



# VOICES TO VISION

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## Will my favorite camp be sold?

No decisions have been made to sell any of our four camps or ten program center properties.

Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles (GSGLA) has, however, launched a multi-year process to consider how to balance the goal of offering dynamic programming while considering resources. To make determinations regarding properties to be retained or added, this process will include:

- extensive research
- expansive membership input
- thorough financial analysis of costs associated with needed property upgrades/maintenance

## Why are the camp and program center properties being assessed?

It is imperative that we assess our processes, programs, and properties in order to effectively execute our mission.

GSGLA is continually focused on:

- the integrity and relevancy of Girl Scout programs
- the execution of our mission to inspire and empower girls and young women

In order to do this and serve the needs of our membership it is important for the council to make assessments to:

- find the most beneficial and relevant use(s) for our membership
- find the most cost-effective use and potential use of our properties

This assessment will help us identify properties to maintain, upgrade, or sell. Specifically, to:

- provide the best in girl programming and adult training
- maintain the integrity of our programs and properties
- match future program needs with planned development and investments
- alleviate strains on the council's financial well-being

## Why now?

It's time. Since GSGLA was created in 2008 (when six area legacy councils merged), the council has not executed a detailed analysis of all camp and program center properties.

This 2013-14 property planning process, called *Voices to Vision*, follows the GSGLA strategic plan, which was a critical post-merger development for the organization's growth and program creation to meet the needs of the membership.

## Who will have input in the property assessment process?

- GSGLA girl members
- GSGLA parents
- GSGLA adult members (volunteers, trainers)
- GSGLA Board of Directors
- GSGLA staff
- Potential members (girls)
- Non-members (community)
- Funders/Supporters
- Environmental Entities
- GSGLA Property Task Force

## What /who is the GSGLA Property Task Force?

The GSGLA Property Strategic Planning Task Force, or the Property Task Force, is a dedicated committee of volunteers who bring the specialized skills, background, and perspective necessary to coordinate and lead this process.

Approved by the GSGLA Board of Directors in January 2013, the Property Task Force is divided into three working groups:

- Market Research
- Program
- Property

[Click Here](#) or visit the *Voices to Vision* web page at [www.girlscoutsla.org](http://www.girlscoutsla.org) for an introduction to the Property Strategic Planning Task Force.

## What criteria are we using in the property assessment?

Analysis considerations include, but are not limited to:

- interests of girl members and potential members
- needs of adult members
- financial climate
- trends in outdoor programming
- locations
- capacities
- safety
- frequency of use
- sustainability
- scenic beauty
- historic relevance

## In what ways are we assessing the properties?

*Voices to Vision* will ensure that the council and membership get a clear understanding of what activities are important to Girl Scouts, adult members, and potential members. This process will include:

- property tours
- operating costs
- repair/maintenance assessments
- capital needs assessments
- program aspirations
- extensive market research and data collection (see "How can I give input?")

## Will the Camp Lakota rebuild be put on hold during this process?

Yes. In January 2010, a fire destroyed the main building at Camp Lakota in Frazier Park, and a grassroots donation campaign began to build a new lodge. While these early donations are earmarked for the camp and proposed designs have been submitted, the Camp Lakota lodge rebuild is on hold.

The council will not make any property decisions, including those affecting Camp Lakota, before the final ratification of the property plan. Additionally, because fundraising efforts depend on clear direction, no major fundraising efforts can be undertaken without the conclusion of these key decisions.

## What are the steps to the process?

This process, barring any unforeseen impediments, will proceed as follows:

1. Extensive market research will be led by a third-party research firm, Murphy Research.
2. The market research findings will be presented to the GSGLA Property Task Force.
3. The task force will formulate property plan recommendations based on the data.
4. The membership will provide feedback on the recommendations at the 2014 Annual Meeting.
5. The property plan recommendations will be presented to the Board of Directors.
6. The GSGLA Board of Directors will vote to accept or reject the property plan.
7. Once the plan is Board-accepted, GSGLA's voting membership will vote to ratify\* the plan.

\*Final ratification/decisions will be weighted with financial considerations, and implementation of recommendations is contingent on adequate funding. GSGLA reserves the right to amend final decisions based on financial constraints.

## How can I give input?

Input from our Girl Scout family is *vital* for responsible research and recommendations. GSGLA is working with a third-party research firm, Murphy Research, to ensure that we undertake a process that will yield data with integrity. A number of opportunities for input and discussion are available including:

- Online survey
  - Webinars
  - Focus groups
  - One-on-one interviews
- } July 2013 through October 2013
- Town hall meetings
- } October 2013, January 2014, February 2014
- GSGLA Annual Meeting
- } April 5, 2014
- *Voices to Vision* Decision
- } Fall 2014

## Will the survey only be administered online?

Yes. However, if you do not have a computer, visit your local GSGLA service center during business hours. Links to the *Voices to Vision* survey are coming soon to the GSGLA website ([www.girlscoutsla.org](http://www.girlscoutsla.org)) and monthly GSGLA e-Newsletter.

## Will the survey take long?

Not really. You are encouraged to set aside at least 20 minutes to take the survey. Also, the survey is best displayed on a computer. It is *highly recommended* that you take the survey at a computer instead of on a smart phone, as the survey is not set up for mobile device viewing.

## Must I be familiar with ALL of the properties in order to participate?

No. We need input from our *entire* membership, whether you're a GSGLA property connoisseur or a new member who has never visited a GSGLA camp or program center. This process is to help us determine the trends for the future of Girl Scouting, regarding programming as well as properties. Furthermore, the survey is set up to ask questions based on your replies and familiarities.

## Is there a timeline or calendar of events regarding this process?

Yes. The *Voices to Vision* timeline is posted on the GSGLA website ([www.girlscoutsla.org](http://www.girlscoutsla.org)). Click on the "*Voices to Vision*" button for timeline, updates, and general information about the process.

Alerts and updates will also be included in the GSGLA e-Newsletter ("great news!") and in property e-alerts. To sign up to receive the e-newsletter and/or the property alerts (via email), go to the GSGLA website and enter your email address in the red "get e-news" field on the front page.

## How can I stay updated on the process or find more information?

- The *Voices to Vision* webpages at [www.girlscoutsla.org](http://www.girlscoutsla.org) are updated often. Check the website for the latest *Voices to Vision* information. If you don't have a computer, visit any GSGLA service center during regular business hours.
- Monthly updates will be featured in the GSGLA e-Newsletter and/or the property alerts. To sign up to receive information via email, go to the GSGLA website and enter your email address in the red "get e-news" field on the front page.
- Watch your mailbox for printed reminders and information.

## When will we make a decision?

The final step in the process, the ratification of the property plan, will be made by GSGLA's voting membership (registered members age 14+). The ratification vote is planned to take place at the 2015 Annual Meeting. [Click here for further information](#).

## Why is the Skyland kitchen currently closed?

Both the Duncan Lodge kitchen and the Wishhaven kitchen have failed multiple Environmental Health and Health Department Inspections.

- Duncan Lodge kitchen may be used for light cooking and food prep only.
- Wishhaven kitchen presents multiple potential health hazards, including the sinks along the rear wall that need to be removed and replaced; counter surfaces that present immediate health risks and must be refinished and/or replaced; and the stove, which requires repairs or a replacement. All of these upgrades require commercial grade appliances per Environmental Health, including ovens, freezers, coffee makers, microwaves, etc.

## Can volunteers help with maintenance issues at Skyland Ranch?

Yes. Volunteers can and do help the camp ranger with minor maintenance issues, including painting and weeding. Volunteers with specialized trade skills, i.e. licensed contractors, plumbers, electricians, carpenters, etc., can do more.

- Volunteer support should align with the priority of projects that need to be addressed
- Volunteers need to have the appropriate skill level
- Cost and procurement of materials needed must be assessed and evaluated.

Volunteers interested in helping at Skyland Ranch or any camp should contact the Camp Ranger directly to express interest and discuss opportunities.

## Can adults sleep in the Skyland Ranch cabins with girls?

Yes, two unrelated female adults may sleep in the same cabin with girls. This applies to all Girl Scout overnights, regardless of location.

Other requirements:

- Each participant has her own bed. Parent/guardian permission must be obtained if girls are to share a bed.
- Girls and adults *do not* share a bed; however, some councils make exceptions for mothers and daughters.
- It is not mandatory that an adult sleep in the sleeping area (tent, cabin, or designated area) with the girls, but if an adult female does share the sleeping area, there should always be two unrelated adult females present.
- Men may participate only if separate sleeping quarters and bathrooms are available. (Family camping is the only exception.)

All policies are designed to ensure the safety of girls. Per *Risk Management at Girl Scout Councils*, 2013-2014, chapter 1, section entitled "Sleeping Arrangements" on page 9:

*On trips where male volunteers are part of the group, it is not appropriate for them to sleep in the same space as girl members. Men may participate only if separate sleeping quarters and bathrooms are available for their use. In some circumstances, such as a museum or mall overnight with hundreds of girls, this type of accommodation may not be possible. If this is the case, men do not supervise girls in the sleeping area of the event, and the adult-volunteer-to-girl ratio is adjusted accordingly. Always avoid having men sleep in the same space as girls and women, but during family or parent-daughter overnights, one family unit may sleep in the same quarters in program areas.*

## Why isn't scrambling up Timber Peak at Skyland Ranch allowed?

Due to safety reasons, as Timber Peak is above the safety height allowed for bouldering without safety equipment.

*Safety Activity Checkpoints for Climbing and Rappelling* states:

*Bouldering: Climbing without a rope but at a height not greater than 6 feet off the ground.*

*Spotters (participants who safeguard the movements of a member of the group) provide support*

*and protect the head and upper body of a climber in case of a fall. Spotting is used on descending and ascending high elements or climbing routes and bouldering.*

Timber Peak is a boulder that is greater than six (6) feet in height. GSGLA Camp/Program staff who are certified by the ACCT (Association of Challenge Course Technology) in zip-lining, challenge courses, and climbing determined it was unsafe to climb this rock without ropes, helmets, etc. Girls/adults can hike to it, but are not allowed to climb it.

## **Why is El Protrero only available to groups of 100 or more ?**

Due to maintenance, prep, and operating costs, plus the condition of ranger housing (and the costs to provide adequate housing), GSGLA cannot afford a full-time Ranger at El Potrero nor maintain the property in ready condition, as El Potrero requires significant prep work to make it ready for camp, including extensive brush clearance, weed abatement, restroom sanitation and preparation, road maintenance, and other timely and costly tasks.

Currently, the Skyland Ranch Ranger covers both camps and relocates based on camp needs. To open up El Potrero for a small group is not economically feasible without a permanent onsite ranger, as the drive time, fuel costs, absence from Skyland, etc. is too costly.

It is suggested that small groups schedule a trip together to meet or exceed the 100-minimum group size.

## **How can volunteers to help with maintenance issues at El Potrero?**

Volunteers may help provided they are willing to do the work deemed necessary, i.e. brush and weed clearance, restroom sanitation, road maintenance, etc. Any desire to volunteer is much appreciated and should be presented to the Skyland Ranch Camp Ranger.

## **Who do I contact if I have more questions?**

If you have additional questions, please send them to [PropertyPlanning@girlscoutsla.org](mailto:PropertyPlanning@girlscoutsla.org).