survey, with flood control as the objective, of all private forest lands and all abandoned farm lands and submarginal lands, their location, availability for purchase, and their approximate purchase prices, together with all lands in any of the above classes on which the taxes imposed by political subdivisions are delinquent, or which have been sold to counties because of insufficient bids at tax sales.

The investigation and survey shall include the three watersheds of the Commonwealth, the Susquehanna watershed, the Delaware watershed, and the Ohio watershed, including lands draining, directly or indirectly, into the Susquehanna River and its North and West Branches and the Juniata River, the Delaware, the Lehigh and Schuylkill Rivers, and the Ohio, Allegheny, Monongahela, and Beaver Rivers.

Section 2. The Department of Forests and Waters shall make a complete report of its investigation and reforestation survey to the next General Assembly convening in January, one thousand nine hundred and thirty-seven, not later than February first, one thousand nine hundred and thirty-seven, so that the General Assembly may be fully advised in order that appropriate

legislation may be enacted with a view of adopting a comprehensive flood control program.