

CHAPTER 84B

VOYAGEURS NATIONAL PARK

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84B.01 LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS.

Subdivision 1. **History of efforts to establish.** The legislature finds that the untiring efforts of citizens of the state of Minnesota, first formally enunciated by the legislature in 1891 by concurrent resolution number 13, together with efforts of citizens of other states, have culminated in the enactment by the second session of the 91st Congress of an act authorizing the establishment of Voyageurs National Park in the state of Minnesota; (Public Law 91-661).

Subd. 2. **Purpose of park.** The legislature concurs with the stated purpose of Congress in authorizing the establishment of the park. It is, therefore, the purpose of sections 84B.01 to 84B.10 to preserve, for the inspiration and enjoyment of present and future generations, the outstanding scenery, geologic conditions, and waterway system which constituted a part of the historic route of the voyageurs, who contributed significantly to the opening of the northwestern United States.

Subd. 3. **Public interests served by establishment of park.** Sections 84B.01 to 84B.10 are a necessary first step in the establishment of the park and is in furtherance of the provisions of section 101 of the act of Congress authorizing the establishment of the park. The Voyageurs National Park will be the largest park area within the state and will be of especial and immediate benefit to the citizens of the state, due to its accessibility to them, and to the effect it may reasonably be expected to have on the development of tourism and related economic activities. Sections 84B.01 to 84B.10 will, therefore, promote the health and welfare of the citizens of the state of Minnesota.

History: 1971 c 852 s 1

84B.02 WITHDRAWAL OF LANDS FROM KABETOGRAMA STATE FOREST.

All lands, including but not limited to trust fund lands, tax-forfeited lands, and acquired lands lying within the boundaries of Voyageurs National Park as described by section 102 of the act of Congress authorizing the establishment of the park are withdrawn from the Kabetogama State Forest.

History: 1971 c 852 s 2

84B.03 DONATION OF STATE LANDS.

Subdivision 1. **Governor's duties.** (a) Notwithstanding the provisions of any other law to the contrary, the governor, after consulting with the commissioner of natural resources and, in regard to lands forfeited to the state for nonpayment of taxes and held in trust by the state for taxing districts, the commissioner of revenue, shall donate and convey to the United States of America the state's interest in all of the following lands lying within the boundaries of Voyageurs National Park, as described by section 102 of the act of Congress authorizing the establishment of the park:

- (1) trust fund lands;
 - (2) lands forfeited to the state for nonpayment of taxes and held in trust by the state for taxing districts; and
 - (3) other lands acquired or otherwise owned by the state.
- (b) Each conveyance of these lands shall contain the following:
- (1) a provision that the lands shall revert to the state of Minnesota if:
 - (i) the secretary of the interior does not establish the park within five years after donation of all state-owned lands; or
 - (ii) the lands so conveyed are no longer used for national park purposes;
 - (2) a reservation to the state of all minerals and water power rights;
 - (3) a provision that the conveyance is subject to the rights of any person having an interest in the land on the date of conveyance pursuant to state lease, license, or permit; and
 - (4) to satisfy the provisions of section 301(c) of the act authorizing the establishment of Voyageurs National Park, the covenant required by that section to prohibit mining or water power development.

Subd. 2. **Trust fund land; condemnation.** For the purpose of satisfying the public sale requirements of Minnesota Constitution, article XI, section 8, and other applicable provisions of Minnesota's Constitution, and in keeping with the decision of the Minnesota Supreme Court in the case of *Independent School District of Virginia v. State*, 124 Minn. 271, where the court held that condemnation satisfied the public sale requirement of the Minnesota Constitution, the commissioner of administration shall acquire, by condemnation, fee title to all trust fund lands lying within the boundaries of Voyageurs National Park. The commissioner of administration shall not condemn the interests of any person holding a lease, license, or permit from the state in the lands condemned. Before any parcel of trust fund land is donated to the United States, the commissioner of administration shall certify to the governor that the parcel has been condemned, the condemnation award has been paid, and the time to appeal from the award has expired.

Subd. 3. **Tax-forfeited land; reimbursement of local taxing districts.** The commissioner of administration shall also acquire fee title, free from any trust or other encumbrance, to all land lying within the boundaries of Voyageurs National Park, the title to which has vested or may vest in the state due to nonpayment of taxes and expiration of the period for redemption, after the giving of notice thereof as provided by law, and is held by the state pursuant to section 281.25, in trust for the respective taxing districts interested in the taxes, assessments, penalties, interest, and costs accrued against the land at the time of expiration of the period of redemption. The commissioner of administration, in cooperation with the commissioner of natural resources, shall appraise the land at its fair market value. Upon determining the value of the land, the commissioner of administration shall transfer to the appropriate county auditor, from money appropriated for this purpose, an amount of money equal to the appraised value of the land, whereupon fee title to the land, free from any trust or other encumbrance, shall vest in the state of Minnesota. When a county is not satisfied with the valuation determined by the commissioner of administration, it may appeal the matter to the District Court in Ramsey County. The appeal shall be conducted so far as possible in the manner provided for eminent domain proceedings by chapter 117. The county auditor shall apportion the money in the manner provided in section 282.08, for the apportionment of proceeds from the sale of tax-forfeited lands.

Subd. 4. **Conveyance.** (a) In furtherance of boundary adjustments to Voyageurs National Park authorized by Congress in Public Law 97-405, and notwithstanding any other law to the contrary, the governor, after consulting the commissioner of natural resources, shall donate and convey to the United States of America, for Voyageurs National Park, the state's interest in the following described lands:

(1) Lot 7, Section 4, Township 68 North, Range 18 West;

(2) the area of land commonly referred to as the Kabetogama Forestry Station, consisting of approximately 18.45 acres, and located in Section 21, Township 69 North, Range 21 West; and

(3) land not exceeding 120 acres consisting of a strip of land through that portion of Section 1, Township 68 North, Range 20 West, which is roughly parallel to and 400 feet on each side of the unimproved road extending northward from a point of beginning at the Ash River Trail in the Southeast Quarter of the Southeast Quarter of Section 1 to a point of termination in the Northeast Quarter of the Northwest Quarter in Section 1.

(b) Lands described in paragraph (a), clause (1), shall be donated and conveyed only after \$30,000 has been paid by the commissioner of natural resources to the city of Tower in return for a conveyance to the state of all right, title, and interest of the city of Tower in the land. Lands described in paragraph (a), clauses (2) and (3), shall be donated and conveyed only after the lands have been condemned by the commissioner of natural resources in the manner required by subdivision 2, and the time to appeal from the condemnation award has expired. All conveyances required by this subdivision shall comply with subdivision 1, except for the provision required by subdivision 1, paragraph (b), clause (1), item (i).

History: 1971 c 852 s 3; 1973 c 582 s 3; 1976 c 2 s 172; 1984 c 654 art 2 s 85; 1Sp1985 c 13 s 195; 2025 c 20 s 25,26

84B.04 ACQUIRING LANDS OF POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS.

The commissioner of administration shall acquire, by condemnation or purchase, fee title to lands owned by any political subdivision of the state located within the boundaries of Voyageurs National Park. Upon certification by the commissioner that the lands have been acquired and that any appeal time has expired, the governor shall donate and convey these lands to the United States for the park, in the manner provided in section 84B.03.

History: 1971 c 852 s 4

84B.05 OWNERS OF CERTAIN IMPROVED PROPERTIES MAY FILE CLAIMS.

Any person leasing land of the state of Minnesota for cabin site purposes within the boundaries of Voyageurs National Park may file with the legislature, a claim for the fair market value of any recreational residential dwelling, the construction of which was commenced on or after January 1, 1969 and before January 1, 1970.

History: 1971 c 852 s 5; 1975 c 271 s 6; 1Sp1981 c 4 art 2 s 8

84B.06 STATE'S CONSENT TO ACQUISITION OF LANDS.

Consent of the state of Minnesota is given to the acquisition by the United States in any manner authorized by act of Congress of lands lying within the boundaries of Voyageurs National Park for any purpose incident

to the development and maintenance of the park, subject to concurrent jurisdiction of the state and the United States as defined in section 1.041.

History: *1971 c 852 s 6*

84B.061 STATE JURISDICTION OVER RAINY LAKE AND OTHER NAVIGABLE WATERS; DUTIES OF GOVERNOR, ATTORNEY GENERAL, AND OTHER PUBLIC OFFICERS.

As required by this chapter and the act of Congress authorizing Voyageurs National Park, the state of Minnesota donated in excess of 35,000 acres of state and other publicly owned land for the park, roughly one-fourth of the land area of the park, at a cost of over \$5,000,000 to the state. More than 24,000 acres of this land was state trust fund land which the state condemned before making its donation. Pursuant to section 84B.06, lands donated by the state, along with other lands acquired by the National Park Service for the park, were made subject to concurrent jurisdiction by the state and the United States under section 1.041. In making these donations, none of the navigable waters within the park and the lands under them have been donated to the United States. These navigable waters include the following: Rainy, Kabetogama, Namakan, Sand Point, and Crane Lakes. Pursuant to applicable federal and state law, navigable waters and their beds are owned by the state. Ownership of and jurisdiction over these waters, frozen waters, and their beds has not been ceded by the state, either expressly or implicitly, to the United States. Unlike section 1.044 relating to the Upper Mississippi Wildlife and Fish Refuge, where the state expressly granted its consent and jurisdiction to the United States to acquire interests in water, as well as land, the consent granted by the state in section 84B.06 to acquisitions by the United States for Voyageurs National Park is limited to land, only. In the discharge of their official duties, the governor, attorney general, other constitutional officers, and other public officials, such as the commissioner of natural resources, shall vigorously assert and defend, in all forums, the state's ownership of and jurisdiction over these waters and their beds and related natural resources, together with associated rights of the state and its citizens arising from the state's ownership and jurisdiction. In discharging their duties, the governor, attorney general, other constitutional officers, and other public officials shall, additionally, be especially cognizant of the free rights of travel afforded to citizens of Minnesota and others under the Webster-Ashburton Treaty (proclaimed November 10, 1842) and the Root-Bryce Treaty (proclaimed May 13, 1910) on international and associated boundary waters. Also, in furtherance of duties under this section, the commissioner of natural resources shall continue in effect the commercial removal of native rough fish, as defined in section 97A.015, subdivision 32c, from these waters, together with any rights to do so possessed by any person on January 1, 1995, so long as the commissioner determines that such taking is desirable to the management of the native fishery.

History: *1995 c 124 s 2; 2024 c 90 art 2 s 8,44; 2024 c 116 art 3 s 14*

84B.07 PAYMENT IN LIEU OF PROPERTY TAXES.

When a tract or lot of privately owned property is acquired by the federal government for inclusion within Voyageurs National Park, and when, as a result of the acquisition, taxes are no longer assessed against the tract or lot or any improvements thereon, the following amount shall be paid by the commissioner of natural resources to the county of Koochiching or St. Louis for distribution to the taxing districts: In the first year after taxes are last required to be paid on the property, 80 percent of the last required payment; in the second year after taxes are last required to be paid on the property, 60 percent of the last required payment; in the third year after taxes are last required to be paid on the property, 40 percent of the last required payment; in the fourth year after taxes are last required to be paid on the property, 20 percent of the last required payment. The county auditor shall certify to the commissioner of natural resources the total amount due to a county on or before March 30 of the year in which money must be paid pursuant to this section. Money received by a county pursuant to this subdivision shall be distributed to the various taxing districts in the

same proportion as the levy of a taxing district bears to the total levy on the property in the last year taxes were required to be paid on the property. In no case shall the total amount of money paid to Koochiching County exceed \$19,000, and in no case shall the total amount of money paid to St. Louis County exceed \$111,000.

History: *1971 c 852 s 7; 1973 c 492 s 14; 1977 c 403 s 3*

84B.08 [Repealed, 1989 c 271 s 36]

84B.09 LIMITATION ON APPROPRIATIONS.

It is the intent of the legislature that the appropriations made by section 84B.07, as payments to counties in lieu of taxes, and by Minnesota Statutes 1986, section 84B.08, as proceeds from the sale of Voyageurs National Park bonds, shall not exceed \$6,000,000 and shall constitute the total expenditure of the state or any state agency for the purposes of sections 84B.01 to 84B.10, notwithstanding any other provisions of law or any appropriation made by law.

History: *1971 c 852 s 9; 1991 c 199 art 2 s 5*

84B.10 ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION.

Before any lands are conveyed to the United States pursuant to sections 84B.01 to 84B.10, the state shall enter into a written agreement with the secretary of the interior or a designee pursuant to which the parties agree to cooperate to maintain in the park the highest standards relating to air, land, and water quality, whether these highest standards be state or federal, consistent with the lawful authority possessed by the state of Minnesota and the secretary of the interior in the administration of the national park system to maintain air, land, and water quality in the park.

History: *1971 c 852 s 10; 1986 c 444*

84B.11 Subdivision 1. [Repealed, 2002 c 298 s 8]

Subd. 2. [Repealed, 2002 c 298 s 8]

Subd. 3. [Repealed, 2002 c 298 s 8]

Subd. 4. [Repealed, 1989 c 343 s 7; 2002 c 298 s 8]

84B.12 MS 2006 [Expired]