

First Vision Concept Complete!

Written by Mike Swofford

Wednesday, 25 January 2012 13:20 - Last Updated Tuesday, 31 January 2012 14:23



On January 17, 2012, the council Board of Directors was presented with the first concept of Camp Michaels development plans. This important milestone was the culmination of over six months of discussion and revision by the Visioning Committee. The proposal included a 60-page document with descriptions of the facilities and programs necessary to meet the needs and wishes of the council membership, as gathered earlier in the [visioning process](#).

This first concept is not a commitment or a "set in stone" plan. Rather, it is a starting place and a draft concept that will now need to be [field tested](#)

. At this point, the individual features and facilities should be viewed as potential possibilities and *not for certain* plans.



The Camp Michaels Visioning Committee is excited to share this first concept with you. After all, it is your feedback that created it! The following is a high-level summary of the first vision concept as presented to the Board of Directors. You can also download the Camp Michaels Vision Proposal:

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- [Click here to download the full Camp Michaels Vision Proposal \(PDF\)](#)
 - [Click here to download the Camp Michaels Vision Proposal Executive Summary \(PDF\)](#)
 - [Click here to download the Camp Michaels Vision Map \(JPG\)](#)
 - [Click here to download the Camp Michaels Vision Presentation \(PDF\)](#)
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Multiple Camp Reservation

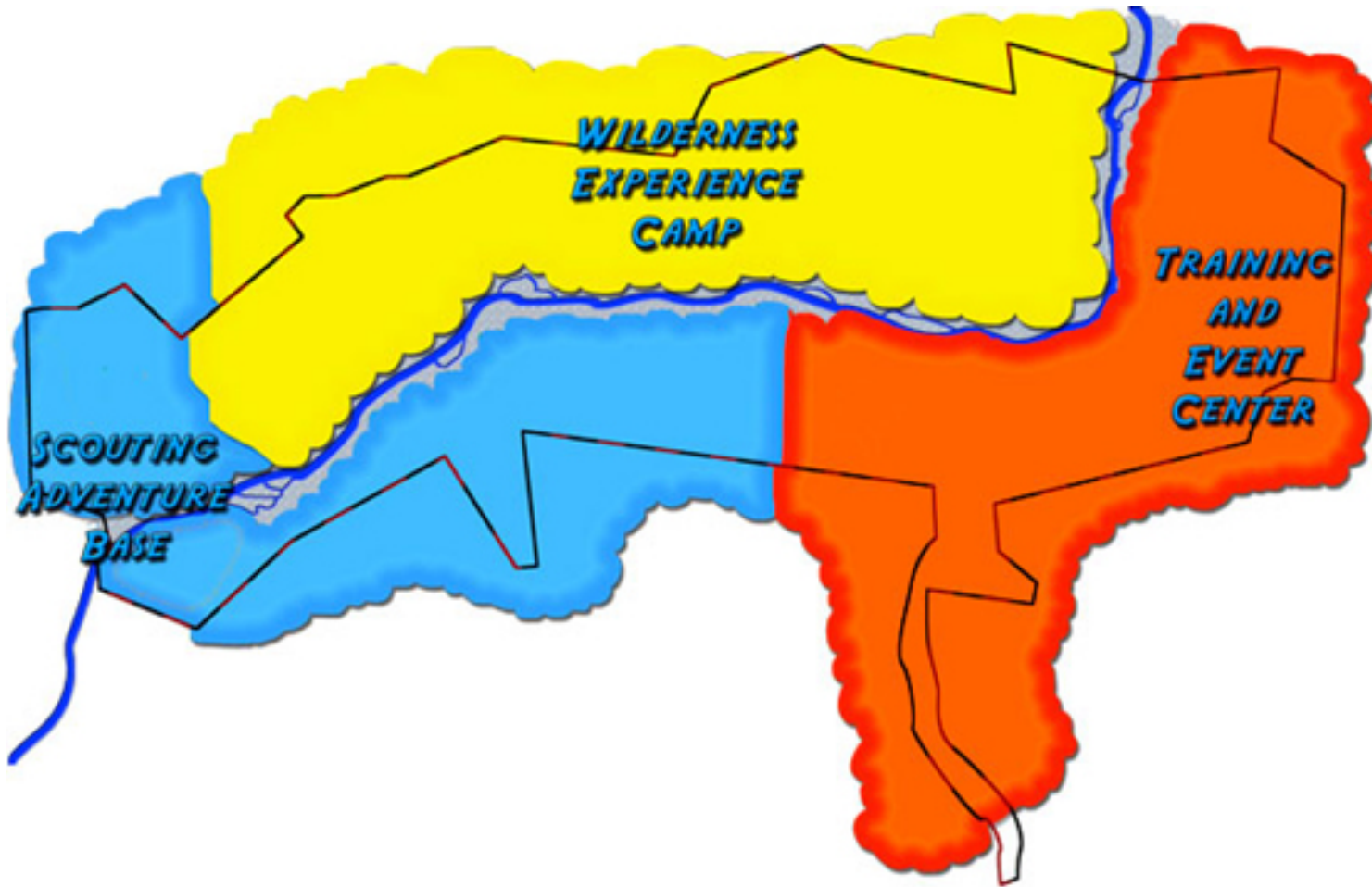
Currently, Camp Michaels is perceived as a single camp with a relatively dense developed area and a large wilderness area. The committee envisions a reservation with multiple camps each with its own purpose and identity. This approach will take advantage of the landscape of the property, the currently standing facilities, and new county road access on the previously inaccessible side of Gunpowder Creek.

- Training and Event Center – The currently developed area will be upgraded and renovated into a four-season camp for the purposes of training and council/district events.
- Scouting Adventure Base – Along with the southwest area of the property, the land addition purchased in 2007 will be developed into a high adventure and outdoor education base that offers unique and exciting programs for older Scouts and nature-centered advancement opportunities for all ages of Scouts.
- Wilderness Experience Camp – The undeveloped wilderness area on the north side of Gunpowder Creek will be upgraded with a full hiking/backpacking trail system and primitive camping opportunities that serve as a training area for Philmont and similar experiences.

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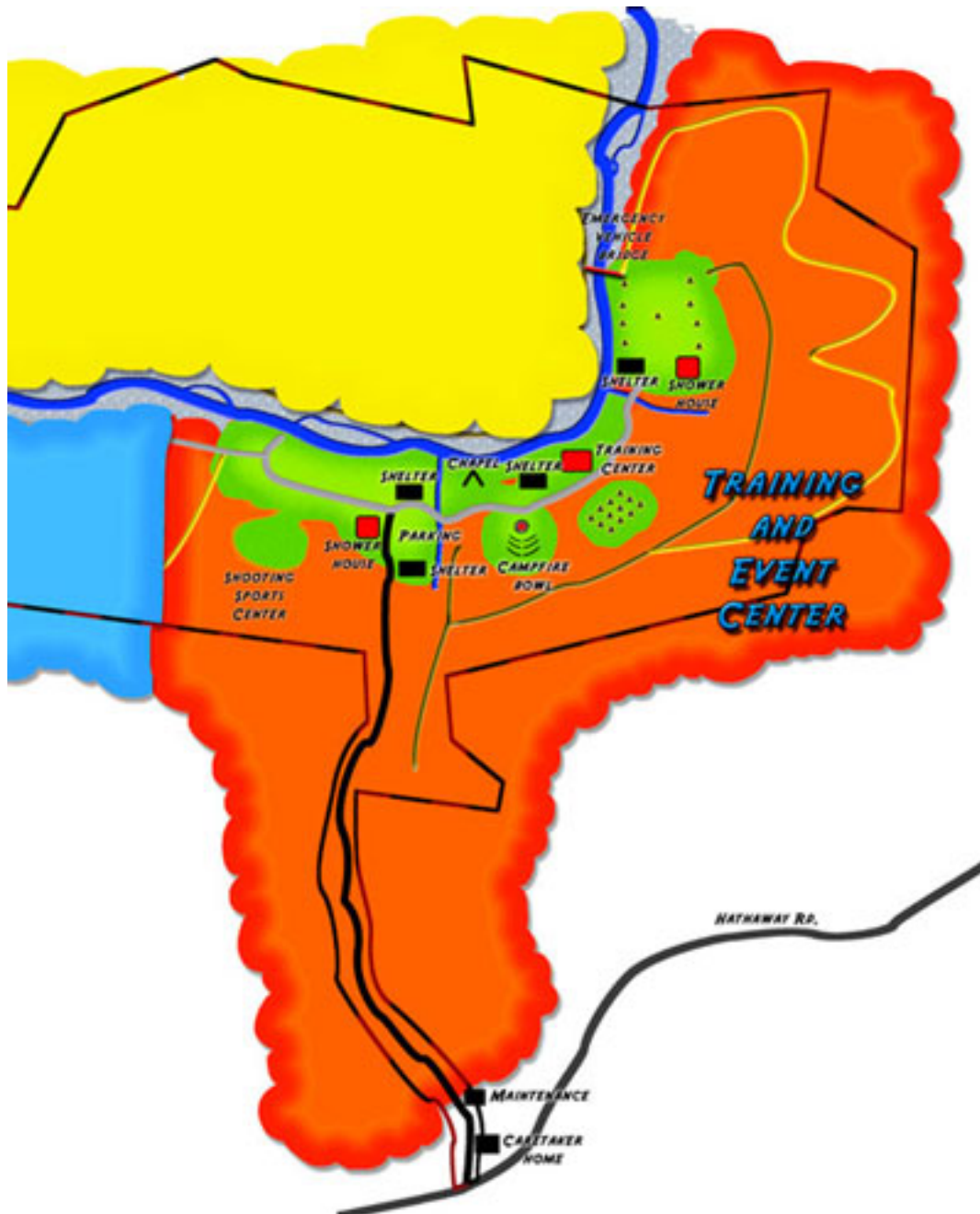
Training and Event Center

This area will offer a two-fold purpose of a training facility and a venue for large-scale council and district events. Camping and lodging facilities will remain rustic, with only tent camping available, albeit with distinct campsites. The centerpiece of the camp will be a Training Center with features necessary for large training courses. The event area, centered around the large fields and shelters in the center of the property, will offer support for council and district events that have been impractical or limited in the past.

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In response to the membership feedback and in an interest to provide a sense of tradition, this area of the reservation should incorporate the history of Camp Michaels. The current structures, when possible, should remain as they are. Some portion of the current lodge building should be built into the Training Center structure that will replace it. The camp could be named "Historic Camp Michaels" in recognition of the property's impact on past generations of Scouts and Scouters.

Potential Facilities:

- Training Center
- Re-developed Campsites

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- Event Areas
- Shooting Sports Center
- Showerhouses
- Infrastructure Improvements

Potential Programs:

- Wood Badge training
- National Youth Leadership Training (NYLT)
- Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills (IOLS) training
- Basic Adult Leader Outdoor Orientation (BALOO) training
- All basic leader training programs
- Supplemental outdoor training programs (Dutch oven cooking, etc.)
- District Day Camps
- District Camporees
- Shooting Sports weekends

Scouting Adventure Base

Unique and exciting Scouting experiences will be offered in this new area that combines High Adventure activities and outdoor education and advancement opportunities. While the "Training and Event Center" will incorporate and renovate the facilities of the current Camp Michaels proper, the Scouting Adventure Base, will be comprised of all new facilities. A variety of camping styles and degrees of challenge will be available, some unique to camps in the Cincinnati area. The landmark of the camp will be the Zipline Canopy Tour.

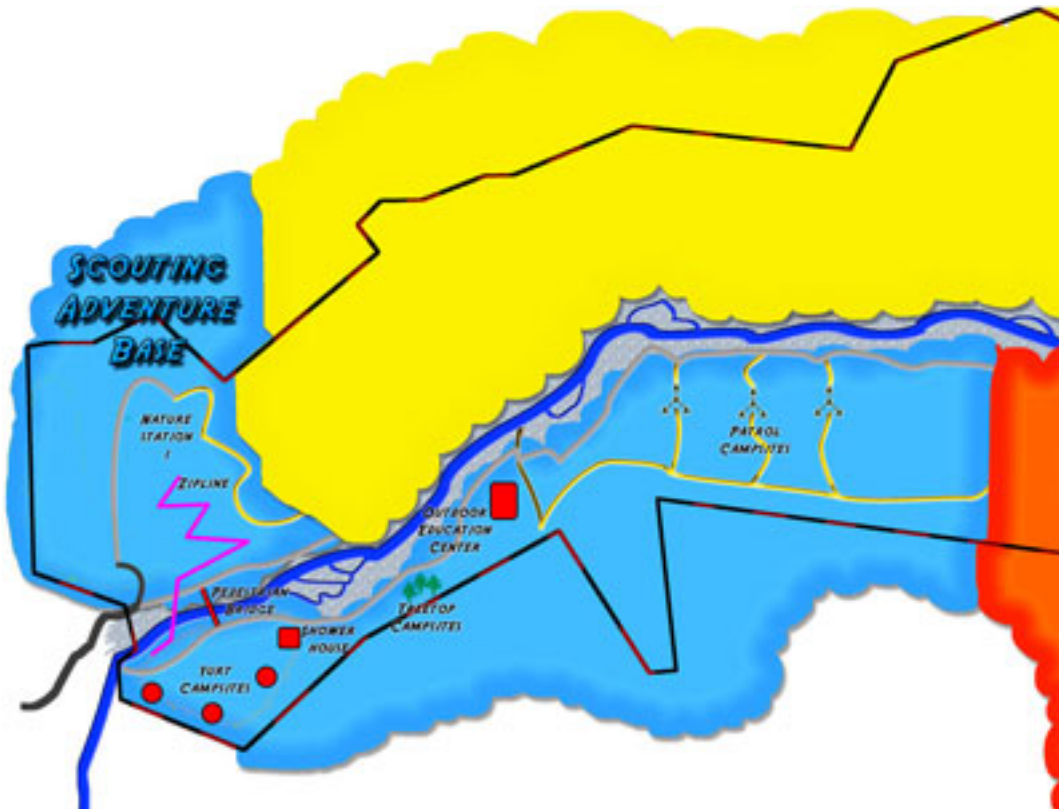
In 2007, the council acquired 70 additional acres in the northwest part of the property, gaining county road access to the north side of Gunpowder Creek. After review, it was determined that it would not be practical to make this road a formal entrance to the camp; doing so would duplicate the need for roads, parking, security, and maintenance. However, the area should be developed to be accessible to emergency and maintenance vehicles. It can also be an entrance for accessibility and guided excursions to the Zipline take-off point.

Potential Facilities:

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- Outdoor Education Center
- Zipline Canopy Tour
- Yurts
- Mountain Boarding Area
- Treetop Campsites
- Patrol Campsites
- Trailhead
- Infrastructure Improvements

Potential Programs:

- Nature-related merit badge programs (nature, forestry, nature, mammal study, environmental science, insect study, fish and wildlife management, soil and water conservation)
- Outdoor skill related merit badge programs (pioneering, orienteering, first aid, camping)
- Zipline tours
- Troop/Crew campouts (in patrol campsites, yurts, or treetop campsites)
- High Adventure base (Philmont, Northern Tier) preparation
- Mountain boarding
- Camp Friedlander Summer Camp older Scout outpost program.

Wilderness Experience Camp

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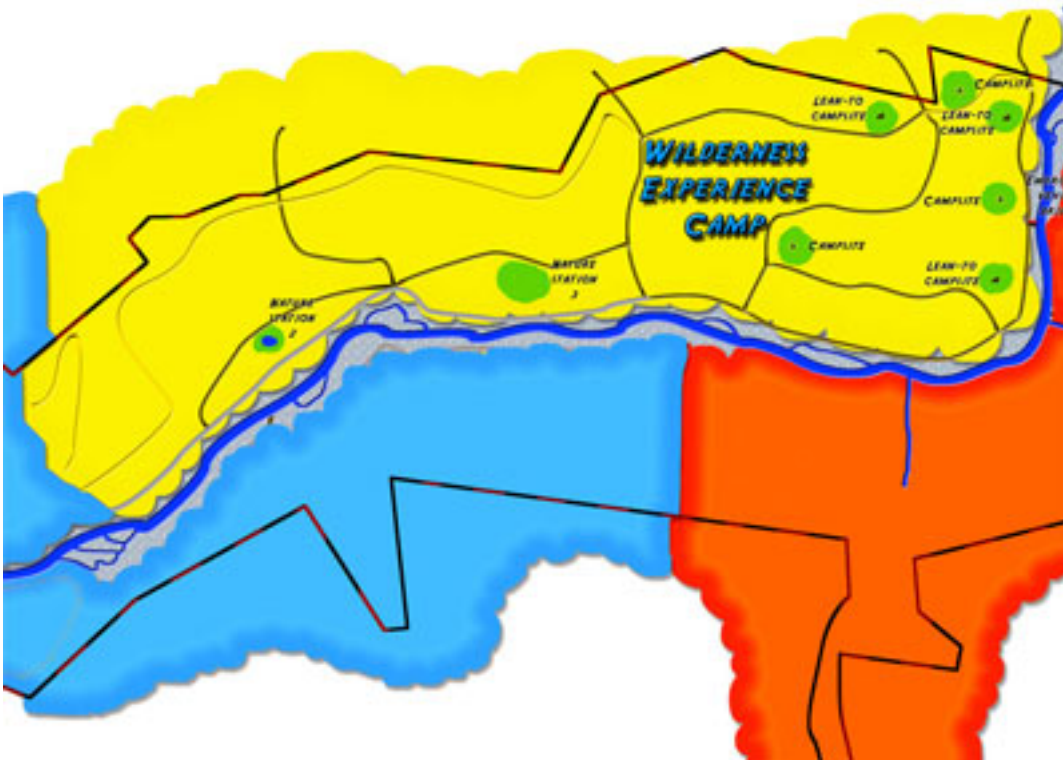
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An ideal location for getting into the wilderness and experiencing more primitive Scouting activities, this area will provide opportunities for simple hikes, nature observation, and training for High Adventure base treks. A large trail system will be the central element of the camp, offering a variety of hiking, backpacking, and camping options.

The real treasure of the property is its natural rustic landscape – this will be the focus of the programs and facilities for this camp. While trails and primitive campsites will be developed, the majority of the land will be untouched from its current state.

Potential Facilities:



- Backpacking Trail System
- Remote Campsites
- Mountain Biking Trails
- Orienteering and GPS Course
- Geocaching Course
- Nature Stations
- Bridges
- Infrastructure Improvements

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Potential Programs:

- Hiking
 - Backpacking
 - Philmont and Northern Tier preparation training
 - Wilderness survival
 - Mountain biking
 - Orienteering/GPS
 - Geocaching
 - Nature study
 - Camping
-

What's Next?

The Camp Michaels Visioning Committee believes that the program and facility ideas presented here are a thorough response to the feedback gathered from the council membership. In the development of these ideas, the focus group and survey results were the driving initiators and deciding factors. The current Camp Michaels property has massive potential for new and attractive programs that will not only enhance unit programs but also be a recruiting and promoting tool to grow Scouting in the Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky area.

Two main themes were apparent in the process of creating this vision:

- *The rustic nature of the property should be maintained and taken advantage of. Conversely, any facilities or elements that would detract from the rusticness in the camp too much should be avoided.*
- *The program and facility offerings should be unique. There is no need to duplicate what is available at the Dan Beard Scout Reservation apart from the core elements (campsites, shelters, etc.). For Camp Michaels to become the asset envisioned here, it must be uniquely attractive.*

While a good representation of several cross-sections of the council, the committee also understands that one group cannot perfectly represent the needs and desires of the entire council membership. These ideas must be [field tested](#) and further vetted to more closely match the interest of our Scouts and units.

Recommended Action:

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The committee recommends the following steps for action to realize this vision:

- Initial review and approval by Executive Committee – The Executive Committee will review the vision and concepts, give high-level feedback, and provide approval for presentation to the Board of Directors.

- Initial review and approval by Board of Directors – The Board of Directors will review the vision and concepts, give high-level feedback, and provide approval for focus group field testing.

- Field Testing – The ideas will be presented in a series of focus group meetings attended by specific groups of the council membership. The purpose of these meetings will be to gauge the acceptance and interest in the ideas and to gather feedback to adjust the ideas or incorporate new ideas. The meetings will be facilitated by 1-2 committee members each; the committee members chosen will be those that best fit the group. The following groups should be field tested:

- District and council level volunteers
- Troop leadership
- Cub Scout leadership
- Venturing leadership
- Boy Scouts
- Venturers
- Northern Kentucky Scouters
- Council staff, including Ranger staff

- Committee Revision – After feedback has been gathered, the committee will convene a final time to review and incorporate the feedback back into the vision plan.

- Final review and approval by Executive Committee – The Executive Committee will review the revised vision proposal and recommend action to the board of directors in regards to development or capital campaign plans.

- Final review and approval by Board of Directors – The Board of Directors will review the revised vision proposal and vote on action for development of capital campaign needs.

Tentative Timeline:

| ACTION | DATE | STATUS |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| Initial Executive Committee Review | December 13, 2011 | Complete! |
| Initial Board of Directors Review | January 17, 2012 | Complete! |
| Field Test Focus Group Meetings | March - March, 2012 | In progress... |
| Committee Revision Meeting | April 3, 2012 | - |
| Final Executive Committee Review | April 17, 2012 | - |
| Final Board of Directors Review | May 15, 2012 | - |

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