



Camps and Properties FAQ

- 1) Camp Wolfeboro - a legacy camp - needs plenty of resources for needed improvements.
 - We agree. We are in the quiet phase of a major capital campaign to fund council property improvements. This won't change with a merger. We need all the camps to provide a variety of programs for our units. In fact, the merger will provide us with additional resources to fund that campaign.

- 2) What happens to Camp Wolfeboro when the councils merge?
 - Camp Wolfeboro is one of the longest continuously operating camps in the state and has a proud history and tradition. On average, about 1000 Scouts from MDSC attend Camp Royaneh or Wente Scout Reservation (SFBAC camps) while only about 60 SFBAC and Alameda Scouts attend Camp Wolfeboro. The merger will bring increased visibility to the property and will hopefully attract more Scouts to experience the only High Sierra camp in the new council.

- 3) How will the council camps be ranked in order of maintainability and repair?
 - Great question! All camps have an annual planned budget expense for ongoing maintenance. The order in which maintenance is completed is focused on the unit needs and is guided by the council's strategic plan.

- 4) How much did each camp receive in out-of-council revenues? How will those lost revenues be made up. I heard in the presentation that camp rates will *need to be competitive*. In my experience, this is corporate speak indicating that the in-council rates will increase. True?
 - We would not agree with the assertion that this is "corporate speak" for any pending council rate increase. As a merged council, we would define a "Need to be competitive" by having our general camp rates be competitive in comparison to nearby camps (both Scouting and non-Scouting use). Families make decisions about camp based on the programs offered and the cost. Each camp offers their own unique qualities. While the facilities at

Camp Wolfeboro are lacking, the program is first rate and camp fees are at the low end of the cost range. Wente Scout Reservation and Camp Royaneh are considered top tier facilities, and thus command higher fees. Camp operating costs generally rise each year - salaries, food service, materials, etc. The council sets fees to ensure that the camp income covers the camp's costs. A combined council will open up the marketing of Camp Wolfeboro and should result in increased use from the current SFBAC and Alameda units.

5) Will the Camp Herms "Mayan Water Temple & pool site" finally be restored or improved?

- Great question. We know that many of you have fond memories of the pool and swam there as a youth. This site has been closed since the 1970's. Currently, there are no plans to restore the pool due to an analysis of the structure last year. Earthquake retrofitting would double costs to restore the facility. We now have it fenced off out of an abundance of caution, as it is a safety hazard to the Scouts and Scouters using Camp Herms. Many wonderful Camp Herms improvements are included in the capital campaign and the long-range property plan.

6) Will the Alameda council offices remain open or be merged with San Leandro?

- Yes, there are currently no plans to close any of the service centers. Service centers are designed to specifically serve the units and their needs. It's worth noting that all the service centers were designed and built to serve unit needs 20+ years ago. Needs have changed over time and if we move forward with a council merger, we will need to look at how the centers are being used and optimize them to provide the best service to our units

Volunteer FAQs

7) Additional volunteers: If we combine the existing three pools of volunteers into a single pool, I don't see from where all the additional volunteers are coming. The logic sounds flawed.

- Each of the councils have their own standing committees, such as membership, camping, advancement, etc. From the standpoint of MDSC, this brings additional talent and volunteer resources at the council committee level. In turn, this should free up some of our volunteers to serve at the

district level in further support of our units. Our districts overwhelmingly stated that adult volunteer growth is one of their primary goals and this goal is supported by our strategic plan. Increased council committee involvement can only benefit the districts.

Program FAQs

8) Cub Scouts are not likely going to travel long distances to go to day camp.

- No one said they would be asked to travel long distances. Scouting is local; camps are there to provide opportunities that can't be delivered locally. Each district will continue to plan their day camp program in areas that are convenient for their Cub Scouts to attend. An advantage for the council merger is that SFBAC has developed Cub Scout and family camping opportunities that have not been available in MDSC due to facility limitations. Rancho Los Mochos is conveniently located in Livermore and has many of these Cub Scout programs, which makes a drive to Camp Wolfeboro less necessary!

9) What exactly would come from National to the merged Council? It would be nice to have specifics. This seems speculative.

- The National Council looks to successful councils in order to test cutting-edge ideas and pilot programs. We have been fortunate to participate in several pilots over the years (such as NAYLE, Powderhorn courses, National Camp School, STEM), which has allowed our Scouts and Scouters additional training, activities, and resources. A move to become one of the three largest councils in the western region will open even more doors for future opportunities.

10) How will the merger impact the MDSC Exploring program?

- Last year, MDSC Exploring had a 14% growth in youth membership in 22 posts. We now have 23 posts and plan to add two more in the short term. A council merger will open opportunities with additional posts in a variety of career interests. This will only enhance our program and will allow for the sharing of new ideas. For instance, both councils have strong Police Exploring programs. SFBAC has two large and successful medical posts, which would allow for additional expansion within the new council's boundaries. MDSC already has a strong council level Exploring Key 3, but

we could benefit from the additional adult advising and youth leadership opportunities that a stronger Exploring Officers Association would provide.

11) How will this merger affect the Sea Scouts

The Sea Scouting program would benefit from a council merger, as both SFBAC and Alameda councils have Sea Bases (San Francisco Aquatic Park and Alameda Island) with a bigger pool of resources than MDSC.

Council Employee FAQs

12) Why were SF and Alameda allowed to be in a situation where there was no one groomed to take over as Exec? Do we have succession planning in place at MDSC? Who is next in line as Exec here at MDSC?

- Scout Executives are hired from outside of the local council per our national policy and are not groomed by a council from within for an open position. Because our internal professional employees would be required to take that leadership position in a new council, we do not have a “next in line” Scout Executive.

COVID-19 FAQs

13) Have the financials been revised to accommodate the impact of COVID 19? Revenues at camps may be significantly diminished for 2020. What if summer activities are scrapped? How does that affect the bottom line for the three councils vs the super-council?

- We have reviewed several financial models and the impact has been considered, as we are all negatively impacted by this pandemic. If summer activities at camps are significantly reduced or canceled, the advantage of having several larger year-round camps is that we can add fall, winter, and spring camping opportunities to the calendar. We have also looked at online camp activities to support units. We will make appropriate strategic decisions regarding the annual budget if needed.

14) Why is this merger being pushed through during a time of National Emergency?

- There is nothing being “pushed through.” The merger process was reviewed and approved by the MDSC Executive Committee. All further recommendations and timelines were initiated prior to the COVID-19 outbreak and the local shelter in place recommendations.

Merger rumors and/or discussions are naturally disruptive to council processes and programs. We learned that hard lesson years ago in our last merger discussion. We lost a lot of momentum, several key volunteers, and financial resources over that 18-month process. It took us several years to recover from that disruption.

With the initial investigation complete and with a unanimous recommendation from the MDSC Executive Committee to merge the three councils, the majority of the merger processes over the next few months are administrative. We do not intend to lose momentum in holding a merger vote because the process itself is already disruptive.

A merger decision answers a simple question. Either we want to take advantage of the extra opportunities and benefits the combined programs would bring to our Scouts and Scouters, or we don't.