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To: [xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx](#)  
Sent: 8/21/2009 2:07:09 P.M. Eastern Daylight Time  
Subject: Friends of Crowell Hilaka to the GSNEO Board of Directors

Dear Roberta:

Please pass this message on to the rest of the Board.

With regard to our request to keep the camp open, naturally, we are disappointed that the extension for Camp Crowell/Hilaka was not granted at this time.

In spite of that decision, we hope to continue to partner with the Board of Directors to maintain the value of the land and further the mission of Girl Scouting in Northeast Ohio. To that end, we must raise the following 6 concerns:

1. Invasive species remediation.

There were several problems recently noticed that should be addressed immediately in order to prevent further deterioration. These include the growth of invasive plants: There are small trees growing into the foundations of some of the buildings. If allowed to grow, these will eventually impair or destroy the foundations. There are grapevines overgrowing some currently intact structures, and invasive briar species growing across some of the trails. As you know, invasive species spread rapidly and crowd out native species.

We propose that volunteer work groups be allowed to remove the worst of the problem plants. This could be done with registered adult/girl groups in September, as part of a nature conservation program. It could also be done by adult [volunteers](#) in October when there are no troops scheduled to camp. Kathleen Bradley, a registered GS and one of our members, is very experienced in invasive species remediation through her work with the Rocky River Watershed. She has offered to assist in directing this effort. Of course, we would be pleased to work with GSNEO naturalists also.

2. Seasonal Accommodation Plan.

A plan for accommodating all the service units who hold large unit camporee events next spring should be essential work at Crowell/Hilaka not be completed in time. If troops camp at no other time, they camp in Spring when troops have their cookie money, have been able to plan the event, and service units can pool their resources to encourage new leaders. Service Units were already being turned away this past Spring for lack of space (mine was one). Public campgrounds are not acceptable for younger girls due to safety issues.

3. Specifics for the Distribution of Cookie Profits.

As proposed in point 5 in the letter of August 11, 2009, Ms Zahringer wrote of "pathway passes" and "cookie dough" as opportunities to support the camp of one's choice. Does this constitute a commitment on behalf of the Council should girls choose to direct their money to Crowell/Hilaka? What happens to the money if Crowell/Hilaka closes and

does not reopen? Will decisions affecting the camp be based on cookie sale designations? If there is a fund established for individual camps, such as the one for Friends of Camp Lejnar, will individual & corporate donations as well as camp specified cookie dough go into the same fund? If so, who will have access to these funds?

4. Resolution of Non-member Volunteers Working at Camp.

Dr. Alford-Smith recently informed Gail Oleksy (the union carpenter who attended the GSNEO/FoCH meeting) that Dr. Alford-Smith was not the one to make the decisions. Is this about non-member volunteers in general, or Crowell/Hilaka in particular, due it's uncertain status? Is the issue of non-member volunteers working at camp an issue of safety for the girls, or an issue of liability insurance should a volunteer be hurt while on site? How are Camp Open House events handled with regard to liability insurance? How was the GE day of caring in 2002 handled?

5. Generous Severance Package for Stanley Polo.

We realize individual personnel issues cannot be divulged in a public forum. Nevertheless, many FoCH members have expressed concern that Mr. Polo, the current resident camp manager at Crowell/Hilaka, is being forced out of a job he has performed well for past 15 years. The "opportunity" he has been given to re-apply for an assistant position at another camp has little bearing on being laid off from his current situation which includes housing and seniority. Although it is understood that lay-offs are all too often an economic necessity, the unfair treatment of a long-term employee in good standing does have implications for the Girl Scouting movement with "fairness" being at the top of the Girl Scout Law.

6. Request to Hold a Meeting at Crowell/Hilaka.

The earlier request we made to hold a FoCH meeting on camp property at the end of September was probably lost in the shuffle, but we still wish to do this. During a phone inquiry, the staff member in registration was unsure how to handle it. Wetherefore have sent in an application and payment under a member's name in order to reserve a site. But it is ultimately the Board of Directors who has final say over whether this can be permitted.

We look forward to your responcees to these concerns.

Respectfully,

Lynn Scholle Richardson  
interim president, Friends of Crowell Hilaka