

Camp Properties – Stakeholder Findings and Opportunities Report

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Project Objectives and Deliverables

Objectives:

- Gain insight and direction from key Girl Scout stakeholders as to the potential for existing camp properties to support a sustainable 21st Century outdoor experience that attracts and engages the current and next generation of girls.
- Understand the camp property and outdoor experience landscape locally and beyond.

Deliverable:

Stakeholder Findings and Opportunities Report



Strategic Context

Girl Scouts Heart of the South (GSHS) offers young girls unique outdoor experiences to develop new friendships, enhance interpersonal and leadership skills, and strengthen self-confidence.

GSHS wants to refresh and build on that core feature of its mission.

- Common understanding that the girls of today and the future have **evolving** interests, and outdoor experiences must change in response.
- Recognition that camp properties are sub-par compared to other area camps and that facility **upgrades and renovations are required to meet the needs and expectations** of today's Girl Scouts and parents.
- **Shared commitment** to strengthening the breadth and depth of camper engagement.
- **Opportunity to reimagine** how Girl Scouts can best utilize its camp real estate holdings in fulfillment of its mission.



Strategic Context

Any strategic decisions regarding the future of GSHS' camp real estate holdings are complex and require a nuanced view towards stakeholder sensitivities.

- A **range of options exists** in terms of whether to sell, develop or alter uses of the camp properties.
- Any decision to sell any part of the remaining property portfolio is a **permanent decision**.
- Skepticism of some, including alumni and current volunteers, goes beyond discomfort with change to include **lowered trust born of perceived lack of transparency and broader input** over a number of years.



Project Approach & Purpose

Beyond providing a snapshot of Council needs and ideas, this approach to stakeholder outreach serves to:

- **Show respect & appreciation** for a diverse array of stakeholders' ideas and feedback.
- **Test ideas** emerging from Committee work and GSA research.
- Take initial steps in a longer-term commitment to **enhance Scout and adult engagement** in co-creating future-focused solutions.
- Strengthen and **further rebuild trust** among some stakeholders about camp-focused decisions.

Research and Input Components



12 Property Committee members participated in the **Visioning Session** to develop the outdoor experience vision.



80 volunteers completed a **real-time survey** at the Volunteer Luncheon and many indicated interest in focus group participation.



8 **Council Circles** were held to receive input from a diverse group of both adults and girls throughout the Council's geography.



Research of regional camp offerings beyond GSHS and GSA was completed to compare offerings.

Summary of Themes from Council Outreach and Input

Girl Scouts enriches the lives of girls in our communities by offering a unique girl-centered opportunity to explore the outdoors.

- Outdoor experiences provide invaluable **learning and developmental** opportunities.
- Girl Scouts offers a unique opportunity to develop interest in and **learn about the outdoors.**
- Outdoor experiences contribute to the **development of life skills**, including interpersonal communications, problem-solving, and teamwork skills in addition to outdoorsmanship skills.
- Girls **broaden horizons** through exposure to new and challenging experiences.



This input showed that an outstanding outdoor experience is less about premium facilities and more about dynamic program delivery.

- Align outdoor programming with the varied interests among today's girls and further **develop and better communicate a Continuum of Skills/Experience Progression.**
- **Sharpen camp operational processes and practices** to enhance the outdoor experience.
- To support volunteers, **invest in greater volunteer network infrastructure** to make it easier for adults to participate with what time they have and to share skills and information across the Council.
- To support families, **meet family needs for greater understanding and involvement** including improved family orientation and sharing, and **address barriers to participation.**
- **Expand communications and outreach** that emphasize uniqueness of girl-focused outdoor experiences to refresh the community's awareness of **what makes Girl Scouts special.**
- **Prioritize clean, safe and secure facilities over premium amenities.** Any major improvements should be well-planned and executed with active Scout and volunteer input.



Guidance for Making Strategic Camp Property Decisions

- 1. Embrace the standard of creating an experience “worthy of our girls.”**
 - a. Look beyond piecemeal improvements.
 - b. Continue to engage and communicate transparently with stakeholders.
 - c. Identify information/expert advice needs and seek out answers.
 - d. An incremental plan will not engage Capital funders of size in supporting a campaign.

- 2. Prioritize systematic approaches that advance a master plan rather than patching and repairing.**
 - a. Explore intermediate options to relieve time pressure and maintain flexibility.
 - b. A comprehensive master plan can be phased in as circumstances and resources allow.

- 3. Prioritize long-term missional and social benefits over short-term pressures and needs.**
 - a. Opportunity costs and decision-permanence vs. short-term income generation.
 - b. Environmental and conservation impact.
 - c. Avoid unintended consequences that are not aligned with GSHS values.

Continued...



Guidance for Making Strategic Camp Property Decisions

4. Take into account that *location* and *convenience* are common concerns across Council geography.
 - Council-secured partnerships for accommodations with closer access to some geographies will need to be considered in addition to GSHS-owned properties.
 - Addressing this challenge may be a critical factor in Council growth strategies.



Council-wide comprehensive long-range planning is essential whatever your Outdoor Experience Vision

Comprehensive Council/Organizational Strategic Business Planning

- Refines strategic grounding statements, including long-range vision, and sets strategic priorities, objectives, goals and measures to achieve this vision.
- Develops concrete action plan – with accountabilities, fiscal notes, and timelines – to execute plan successfully.
- Includes all aspects of Council business, programming, facilities/properties, financial management, funds development, membership growth, and Council support infrastructure.

Camp Property Planning

- Gather needed information and guidance, including real estate valuation and advice, to firm up direction.
- Conduct preliminary master plan vision-setting, draft case statement, and conduct feasibility study.
- Once strategy firmed up, develop comprehensive master plans for each property; execute on fundraising and development plan.

Innovations & Improvements

- With commitment to CQI, continue to undertake the work of the Council and build out or improve processes, programming, and actions to support GSHS' mission, sustainability and growth, including any adopted recommendations here.



Recommendations to Committee on the pressing matter of 2023 camp property availability decisions

1. Take a pause in making major decisions on camp properties right now. More exploration and planning required to make wisest decision.

- Continue to move this process forward as part of comprehensive long-range agency planning.
- Move forward with a professional real estate assessment and valuation project to provide needed initial information on what GSHS could expect if determine best choice is to sell any holdings, in whole or part.
- Begin process of outlining framework and securing help for camp property master planning.

2. Prepare some camps for opening in 2023, addressing repairs needed to ensure safety and cleanliness.

- **Fisherville:** Continue camp reservations.
- **Tik-a-Witha:** Continue camp reservations and summer camp plans.
- **Kiwani:** We suggest two options:
 - Keep Kiwani closed another season ; significant repairs needed may not be feasible (time and financial resources constraints); or,
 - If such repairs prove feasible, re-open for GS troop-only primitive use (no use of camp buildings) and possibly equestrian program (if feasible). This would require an aggressive opening plan, including financial requirements, and timeline.
- **For all opening properties:** Begin to test or implement program/process enhancements.



Recommended Next Steps require the ability to make this sizeable, time-sensitive work a priority

- **Property Conditions & Improvements**
 - Quickly firm up opening requirements and action plans for each opening property.
 - Prioritize this work at staff-level with supportive, active engagement of appropriate Board member(s).
 - Invest needed dollars in necessary on-time quality repairs (understanding that such funds are limited).

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Recommended Next Steps require the ability to make this sizeable, time-sensitive work a priority

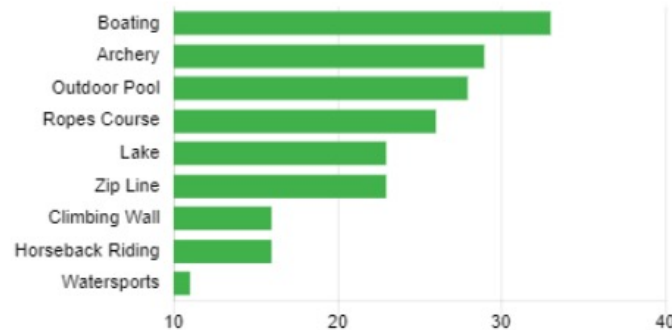
- **Communicate decisions, especially for 2023 plan.**
 - Communicate decision on 2023 camp properties to entire Council by the promised decision date (end of January).
 - Determine and communicate opening dates and reservation processes ASAP.
- **Communicate and share the camp research tool for Troop and SU leaders for 2023 planning.** (*See next slide)
 - To aid Troops and SUs in using state parks and other existing sites and partner facilities, Council-led training and vetting may be required in near term and as part of ongoing Volunteer Training.
- **Communicate more thoroughly and creatively about what to expect.**
 - Institute recommendations (see earlier in report) for improved communications to parents and Scouts to better describe the programming and camp conditions to expect.



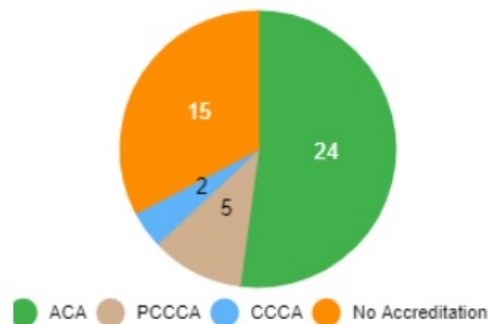
Summer Camp Comparative Analysis



Common Camp Amenities



Camp Accreditation



ACA: American Camp Association

PCCCA: Presbyterian Church Camp and Conference Association

CCCA: Christian Church Camp and Conference Association

Overnight Accommodations

Overnight Accommodations	Camps
> 100 Campers	4
101 - 200 Campers	12
201 - 300 Campers	10
301 - 400 Campers	5
< 400 Campers	3

Camp Acreage

Acreage	Camps
> 100 Acres	8
101 - 250 Acres	10
251 - 500 Acres	13
< 501 Acres	7

Research Highlights

- **Accommodations:** An array of summer camps and retreat centers are in the Southeastern region. Camps can accommodate as few as 100 and as many as 500 guests.
- **Food Service:** Camp and retreat centers regularly provide breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snacks to guests, charging a standard per-person rate for each meal. Meal rates can be negotiated depending on the facility.
- **Overnight Lodging:** Cabin and lodging accommodations are provided for overnight guests at most camp and retreat centers. Several cabins/lodges are equipped with A/C and include an en suite bathroom and sink. Eight camps also include sites for outdoor camping.
- **Preferred Amenities:** Camps offer various amenities for campers and retreat goers. Boating, swimming, climbing, and zip-lining activities were offered by several facilities. However, only sixteen facilities offered horseback riding.
- **Two-Story Lodging:** Ten facilities had two-story overnight lodges.
- **Usage:** Multi-use facilities are common. Interested parties can reserve space to host a conference, retreat, wedding, or reunion at several facilities.



Camp Property Planning Process: Next Steps

Past and Current Processes

Long Range Property Plan

Summer Camp Research

Stakeholder Engagement

Recommended Next Steps

Council Outreach and Communications

Property Assessment and Valuations

Master Planning/
Organizational Planning

- Going forward, the GSHS Board and leadership team must communicate all camp property plans and strategic vision to Council members to create a transparent, collaborative approach.

- Contract with a Real Estate Planning Consultant to assess the strategic opportunities as it relates to the camp property holdings.

- Contract with design firm for comprehensive master plan(s) for each property retained to outline property vision and features.
- Create long-range strategic plan as well as property funds development and sustainability plans to align financial resources and needs.



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Camp Property Assessment Process Overview

Long Range Property Plan (LRPP)

Context: GSHS staff and Board recognized the need for a multi-year property plan to outline routine maintenance as well as facility upgrades. A diverse group of staff and volunteers participated in this project.

Purpose: The LRPP was developed in 2010-2011 to more deeply examine how to steward the organization's real estate holdings as part of the organization's sustainability. Most completed projects were devoted to camp maintenance projects and funded through annual allocations from the general budget and proceeds from the sale of properties and timber. There have been no major additions or improvements to the camps, except the stables at Kamp Kiwani which was funded in part by an alumni donor.*

* See Appendix for more about the LRPP.

Summer Camp Research (Summer 2022)

Context: While two of the three camp sites reopened following the closure of all camp sites in 2020 due to the pandemic, camp engagement has remained low. Given these trends, coupled with the level of facility renovations required with limited funds, the Council took the opportunity to assess how GSHS camps compare to other regional camp programs and offerings while offering volunteers information about other area camp alternatives.

Purpose: Through identifying alternatives to Girls Scouts summer camp, the Council aimed to better understand the gaps in camp programming and rentals. Further, the Board gathered information to gauge opportunities to host Girls Scouts' outdoor experiences at other locations.



Stakeholder Engagement (September 2022-January 2023)

Context: Girls' interests in outdoor experiences have evolved over the past decades. Girl Scouts must continue to advance the spectrum of outdoor offerings to better align with the interests and passions of 21st Century girls.

Purpose: To understand the needs and wants of girls and parents around outdoor experiences, stakeholders across the Council were invited to share their thoughts on how to strengthen outdoor experiences to appeal to a larger group of girls and volunteers. These stakeholder engagement findings coupled with a recommended real estate assessment and valuation will guide the Girl Scouts Heart of the South's next steps in decision making.



Project Approach & Purpose

Beyond providing a snapshot of Council needs and ideas, this approach to stakeholder outreach serves to:

- Strengthen and **further rebuild trust** among some stakeholders about camp-focused decisions.
- **Show respect & appreciation** for a diverse array of stakeholders' ideas and feedback.
- **Test ideas** emerging from Committee work and GSA research.
- Take intentional, initial steps in a longer-term commitment to **robust Scout and adult engagement** in co-creating future-focused solutions.

Note: While we feel that the many commonalities across varied sources of input reinforces many of our observations, limitations to this research remain, and further research may be required if deeper analysis is desired in a certain area or research question.



Stakeholder Engagement

To engage volunteers and Board members in the process, longtime volunteers and Board members were invited to provide feedback *via* surveys and visioning session participation.

Volunteer Luncheon Survey

- 80 volunteers attending the Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon in September 2022 completed a real-time survey assessing their thoughts and ideas around outdoor experiences.
- Those interested in participating in Council Circles (focus groups) shared contact information.

Board Visioning Session

- 10 Board members and two staff leaders participated in a Visioning Session in October 2022.
- Discussion points and ideas were used to develop and refine the Council Circle framework.



Council Circle Recruitment Efforts

To ensure input from a diversity of voices throughout the Council, the engagement approach utilized rigorous outreach and recruitment and other focus group best practices:

- Eight (8) 1-hour Council Circles (goal of 8-10 participants each) conducted in person throughout four (4) major Council geographies.*
- A local volunteer or staff member took the lead in populating and determining preferred logistics within their areas.
 - Aim was to engage a diversity of ages, lived experience, and interest in and familiarity with outdoor experiences.
 - Conducting Circles at days and hours preferable to girls and adults in that area.
- Conversation guides were appropriate to the audience and informed by research, ideas, and input already received through a volunteer survey, a Board of Directors visioning session, and secondary research.

* The Memphis Metro circles were changed to Zoom format to increase participation.



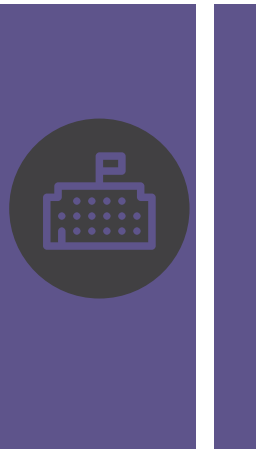
Council Circle Recruitment Efforts

Preparation



Volunteer Luncheon Survey

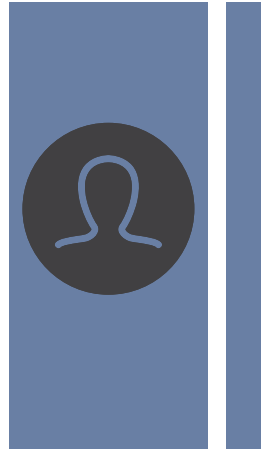
The list of volunteers expressing interest in Council Circle participation was used as a starting point to identify and recruit Council Circle participants by region.



Service Unit Analysis

The GSHS Membership Team examined membership lists to ensure Council Circles were representative of service units in each of four key Council geographies. Targeted efforts focused on recruiting a group of girls of various ages and a range of prior participation in Girl Scouts camps and outdoor experiences. A mix of parents and active volunteers were recruited to craft groups with a balance of perspectives.

Active Recruitment



Local Leads

Local leads were identified for each location to help champion the Council Circle efforts by reaching out to participants to explain the opportunity to both adults and girls more thoroughly. These leads additionally communicated with participants to remind them of the Council Circles in the days leading up to and the day of the event.

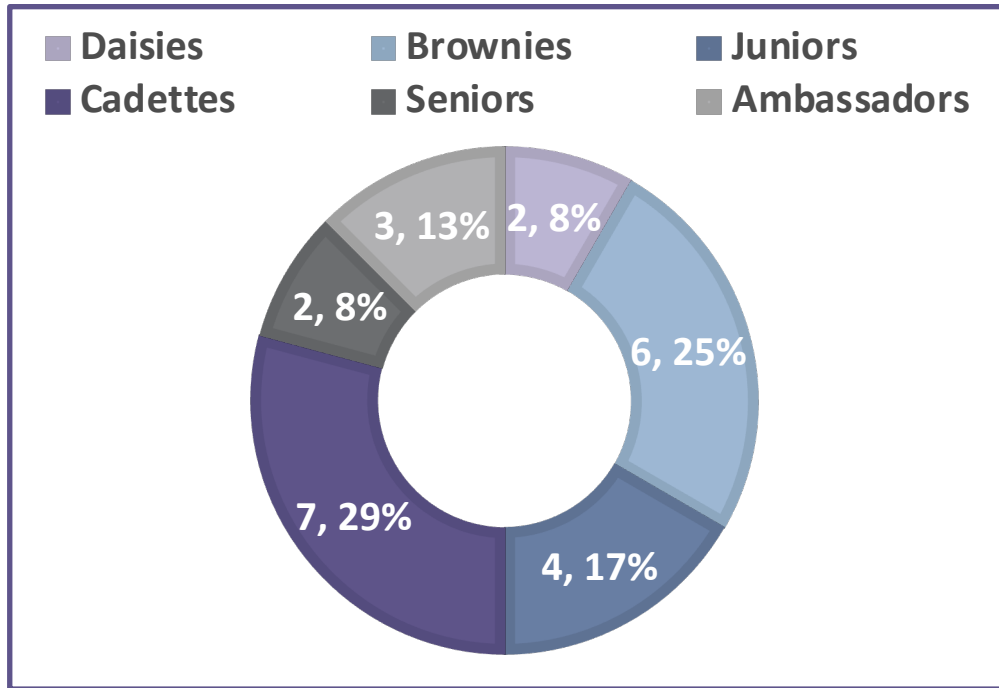


Communication Efforts

Membership Managers and local leads called and emailed participants to invite them to participate in the Council Circles. As girls and adults noted they were unable to attend, the GSHS team went back to the list of potential participants to recruit a participant group with a wide range of outdoor experiences up until the day of the event.

Youth Council Circle Participant Breakdown

Participation By Age Group



Participation By Region

Region	Location	# of Youth Participants
West MS/Delta	Greenwood	9
East MS	Tupelo	6
West TN	Jackson	7
Greater Memphis	Zoom	2
Total		24

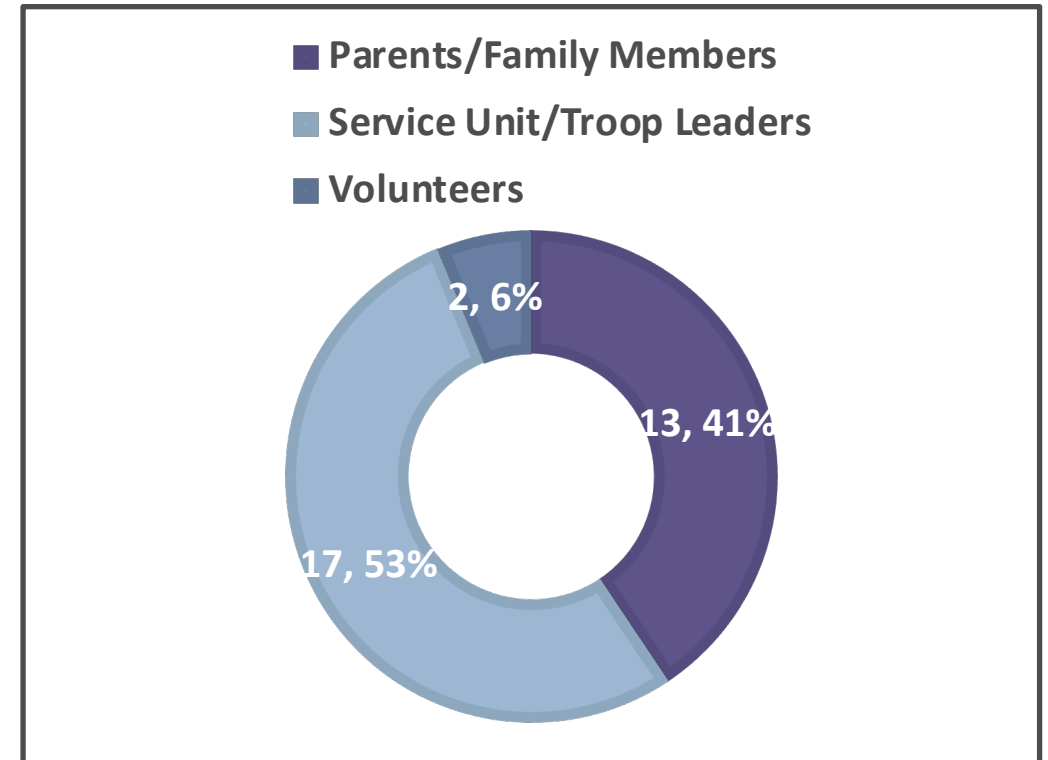
Key: Daisies – grades K-1; Brownies – grades 2-3; Juniors – grades 4-5; Cadettes – grades 6-8; Seniors – grades 9-10; Ambassadors – grades 11-12

Adult Council Circle Participant Breakdown

Participation By Region

Region	Location	# of Adult Participants
West MS/Delta	Greenwood	7
East MS	Tupelo	5
West TN	Jackson	8
Greater Memphis	Zoom	12
Total		32

Participation By Role



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Summary of Themes

Girl Scouts enriches the lives of girls in our communities by offering a unique girl-centered opportunity to explore the outdoors.

- Outdoor experiences provide invaluable **learning and developmental** opportunities.
- Girl Scouts offers a unique opportunity to develop interest in and **learn about the outdoors.**
- Outdoor experiences contribute to the **development of life skills**, including interpersonal communications, problem-solving, and teamwork skills in addition to outdoorsmanship skills.
- Girls **broaden horizons** through exposure to new and challenging experiences.



Desired Camp Outcomes

Impact Area	Outcome	Girl Scouts	Parents	Volunteers/ Leaders
Learning and Developmental Benefits	Gain independence		✓	✓
	Unplug from technology	✓	✓	✓
	Disconnect from day-to-day		✓	✓
	Form new friendships	✓	✓	✓
	Have fun	✓	✓	✓
Outdoor Exposure	Learn to appreciate the outdoors		✓	✓
	Connect behaviors to environmental impact			
Building Tactical Skills	Overcome fears	✓		
	Develop new skills	✓	✓	✓
Expanding Horizons	Explore new experiences and challenges	✓	✓	✓
	Value diverse perspectives		✓	

Note: GSA national-population research aligns with local feedback except for Environmental Stewardship, which did not come up in local research. Also, rows in **Bold** are shared by all three groups.



Girl Scouts Value-Add: Unique Developmental & Learning Experiences

Council Circle participants emphasized the lasting impact of Girl Scout's outdoor experiences on girls' development and growth.

- Develop **independence** by learning how to be responsible for self.
- Cultivate **interpersonal skills** and form new in-person friendships.
- **Unplug** from technology and social media and break away from constant social pressure.
- Build **self-confidence** through mastering new skills and overcoming fears.
- Experience **fun** and **joy** away from day-to-day life.



Unique Opportunity to Experience the Outdoors

Girl Scouts parents, leaders, and volunteers share an understanding that Girl Scouts provides critical, irreplaceable outdoor opportunities that girls may not otherwise experience.

- Engage in **novel** outdoor activities and adventures.
- Enhance knowledge of **nature** and **science** through hands-on activities.
- Grow a **love** and **genuine interest** for the outdoors.
- Become an **outdoor enthusiast** and inspire friends and families to explore the outdoors.



Unique Opportunity to Experience the Outdoors

- *“Girls today don’t get the breadth of experiences that they once got. Girl Scouts is so unique because of the activities offered. Outdoor activities offered by Girl Scouts are the only opportunities they’ll have for these activities.” - Adult*
- *“What I recall from my experience as a Girl Scout is that you’ve heard all the things about working together, leadership, and getting along. But once you’re put out there in the woods, you don’t know you’re learning all that because you’re having fun outdoors. It’s what makes Girl Scouts unique – all the outdoor activities and experiences that you don’t get to do in other circumstances.” - Adult*
- *“Camp is a vital experience. It’s not the selling cookies; it’s the camp part that keeps me. I became more involved in Girl Scouts because of camp.” - Girl*
- *“Girl Scouts can be outdoorsy – other people don’t know about Girl Scouts camp and that it can be outdoorsy. I wish other girls knew that.” - Girl*

N.B. Quotation pull-outs throughout report are not verbatim as no recording or dictation was made. These are approximate quotations pulled from detailed focus group notes reflecting the essence of what was shared.



Outdoor Skills and Competencies

Participants highlighted the transformative power of nature in allowing girls to fully immerse themselves in new challenges and experiences. Outdoor experiences contribute to the development of a concrete skillset that lays the foundation for subsequent leadership skills.

- Strengthen emerging **leadership competencies**, including:
 - Teamwork skills
 - Problem-solving abilities
 - Conflict resolution
 - Interpersonal communication
- Take appropriate risks and learn how to **conquer fears**.
- Learn **tactical outdoor skills** including building a fire, using a compass, and responding to outdoor emergency situations.



Broadening Horizons

The outdoors exposes girls to new and challenging experiences which, in turn, broaden their horizons and provide them opportunities to face their fears.

- Develop **greater courage** through navigating new, unfamiliar outdoor experiences.
- Learn how to build the **trust** and **respect** of peers and adults.
- Explore **new perspectives** through forming new relationships with peers, adults, and the surrounding environment.

“Some of these girls don’t get to experience anything outside of this small town – likely have never been out of town. These girls need to see an experience outside of this community – there’s a whole world outside this community. We want our girls to have the same opportunities as girls from families with more resources.” - Parent/Volunteer



Fun Camp Activities Mentioned by Girls

Activity/Feature	Daisies & Brownies	Juniors & Cadettes	Seniors & Ambassadors
Horse-back riding	✓	✓	✓
Variety of water activities	✓	✓	✓
Variety of arts & crafts	✓	✓	✓
Mixed-ages camp	✓	✓	✓
Age-exclusive experiences			✓
Outdoor cooking	✓	✓	✓
Advanced camping skills		✓	✓
Nature-based projects	✓	✓	
Destination camping			✓

Across the board, girls want a wider variety of activities offered and more variety in terms of activities embedded within an activity category.



Addressing Barriers to Outdoor Engagement

To engage a broader group of girls and troop leaders, focus on addressing barriers that prevent participation.

Barrier	Girl Scouts	Volunteers/Leaders
Distance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation challenges (distance, cost) • Concerns around being far from family (voiced by parents) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logistical challenges for parents and/or volunteers with multiple children/busy schedules to attend troop camping events or on-site trainings
Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competing priorities • Publication of summer camp dates too late 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competing priorities • Limited time to plan troop camping events
Limited Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vague understanding of what to expect • Desire to see/experience in some way before more extensive trips or events • Effective guidance inconsistent and dependent on knowledge and engagement of volunteer leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient resources and knowledge to support and inform less experienced leaders • In some cases, potential volunteers put off by onerous expectations or challenges of finding volunteers
Financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer camp fees • Transportation fees • Funds for skill-building pre-requisites (e.g. swim lessons) • Costs for purchasing/renting necessary equipment and gear/clothes 	

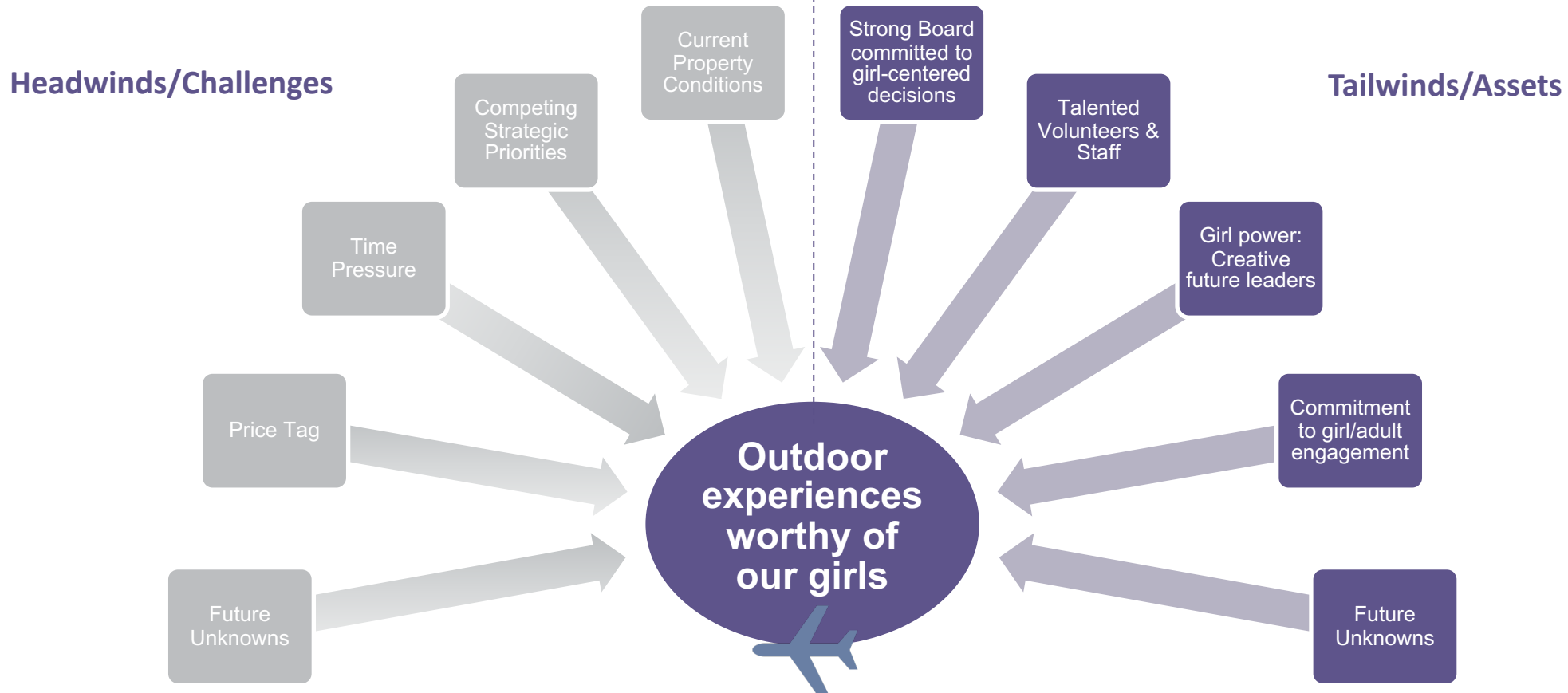


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Factors in the strategic landscape both support and challenge achieving the vision of outstanding outdoor experiences worthy of 21st Century girls.



Headwinds/Challenges

- **Current property conditions** at all properties need improvements to meet basic safety and operational standards.
 - Sizeable financial requirements to address ongoing maintenance needs merely to maintain the status quo.
- Investment of **limited resources** in property repairs and improvements **competes with other strategic priorities** (e.g., rebuilding membership, improving overall outdoor experience programming).
- **Time pressure to act** to make open/close or keep/sell decisions is driven by Council frustration with many years of uncertainty and declining membership.
- The development and implementation of forward-looking quality master plans for each property **require significant time, focus and financial resources**.
- Limited recent history of large, successful capital campaign fundraising.

Tailwinds/Assets

- **Experienced staff and volunteers** with the knowledge and history of conducting a broad range of camp-based experiences.
 - Some SU and Troop Leaders available to draw on for input into outdoor experience design and delivery.
 - Newer volunteers open to helping their Scouts participate in camp experiences with additional training and support.
- **Board prioritization of and commitment to** a bold vision of rebuilding GSHS' core differentiator of girl development centered on outdoor experiences.
- **Greater systematic engagement** of girls & volunteers in co-creating solutions underway.
 - Hundreds of creative girls to tap into for feedback, ideas, and accountability. Many parents and volunteers with a diversity of interests, experience and ideas.
 - A serious commitment to greater transparency and collaboration going forward.



Further, future unknowns will impact this strategic landscape and the feasibility of any desired approaches.

Potential factors include:

- Macro- and micro- changes beyond GSHS control in areas like the economy, social, public health, etc.
- Internal leadership priority shifts with upcoming leadership change.
- An appropriate buyer at a worthwhile price may make an unsolicited offer, or finding such a buyer may prove challenging (if desire to make a sale).
- Fundraising landscape may improve or become more challenging for capital improvements desired (all areas including earned revenue, individual and private grant funding, public investments).

* The Memphis Metro circles were changed to Zoom format to increase participation.



Challenges: Current Property Conditions

Current property conditions do not compare well with other camp facilities and highlight a wide disparity between current state and the Council’s vision of excellence.

Camp Property	Current Conditions	Considerations
Kiwani	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Significant deferred maintenance issues• Inaccessible/poor road conditions• Dilapidated bathrooms and shower stalls• Outdated kitchen equipment• Well water system and lines cannot be used across all four seasons	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fond memories of Kamp Kiwani among decades of alumni who express desire to “save” Kiwani• Proximity to West Tennessee troops• Usage decline paired with very large ownership footprint stretch funds even for regular maintenance.• May be good candidate for a more more primitive camping experience for more experienced Scouts
Tik-A-Witha	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dilapidated bathrooms and shower stalls• Dining hall capacity limitations• Well water system and lines cannot be used across all four seasons• Limited sleeping capacity across all four seasons	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proximity to Eastern Mississippi• Has many desired features/amenities and in better condition
Fisherville	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dilapidated pavilion bathrooms• Well water, septic system, and other infrastructure limitations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proximity to Memphis Metro• Fairly high ongoing usage but with limitations to capacity and activities

Source: Current Conditions provided by GSHS in January 2023. Note: This table is not exhaustive; rather, it highlights some of the camp property conditions



Further, current conditions cannot compete with many of the camps included in the Camp Research Inventory*.

- A scan of the Inventory provides a comparison picture with the overall landscape of regional camp opportunities.
 - While GSHS facilities may have a similar complement of activities, many competing camps are newer or more recently updated and offer these activities in a setting with a high-quality baseline.
- Despite its best efforts to prioritize and steward funds held from past timber and property sales to maintain council properties, the available funds have only covered the most urgent maintenance needs.
 - There have been no major additions or improvements to the camps, except for the stables at Kamp Kiwani which was funded in part by an alumni donor.

* Inventory was conducted in 2022. Refer to Appendix for a snapshot.



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An outstanding outdoor experience is less about premium facilities and more about dynamic program delivery.

1. Outdoor Experience Programming
2. Camp Property Operations and Program Execution
3. Support and Infrastructure for Volunteers
4. Support for Families
5. Outreach and Marketing
6. Camp Facilities/Physical Plant

The good news: Some of these insights may simply affirm ideas and plans already being considered or underway.



Essentials for Excellence: Snapshot

Area	Opportunities for Improvement
1. Programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Incorporate thoughtful programming to address social-emotional needs of girls.• More variety in camp programming.• Create a continuum of outdoor opportunities to promote the expansion of skill development
2. Ops/ Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Revamp the flow of activities and increase staffing to maximize time spent engaging in activities.
3. Volunteer Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leverage volunteers interested in planning and/or leading camping trips to support troop leaders less comfortable with facilitating outdoor activities.• Harness the institutional knowledge of key volunteers and lifetime members to develop a one-stop Camping Resource Hub.• Create turn-key options to support busy troop leaders in leading outdoor experiences.
4. Support for Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Address distance/transportation challenges and financial barriers faced by families.• Collaborate with parents to meet their needs for sharing in the outdoor experience alongside their girls.• Tailor outreach to new families and parents of Daisies/Brownies to broaden engagement.
5. Marketing & Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Refresh branding and improve external messaging to emphasize <i>outdoor experiences over cookies</i>.• Increase outdoor experience participation through increased membership and emphasis on outdoor experiences as heart of social & relational and leadership development, STEAM education, and fun.
6. Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prioritize safety by catching up on critical deferred maintenance issues.• Update facilities to protect the security and privacy of girls and to raise cleanliness standards.



1. Intentional & Innovative Programming

To ensure outdoor experiences remain relevant in today's world, outdoor programming should be aligned with the varied interests among girls of today and of the future.

Programming Development

- Incorporate activities and lessons to promote the development of essential **social-emotional** and **mental health** skills.
- Create a diverse girl-led **Outdoors Ambassador Committee** to provide guidance and input on programming decisions while giving girls a leadership opportunity.

Programming Updates

- Support girls with the challenge of being **unplugged** from devices.
- Integrate planned down-time for girls to learn how to slow down and **mindfully reflect** on experiences.
- **Expand the variety of activities** by continually collecting and analyzing camper engagement survey results.



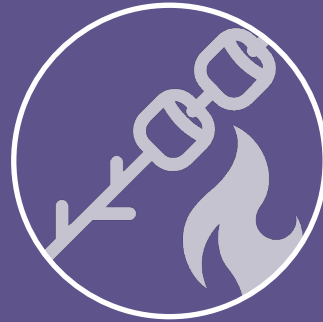
1. Intentional & Innovative Programming

Further Develop & Better Communicate a Continuum of Skills/Experience Progression



Introducing the Outdoors

- Outdoor Meetings
- Nature walks, park visits, backyard exploration
- Guided Day Hikes
- Day Camp events with families
- Exploring the Outdoors Inside (Indoor Tent Camping)
- Lock-In (e.g., hosted by the Zoo, Botanic Gardens, etc.)
- Backyard Camping



Building Outdoor Skills

- Day-Long Outdoor Excursions
- Community Garden Projects
- Overnight Camping
- First Aid and Outdoor Safety Training
- Basic Camping Skills: Building Fires, Setting up Tents, and Outdoor Cooking
- Overnight Family Camp



Advancing Love for the Outdoors

- Destination Camping
- Primitive/Survival Camping
- Shelter Building
- Environmental Service Projects
- Planning and Coordinating Outdoor Adventures

← Incorporate experience-based activities into summer camp, troop camping →



2. Sharpen operational processes and practices to enhance the overall outdoor experience

Vision

- Create a comprehensive array of outdoor experiences for campers, troop leaders, and volunteers.
- Implement operational best practices with consistency across experiences and properties.
- Practice continuous quality improvement (CQI) to refine outdoor experiences.

People Ideas

- **Increase on-site, qualified staff** to maximize time available for high-interest activities (e.g. rock climbing wall, ziplining, boating).
- Make camping events **more turn-key for volunteers** *via* Camp Concierge Leads to support troop leaders in handling set-up/prep details.
- **Systematize volunteer staffing across Council** to engage more volunteers based on their availability.

Process Ideas

- **Regularly optimize** camp schedule to minimize waiting-time between activities while allowing for intentional reflection.
- Embed **activities** into wait-time periods for certain activities.
- Conduct **pre-camp training** where possible to maximize adventure time (e.g., boating safety).



3. Invest in Greater Volunteer Network Infrastructure

Troop volunteers' influence plays a significant role in shaping girls' outdoor experiences and often determine whether girls try outdoor experiences at all. The situation is exacerbated by inconsistent access to knowledge and resources.

Systematize and Democratize Access to Supports

- Offer/expand a **centralized, comprehensive outdoor training program for volunteers** using different modes, covering different topics and skills, and targeted to an array of experience levels.
- Establish an **Adult Outdoors Mentor Program** that activates volunteers interested in planning and/or leading camping trips to support troop leaders across the Council who are less comfortable with facilitating outdoor activities.
- Create a **menu for turn-key outdoor adventures** to assist busy troop leaders and other volunteers in facilitating outdoor experiences.

Build Network Scaffolding to Equip Volunteers

- Harness institutional knowledge to develop a **one-stop Camping Resource Hub** that incorporates training program and a volunteer match-making tool. Leverage latest web- and app-based tools.
- **Develop/refine Council-wide communication platform** to formalize how volunteers and staff communicate with one another, share ideas, and disseminate upcoming outdoor events and activities.
- **Standardize outdoor experiences** by updating or developing a systematic step-by-step process for interested troop leaders or volunteers to follow when planning to utilize Girl Scouts camp properties.



4. Support Families *via* Parent Orientation & Involvement

Families with no Camping Experience

- Offer **preview days at local parks** featuring a wide range of outdoor activities (e.g., On Target archery demos)
- Provide thoughtfully-crafted materials and training to make **understanding the opportunities and benefits accessible to all girls and families.**
- **Understand any barriers to participation** and be prepared with solutions and/or responses.

Families of Younger/New Campers

- **Offer Family Day Camps or overnight camp events at camp facilities** to introduce families to GS outdoor experiences.
- Focus on local day experiences and controlled lock-ins first.
- Provide highly **detailed packing/prep instructions** and agendas.
- Find creative ways to meet camper independence growth goals with child and parent needs for communication.

All Families

- **Update and expand orientation to various camping experiences** (i.e., what to expect) using different approaches (e.g., checklists, video tours, required in-person orientations & previews)
- **Enhance social media sharing** in a consistent, safe manner.
- **Support parents in post-experience sharing** and reflection guidance.
- **Meet families where they are and use CQI** to evolve as needed.



4. Support Families *via* Accessibility Solutions

To engage a broader group of girls and troop leaders, focus on addressing barriers that prevent the accessibility of attending and leading outdoor experiences.

Barrier	Potential Solutions for Girl Scouts	Potential Solutions for Volunteers/Leaders
Distance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide funding or coordination for carpool or bus options to alleviate transportation challenges. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer Leader Training locally to mitigate logistical challenges for parents with multiple children or competing priorities.
Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide additional training or resources to offer smaller local excursions to introduce girls to the outdoors in smaller pockets of time. Publish calendars (especially summer dates) earlier. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update materials to ensure equipment, tools, set-up, and activity requirements are clearly communicated to streamline preparations for leading events. Camp Concierge support options, volunteer-matching.
Financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of outdoor experience planning, consider more resources for barrier-busting funds to defray fees, transportation, clothing, and equipment costs. Partner with/leverage other community resources to expand skill-building programming. 	



5. A refreshed comprehensive communications and outreach plan: a critical part of any future-building strategy

Some Elements of a Strategic Communications & Outreach Plan

- **Emphasize uniqueness of girl-focused outdoor experiences** to overcome external perceptions about Cookie Sales primacy (e.g., “Cookies Fuel Our Fun.”)
- **Update case for support** to emphasize comprehensive outdoor strategy as central to Girl Scouts’ social-emotional development, STEAM education, leadership development and fun.
- Highlight new fun elements as well as resources and structure of support for families to plug in.
- **Develop Council-wide messaging, materials and tools for volunteers** to speak consistently and effectively with external stakeholders and prospects.

Anticipated Results of a Refreshed Communications & Outreach Plan

- Membership growth
- Volunteer growth
- Broader age- and experience-range of members & other participants
- Expanded fundraising appeal
- Enhanced community partnerships



6. Prioritize Clean, Safe Facilities and Master Planning

Respondents were less concerned about premium facility improvements. Rather, parents and girls strongly emphasized the importance of camp properties being clean, safe, and secure places for girls.

Immediate Priorities

Prioritize Safety and Well-Being

- Identify immediate maintenance needs to ensure facilities meet accreditation and safety guidelines and cleanliness expectations.
- Continue to ensure and communicate child safety protections.

Develop a Council-wide Shared, Transparent Understanding

- Clearly communicate facility conditions to girls, parents, and volunteers/leaders. Outline any changes to facilities, as well as planned next-steps.
- Engage girls and adults in any planning beyond maintenance; regularly give Council-wide updates.

Longer-Term Priorities

Develop staged long-term plans for property renovations and upgrades.

- Align facility plans with organizational strategic priorities.
- Develop comprehensive, creative, and actionable master plans for camp properties retained (including financial and fundraising capital and operational plans).

Proactively engage girls and volunteers in master planning and related processes.

- Pilot board-level Girl Scout engagement and leadership by establishing a **girl-populated Outdoor Experience Subcommittee** to participate in and inform fellow Scouts about any related progress and plans.



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- II. Report Details
 - I. Methodology
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 - III. Overarching Implications & Analysis
 - I. Strategic Landscape
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 - III. Camp Property Possibilities & Guidance
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Guidance for Making Strategic Camp Property Decisions

- 1. Embrace the standard of creating an experience “worthy of our girls.”**
 - a. Look beyond piecemeal improvements.
 - b. Continue to engage and communicate transparently with stakeholders.
 - c. Identify information/expert advice needs and seek out answers.
 - d. An incremental plan will not engage Capital funders of size in supporting a campaign.

- 2. Prioritize systematic approaches that advance a master plan rather than patching and repairing.**
 - a. Explore intermediate options to relieve time pressure and maintain flexibility.
 - b. A comprehensive master plan can be phased in as circumstances and resources allow.

- 3. Prioritize long-term missional and social benefits over short-term pressures and needs.**
 - a. Opportunity costs and decision-permanence vs short-term income generation.
 - b. Environmental and conservation impact.
 - c. Avoid unintended consequences that are not aligned w GSHS values.

Continued...



Guidance for Making Strategic Camp Property Decisions

4. Take into account that *location* and *convenience* are common concerns across Council geography.
 - a. Council-secured partnerships for accommodations with closer access to some geographies will need to be considered in addition to GSHS-owned properties.
 - b. Addressing this challenge may be a critical factor in Council growth strategies.



Council-wide comprehensive long-range planning is essential whatever your Outdoor Experience Vision

Comprehensive Council/Organizational Strategic Business Planning

- Refines strategic grounding statements, including long-range vision, and sets strategic priorities, objectives, goals and measures to achieve this vision.
- Develops concrete action plan – with accountabilities, fiscal notes, and timelines – to execute plan successfully.
- Includes all aspects of Council business, programming, facilities/properties, financial management, funds development, membership growth, and Council support infrastructure.

Camp Property Planning

- Gather needed information and guidance, including real estate valuation and advice, to firm up direction.
- Conduct preliminary master plan vision-setting, draft case statement, and conduct feasibility study.
- Once strategy firmed up, develop comprehensive master plans for each property; execute on fundraising and development plan.

Innovations & Improvements

- With commitment to CQI, continue to undertake the work of the Council and build out or improve processes, programming, and actions to support GSHS' mission, sustainability and growth, including any adopted recommendations here.



Recommendations to Committee on the pressing matter of 2023 camp property availability decisions

1. Take a pause in making major decisions on camp properties. More exploration and planning required to make wisest decision.

- Continue to move this process forward as part of comprehensive long-range agency planning.
- Move forward with a professional real estate assessment and valuation project to provide needed initial information on what GSHS could expect if determine best choice is to sell any holdings, in whole or part.
- Begin process of outlining framework and securing help for camp property master planning.

2. Prepare some camps for opening in 2023, addressing repairs needed to ensure safety and cleanliness.

- **Fisherville:** Continue camp reservations.
- **Tik-a-Witha:** Continue camp reservations and summer camp plans.
- **Kiwani:** We suggest two options:
 - Keep Kiwani closed another season; significant repairs needed may not be feasible (time and financial resources constraints); or,
 - If such repairs prove feasible, re-open for GS troop-only primitive use (no use of camp buildings) and possible equestrian program (if feasible). This would require an aggressive opening plan, including financial requirements, and timeline.
- **For all opening properties:** Begin to test or implement program/process enhancements.



Recommended Next Steps require the ability to make this sizeable, time-sensitive work a priority

- **Property Conditions & Improvements**
 - Quickly firm up opening requirements and action plans for each opening property.
 - Prioritize this work at staff-level with supportive, active engagement of appropriate Board member(s).
 - Invest needed dollars in necessary on-time quality repairs (understanding that such funds are limited)

Continued...



Recommended Next Steps require the ability to make this sizeable, time-sensitive work a priority

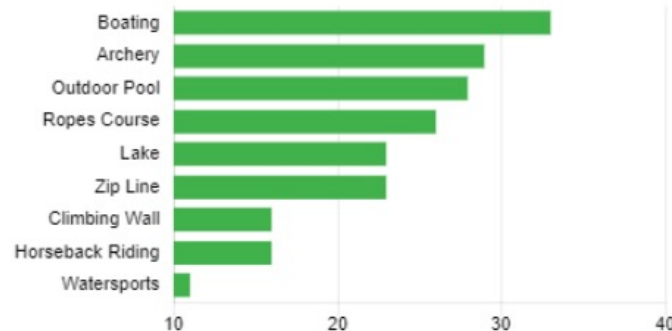
- **Communicate decisions, especially for 2023 plan**
 - Communicate decision on 2023 camp properties to entire Council by the promised decision date (end of January).
 - Determine and communicate opening dates and reservation processes ASAP.
- **Communicate and share the camp research inventory for Troop and SU leaders for 2023 planning.** (*See next slide)
 - To aid Troops and SUs in using state parks and other existing sites and partner facilities, staff-led support and vetting may be required in near term and as part of ongoing Volunteer Training.
- **Communicate more thoroughly and creatively about what to expect**
 - Institute recommendations (see earlier in report) for improved communications to parents and Scouts to describe better the programming and camp conditions to expect.



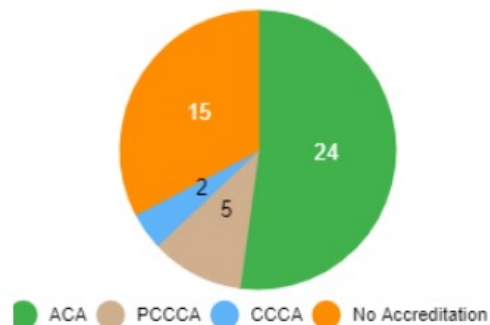
Summer Camp Comparative Analysis



Common Camp Amenities



Camp Accreditation



ACA: American Camp Association

PCCCA: Presbyterian Church Camp and Conference Association

CCCA: Christian Church Camp and Conference Association

Overnight Accommodations

Overnight Accommodations	Camps
> 100 Campers	4
101 - 200 Campers	12
201 - 300 Campers	10
301 - 400 Campers	5
< 400 Campers	3

Camp Acreage

Acreage	Camps
> 100 Acres	8
101 - 250 Acres	10
251 - 500 Acres	13
< 501 Acres	7

Research Highlights

- **Accommodations:** An array of summer camps and retreat centers are in the Southeastern region. Camps can accommodate as few as 100 and as many as 500 guests.
- **Food Service:** Camp and retreat centers regularly provide breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snacks to guests, charging a standard per-person rate for each meal. Meal rates can be negotiated depending on the facility.
- **Overnight Lodging:** Cabin and lodging accommodations are provided for overnight guests at most camp and retreat centers. Several cabins/lodges are equipped with A/C and include an en suite bathroom and sink. Eight camps also include sites for outdoor camping.
- **Preferred Amenities:** Camps offer various amenities for campers and retreat goers. Boating, swimming, climbing, and zip-lining activities were offered by several facilities. However, only sixteen facilities offered horseback riding.
- **Two-Story Lodging:** Ten facilities had two-story overnight lodges.
- **Usage:** Multi-use facilities are common. Interested parties can reserve space to host a conference, retreat, wedding, or reunion at several facilities.



Camp Property Planning Process: Next Steps

Past and Current Processes

Long Range Property Plan

Summer Camp Research

Stakeholder Engagement

Recommended Next Steps

Council Outreach and Communications

Property Assessment and Valuations

Master Planning/
Organizational Planning

- Going forward, the GSHS Board and leadership team must communicate all camp property plans and strategic vision to Council members to create a transparent, collaborative approach.

- Contract with a Real Estate Planning Consultant to assess conditions and identify strategic opportunities as it relates to the camp property holdings.

- Contract with design firm for comprehensive master plan(s) for each property retained to outline property vision and features.
- Create long-range strategic plan as well as property funds development and sustainability plans to align financial resources and needs.

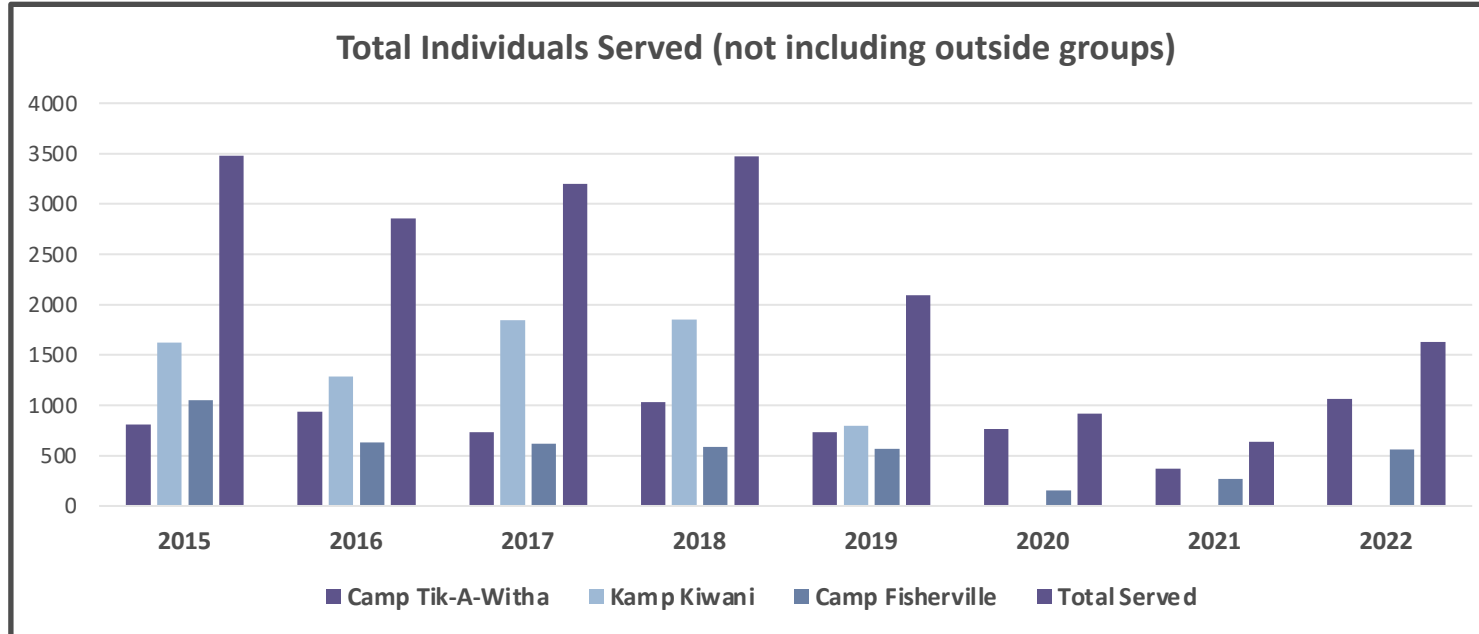


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Camp Property Usage Trends (2015-2022)

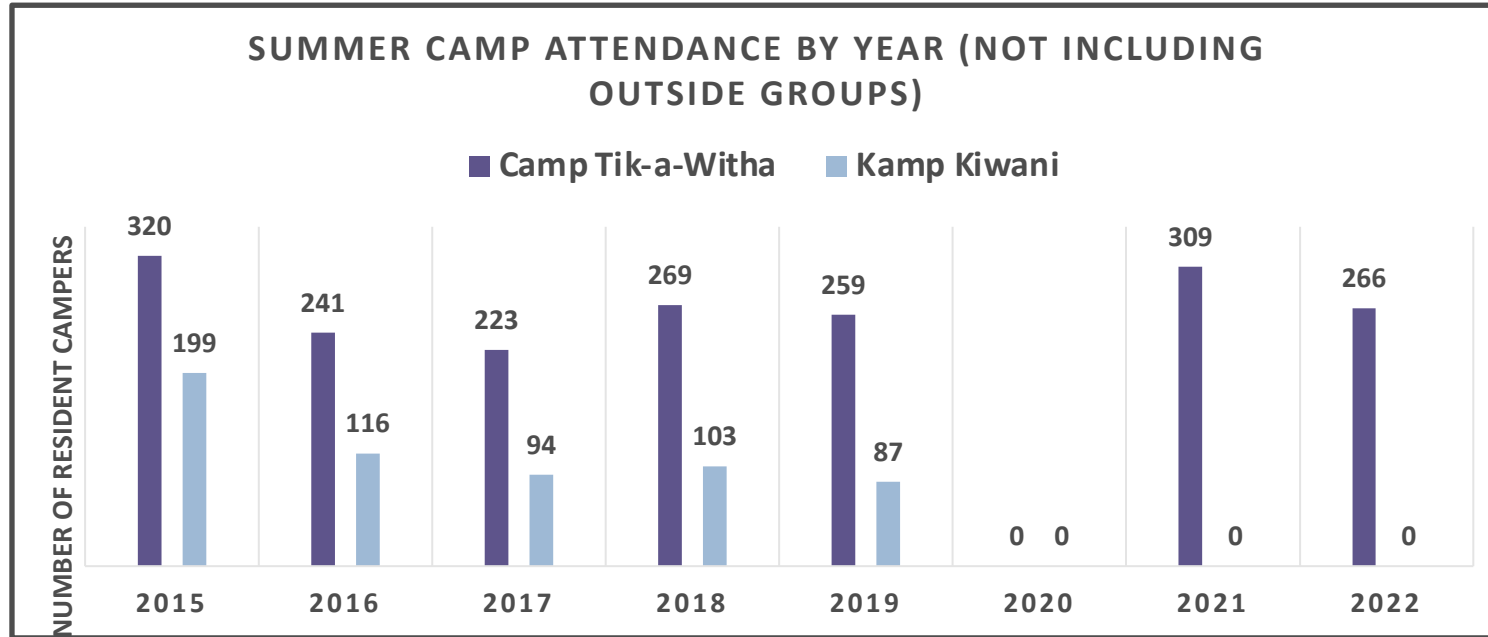


Total Served (not including outside groups)								
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Camp Tik-A-Witha	809	935	733	1030	735	762	373	1066
Kamp Kiwani	1621	1288	1847	1853	794	0	0	0
Camp Fisherville	1051	633	616	588	566	157	266	561
Total Served	3481	2856	3196	3471	2095	919	639	1627

Data Source: GSHS Staff



Residential Camp Attendance Trends (2015-2022)



Summer Camp Attendance by Year								
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Camp Tik-a-Witha	320	241	223	269	259	0	309	266
Kamp Kiwani	199	116	94	103	87	0	0	0
Total Served	519	357	317	372	346	0	309	266

Data Source: GSHS Staff



- This snapshot is the first page of a 22-page Committee report and gives an example of the Committee's work and the breadth of the improvement projects.
- The Committee regularly convenes to prioritize and allocate funds for the repairs and improvements of the highest priority items within the bounds of available funds.

girlscout! heart of the south

Long Range Property Plan

Update December 2013

The Long Range Property Planning (LRPP) Task Force continued their work by touring the remaining camp locations. The Task Force outlined several projects and put each into two categories:

1. Land, Building and Equipment Projects (LBE)

The LRPP task force identified smaller projects that were more appropriate for the Land, Building and Equipment (LBE) project list. There were 9 projects that were added to the LBE list. In September 2013 the property committee met to review the proposed projects. Of the 9 projects, three were approved. Five additional projects that had previously been identified by the property staff were also approved.

The approved LBE Projects are as follows:

Replace roofs on 6 buildings at Kamp Kiwani
Complete platform tent unit called Heart of Hazlewood at Kamp Kiwani Build retaining wall,
work on parking lot and patio at Camp Fisherville Repair T-Dock at Kamp Kiwani
Plant Green Screen at Camp Fisherville - Completed Replace Ceiling Tile in
the Jackson office
Replace A/C Unit at the Program Training Center - Completed Purchase additional
vehicle

2. Capitol Priority Projects (CPP)

The Capitol Priority Project will require a capital campaign in order to complete. The task force used these criteria to prioritize the projects: safety, deferred required maintenance, girl impact, future user impact. GSHS Fund Development will develop a campaign to fund the CPP.

The Capitol Priority Projects are as follows: Camp Tik-A-Witha Pool

Kamp Kiwani Splash Pad
Kamp Kiwani Equestrian Center Camp Tik-A-Witha Tree
House
Kamp Kiwani Renovation of Main Camp Camp Fisherville Main
Lodge Renovation Camp Tik-A-Witha Natchez Bathhouse
Camp Tik-A-Witha Accessibility boat dock Kamp Kiwani
Thunderbird Kitchen
Camp Tik-A-Witha Dining Hall Expansion Kamp Kiwani Move/build
Cabins for Unit 1
Kamp Kiwani - Maintenance Facility Move/include shed
Camp Tik-A-Witha Challenge Course Kamp Kiwani Bunkhouse
Kamp Kiwani Boat house
Camp Fisherville - Four-Season Lodge

Source: GSHS file "LRPP 2010.pdf", dated Dec 2013, page 1 of 22



Camp Property Conditions

Amenities	Current Conditions	Considerations
Kiwani	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant deferred maintenance issues • Inaccessible/poor road conditions • Dilapidated bathrooms and shower stalls • Outdated kitchen equipment • Well water system and lines cannot be used across all four seasons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fond memories of Kamp Kiwani among decades of alumni who express desire to “save” Kiwani • Proximity to West Tennessee troops • Usage decline paired with very large ownership footprint stretch funds even for regular maintenance. • May be good candidate for a more more primitive camping experience for more experienced Scouts
Tik-A-Witha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dilapidated bathrooms and shower stalls • Dining hall capacity limitations • Well water system and lines cannot be used across all four seasons • Limited sleeping capacity across all four seasons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proximity to Eastern Mississippi • Has many desired features/amenities and in better condition
Fisherville	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dilapidated pavilion bathrooms • Well water, septic system, and other infrastructure limitations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proximity to Memphis Metro • Fairly high ongoing usage but with limitations to capacity and activities

Source: Current Conditions provided by GSHS in January 2023. Note: This table is not exhaustive; rather, it highlights some of the camp property conditions



Camp Property Conditions: a selection of photos



Source: GSHS, Kiwani Site Visit photos, Sept 2022





End of Report