



Partnership Creates Opportunity for BAC through Canyon Camp

In 1936, nearly 150 acres of property in beautiful Jo Daviess County were donated to the BSA. Since that initial gift made by the Koenig family of Freeport, thousands of young people have experienced The Spirit of Canyon Camp, hundreds of staff members and volunteers have served young people, and dozens of capital projects have been invested into this property for our program needs. The memories and relationships made on this land are priceless and must be preserved.

Last year, due to implications of the National organization and after initial localized determinations, the Blackhawk Area Council (BAC) moved to preserve important acreage at Canyon Camp through partnership with the Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation. On September 30th, the BAC finalized the protection of 140 acres of land on the eastern and northern edge of our property. This space has most frequently been referred to as the Wiley expansion made in 2010- used predominantly for star hikes and US Grant Pilgrimage camping sites- and additional acreage encompassing areas on the north end of the property incorporating portions of the five-mile hike trail and historical outpost camping sites. Through the sale of these northern and eastern portions of property, this land can and will still be used for Scouting needs, such as stargazing and hiking, while also being secured for conservation needs. This partnership also continues the connection of Canyon Camp to more than 1,500 acres of contiguous public lands that can be utilized for Scouting adventures.

Today, we want to thank the many volunteers who spent countless hours of service to bring this partnership together. Bill Reilly, Gene Nott, Lee Binkley, Seth Kannarr, Collin Nack, Jon Krause, Alex Kloepping, Dan Dick, Todd Wood, and many others all played vital roles in bringing the partnership with JDCF together, identifying appropriate boundaries for property, and casting the vision for what is yet to come.

Looking forward, we are in preliminary discussions with the Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation to host an event in 2023 at Canyon Camp. This will be an opportunity to celebrate this partnership, learn more about conservation efforts on this property (i.e., invasive species removal, prescribed burns, and forest improvements), and cast a vision for the future. Initial discussions have already begun regarding potential trail improvements in this space. There are many other opportunities in the future as well.

Canyon Camp is a very special place. Generations of young men and women have been taught to love the outdoors and learn life skills here. Each time someone visits, they are immersed in the Spirit of Canyon Camp that instills an appreciation for nature, teaches independence, builds character, fosters stewardship for the land, and instills the values of the Scout Oath and Law. We will continue to invest in Canyon Camp and have more than \$350,000 in planned projects to be implemented in the next year alone. Summer camping and weekend outings will continue to host exciting programming opportunities for young people throughout the Midwest at Canyon Camp.



Tumilowicz Center for Scouting
2820 McFarland Road
Rockford, IL 61107

Crystal Lake Field Service Center
600 North Route 31
Crystal Lake, IL 60012

Thank you again to the entire Blackhawk Area Council community. We appreciate the passion shared for outdoor adventures. Canyon Camp is an important asset for the Blackhawk Area Council, from weekend unit outings to our flagship summer camp program. The care you share for Scouting and the mission of serving young people is unrivaled.

If you have any questions or ideas for further partnerships, please do not hesitate to reach out to Blackhawk Area Council (Bac.info@scouting.org). Thank you for all you do for Scouting.

Sincerely,



Jake Dykstra
President



Sedrick Robinson
Scout Executive