

2014

Advancing Camp Karoondinha's Sustainability Leadership



Prepared by Bison Consulting Group in partnership with the Susquehanna Council, BSA, and members of Camp Karoondinha

7/31/2014

Contents

Introduction	2
What is Sustainability?.....	2
What is Sustainability for the Boy Scouts of America?	2
What is Sustainability for the Susquehanna Council and Camp Karoondinha?	3
Camp Karoondinha Sustainable Resource Inventory	3
Strategic Objective 1: Keep Scouts Relevant	3
Strategic Objective 2: Increase Camp K Use	4
Strategic Objective 3: Increase Community Partnerships	4
Strategic Objective 4: Minimize Environmental Footprint	5
Camp Karoondinha Sustainable Resource Use Recommendations	5
Strategic Objective 1: Keeping the Boy Scouts Relevant.....	5
GO Kart Facility	5
Troop Competition.....	6
University Educational Partnerships	6
Enhanced Marketing Effort	6
Strategic Objective 2: Increase Camp Use and Marketing to Community Members	7
Penn’s Creek	7
Lakefront Pavilion	7
Strategic Objective 3: Increase Community Partnerships	7
University Liaison	7
AmeriCorps Volunteer.....	8
Solicitation of Donations	8
Strategic Objective 4: Minimize Environmental Footprint	9
Development of Recycling Program	9
Innovate Food Sourcing	9
Forest Assessment	9

Introduction

This report completed by Bison Consulting Group is an overview of Camp Karoondinha's current Sustainability efforts, as well as recommendations to further develop their current offering in order to ensure the camp remains an indelible fixture for both local youths and the community for years to come. First, the report explains the term sustainability and its critical relationship to the Boy Scouts of America. While sustainability is a broad ideology with various areas of emphasis, BCG focused on aspects of sustainability that are pertinent to the goals described by the Susquehanna Council and other stakeholders. Next, an inventory of sustainable practices at Camp K and their relationship to four strategic objectives are outlined below to provide council leaders with tangible ways to envision sustainability. Lastly, recommendations on how Camp K can utilize its resources in order to further meet their sustainability goals are included. This report serves as a guide and starting point to initiate conversations between the Susquehanna Council and Camp K stakeholders about the importance of Sustainability. BCG hopes to forge a mutually beneficial relationship with Camp K by assisting in further research or implementation of any of these recommendations.

What is Sustainability?

In 1987 the World Commission on Environment and Development (Brundtland Commission) published a report that defined sustainability as, "meeting the needs of current generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". This definition of sustainability is the most widely used today and serves as a great starting point to understand how the issue of sustainability affects all organizations. Sustainability is many times further broken down into economic, environmental, and social sub categories. Sustainability is also employed as a strategy by organizations who wish to create shared value among all stakeholders.

Management guru Michael Porter urges that organizations should strive to perform activities in a way that improves all stakeholders: the community, customers, employees, suppliers, the environment, etc. By embracing this strategy, the Boy Scouts will remain an important social structure within American society while remaining true to the ideals it was built upon.



What is Sustainability for the Boy Scouts of America?

From our discussion with Sustainability Consultant Zachary Carson, Scout Executive Jon Brennan, Susquehanna Council Vice President of Camp Properties John Fogarty, and various other stakeholders we have determined that the BSA has focused nationally on meeting several sustainability goals.

- The Boy Scouts of America are committed to maintaining their initial purpose while continuing to develop in a manner that meets the needs of future generations of America's youth.
- The Boy Scouts of America want to ensure that sites nationwide have the funding and natural resources necessary to serve scouts well into the future.



What is Sustainability for the Susquehanna Council and Camp Karoondinha?

Within the overarching goals of the Boy Scouts of America, Camp K has chosen to focus on a few strategic objectives of Sustainability in order to emerge as a leader within Boy Scout facilities nationwide.

1. Keep the Boy Scouts relevant with today's youth

In a cultural shift towards structured sports leagues and technology-related entertainment, the future of the Boy Scouts hinges on their ability to provide unique value to young boys and their families.

2. Increase camp use and market to a variety of community members

If Camp K can more effectively supplement its usual Boy Scout activities with community events in the off-season, it can use these additional financial resources to improve its offerings for scouts. A diverse range of community customers will strengthen the bond that Camp K has with the local area.

3. Strategically increase the number and diversity of community partners in order to develop mutually beneficial relationships

Leveraging community relationships into partnerships where both parties truly benefit will further root Camp K into the local consciousness and also allow for goods and services to be acquired inexpensively. As Camp K further improves and develops, so will the local community.

4. Minimize the environmental footprint in order to maintain long term camp operations

Environmental sustainability must be a priority for Camp K because the facility will cease to exist if the grounds are not maintained. Camp activities must work with the camp's natural resources to ensure their longevity. The other sustainability goals will be rendered meaningless if camp operations cause damage to the environment.

Camp Karoondinha Sustainable Resource Inventory

Camp K has an abundance of resources currently used to address some of the strategic objectives outlined in the above section. Below is a description of these resources and the objectives they meet.

Strategic Objective 1: Keeping the Boy Scouts Relevant

Camp K offers merit badges in a myriad of subject areas that include sports, crafts, science, trades, and business. The main goal of these offerings is to give Scouts the opportunity to explore potential career paths and further develop critical life skills to be used in the future. The variety of merit badges offered at Camp K exemplifies how the camp continues to innovate while striving to achieve this very goal.

partnership assists Camp K by providing increased exposure and premium facilities designed by this industry leader.

Camp K is able to create shared value with Susquehanna University through the use of the Ecology Building. The university enjoys the use of an outstanding outdoor facility at a beautiful natural landscape while members of the camp utilize the structure for educational purposes.

Strategic Objective 4: Minimize Environmental Footprint

The new septic leach field installed in 2001 contributes to minimizing the environmental footprint of the camp by reducing the amount of waste and the need for waste removal services. Careful consideration for the environmental impact of this facility guided the planning and construction process.

Year round camp rangers monitor the camp to ensure that all activities preserve the environment. Environmental abuses of the facility are minimized and discouraged due to these efforts.

Camp K utilizes firewood that is gathered on site from fallen trees and branches. By utilizing the firewood gathered on-site, Camp K reduces costs and maintains the aesthetically pleasing aspect of the site as the need for clean-ups is reduced.

Camp Karoondinha Sustainable Resource Use Recommendations

In addition to their current use of assets, Camp K could potentially leverage these resources in a manner that would further contribute to its sustainability efforts. Below is a discussion of recommendations as they relate to each strategic objective.

Strategic Objective 1: Keeping the Boy Scouts Relevant

Camp K will cease to function if there are not Boy Scouts to visit it. Keeping the Boy Scouts relevant to young boys must be a priority to the council, and this initiative does not have to include large overhauls to programming. By restructuring current activities, adding a few new programs, and refocusing marketing efforts, Camp K will be well positioned to be a model for Boy Scout camps nationwide.

GO Kart Facility

We recommend the addition of a Go Kart facility to make the camp more attractive to adolescent boys and provide valuable learning opportunities in mechanics. With this attractive new venture, campers will learn how an engine functions, basic mechanical maintenance, and driving safety procedures. The cost of go karts varies greatly depending on the type of vehicle (gas, electric, and solar powered machines each have their benefits and costs) and style of track (ranging from a temporary track lined with cones in a grassy area to a permanent dirt track cut out of a wooded area). While this investment is costly compared to other new programming options, it has the highest potential payback. A go kart facility has the potential to attract boys that would not have considered joining the Boy Scouts and could inspire campers to pursue related careers. This facility could also attract outside community members for rental purposes.

Troop Competition

While young boys today are increasingly participating in structured sports leagues that hinder their ability to joining BSA, we recommend implementing structured troop sports leagues/events at Camp K to create healthy competition and attract campers that desire an experience with sports. Results from a wide variety of sports should be tallied to name a troop champion at the conclusion of camp. The types of sports offered should take into account camper interests by conducting camper votes to ensure that the competition is uniquely tailored to specific camps. While there are many games and competitions already offered at Camp K, more could be done to organize troop teams and champions. The Camp K Olympics could be an annual week long competition that all campers look forward to. Essential life lessons such as teamwork, healthy competition, and sportsmanship are tightly aligned with the mission of the Boy Scouts and are reinforced through sports. If a boy can join the Boy Scouts and still get the sports experience that some of his peers enjoy, it will make BSA and Camp K a more attractive option.



University Educational Partnerships

Camp K is conveniently located near several universities which should be utilized as resources to present topics that provide campers with early exposure to fields of study within academia. Students, Faculty, and Staff have a wealth of knowledge that pertains to various merit badge programs, camp activities, and specifically to campers' interests. Camp K should pride itself on being the place where boys go to discover their passions. The summer is an optimal time to conduct such presentations, as staff and faculty usually have more time available and many students are on campus taking classes, researching, and/or working. This could contribute to service hours for faculty up for tenure review or students needing a service project.

Enhanced Marketing Effort

With the addition of some of the above activities and enhancement to the current offerings, we recommend that the Susquehanna Council and Camp K focus on emphasizing the unique advantages of the Boy Scouts. Other sources of competition for young boys' time (sports, video games, church activities, etc.) do not provide the opportunity to gain out-of-the-classroom education, practice life skills, and develop a sharper moral compass. We recommend all marketing materials and discussions with prospective scouts and their parents include these distinct advantages conveyed in a creative manner. The popular image of the Boy Scouts is often one of boys in uniforms hiking through the woods. While it is important to stay true to the core mission of the organization, the Council must emphasize the diverse and culturally relevant program offering. Scout leaders must strategically include references to programming

that is not traditionally associated with BSA and compliments other activities popular with the youth today.

Strategic Objective 2: Increase Camp Use and Marketing Efforts

Filling off-season days with the community use of Camp K facilities will strengthen the bond with the local area, generate additional revenue, and possibly allow mutually beneficial partnerships to form. Extending the use of Camp K to community members is the first step in active collaboration (the fourth sustainability goal) and endows the Council with financial resources that can be put towards attracting new scouts, developing new community relationships, and upgrading camp facilities.

Penn's Creek

Penn's creek is a valuable resource that must be further utilized to encourage more community involvement and generate additional revenue. The part of the waterway within Camp K is a stunning natural resource that should be the site of regular community events. The water and banks are suitable for fishing, camping, picnics, kayaking and floating among other activities. We recommend the use of flyers and emails to community organizations, churches, and businesses describing these opportunities would help draw more river visitors. While corporate outings to Penn's creek could be used to generate funds, greater community use of the site will increase visibility and encourage more groups to utilize other camp facilities.

Lakefront Pavilion

The lakefront pavilion and open field is a perfect site for birthdays, graduation parties, church picnics, and many other types of events. We recommend Camp K aggressively targeting local churches, schools, and businesses and advertise this picturesque party location. More so than with Penn's creek, this facility could bring substantial additional revenue with which the Council could put towards more campships or to upgrade existing facilities.

Strategic Objective 3: Increase Community Partnerships

The Boy Scouts of America have a long tradition of working with local communities in order to accomplish their mission of "building a more conscientious, responsible, and productive society." Cooperation amongst local individuals, organizations, and BSA is a vital component to developing a sustainable future for the Boy Scouts. A healthy community strives for collaboration and support amongst its members and the presence of BSA greatly assists in that endeavor. In order to increase community partnerships, we recommend several initiatives specific to Camp K.

University Liaison

Camp K is situated in an area with many high-quality higher education institutions including Bucknell University, Susquehanna University, Lycoming College, Pennsylvania College of Technology, and Bloomsburg University. These schools have many student groups and individuals that work with and in the local community. We recommend that Camp K establishes a student liaison at local universities to connect the camp to the resources of the university and vice versa. The



relationship has the potential to be mutually beneficial; the colleges have access to educational resources that could connect scouts to a variety of subjects and encourage academic interests as mentioned above. Furthermore, most colleges have the ability to fund a student liaison with the Federal Work study program, which would incur no cost to either Camp K or the university.



AmeriCorps Volunteer

The AmeriCorps volunteer program is the second way we recommend that Camp K engages with someone who can further connect the Boy Scouts to the community. AmeriCorps is a federal work program that is funded partially by the national government and partially by individual donors and organizations; it serves nonprofits, schools, public agencies, community, and faith-based groups across the country. By applying to have an AmeriCorps volunteer, Camp K could gain an employee at no financial expense to the camp who is specifically trained to improve non-profit organizations. Additionally, AmeriCorps is an extensive network of people connected to organizations locally and nationally with the potential to partner with BSA.

Solicitation of Donations

Utilizing the aforementioned agencies to improve Camp K's connection to the community is not only socially and financially sustainable, but also has the potential to connect the camp to a number of community organizations that otherwise would not have been considered. However, the best way to connect Camp K to the community is to let the Boy Scouts present themselves and the values they learn to organizations and individuals in the local area. The Boy Scouts are their own best asset. We recommend that the Council develop a program to be run by a Scout Leader or other volunteer that

- 1) allows the Boy Scouts to plan projects they can perform for the community that exhibits the skills gained at Camp K and
- 2) solicit donations in exchange for the use of Camp K facilities, positive public relations, and tax incentives.

For example, a local company could use the camp facilities for a company picnic or training facility in exchange for a financial contribution that would be much less expensive to the company than a typical locale for training such a hotel or conference center. It is also possible for an organization to donate time or materials to Camp K. For example, there are many construction companies and hardware/lumber suppliers in the area that could donate materials to allow the Scouts build a useful structure that for the camp. The Boy Scouts are learning valuable skills and in turn the company receives free use of the camp facilities or a tax break to compensate for their donation. The main goal of this program is to allow the Boy Scouts at Camp K to better display to the community the valuable life skills attained and motivate the community to increase involvement with Camp K and its positive influence on local youth.

Strategic Objective 4: Minimize Environmental Footprint

Respect for the environment goes hand in hand with other Boy Scout values; much of a scout's time is spent outdoors camping, practicing survival skills, and learning about ecological processes. Camp K specifically is located in a healthy forested area with access to Penn's Creek, an area coveted for fishing and aesthetics. Camp K aims to minimize its environmental footprint to ensure the camp is able to be enjoyed by future campers.

Development of Recycling Program

We recommend that Camp K develop a thorough recycling and composting program maintained by campers and used for educational purposes. Teaching the scouts what can and cannot be recycled will encourage reducing the use of unrecyclable materials. Also this program will greatly decrease the amount of trash contributed to the landfill by Camp K. Because Camp K cannot reuse food once it has left the kitchen as per FDA rules, a composting system maintained by campers will significantly reduce the amount of food being wasted. The campers will learn about the chemical and biologic processes that break down food waste and be encouraged to only take as much food as they will eat. Properly composted food can be used as fertilizer on Camp K property or donated to local farmers.



Innovate Food Sourcing

Our second recommendation to reduce Camp K's environmental footprint is to change the food production system to

- 1) source foods from local sites and
- 2) minimize food waste by producing only the amount of food that will be consumed

There is an abundance of farms, orchards, and dairies in the Central PA region that are capable of providing healthy, locally grown food to Camp K. Buying locally produced food decreases the amount of energy used to preserve and transport the food to camp and supports the community by patronizing local businesses. There are many local organizations that source food locally when possible, such as Bucknell and Susquehanna Universities, which could serve as a model for Camp K's transition to locally produced food. The amount of food wasted at the camp can be significantly reduced by altering the serving system. Rather than placing food on each table in the dining hall, serving the food buffet style allows kitchen staff to only serve as much food as needed. Any leftover food that has not left the kitchen can be saved for another meal or donated to local hot meals programs to further teach the scouts the importance of philanthropy. While implementing both of these initiatives would be ideal, altering the service system is an inexpensive and quick way to reduce food waste and decrease the camp's environmental footprint.

Forest Assessment

We recommend Camp K assesses the health of the abundant forest within the camp property to reduce its environmental impact. Some of the lumber provided by the trees is used as firewood at the camp, but the forest as a whole has not been selectively logged or evaluated. We recommend that Camp K hire a professional forester or well-qualified forestry/botany

student to assess the health of the forest and develop an action plan for Camp K in regards to logging for firewood and maintaining healthy biodiversity. The forest and surrounding area provide the means for Camp K's existence. It is vital to ensure that Camp K remains ecologically healthy and viable well into the future for many generations to enjoy.



BISON
CONSULTING GROUP

