

The Manuel F. Correllus State Forest on Martha's Vineyard Part 1 [2014]





Key Points:

- Why was it first established?
- How has it changed since then?
- How is it beneficial for the island?
- How is it not beneficial for the island?
- What is the future of the State Forest?

A typical view inside the State Forest






Some key dates in the history of the State Forest:

- **1908** - 612 acres (established as a Heath Hen Preserve).
- **1925** - expanded to 1040 acres.
- **1926** - expanded to 4484 acres.
- **[1932]** - Heath Hen declared extinct.
- **1942 (WWII)** - Navy took one sq. mile for an airport.
- **1948-87** - Manny Correllus served as first State Forester.
Planted thousands of white and red pines.
- **1987 to present** - John Varkonda is State Forester.
- **1995** - about 800 acres donated (The Flynn Property)

**Total acreage today = 5343 acres
(8% of the Island!)**



There is some good news about
the State Forest and there is
some bad news too.



First the Good News:

- 5343 acres of undeveloped and protected land in the middle of Martha's Vineyard!
- Over 300 acres (and growing) are “grasslands” - mostly fire lanes and meadows.
- Provides good habitat (including some sandplain grasslands and scrub oak barrens).
- Possible grassland restoration?
- It's beautiful and peaceful.
- Serves as a **NATURAL RECHARGE AREA FOR OUR AQUIFER.** (For every one inch of rainfall, 140 million gallons of water land on the Forest.)



And now the Bad News:

- The Heath Hen didn't make it.
- Red pines died from a fungal disease.
- Major fire hazard today (dead wood).
- Too much monoculture.
- Trees “drink up” LOTS of water. So?
- Not the original vegetation of this area.