

SCOUTS CANADA PROPERTIES REPORT
Ontario Quebec June, 2003

PROPERTIES REPORT
A REVIEW OF PROPERTIES
TOWARD ESTABLISHING ACTION FOR PROPERTIES IN
ONTARIO AND QUEBEC

June, 2003

Compiled by:
Director of Council Operations
Ontario Quebec
SCOUTS CANADA

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"Scouts Canada believes:

* That the outdoors provides an ideal setting for personal growth and recreation;

* That responsible citizenship imposes upon each person an increasing obligation to live in harmony with the natural environment.

"Because of these beliefs, camping and outdoor activities are essential parts of the programs. Every member has the right to the opportunity to participate in camping and outdoor activities as reflected in the Program Standards. These activities must meet the needs of members for fun and challenge and comply with recognized health and safety practices." (By-Law. Policies & Procedures, p.35136 and Camping & Outdoor Activity Guide)

"Since the inception of Scouting, nature and life in the outdoors have been considered as the ideal framework for Scout activities whenever possible, therefore. Scout activities should take place in an

outdoor sewing, in contact with nature, since it provides the ideal environment in which a harmonious and integrated development of the young person can take place." (Fundamental Principles, publication of the World Organization of the Scout Movement, p.1)

INTRODUCTION

In a paper prepared for the Quebec Provincial Council in February 2001 titled "WHEN IT COMES TO CAMPS, WHAT BUSINESS ARE WE IN?" a clear picture of the relationship of Scouts Canada to property ownership was expressed. "The use of the outdoors as a key learning resource has over time been a consistent means by which our Mission has been achieved. This is consistent with both (Canadian) and World Scouting objectives, as expressed in the quotations noted above.

"The primary purpose of (property) is to achieve the mission of Scouts Canada. The means by which this is done, the 'how' has and should change over time to take into consideration the society in which it operates at any given (period). The mission, the 'why', has not significantly changed over time, and will not likely change in the foreseeable future. "To this end, most Councils (and groups) have acquired property or access to property for Scouting purposes. This does not imply that councils (and groups) must own property to enable groups to achieve the Mission.

"In fact there are some groups that do not have access to Scouting Owned property yet still accomplish the objectives of the Movement by using the outdoors as a key learning resource. Similarly, groups that have access to Scouting-owned property use it in addition to non-owned outdoor facilities to accomplish our objectives.

"Scouting can be done almost anywhere with virtually no permanent facilities, although it does often benefit from access to facilities for certain kinds of program activities. It can be argued that there have been times in our history when suitable facilities were not readily available in the marketplace and therefore buying and developing these... facilities were essential. It is also not a coincidence that this period of property acquisition and development coincided with the 'baby boom' growth period and the corresponding substantial growth in Scouting which ended in the late seventies....

"Different from twenty-five years ago, there is available in the community a plethora of outdoor challenge activities and facilities which our members can and do access. Some examples include well-developed municipal, provincial and federal (campgrounds), (private) facilities, (and more). Given the above comments, it is therefore proposed that (Scouts Canada) confirm that the principal role of the Council relative to (property) is to further the mission of Scouting through the promotion of (program delivery, especially) camping and outdoor activities, as a key learning resource to members. This includes promoting and enabling (program delivery) through appropriate training, sharing of ideas (and resources), encouragement, coordination, and may also include the provision of direct... program opportunities.

"The accomplishment of this principal role does not require (Scouts Canada) to own ... properties. This does not mean that a Council must divest itself of property, but rather it must ensure that properties be properly maintained and fulfill the principal role identified above It also must take into consideration that any property meets the agreed upon... goals ...

In 1998, Scouts Canada began to assemble corporately a listing of all the properties that were held in the name of the organization. It was quickly realized that Scouts Canada had properties based upon a membership greater than we had ever achieved in our history. Every local council and many groups felt they had to have a special parcel of land to call its own as a means to deliver the Scouting program. The difficulty is that we never had the financial resources and with the smaller membership that came with the tmbust¹ "echo", and "millennium" generations we no longer have the membership base to justify the number of properties.

Organizationally then, Scouts Canada needs to reduce the risk associated with having so much property, risk that comes from it being

used, or from sitting idle. The expectation is that the financial resources generated from such a reduction in property will allow Scouts Canada to undertake significant membership growth initiatives and improve program delivery so that there is greater adventure in the program to ensure greater membership retention.

In all discussions about property it has been concluded that any property that Scouts Canada has should provide added value to program delivery beyond the resources already available within the community and not be a burden on financial or human resources. The goal then becomes, to identify how properties are utilized for the maximum benefit of program delivery. It is conceivable that any objective review would result in the reduction of the number of properties. At the same time there is an interest in not inadvertently divesting ourselves of a property that may be best to retain.

In March 2002, upon returning from visiting the National Office of Boy Scouts of America and attending a IBSA National Camp School 9amp Management Course, Brian Moore was asked to facilitate a discussion with Council Executive Directors about a future direction for properties within Scouts Canada (Central Division). While many ideas were generated, it was ultimately concluded that the Commissioners needed to be brought into the discussion and that any discussion would likely include the various property managers since each would have primary knowledge and responsibility for a specific property. During the early dialogue it was noted that Scouts Canada had very little information about the financial picture, program potential, facility usage, in fact, what exact structure(s) and equipment were on each piece of property. Further, while properties had spent two years achieving a level of compliance on the properties, there was no clear picture of whether the compliance expectations were at or beyond any suitable standards.

This meant that the first real task was to get some grasp on the properties, their resources, their potential and their usage so that we could best understand the current state of affairs. The purpose of this paper then was to propose a set of actions which could be used to make future decisions regarding properties.

THE PROCESS In the fall of 2003 a process was defined to gain input from across the Division about the possible ingredients to a Property Plan for Scouts Canada (Ontario/Quebec). The process consisted of taking some of the material presented to Council Executive Directors and select Commissioners, and presenting it to the property managers, from across the Division. The camp properties were well represented but the halls and office properties were never well represented at any of the meetings.

The goals set were:

- * To gain a sense of the size and scope of the property issue across the Division. (Over 180 properties with half of them camps and the other half halls, offices and other purposes and of these about half of each grouping is owned property.)

- * To develop criteria for assessing the value to Scouts Canada of the properties that ensures the best Scouting program delivery opportunities into the future.

- * By June 1, 2003 give to the Boards of Directors of each Incorporated Body, through the Divisional Executive Director, recommendations for a Divisional Properties Strategy.

The first meeting consisted of having attendees locate and briefly describe their property for other attendees. They then developed a list of elements that should be part of the final plan and therefore part of this report. Next the attendees created the list of Hems (an inventory) that people would want to know about the other properties if they were determining the future of any property. Finally attendees were asked to offer ingredients to a quality award scheme for properties.

The originally scheduled second meeting was intended to be a time when property managers would bring their inventory, share it with others, make refinements and promote their facility. Because of the winter scheduling, this meeting did not happen and instead inventories were submitted electronically. Each property manager made the

individual choice whether the inventory was broadcast generally or not. At the time of preparing the report we are still receiving the inventories. In the interval, questions generated from the meeting were taken to corporate officials for the answers and detail behind the answers. Further, any resources related to properties were encouraged to be shared. Before the spring meeting the answers were shared with the attendees. As well a discussion paper, consisting of various concepts that had been proposed from several sources from the start of this process, was also distributed. Many of the concepts were presented in the most controversial manner possible to ensure discussion. The result was some heated remarks during the spring meeting but the discussions should have exposed any weaknesses in the ideas so that the best concepts are presented here.

Some of the notable sources for the concepts paper were: the staff in both the Program and Operations Divisions of the Corporate Office, staff of the National Office of Scouts Canada, the Council Executive Directors of Central Division, a discussion paper from the Quebec Council (February 2001), and a properties review report from Alberta Council (June 2002). Following the spring meetings there was an expectation that there would be a review of the material by a small team of volunteers before forwarding it to the Board of Directors. Unfortunately, since we are still receiving material about various properties and the last meeting had to be rescheduled to a rather late date in May. The resulting report is only the final thoughts of the author.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Scouts Canada needs to establish an overall objective regarding expectations about outdoors and our properties.

Scouts Canada must expect all properties held in the name of Scouts Canada to be available to all Scouts Canada members.

The corporation will only authorize ownership arrangements in the future and scrutinize closely any leases or agreements with the intention of discouraging any further development of these properties.

Scouts Canada should assess each of the properties to ensure they each add value to program delivery, and are not a burden on financial or human resources, based on consistent criteria.

Commissioners (National, Council and Area), in consultation with leaders and youth, need to define the program focus for every property (camps, halls and others).

Deputy Commissioners for Program need to be as concerned about outdoor programming at camp and on the trail as they are for weekly programming.

Camping and hiking should be understood to be the means to various adventures, therefore Group Committees need to ensure leaders have programming planned beyond just "going to camp" or "on a hike."

Scouters want program opportunities available at the properties, so properties need to move to making program resources available and ultimately move toward providing program opportunities.

Scouts Canada should have at least one camp in each council that will have the infrastructure to offer Wolf Cub section programming in all four seasons.

Scouts Canada should have one camp in each council with the infrastructure to offer Scout section programming in all four seasons.

Scouts Canada should establish a Divisional Properties Program Committee to ensure effective program delivery opportunities across the Division and ensure that meeting halls and offices have a greater role in program delivery.

The two corporations (Ontario and Quebec) need to make a decision about all properties being managed consistently, either centrally or locally, and to what level of the organization.

Scouts Canada must expect every property to have a formal management plan.

Scouts Canada needs to look seriously at having employed staff associated with property operations.

The corporations need to make talent and resources available to help property management and their Councils become successful with funding initiatives.

Scouts Canada should consider the placement of offices with the intention of multiple use of property owned by Scouts Canada.

Scouts Canada needs to develop a rationalized fee structure and booking system for its properties.

Scouts Canada should develop and implement a centralized communications strategy for properties.

GENERAL STRATEGIES

"Every member has the right to the opportunity to participate in camping and outdoor activities as reflected in the Program Standards. These activities must meet the needs of members for fun and challenge, and comply with recognized health and safety practices." B.P. & P., p.36

Actions to be taken:

Scouts Canada must expect all properties held in the name of Scouts Canada to be available to all Scouts Canada members.

The corporation will only authorize ownership arrangements in the future and scrutinize closely any leases or agreements with the intention of discouraging any further development of these properties.

Scouts Canada should assess each of the properties to ensure they each add value to program delivery, and are not a burden on financial or human resources, based on consistent criteria.

As a true international fellowship, all people must feel welcome at properties held in the name of Scouts Canada. In the past there have been some properties that have been seen as the select space of their particular crowd or group. This sense of personal ownership must expand beyond select members so that the greater Scouting community is welcome at all Scout camps and halls across the Division. If there is an expense associated with this openness, then usage fees need to be calculated. But the fees must not be imposed such that a new form of segregation is established. The time has long passed when some Scouting members should be seen as more favoured than others. Our members, their leaders and their parents do not understand this sense of "privileges for some when they believe they joined Scouts Canada, a national youth organization. Therefore, Scouts Canada must expect all properties held in the name of Scouts Canada to be available to all Scouts Canada members.

While a lease or use agreement brings the possibility of exclusive use for Scouts Canada members, both contracts do not permit the degree of freedom that comes with ownership. Both also bring potential liabilities without any return on our investment.

For any property for which we currently have a lease, the lease must include some detailed description about the expectations upon Scouts Canada and the land owner when the lease is concluded. Any future buildings and other major structures should be erected only on property we own (upon approval of the directors of the incorporated body). My structures currently on leased property must have the details of future expectations written into the lease so that any contingency funding can be reserved and assured thus the property can be left in the condition described by the lease or agreement. The strategy needs to be that the corporation will only authorize ownership arrangements in the future and scrutinize closely any leases or arguments with the intention of discounting any further development of these properties.

Any current leases or agreements need to be revised with these conditions. For the aid of councils, a proposed model lease will need to

be offered in the near future.

In all of the meetings that were held regarding all properties the number one concern was about what criteria would be used to assess the value of a property to Scouts Canada. Based on the feedback from attendees to the meeting the following general categories were identified.

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CRITERIA FOR ASSESSING VALUE OF PROPERTY TO SCOUTING

In order of priority:

- COMPLIANT - Safe Environment for Program Delivery
- PROGRAM - Potential for Adventure
- PROGRAM - Delivering on the Potential
- USAGE - Used for Program Delivery by Section Leadership (Age Appropriate)
- USAGE - Seen as Attractive by the Youth (as determined by the Council Youth Forum)
- LOCATION - Reasonable Travel Distance for Transporters (Appropriate to Section)
- LOCATION - Accessible by Sections and their Members
- LOCATION - No other Options Available
- FINANCES - Operates on a Revenue Neutral Basis
- FINANCES - Resources Available to Ensure Continuance
- HUMAN RESOURCES - Sufficient to Ensure Work gets Accomplished
- PLANNING - Consistent with Strategic Plans for the Property. Council and Division
- LINKAGES - Community Commitment to the Property
- USAGE - Used by External Groups (Limited)

While there is no certainty that the order to the following categories may not change, it is understood that safety was the starting point and that program delivery was the reason for having property.

COMPLIANT - The property management must ensure first and foremost that a safe environment is available and maintained so that program delivery is never jeopardized.

PROGRAM - The reason for having property is program delivery and while a property may not be at its full potential the program potential for providing adventure for those that may use the property, both camps and halls, is what next needs to be assessed. This assessment needs to be made by the program people as outlined later in this document. The potential should be assessed based upon the purpose defined for the property based upon agreement to the PROGRAM FOCUS outlined in this document.

PROGRAM - The next criterion needs to be the current ability to deliver on the potential for program adventure. Property that currently has the resource is much more able to continue with delivery by comparison with those locations that have yet to put program opportunities into place.

USAGE - Use of a property for program delivery is a key indicator of how valuable the section leadership sees the property resource. This usage will be determined by the Colony Scouters in the case of Beavers but by the youth of the Company Executive in the case of the Venturers, that is why the descriptive note of "age appropriate" is used. The primary users of a property must be the Scouting membership. Monitoring of usage must be part of an annual camp operations review.

USAGE - The property must be seen as attractive by the youth as a setting to achieve their adventure. Attendees to the meetings were in agreement that the reaction of the youth had to be a determining factor regarding the future of a property. It was further agreed that the Council Youth Forum was likely the best forum for getting valuable and frequent feedback about the attractiveness of a property to their program.

LOCATION - While there was no agreement on the actual time that people may be willing to transport youth to a property for program, most attendees to the meetings agreed that Beaver and Wolf Cub parents would normally expect not to travel further than 75 minutes one-way for a weekend event. The maps covering the Division were divided into blocks using this approximate timeframe and camp properties have been grouped for review (see later in the report). Within that block one good size camp per area should be able to meet the needs of our two junior sections unless the usage at a location is already maximized.

LOCATION - Section members must be able to gain access to the property so that they can use it for their program delivery. If a hall or office, for whatever reason, is not available for use despite its proximity, then that becomes a factor in assessing its value.

LOCATION While the Scouts Canada program can be delivered in non-Scouting locations, if there is no other option available where the program can be delivered, then this becomes a factor in ensuring the continuance of the property. This has to be assessed carefully because some options are overlooked because we have not used them in the past.

FINANCES - Operation of the property must be on a revenue neutral basis. This means that the operating budget of the property operation is break-even with the capital development having a separate budget, not drawn from operations. To do less is to expect that resources will be drawn from other locations in Scouts Canada to ensure the survival of the property and that is inappropriate. It also means that properties need to price their service based upon the actual replacement costs, which means as an example, the replacement of a building roof every twenty (20) years needs to be built into the financial plans. Finance is significant but if all of the previous factors are positive, then the financial resources may be able to be found to ensure the success of the property.

FINANCES - There needs to be an assessment of the resources that are available to ensure the continuance of any property. Clearly when a property has a reserve fund backing it up there is less demand on the greater organization, than when there is not.

HUMAN RESOURCES - The future of any property is always affected by the assessment of whether there are sufficient people, be they volunteer, staff or hired, to ensure any work gets accomplished. Clearly this follows financial considerations because several human resource issues can be addressed by hiring the necessary personnel.

PLANNING - It is essential that there be long term plans for each property and these plans must be consistent with strategic plans for the Council and Division. While this consideration should have higher priority, it is evident that planning has not been a significant factor considering the number of properties that do not have long-term plans and it was therefore given this placement

LINKAGES - Community commitment to the property may not be a high factor but it could be a significant factor; in the sense that, while there may not be a reserve fund behind the property and there may not be the human resources for the routine efforts, when there is a special campaign to address property issues there are some communities that support a property more vigorously than others. That must influence decision makers.

USAGE - Scouts Canada must expect all properties held in the name of Scouts Canada to be available primarily to our Scouts Canada members. Properties must focus on the Mission of Scouting and not evolve or be drawn into providing recreation facilities for local communities or non Scouting groups. However, usage by external groups, no matter how limited, can be a determining factor. It reflects the value of the resource in supporting community initiatives as reflected by the demand of other community agencies or services. This should not be blindly discounted, but it does come as the final factor in the criteria.

Using the criteria just outlined as the tool, Scouts Canada should assess each of the properties to ensure they each add value to program delivery, and are not a burden on financial or human resources, based on consistent criteria.

PROGRAM FOCUS

"Every member has the right to the opportunity to participate in camping and outdoor activities as reflected in the Program Standards. These activities must meet the needs of members for fun and challenge, and comply with recognized health and safety practices." B.P. & P., p.36

Actions to be taken:

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Commissioners (National, Council and Area), In consultation with leaders and youth, need to define the program focus for every property (camps, halls and others).

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Camping and hiking should be understood to be the means to various adventures, therefore Group Committees need to ensure leaders have programming planned beyond just "going to camp" or "on a hike."

Scouters want program opportunities available at the properties, so properties need to move to making program resources available and ultimately move toward providing program opportunities.

Throughout this report is frequent comparison with Boy Scouts of America. It should be understood that we in Scouts Canada should be proud of our short-term camping opportunities. Tiger Cubs, which are comparable to older Beavers, are not permitted to camp; they are restricted to rambles and day outings. The comparable Cub programs Wolf Cubs, Bear Cubs and Webelos) are permitted to camp but most Packs camp for a single overnight, sometimes because of camp availability but usually because that is the program expectation.

Scouts and Venturers do not seem to have, on average, as many weekend opportunities as units in Scouts Canada. This success we need to continue.

Where we do not compare as well is in long-term camping. [Boy Scouts of America expects and achieves greater summer camping for Cubs (typically three over-nights to avoid homesickness). Scouts, and Venturers despite their older age of sixteen plus. Boy Scouts of America also provides greater employment opportunities for their Scout and Venturer members to apply their Scouting skills through summer camp jobs. These are likely significant factors that influence greater retention of older youth by Boy Scouts of America.

To give focus to youth members, their leaders, council officials and properties management, Boy Scouts of America established a motivational objective statement to ensure camping was a significant part of the Scout section program. Scouts Canada could ensure similar impact on our outdoor programming by establishing a similar objective. Therefore, Scouts Canada needs to establish an overall objective regarding expectations about outdoors and our properties.

As a starting point for discussion, a statement that could lead to a final objective might be, "To ensure each Scout and Venturer has experienced a complete year program, camps in each of the four seasons must be available annually." The summer opportunity (between June 21 and September 21) should be at least a short-term experience. With this direction, as well as training support, we may start to convince Scout Leaders NOT to shut down in the spring, since Scouting is a twelve-month program - the youth deserve our best effort.

During the meetings held across the Division, the people who were invited were the Property Managers. It was acknowledged that the purpose of properties needs to be to enhance program delivery; however, the managers believe that the program Scouters (section leaders with their youth, and commissioners with their teams) need to be the people who identify the program focus of each individual property. Managers then have the responsibility of ensuring that the property is in the correct state to be able to meet the expected focus. Historically, our camp properties have tried to offer "all things for all people." While this may ensure that the area test number of local sections camp at the local facility, it may also become a problem with retention because youth get dissatisfied with "always camping at the same place." It further results in Scouting scattering our scarce resources on duplicate services at multiple sites. As a study done of the camps in Alberta recommends, we should establish a program focus for each property that does "not duplicate programs at all the camps. The camps should specialize and cater to specific (sections)." [one program specialty ideas are offered in Appendix 'A'. Many attendees to the meeting also felt this concept of

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coordinated specialization further emphasized the idea that Scouts Canada was one organization rather than several different jurisdictions.

To date camps have fallen in one of the following categories. "Wilderness," a property with nothing but drinking water and privies on unmaintained land, intended for Rover, Venturer and selective Scout programming. "Rustic," a property with drinking water and privies plus building(s) but no electricity, intended for Rover, Venturer, and Scout programming. "Rural," a property with drinking water and privies plus building(s) having electricity but no program support. intended for Rover, Venturer, Scout, and Wolf Cub programming. "Recreational," a property with drinking water and toilets plus building(s) that has electricity, and program resources but no program support services, intended for Venturer, Scout, Wolf Cub, and Beaver programming. "programmed," a property with drinking water and toilets plus building(s) that has electricity, and program support services, intended for Venturer, Scout, Wolf Cub, and Beaver programming. These categories have allowed for varying property services but little program focus. Scouts Canada can take the current state of the property as an influencing factor, and define one or possibly two program sections to be served by a property.

All Scouts Canada property no matter whether camps, meeting halls, offices or otherwise should maximize their use for program support. Halls and offices have normally focused on a single function be that as a meeting hall, administrative centre, training facility, or retail outlet. All facilities need to be utilized as program delivery opportunities and then maximized. Meeting halls could be used for weekend billeting, offices could be meeting locations for crews and companies. Training facilities could become outdoor education centres, to mention just a few ideas. Facilities could enhance their usage through ensuring greater use during the hours of the week when we offer our program, specifically from 6:00-9:00 p.m. Halls and offices need to look at offering after school programming in the 3:30-6:00 p.m. time slot. Halls and offices need to investigate offering weekend program opportunities for Beaver overnights, billeting for touring and bike treks, and many more (depending upon zoning). We should fully utilize the opportunities of school breaks offered in December and March, as well as increasing summer usage. Camps that are near our groups need to draw sections out to camp for evening program opportunities after 5:00 p.m. on weekdays. based upon their program focus.

Beaver "camping" should be a progressive experience and capitalize on the family context Beavers should experience "family day camp" during the first-year, moving to family overnight camps in local halls by the second-year (acknowledging that some schools and churches do not permit overnight stays, we should take full advantage of local Scout halls and offices, where zoning allows) and family overnight camping in camp settings for the third-year. The focus is on "family fun" so that a child and parent together are enjoying the camping experience.

Travel time to the camp setting is a concern to Beavers and their parents, so maximum advantage should be made of facilities available locally, be they provincial parks, conservation areas, private campgrounds and more; rather than relying exclusively upon Scouting properties. We do not need to build and maintain facilities that duplicate what is already available closer, newer and often more affordably. Should camping resources be limited, since the emphasis is on the single overnight experience. Facilities may handle more Colonies by having one Colony scheduled from 7:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. in the Friday Saturday portion and another Colony scheduled for the same time allotment in the Saturday-Sunday portion of a weekend.

Several of the Scouts Canada camps should specialize in one or both of the junior sections with the emphasis for the majority of camps being on providing Wolf Cub camping. There may be Beaver camping at the same property but it should be located to be separate from the Wolf Cub camping. If one property is accommodating both sections, it is best if there is some natural barrier such as a river or forest, and a separate entrance. This barrier should help ensure that the Wolf Cub program and Beaver program remains separate and that youth are not "bored" going back to the same facility when they advance to Wolf Cubs. The only time Beavers should be exposed to Wolf Cub camping is when third-year Beavers go on a program teaser ramble to see what adventures await in Wolf Cubs.

A property that focuses on the Wolf Cub section, should offer smaller camp structures such as bunk houses, six lairs (in dorms) or wall tents with floors that accommodate six youth. These smaller structures would reinforce the working of small groups. These structures are used quite successfully by several properties. Any large structures should accommodate pack activities such as meals and some programming.

The properties themselves should offer programming opportunities where leaders can slide into the various program options offered or offer program resources that make it easy for leaders to capitalize on the location.

In Appendix 'C' six program areas venues are suggested that could easily be

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offered at most of our camps. If support services are available, Packs could move through those areas in 75-minute segments and have a very successful weekend program weekend schedule is offered in the appendix). If a camp only has resources available, such as: a prepared kit of activities, directions to a local sight for a visit or tour, or a self-directed challenge such as fitness circuit, then it should still be possible for Packs to present a very successful weekend program. These activities should not hamper the experienced leadership team that wants to design a camp program for their Pack.

When a property focuses on just the Wolf Cub section it should permit the imagination of management to be free to focus on activities that can be offered without intruding into the "Friends of the Forest" or the Scout adventures ahead. Some of the program features that could be developed, anchored on age appropriate programming, are such things as a "Jungle" setting, native village. 1812 stockade, French mission, pioneer village, frontier Main Street, sailing ship, and many more (many designs of which are available from Boy Scouts of America).

If Beavers and Wolf Cubs use the camps of older sections, what adventures are left to look forward to when one gets into Scouts? Give youth something to dream about and create a mystique for the younger members. Scouts is where there should be the adventure of learning many new Scouting skills and challenging one's limits. Skills related to camping, hiking, aquatics, conservation and much more, come up against the challenges posed by nature, weather, climate, as well as those man designs through Confidence Courses, Climbing Walls, Competitive Events and more. (Appendix materials can be modified for Scouts.)

When a camp focuses on the Scout section, it should be possible to have few structures, as Scouts learn to rely on tentage for accommodation. Should rescue accommodation be necessary in winter or foul weather then smaller camp structures such as bunk houses that accommodate eight people should be sufficient. (Bunkhouses would reinforce the working of patrol size groups). With These structures being used as a winter refuge it ensures that the routine program is delivered out-of-doors. Council resources can then be turned to program enhancements, whatever they may become. While Venturers and Rovers can benefit from the occasional set" camp as a training base, for a "relaxation" camp, or in the context of providing leadership to younger members, the major focus of Venturer and Rover camping should be toward 'high adventure.' Within the division this should take two forms.

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There should be at least one (and preferably three for variety in each year) 'high adventure' facility that ensures that there is a place with the resources to offer adventure to 14 to 16 year old youth. This could also be the base out of which many ExtremeAdventure programs could be anchored. Hiking, bicycle trekking, horseback riding, bluff face scaling are just some of the adventures that could be offered. These could be expanded to a year-round opportunity with the program built around climate. Activities could also be grouped into a triathlon format such as mountain biking, canoeing and orienteering hike to form one challenge (which has already been run by at least one council).

The second opportunity would be the assembly and resourcing of Scouting "experts" in various high adventure activities, such as mountain bicycling, horseback riding, spelunking, ice-sheet scaling and many more. These experts" would likely be referenced through the "high adventure" facility and be available to help the company or crew plan the experience, train for the adventure(s) and then execute the trip. The best "experts" would be "twenty-something" who have developed their skills through The Scouting program and are prepared to help others across the Division have the experiences they had. This should also ease the anxiety for Scouters and youth alike who want the 'high adventure' experiences but do not initially feel qualified to undertake the adventures unaided.

We need to provide summer camping opportunities to our members as well as expose non-members through our ScoutAbout program.

With all of these points, therefore, Commissioners, in consultation with leaders and youth, need to define the program focus for every property.

All of the suggestions about improved program use of our properties imply that there needs to be greater skill and capability in delivering the program enhancements. Currently The standards and qualifications for leaders and their youth to use risk associated program resources such as canoes, sail boats, aerial "Epfl lines, climbing walls, and more are handled through the Group Committees using the Camping & Outdoor Activities Guide. With Scouts Canada becoming more involved in program delivery at our properties, Scouts Canada will need to define the certification and qualification needed to ensure that program delivery is safe 'while continuing to offer challenge and risk.

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Scouts Canada should be seen as encouraging 21st Century camping practices. That can be best done by using the program delivery opportunities to teach our youth and at the same time have coaches available who can take some time with the Scouters and explain to them what is happening with the program delivery. More can be taught that way about "learning by doing" and leaving a place "cleaner than you found it."

As part of youth education, every Scouts Canada property should operate a program of optimum recycling and waste diversion as an example to our members, irrelevant of whether the local community continues with sorting that we undertake. It is through Scout Canada providing the strongest possible example to our members that will inspire our members to influence their communities to undertake serious waste management practices. There are likely similar initiatives that need to be undertaken.

It should be encouraged to have a Rover Crew or Venturer Company as part of each property as a way for some of our older youth to be able to fulfill adult responsibilities. At the same time we have a young, Energetic resource group to help maintain properties in first class condition Summer programming can give our older youth opportunities for employment as well and contribute to retention in our program of older youth.

These are just some of the reasons why Deputy Commissioners for Program need to be as concerned about outdoor programming at camp and on the trail as they are for weekly programming.

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During the meetings it was learned that in September 1999 Voyageur Region conducted a Contact Leader Survey as part of a camp facilities review. A questionnaire was sent to each leader-in-charge of a section (Contact Leader) and each Group Committee Chairperson within the region. The questionnaire sought information about the nature of the outdoor programs in place within the region, and what role Scouts Canada properties play in these programs.

Of the over two hundred (200) questionnaires sent out, there were forty-four (44) responses as follows: Beaver Colony Scouters - 12, Wolf Cub Pack Scouters - 13, Scout Troop Scouters - 6, Venturer Company Advisors - 2, Rover Crew Advisors - 1. Below is a summary of the results and comments.

The average membership of the sections is 18 youth and 4 adults. Sections that have adults with Wood Badge training are 38%, and only 7% have no trained leaders. Most sections run regular section meetings in the outdoors an average of five (5) times per year. Most sections have weekend camps (of two nights) on average of twice per year; Other outings include day hikes and regional district (council) events.

All Scout properties in the region are used by some sections that responded to The survey. Many private properties and parks, as well as provincial parks, are also used. When asked why they don't use Scout properties, most sections stated that they traditionally used other sites." Other frequent answers included there is "no program", "can't get in when I book", and "cost is too high". The average cost at non-Scout properties was \$4 person/night (in 1999).

When asked to rate the reasons for choosing a campsite (Scout or otherwise), 25% indicated location", 20% indicated "facilities", 17% indicated "cost", and 14% indicated "program."

When asked if they would be interested in "program assistance at camps throughout the year," 58% indicated yes." When asked about "program resources," 76% indicated "yes," and 70% would be 'willing to pay extra for it."

When asked if there was interest for mini-composite camps (e.g. March Break, weekends, etc.), 48% said yes," and 42% said they would be 'willing to help."

When asked what would help in providing a better outdoor program, 26% said "information about facilities, 21% said "adult outdoor skills training," 17% said "adult program training," and 14% said "assistance with program at camp."

When asked about participation in camp organization, 40% are "willing to work on camp committees," and 77% are "willing to donate time to maintenance or program development at the camps."

Most of the general comments received focused on the desire by respondents to keep all the camp properties that are used by groups now.

This survey points to a desire of leaders to have our Scouts Canada properties offering "canned" or prepared programming on-site so that leaders can bring units despite having prepared or not prepared an outdoor program. Some locations have already moved in this direction such as Toronto Council's LAFF

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Programs at Woodland Trails Camp or Ontario Council's special program weekends at Blue Springs Scout Reserve.

The challenges offered in the prepared programming is that they need to be consistent with national program objectives and program standards, and have sufficient challenge that youth feel they are gained significantly when moving up through the program sections. There should also be instructional opportunities as part of the program so youth can earn section awards and recognition while in camp. These are reasons why Scouting personnel should be offering these program opportunities.

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Properties of all type need to provide "super project" programs or resource opportunities for members to be able to begin a canoe trip, expedition, bicycle ramble, and other adventure from our properties. Various special events or activities like ExtremeAdventure opportunities need to originate from our properties and be available to our current members as well as new target markets. And while all this may suggest that properties need to have infrastructure, it is also possible that the support may be providing just the start or end point of a trip with support documents such as maps or instructions that lead members to the adventure. It is also important to remember that there are oft. en local providers of such specialty programs as horse trail rides, white water rafting and mountain biking that are exciting for youth and of which we just need to make section leadership aware to be able to utilize. Scouts Canada does not need to invest large sums of money in these activities to be able to improve the adventure of our program. Should we ever be prepared to invest in these activities the purveyors can and often will provide a wealth of information about equipment, supervision and logistics.

As an added focus, the Divisional leadership should identify one or more properties within the Division that will have the primary focus of becoming World Scouting Centre(s) Scout Centres of Excellence for Nature and Environment-SCENES consistent with the World Scouting expectations/requirements. These centres are intended to focus on conservation, nature and environment such that they are an example to Scouts from across the globe about living in balance within the ecological zone in which the property is located. The site should provide a living example and related instructional activities while also offering other Scouting adventures to the visitor.

Within the context of program delivery, Scouts Canada needs to develop ways to provide transportation to and from properties so there is less reliance on parents and leaders. Further, there needs to be ways of incorporating program adventures into transporting youth to various on-site and off-site program venues. The cost can be built into the fee but this should help eliminate concerns for safe travel while adding an additional element of adventure to the activities.

Camping and hiking should be understood to be the means to various adventures, therefore Group Committees need to ensure leaders have programming planned beyond just "going to camp" or "on a hike."

Scouters want program opportunities available at the properties so properties must move to making program resources available and ultimately move toward providing program opportunities.

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MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

Actions to be taken:

Scouts Canada should have at least one camp in each council that will have the infrastructure to offer Wolf Cub section programming in all four seasons.

Scouts Canada should have one camp in each council with the infrastructure to offer Scout section programming in all four seasons.

Scouts Canada should establish a Divisional Properties Program Committee to ensure effective program delivery opportunities across the Division and ensure that meeting halls and offices have a greater role in program delivery.

The two corporations (Ontario and Quebec) need to make a decision about all properties being managed consistently, either centrally or locally, and to what level of the organization.

Scouts Canada must expect every property to have a formal management plan.

Scouts Canada needs to look seriously at having employed staff associated with property operations.

The Corporations need to make talent and resources available to help property management and their Councils become successful with funding initiatives.

Scouts Canada should consider the placement of properties with the intention of multiple use of property owned by Scouts Canada.

Scouts Canada needs to develop a rationalized fee structure and booking system for its properties.

Scouts Canada should develop and implement a centralized communications strategy for properties.

As described in this report under the 'Criteria for Assessing Value of Property to Scouts Canada' it was noted that the location of camp property for the two junior sections should be not more than about 75 minutes travel time one way. It was determined in the report that there should be Property designated to serve a specific program section. With these concepts in mind, I have grouped the properties across the Division based on the approximate distance factor from major population centres.

Within the groupings of properties one of the properties bolded, based on the results of the inventory, is the property most able to provide the infrastructure necessary to ensure outdoor programming suitable for the two junior sections and provide four-season programming for Wolf Cubs. The bolded choice may be better suited to the Scout section if there is no other property in the council to ensure the infrastructure necessary for four-season programming for Scouts. Each Council in the Division will need to choose a best property for offering such Scout programming.

The Division needs to identify up to three possible locations for offering Venturer/Rover base camping.

Haliburton Scout Reserve was removed from the list because it makes the best choice for being one of the Venturer/Rover base camps or being one of the Scout section focused camps.

Where there were either too many or no properties that easily stood apart as being the obvious choice, there is no property named in bold lettering. The commissioners need to quickly identify a property best

suited to

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offer four-season Wolf Cub programming. All of the properties that are not bolded should be considered in the listing to determine the best location in the council to offer four-season Scout section programming.

SHERBROOKE Lovering Spoooner Pond	SW of MONTREAL Powerscourt	NW of MONTREAL Tamaracouta	HULL Lac Otter (PQ)	E of OTTAWA Apple Hill Camp JJ Sheldrick
UPPER OTTAWA Fort Pine Mackay	W of OTTAWA Ledgewade Opemikon Whispering Pines	KINGSTON Folly Oskanonton Otter Lake (ON) Rock Dunder Trail	BELLEVILLE/TRENTON Brookwood Gleoy Saganaska	OSHAWACOBURG Langley NorthumbriandHills Samac
HALIBURTON Ragged Falls Samac Adventure Wheeler	YORK SOUTH WoodlandTrails	HALTON/PEEL Blue Springs Everton Goodyear Memorial Mount Nemo Woodland Trails(H)	NIAGARA Dayhondalaquah Wetaakwin	E of LONDON Camp Bel Impeasa Peacehaven St. Mary's Shegardenou
SW of LONDON Catsaraqui Timkin	WINDSOR/ESSEX Cedarwin	SARNIALONDON Attawandaron Chester Sylvan Wadscoca	LAKE HURON Chariboro Kincardine Huron	W of KITCHENER Elmira Properties Wilwood
N of L. SIMCOE Jackson Orillie Cabin Wildman	N of L. MUSKOKA Brandy Lake Burka's Falls	SUDBURY Lake Panache Wlabosco	NORTH BAY Wirbara Timber Lake	GREAT NE ONT Ansonville Cochrane Nellie Lake
N of SUPERIOR Nipigon Three Finger Lake Whitesand	THUNDER BAY Dog Lake Grey Wolf Trout Lake	GREAT NW ONT Abram Lake Ignace Wabigoon	L. of the WOODS Scout Island	

Scouts Canada should have at least one camp in each council that will have the infrastructure to offer Wolf Cub section programming in all four seasons. (It may also offer a focus on Beaver camping preferably with a separate camp entrance and separated environmentally.)

Scouts Canada should have one camp in each council with the infrastructure to offer Scout section programming in all four seasons.

In this format there would be twenty-nine camps in place to ensure camp programming to Wolf Cubs and likely Beavers as well. With the Councils in Ontario and Quebec, there would be nine camps dedicated to ensuring Scout section programming. The Division would ensure that there would be up to three camps dedicated to Venturer/Rover base camping. There may also be consideration for establishing an international SCENES location. This would mean that having been at a high of 90 camp properties in 1999 and now being at 75, we could with this strategy move toward a low of 40 (or nearer to that number).

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The Alberta Property Review recommended that Property Managers were not the appropriate people to make program decisions. To give the province a greater sense of the "big picture" and give guidance for the betterment of the larger organization, Alberta established a Camp Programs Committee. During the meetings in Ontario it was acknowledged that program Scouters led by the Commissioners needed to make the program decisions about property, then managers would implement their direction. The concern is that there needs to be a group that gives guidance on programming at properties based on a Divisional or National perspective. Further, the management for meeting halls and offices often felt they are doing sufficient by ensuring a meeting location. They do not see the need to offer other program opportunities such as being: an outdoor education centre, a billeting locale for treks, an interactive learning centre, a computer lab, a Scouting attraction (e.g. museum), or much more.

To help commissioners determine the program purpose for each property across the Division, to select the best property for the various programming, to provide overall guidance into the future with regard to program for properties, Scouts Canada should establish a Divisional Properties Program Committee to ensure effective program delivery opportunities across the Division and ensure that meeting halls and offices have a greater role in program delivery.

With the exception of Blue Springs Scout Reserve and the Quebec Council properties all other properties come under the management of a local team. This has forced the Directors of the Corporation to address the management issues in a slightly different manner than they would with other properties. It would only be sensible to standardize the approach toward property management. This would mean that either these exceptions like Blue Springs should be turned over to a local authority to manage or that management of all properties across the Division should be centralized and be treated like Blue Springs is currently. Each has its advantages and disadvantages but the exception does pose difficulties that do not need to be present in our decision making. The two corporations (Ontario and Quebec) need to make a decision about all properties being managed consistently, either centrally or locally, and to what level of the organization.

Throughout the organization there is an expectation of a planned approach to the efforts we undertake.

Property is no different, though historically many properties have just taken corrective action as time situation and resources warranted. Every property needs to develop a formal plan that consists of the key purpose (based on the direction of the program Scouters) and strategies for the property, management action plans, schedules of maintenance and replacement of facilities and equipment, and both a capital improvement budget and an operation budget. The coiner! needs to have a financial accounting (financial report) of the property separate from the operating accounts of the council, for ease of assessment of camp operation revenue and expenses. In this way when the Corporation Directors ask to see the plan for the property before approving any changes or improvements to the property, management is not surprised. Therefore, Scouts Canada must expect every property to have a formal management plan.

All that Scouting accomplishes could never be achieved without the efforts of volunteers, and properties are no different. Properties will continue to need countless volunteers to ensure their successful operation. But Scouts Canada needs to look seriously at having employed staff associated with properties. There are times when we have to ensure that there are people dedicated to ensuring particular properties always remain compliant. There are times when we need a person available when volunteers cannot be available. There are times when we need the expertise if someone who works regularly with camp maintenance. This may be the ranger who works from a camp that has infrastructure and becomes responsible for a number of properties surrounding the base camp.

Scouts Canada also needs to look at having summer camp staff, whether that is to offer program opportunities

to our members or to do property maintenance and improvements especially at our camps with infrastructure or our halls that are program centres. The staffing should be funded through summer employment grant opportunities available from the government. When we hire we need to focus on hiring our own youth members as summer staff so that we reinforce the value of Scouting with our members and provide the opportunity to apply what has been learned through the Scouting program in a meaningful way.

These are just two examples of how Scouts Canada needs to look seriously at having employed staff associated with property operations.

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One of the common concerns expressed by property management was that with all the expectations that are being placed on them, there is a similar burden to find the financial resources to be able to address the issues that property management brings. The type of individual who becomes a director of the property bodies are usually those who are familiar with funding issues, such as making grant applications or undertaking fund raising campaigns. With this degree of expertise it should be possible for the directors of the corporation to be able to give guidance and advice about how to be successful with fund raising campaigns or grant applications. It should also be possible to provide information about the appropriate foundations across the Division to which to apply for specific projects. Therefore, the Corporations need to make talent and resources available to help property management and their Councils become successful with funding initiatives.

During the review it was found that some properties are paying taxes through the lease or rental payments that are being made on the property; an expense we do not incur when we own the property. In Boy Scouts of America office operations are placed on camp properties so that the parcel of land serves multiple purposes.

In Scouts Canada we need to seriously rethink the idea of placing any of our office operations in/on anything but owned property and preferably on property that serves multiple purposes such as a camp or incorporate more things into the office such as training centre, hostel, and Scout Shop. Therefore, Scouts Canada should consider the placement of offices with the intention of multiple use of property owned by Scouts Canada.

During the meetings people were amazed by the range of prices for facilities across the Division. More importantly many people could not explain how the prices were determined. A user group should easily be able to understand the price differential from one location to another because each can know the differing level of service(s) provided. In at least one Council, pricing was altered to be moderately consistent across the Council with no differentiation because of where one was a Scout. This approach eased the ability of properties in close proximity to collaborate and not feel they had to serve a select Scouting community. If we are to move in the direction of Scouts Canada serving all of its members consistently then, Scouts Canada needs to develop a rationalized fee structure and booking system for its properties.

Frequently questions raised by the property managers focused on issues relating to property promotion and promotion of Scouting. Property Managers understood The need to find innovative ways of introducing their property to potential users through such things as: Open Houses, Scouters' Club talks, Tours; hosting leader and/or youth training or meeting opportunities; holding property "Good Turn" or "Mix Fix" dates. They also accepted the desire for a degree of consistency in signage, flags, and much more to identify a property as a Scouts Canada property so that no one was mistaken about where they are camping. This was even reflected in a desire for a standard Scouts Canada 'No Trespassing' sign. But there is a desire to take this further by having a centralized publicity approach that includes such things a camp directory or single point-of-contact web-site with easy booking procedure using on-line booking or a 1 EOO number. Therefore, Scouts Canada should develop and implement a centralized communications strategy for properties.

SHARED IDEAS

During the meetings there were several ideas that were shared that have begun to improve the quality of property management on individual properties and collectively.

- * Some properties have developed an inventory of equipment (e.g. tents, stoves, snowshoes), its storage location, and usage bookings, then publicizing the resources as a means to increase accessibility and use by sections.

- * Some properties are working collaboratively through one property being used as an out-trip location for another property. or by sharing equipment (e.g. tractor, back-hoe), services (e.g. pool, showers), or human resources (e.g. rangers, volunteer workers).

- * At least one council has moved toward a communications network for identifying equipment being sought, locations of surplus equipment

or supplies, and coordinated purchasing so that it is easier to make bulk purchasing. More of the property managers wanted to move in this direction.

* At least one council had moved to a web based system for promoting the camps to its members with on-line booking or the option of a 1-800 number so that groups could book available site. While use by local sections at the local camp has dropped, camp usage has risen 5-20% because sections from other areas now have access to other options. Other councils are inquiring about either being on the same web site or establishing a link.

* One property has moved to establishing a Camp Program Coordinator as a method of ensuring section programming beyond just going to camp" or "on a hike." This has permitted scheduled programming at the camp but also had the coordinator taking an interest in section programming as each arrives at camp.

* At least one property, that does not have a "per camper fee as part of the pricing, has moved to collecting the entire camp fee at the time of booking so the camp is not hurt by late cancellations.

FURTHER WORK

Not all the necessary materials and resources to assure the future success of properties within Scouts Canada (Ontario/Quebec) have yet been developed. Some areas have been identified that should get quick attention for the betterment of property use and program delivery. Several of these were described earlier in the report but others are items that this report has not addressed.

* As mentioned earlier, preparation of a model of a lease that deals with all of the concerns that are potential risks for Scouts Canada.

* Also stated earlier. is the need for having personnel available to help property management and councils with making funding applications to governments and foundations

* As previously stated, there needs to be a study done of the facilities on each property and the related pricing so that there can be a move to rationalize the pricing scheme across the Division.

* As also mentioned, The property managers are wishing a directory of property as a means of promoting their property to potential users.

* Also as stated, all properties would benefit from a coordinated, centrally run publicity strategy that would likely include several things as web site, centralized booking process. assistance with brochures, and paid advertising.

* As stated earlier, property managers are looking for some standard resources that can be used to make Scouts Canada property operations more easily identifiable to the public whether that is camp signage, standard 'no trespassing' signs, "saW outfit, or consistent practices or routines.

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* As mentioned, many property managers want to have a coordinated purchasing process especially for bulk purchasing of large items (e.g. life jackets, canoes, paddles).

* Time schedules and deadlines have been left to the directors but people are expecting many of the bolded directions to be addressed within the next three months.

* Some study needs to take place regarding the list of items expected in the Property Compliance Checklist. There were often questions about what was on the list and why some things were missing. The Ontario Camping Association has an extensive standards book for accrediting camps. In Quebec there are a couple of prescribed standards that ensure camp accreditation. Further work is needed on the accreditation list and it will likely lead to a quality standards scheme for properties in the near future.

* There needs to be a monitoring process established of issues within the courts, in the area of insurance, from camping associations, in the real estate sector all with the intention of permitting Scout Canada to become less reactive and more proactive on property management issues. Organizationally. Scouting personnel, both volunteers and staff, have felt that we have been jumping to respond to external pressures rather than making thoughtful change and while thoughtful change can still bring resistance, thoughtful change is more likely to be explainable and understood so that resistance drops dramatically.

* Scouts Canada needs to demonstrate greater stewardship for the environment and introduce protective practices that ensure we do not abuse our properties. Parks Canada helped to identify several resource - - books that can help us determine the correct process for ensuring our impact is consistent with the geological and climatic zones where each property is located. The work necessary to determine and distribute this material will take more time than this study allowed but is worthy of serious investigation and implementation.

CONCLUSION

I have to say that I appreciated the opportunity to interact with the Property Managers across the Division.

They are all interested in having their property become part of the future for Scouts Canada, preferably by providing added value to program delivery. Some of them are even aware that while their property may not be in our future, the resources from that property (like a climbing wall) or the funds that are generated from the sale will help to ensure adventurous programming for our members.

Through participating in the process there was much more support for doing the tasks that needed to be done.

The managers had provided the content for the property inventory so they were not surprised when it was distributed. They also wanted other people to know what their property had to offer so that others might consider using it. Together this made collecting data easier than expected.

The meetings that took place for this study have already started to bear fruit as property managers are sharing ideas such as fire emergency evacuation plans. Some Councils have established regular meetings of their property managers to keep the sharing happening. It is in these groups that it is most evident that they appreciate a greater plan for properties that ensures challenging program opportunities for all age ranges of our members.

Property management does not have to be daunting. It should be noted that prior to 1998. Scouts Canada did not have a clear picture of the scope of the real estate we managed. By 2002, compliance is well established and people understand that there may be some tougher

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standards. By 2003, approximately 15 of 90 camp properties and about 5 of 90 halls and offices have been sold because we are learning more about what we have. With understanding and clear actions as part of a plan for our properties, it should be possible to see some dramatic improvement in our situation in the near future (in the next three to five years).

Respectfully Submitted

L. Brian Moore
Director of Council Operations

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This is a brief summary of my trip to Tri-Shores Council properties on October 23-24, 2003. The trip included visiting the seven camp properties west of London. For the trip Bruce Parks, the Council Properties Coordinator, joined Myles Vanni and me. During the trip it became apparent that there are some concerns that affect our move to good property management. First, councils are focusing on camp properties almost to the exclusion of all other properties. There is very little support for the idea that attention on meeting halls and office will get us much return for our program because these locations are often "well" booked by the typical users. Second, councils have focused on property managed by past districts and regions. Property managed by individual groups has been seen as a greater "headache" that may be addressed more easily when everyone sees that Scouts Canada has proven what we can do with the council properties. Finally, there has not been authority given to councils to step into group property issues. In our structure, groups are an extension of the sponsor/partner and not an extension of Scouts Canada, though many of our sponsors! partners believe the groups are ours. During the tour we also attempted to address some issues noted by the visit. Many of the fireplace fire-pit locations did not have mechanisms that ensure fire is kept separated from natural vegetation, meaning that root fires could result from fires in old wheel fin's or steel barrels with no bottoms. During stops it was noted that youth prefer to use plastic privies rather than wooden for various reasons and that we may need to move to plastic. Aerial "runways" require greater attention to safety and security than some properties have given to date. An earlier memo about specific properties was also discussed and the results of those discussions are addresses via a separate memo.

The first stop was to Spencer Park to see Spencer Lodge and the Bryson Centre in the north end of London. Spencer Lodge has upgraded the climbing facilities in the gymnasium and reactivated the climbing program at least one night per week. Should Spencer Lodge ever have any available funds in the fixture it would be great if an even higher scaling structure could be built into the addition (much as has been done with many Scout Offices in BSA). The Bryson Centre is a very nice facility but unlikely to pull in corporate meetings as intended with its limited meeting space (especially break-out rooms) and the type of furniture. However, the park with the river-front and craft building, picnic shelter, the Bryson Centre as a dining hall would be an ideal

location for Beaver "camping" and ScoutAbout programs, as well as the weekly meeting opportunities the property already provides. A few additions such as a storyteller's chair, a campfire area, and a chapel would complete the park. The current Adirondack shelters should be moved to a Scout camp facility to get greater use.

We moved next to Camp Sylvan near Sylvan. There is significant property here with room for the campers to move about without intruding on others. While the property may have had great potential for Scout programming in the past, the addition of several program features makes it best suited to junior programming now. The access to Hidden Lodge is an ideal location for a Beaver "camping" area because it is generally secluded and separated from the rest of the camp with its own separate access. The lodge could easily be convened for Beaver family camping. The location could also have a craft hut,

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storybook garden, playing field, and campfire ring developed without intruding into the rest of Camp Sylvan. The remainder of Camp Sylvan is very conducive to developing a western Canada theme throughout. Frontierland is already well on the way to presenting a Klondike town format with a saloon (dining hall) and hotel' boarding house bunkhouse (lodge), with the additional of a livery stable, general store, and jail' RCMP office plus the addition of some boardwalk, a small town image could be created with various program locations for crafts, star work, science experiments and more. The cabooses can develop around the building of the railway in Canada and the lodge could easily be dressed up to become a railway station to suit the theme. A third adventure area could be developed where the covered wagons form a circle with teepees near to offer program areas for crafts, stories, songs and more. The Sylvan heritage site could offer a historic perspective on early pioneer settlement that might include some program opportunities such as basic archeological dig such as searching out foundations, old building posts, "arrowheads and other relics" and much more. The Thomas Tract property should be the location for a significant natural environmental centre.

From there we went on to Camp Attawandaron near Grand Bend. The camp provides many natural and man-made features that makes it very conducive to senior sections programming. The lower sand dune area would permit the construction of archery and rifle ranges. The existing climbing tower and aerial runway are attractive pro garritning. Neighbouring on Pinery Provincial Park and the Port Franks Conservation Area permits use of extensive trail systems (with permission and admission fees paid), and the access to the Old Ausable Canal permits use of a watercourse leading to Lake Huron. It is unfortunate that there is not lake frontage at the camp. With moderate investment it should be possible to have a natural environmental centre and several other Scout specific program resources added. The biggest challenge is addressing the group ownership of specific buildings so that all aspects of the camp are available for the benefit of all members of Scouting.

The next property was Camp Chester near Oil Springs. The property is flat with a creek cut running through it. Facilities on the property are one major structure suitable for junior programming and two bunkhouses. The potential for the property is limited without human intervention and the two bunkhouses would be best suited on a property with a senior section focus (if moving is cost effective).

We were next on to Camp Wadiscoca near Wallaceburg. The property has had a great deal of energy poured into providing program resources such as the floating dock and climbing tower but the buildings are of limited value and would require a major investment of time and resources. It would be best if the program resources could be moved to a facility offering program for the Scout section and move the one or two buildings that are old school portables to a location (if moving is cost effective) that offers Beaver and/or Wolf Cub programming where they might become program or nature centers.

The second day had us starting at Camp Cedarwin near Amer. Once again we have a property with two accesses. The advantage is that the camp could be divided to have a Beaver section and a Wolf Cub section. The Propeller Building could be devoted to Beaver programming leaving the opportunity to start designing a Wolf Cub programming section exclusively on the west side of camp with the creek-marsh being

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the natural divide. Alternately, the Beaver program area could be centred on the Sawmill building in the north and leave the south part of camp including the Propeller Building to the Wolf Cubs. The separate access would be ideal for a separate Beaver "camping" area. Either building could easily be converted for Beaver family camping. The Beaver location could be upgraded with a craft hut, storytelling tree, playing field, and campfire ring developed without intruding into the rest of Camp Cedarwin. The rest of the property is ideal for development around specific themes. The trees are large enough to build bunkhouses for "Sixes" as tree-houses about four or five feet off the ground and develop that area of the camp around a jungle theme, with vine swings and rope bridges between tree-houses (a regular Swiss Family Robinson adventure). A second theme area could be an 1812 blockhouse consistent with the local history. Finally, the Humber Hut could be the start of a collection of bunkhouses that form an old French pioneer settlement. All of these themes can be knitted together to form a Wolf Cub camp that would require only small additions such as playfield, craft shed, fitness circuit or obstacle course and a few other program activities.

Camp Cataragul near Clearville was the next place to visit and it has the terrain to be a Scout facility but is likely best located for junior programming. Upon entering the camp there is an open area that could focus on Beaver "camping" with a Beaver meadow as a play area. It would need a new lodge, craft centre, story nook and song circle. With some bunkhouses or an old school portable from other locations this facility could mushroom overnight. The Age of Exploration theme could work very well in this location for Wolf Cubs and build on Ontario history. The "Longhouse" could have some cosmetic changes to make it appear as an Iroquoian longhouse. The Halfway Inn could be developed around a theme of the Hudson's Bay Company post [maybe The Bay would become a significant contributor to the site with other smaller buildings (bunkhouses) around it. A third theme area in the back where sites 17+ are located could be built around a recreated sailing ship that sailed the Great Lakes (a sample plan is available from BSA through this office).

The final camp of this tour was Camp Timkin near Iona. The disappointment of this property was that there was very little of special significance to note with this property. It would make more sense to move the two bunkhouses and the craft centre to another location where they can be used to complement the advantages at other camps. It is unfortunate because the membership in Elgin County already feel wronged by the recent organizational restructuring - even if that may have been more perception than reality.

Brian Moore
Director of Council Operations
SCOUTS CANADA

