



The Umstead Coalition

P.O. Box 10654
Raleigh, NC 27605-0654
(919) 852-2268

<http://umsteadcoalition.org>

<Facebook.com/umsteadcoalition>

<Meetup.com/umsteadcoalition>

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Contact:

Dr. Jean Spooner, Chair, The Umstead Coalition
919-852-2268 or 919-602-0049
info@umsteadcoalition.org
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William B. Umstead State Park Encroachment Issue by RDU Airport

RALEIGH, NC –

A recent review of the property boundary between William B. Umstead State Park and the Raleigh-Durham Airport Authority (RDUAA) managed property to the south, known as the Odd Fellows tract, shows that the boundary of the Odd Fellows tract has been shifted northerly, encroaching over 120 feet into Umstead State Park.

In 1937, President Franklin D. Roosevelt authorized the United States Department of the Interior – National Park Service (NPS) to purchase a 209-acre parcel known as the PD Davis Tract to be a part of the Crabtree Creek Recreational Demonstration Area (RDA) (see Wake Register of Deeds, Book 743 page 499). The legal description for this tract includes boundaries that were re-confirmed via a survey in 1911 and remained unchanged through several sales after this survey and before becoming Park land.

The National Park Service confirmed the 1911 survey boundary as part of their 1937 purchase for the Park.

In 1943, the entire Crabtree Creek RDA, including all of the 209-acre PD Davis tract, was transferred to the State of North Carolina under the express condition that the land only be used for public park, recreation or conservation purposes (see the “Reverter Clause” in the Quitclaim Deed, Wake County Register of Deeds, Book 894 page 40). In 1955, the Crabtree Creek RDA, including the 209-acre PD Davis tract, was renamed William B. Umstead State Park.

The Odd Fellows tract, located just south of the 209-acre PD Davis tract, has been on the Umstead State Park acquisition list since 1935 and on the Park’s critical acquisition list since at least 1974.

Since the late 1800’s, deeds for the Odd Fellows tract indicate that it was “70 acres more or less.” Two one-acre tracts were sold off in the late 1940’s and early 1950’s, leaving “68 acres, more or less.” In 1958, the International Order of Odd Fellows (IOOF) purchased this tract of “68 acres more or less” and 1 additional acre, resulting in 69 acres, more or less.

In 1976, the Airport surprisingly took management control of the Odd Fellows tract. RDUAA employed their own surveyor who incorrectly shifted the Park boundary over 120’ to the north, taking Umstead State Park land, therefore Federal Park land. As documented in RDUAA meeting minutes, the encroachment into Umstead State Park resulted in the “69 acres more or less” becoming approximately 83 acres, a difference of approximately 14 acres. RDUAA did not inform anyone, including State Parks, regarding this large discrepancy in acreage. As such, the resulting encroachment into Umstead State Park was buried.

♥The Umstead Coalition ♥

Dedicated to preserving the natural integrity of W.B. Umstead State Park and the Richland Creek Corridor

For almost 50 years, RDUAA's encroachment was not known nor was it an issue as the Airport expanded in the opposite direction from the Park and Odd Fellows was knowingly being used for recreation (including camping by the Boy Scouts) and conservation, consistent with the neighboring Park usage and consistent with long standing plans for this land to be a part of the Park.

Unfortunately, RDUAA leased the Odd Fellows Tract to a private mining company (Wake Stone Corporation) whose plans are to create a brand-new open mine rock quarry pit, a use that is not allowed on Park land. Recently NC DEQ issued a mining permit to Wake Stone Corporation even though the mining permit application includes land belonging to Umstead State Park.

Fortunately, this border issue can be easily resolved by re-surveying and marking the boundary as delineated by the metes and bounds in the 1937 NPS purchase deed (and as per the 1938 NPS Park map). Additionally, RDUAA should re-evaluate their lease with Wake Stone Corporation and DEQ should reassess Wake Stone's Triangle Quarry Mining Permit modifications.

The good news is that Umstead State Park and the RDUAA managed property known as Odd Fellows are public lands managed by public bodies. We call on the leadership of these public bodies to re-survey and correct the boundary of William B. Umstead State Park, honoring the NPS purchase deed and ensuring the encroachment is eliminated.

A link to the supporting documents is available under the title "William B. Umstead State Park Encroachment by RDU Airport": <https://umsteadcoalition.org/news>

About the Umstead Coalition:

The Umstead Coalition has been working since the 1960's to support and protect the natural character of William B. Umstead State Park and the surrounding open space through fundraising, sponsorship or volunteer activities, and oversight of environmental and legal protections. William B. Umstead State Park was established in 1934 by the National Park Service as a public works project during the Great Depression. For more information about the Umstead Coalition, visit <http://umsteadcoalition.org>

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