



Frequently Asked Questions

Property Long Range Plan: Replacement of Rum River Scout Camp

August, 2008

Q. *Has Rum River Scout Camp been sold?*

A. No, nor has it been marketed or is it on the market. The board has determined that based on the level of use of the camp, role of the camp in the long range plan, importance of other property long range plan goals, and alternatives for entering into a long term lease of non-BSA property that will provide a similar level of program opportunities for Scouting, that the camp should be replaced/sold sometime in the next 3-5 years.

Q. *Do we have any experience with long term leases as a replacement for owning a camp?*

A. Yes, and collaboration with other organizations is a hallmark of Scouting. For the past nearly 20 years, Camp Kiwanis has been leased from a Kiwanis Foundation that actually owns the property. This is one of the most popular weekend, and also summer resident camps in Northern Star Council.

Q. *Is the decision to replace Rum River Scout Camp because the Council has financial troubles?*

A. No, and in fact the Council is in the midst of a \$24 million capital campaign, and has raised \$15 million to date. However, the truly outstanding long range plan opportunities that have presented themselves for the benefit of all youth in Scouting in years to come have a greater cost in total than we believe can be paid for in this major gifts fundraising effort. This, combined with good camping alternatives for the units that most frequently use Rum River Scout Camp (at the nearby Rum River Central Regional Park), led the board to endorse the plan.

Q. *Wasn't this a quick decision, without input from volunteers and Scouters who use the camp?*

A. No, in fact there was a many-months process of examining all aspects of program delivery at all properties, as well as services provided to volunteers at Scout Shops and Service Centers. The study groups, conversations and surveys also considered and utilized considerable volunteer input and key volunteer discussions conducted in the Viking Council approximately four years ago.

Q. *Did the Viking Council consider selling Rum River Scout Camp?*

A. Yes, after receiving verbal offers to purchase, and considering their capital needs at other properties, serious consideration was given to marketing the camp. They concluded that until they had conducted a capital campaign to raise funds for capital needs, and until they had determined whether an Urban Center (like Base Camp) was

actually a feasible goal, and until they had lined up alternative weekend camping facilities in the Anoka County area (and elsewhere), that they would not sell Rum River Scout Camp at that time. At this time, the Northern Star Council board believes that all of those conditions have been met, and that replacing the camp will strengthen the Scouting program long-term.

Q. *Have other camps been sold in this Council?*

A. Yes, many of them. Two different camps on Lake Minnetonka, a camp on Square Lake, one on Balsam Lake, and several more have been sold over the course of previous decades. In each case, sale of these properties led to the acquisition and/or development of other properties that are today some of the very finest Scout camps in the Nation. It is a big decision that should only be made if it is clear that Scouting will be strengthened for the future.

Q. *Is Rum River Scout Camp expected to be sold for enough money to truly make a difference?*

A. It is impossible to put a value on a Scout Camp - more relevant is the number of campers, the strategic uses of the property, the costs of operation, etc. Rum River Scout Camp is projected to have a value of approximately \$8 million within a few years - most of the other six Northern Star Camps are worth even more. In this case, \$8 million will allow us to accomplish many goals, including development of facilities at three other locations for weekend camping, providing many times the number of camping opportunities that exist at Rum River Scout Camp today.

Q. *What will happen to Rum River Scout Camp until it is replaced?*

A. We will ask the volunteers who work closely with the camp to participate in the planning for the development and long term use at a nearby Anoka County Park - but otherwise our camp will be operated as it is today, for the next few years.

Q. *What about the donors and Scouters who have provided funding and for whom buildings at the camps are named?*

A. The primary family that helped acquire and improve Rum River Scout Camp many years ago has previously shared with Viking Council leadership that they would support the board's decision with regard to the future of the camp. Tentative plans are made to carry forward the names on Rum River Scout Camp buildings, to buildings that are planned for the replacement camp.

Q. *Who can I contact to ask questions or share concerns?*

A. Three meetings will be conducted in September to provide more information on all aspects of the Property Long Range plan approved by the Board of Directors on August 20.

They are:

Saturday, September 13 - 10 am - Base Camp (Building 201 at Fort Snelling)
Thursday, September 18 - 7 pm - Base Camp (Building 201 at Fort Snelling)
Saturday, September 27 - 3 pm - Rum River Central Regional Park, Anoka County