

## **Profit trumps preservation for Boy Scout councils nationwide**

By Lewis Kamb

*The Seattle Post-Intelligencer, January 29, 2009*

For nearly a century, the Boy Scouts have worn a self-adorned badge as campsite conservationists and good stewards of the land.

"The Boy Scouts were green before it was cool to be green," said the organization's national spokesman, Deron Smith.

But for decades, local Boy Scouts of America administrations across the country have clearcut or otherwise conducted high-impact logging on tens of thousands of acres of forestland, often for the love of a different kind of green: cash.

A Hearst Newspapers investigation has found dozens of cases over the past 20 years of local Boy Scout councils logging or selling prime woodlands to big timber interests, developers or others, turning quick money and often doing so instead of seeking ways to preserve such lands.

"In public, they say they want to teach kids about saving the environment," said Jane Childers, a longtime Scouting volunteer in Washington who has fought against Scouts' logging. "But in reality, it's all about the money."

Scouting councils nationwide have carried out clearcuts, salvage harvests and other commercial logging in and around sensitive forests, streams and ecosystems that provide habitat for a host of protected species, including salmon, timber wolves, bald eagles and spotted owls.

Boy Scout councils have logged and sold for development properties bequeathed to them by donors who gave the lands with intentions they be used for camping and other outdoor recreation.

In some cases, councils have sought to use revenues from logging or land sales to make up for funding lost because of the organization's controversial bans on gays and atheists from membership and employment rolls.

"The Boy Scouts had to suffer the consequences for sticking by their moral values," said Eugene Grant, president of the Portland-based Cascade Pacific Council's board of directors.

"There's no question they lost membership and funding because of it. I think every council has looked at ways to generate funds ... and logging is one of them."

The investigation -- a nationwide review by five Hearst newspapers of more than 400 timber harvests, court papers, property records, tax filings and other documents since 1990 -- also found:

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- Scouting councils have logged across at least 34,000 acres -- a figure that vastly undercounts the actual number of harvests conducted and acreage cut, as forestry records nationwide are incomplete or nonexistent.
- More than 100 Scouting councils have conducted timber harvests -- one-third of all Boy Scout councils nationwide.

- At least 26 councils have logged in areas with or near protected wildlife habitat at least 53 times, a number also underrepresented.
- Councils have conducted at least 60 clearcuts and 35 salvage harvests -- logging that some scholars and ecologists say can hurt the environment and primarily aims to make money.
- Several councils submitted logging plans with inaccurate and incomplete information, and in some cases, disregarded rules or conditions established to protect wildlife, streams or other resources.
- In some cases nationwide, Scout logging and land deals have involved cozy relationships in which Scouting councils have conducted business with current or former Scouting volunteers, their private companies, employers or in one case, a state regulator.

Scouting officials generally defended logging as sound land stewardship that, as a byproduct, has reaped financial rewards to benefit Scouting programs.

Trees are a renewable resource, said some, adding that their councils practice only sustainable forestry. Proceeds are put back into Scouting, mainly to maintain and improve properties at a time when competition is high and availability scarce for nonprofit dollars, they said.

Forestry records uphold such claims in many cases. Some councils selectively logged and thinned trees as a way to remove hazard trees, reduce fire risks, improve habitat and overall create and maintain healthy forests.

Dozens of councils have implemented long-range management plans with assistance from professional foresters to help better manage woodlands, records also show.

But the investigation also revealed stewardship plans that often went ignored, and several plans identified past poor management and a heavy-handed logging tradition on Scout lands.

## TOP LOGGERS

Since 1990, more than 100 different Boy Scout councils nationwide have been involved in logging projects, a Hearst Newspapers investigation found. Although state forestry records can be scant or nonexistent in some states, here are the councils that have logged across the most acreage during that time frame, based on what records are available.

### Acre logged per council

Since 1990

Philmont Scout Ranch National Council, Irving, Texas	10,092
Cascade Pacific Council Portland	4,496
Inland Northwest Council Spokane	1,197
Pacific Skyline Council Foster City, Calif.	942
Chief Seattle Council Seattle	937
Pacific Harbors Council Tacoma	788
Yankee Clipper Council Haverhill, Mass.	697
Shenandoah Area Council Winchester, Va.	539
Quinnipiac Council Winsted, Conn.	505
Buckskin Council Charleston, W.V.	495

Source: P-I analysis based on state forestry records

SEATTLE P-I

Money also often outweighed stewardship as the main goal -- or was cited among several objectives -- for conducting logging, records show.

"Every time (a council) gets a new Scout director, they call a state forester to come out and see if there is any good timber to harvest," said Paul Tauke, Iowa State Forester. "There's always pressure to make money and to generate income so they can maintain the camps and keep the activities going."

Yet while financial rewards to help boost shrinking funds or cover needed maintenance were cited as a frequent factor for logging, many Scouting executives at the same time earned high salaries and yearly pay raises that outpaced cost-of-living increases, records show.

Local and regional executives can earn annual compensation of \$100,000 to \$300,000 per year. At the national level, Scouting executives make even more.

While most local councils say logging revenues primarily go back into properties, administrators say they have discretion in how to use them. Sometimes, the money from logging has gone to shore up sagging operating budgets that cover salaries and other expenses.

"I butchered the property," said Bruce Faller, a district commissioner for a Vermont Scouting council, when explaining how he was forced to cut down trees in 2006 to cover a property's legal expenses. "It was old, big, beautiful wood. ... I wouldn't have done it if there (were) any other way."

The Cascade Pacific Council in Portland, and the Andrew Jackson Council in Jackson, Miss., are among at least 26 councils nationwide that log camps as tree farms for revenue and other reasons

under what they view as sustainable management plans.

"This is Pine Country," said Arnold Landry, the Mississippi council executive. "We cut when it's best for us to cut. We replant and ... make the best use of the property."

Properly managed logging is simply another resource councils can tap, some say, in an era when funding is hard to find.

"People talk about what a bad, evil, horrible thing it is to cut a tree," said Tim McCandless, executive for the Spokane-based Inland Northwest Council. "But our mission is kids, not trees."

### **'Bending the rules'**

In Southwest Washington, along a gravel county road that gives way to Weyerhaeuser ownership, a denuded hillside piled with logging debris at the Pacific Harbors Council's Camp Delezene offers testament to how, even amid today's stagnant timber markets, trees here are like gold.

On one side of the rustic camp, a new roof on an old lodge serves as a reminder of why a forest of 80-year-old Douglas firs no longer stands on the other side.

The \$20,000 spent for the new roof topped the priority list from \$140,000 in revenues from last fall's 12-acre clearcut, said Douglas Dorr, a retired Weyerhaeuser construction engineer, who serves as chairman of the Tacoma council's volunteer properties committee.

But to get that money, the Scouts' logging broke state rules meant to protect endangered salmon, a consultant said. The council's logger misidentified the type of waterway next to the harvest site; did not properly define a potentially unstable slope that posed risks of discharging sediment into the waterway, and potentially onto Scouting camp sites; and failed to leave enough trees to meet the required size of buffer next to the waterway, said Chris Mendoza, a conservation biologist hired by Hearst to review the council's logging plan.

Such violations are civil infractions that can warrant warnings, stop-work orders and fines from state regulators. But enforcement of such rules are rare, a state Forestry Department spokeswoman said.

Several other logging cases examined by Hearst show some Scouting councils nationwide have deviated from forestry rules or other conditions imposed on logging plans.

Mendoza, a consultant who has worked with timber companies, environmental groups, and tribal, state and federal governments, has written more than 100 compliance monitoring reports and reviewed hundreds of logging plans. In general, the type of violations he found with the Tacoma council's logging occur commonly among small and medium landowners seeking to increase logging revenues, he said.

"It pays to do that," said Mendoza, who also now serves as a co-chairman of a state forest practices subcommittee analyzing forestry rules. "Some landowners are more prone to bending the rules, because if they get away with it, it can mean hundreds of thousands of dollars."

Smith, the Boy Scouts' national spokesman, disputes that Scouting organizations are out to make a buck at the environment's expense.

"The Boy Scouts have ... always been good stewards of their resources so they could provide programs for youth," he said.

Some Scouting officials say the Scouts are likely among the biggest landowners among nonprofit groups nationwide. How that land is used is largely left up to administrators and volunteer executive board members running the 304 local Scouting councils around the country.

Local councils are similar to franchises. They pay an annual charter fee to the national council, based in Irving, Texas, to use the Boy Scouts' name and programs. But, as independent nonprofits, they make their own decisions.

Tapping a local council's assets, such as timber, can help local Scouting executives meet yearly job performance goals -- such as increasing yearly revenues -- which, in some cases, can help them achieve pay raises. But Scouting officials say land use is primarily done to keep council coffers full and properties financially healthy.

In California, moneymaking was cited among key objectives by Scouting councils for several recent logging plans that state regulators found to contain major problems, including inaccurate and incomplete information. Scouting executives regularly hire commercial loggers to harvest trees in environmentally sensitive areas, sometimes drawing sharp criticism from community members and environmentalists.

In a few cases in the state, Scouting officials have been accused of failing to maintain roads that then damaged sensitive streams, not marking special trees to ensure they were not cut, building an unauthorized road through a protected area, and improperly operating a summer dam that killed endangered steelhead.

California public records show the Scouts have almost always followed forestry rules in recent logging around the state. But critics caution that forestry agencies -- even in heavily regulated timber states, such as California and Washington -- can be lax in enforcement.

Chris Len, legal director for the Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center, an environmental advocacy group that monitors logging in parts of Oregon and California, said he found several flaws when reviewing three state-approved Scout logging plans at Hearst's request.

Len's environmental group typically focuses on much larger-scale logging plans submitted by timber companies or conducted by government agencies on public lands. Although such projects can have more egregious problems, Len said, he quickly noticed several failures with Scouting councils' plans for the much smaller timber harvests.

Among the problems, Len found failures to conduct required endangered species surveys, insufficient analysis of required logging alternatives and inaccurate information about potential wildlife habitat.

"They've got endangered species all over the place, but they are not taking any extra care ... of those species," Len said.

In Washington, which has some of the nation's toughest logging laws -- but rarely enforces them -- Mendoza believes the Pacific Harbors Council's recent clearcut at Camp Delezene violated three rules critical to the protection and restoration of salmon streams. State officials said forestry regulators have conducted "compliance monitoring" in less than 2 percent of all logging cases in Washington since 2006, and have not checked if the logging at Camp Delezene followed state rules.

In its logging plan, the council's hired timber company reported the meandering Delezene Creek next to the harvest site was not a special type of waterway, known as a channel migration zone.

Mendoza believes otherwise, saying "it's a classic case" of a channel migration zone.

Mendoza added the plan did not identify or designate a sharply graded hillside as a potentially "steep unstable slope." Such areas pose significant risks of dumping large amounts of sediment and debris into salmon streams, and typically trigger an added environmental review to determine if logging should be allowed.

Mendoza found that should the ground give way in the steep area that the council had logged, there would be "a direct path to deliver sediment and debris" into the protected salmon creek. Such a slope failure also "may pose a potential public safety risk" because of the proximity of several Boy Scouts campsites near the creek, Mendoza concluded.

In addition, Mendoza found a buffer of trees left by the council's logger next to the creek was about 20 feet narrower, on average, than what's required by law. It was far smaller than the buffer that the logger claimed, in paperwork submitted to the state, would be left.

Mendoza's plan review and observations from public access near the harvest site found the council's forester inaccurately reported all three conditions.

"There are blatant rules violations here," Mendoza said. "These were some big, valuable trees. It looks like they wanted to take as many as possible, and broke the rules to do it."

Breaking these forest practice rules allowed more trees to be cut -- "a purely economic decision," Mendoza believes.

Told of Mendoza's findings, council officials disagreed with them, saying that logging met all regulations and was thoughtfully planned to ensure minimal impacts. Only one logging road was built -- to haul timber away from the creek to existing Weyerhaeuser roads.

"The cheapest way would be to pull the timber down the hill and across the stream," said Dorr, the properties committee chairman. "In this case, we did it the best way."

Council officials, who showed journalists part of the clearcut in November, refused to allow Mendoza to visit the site.

"(I)t would be inappropriate to introduce a forester who has not been involved with our council or our property management plans," said board President Jimmy Collins, a Weyerhaeuser executive.

"It speaks volumes that they won't allow an independent third-party audit of what they've done," Mendoza countered.

## **Salvaging**

On a remote hillside within the Siskiyou National Forest in southwest Oregon, the McCaleb Scout Ranch spills up the bank of the pristine Illinois River, an unobstructed stream with runs of wild salmon and steelhead.

Officially declared a state Scenic Waterway in 1970, the Illinois made the nation's list of Wild and Scenic Rivers in 1984.

But despite such designations, the protections they bring and the added safeguards of a scenic easement generally prohibiting logging along this stretch of river, the state approved the Crater Lake Council to conduct widespread logging at its camp after the massive Biscuit Fire in 2002.

"They savagely logged it," said Roy Keene, a former timber industry forester turned activist.

Scouting officials say the council simply salvaged what revenue it could from the scorched but still valuable timber to rebuild structures lost in the wildfire. But a growing number of academics and forestry experts say such post-catastrophe logging is ecologically harmful.

The case is among at least 35 salvage harvests conducted by Scouting groups nationwide since 1990, Hearst found.

"Salvage logging is almost never a positive for ecological recovery," said Jerry Franklin, professor of ecosystem analysis for the University of Washington's College of Forest Resources. "It is done to salvage economic values."

Franklin, one of three co-authors of the 2008 book, "Salvage Logging and Its Ecological Consequences," and other scholars studied salvage logging cases worldwide following hurricanes, insect attacks, floods, volcanic eruptions and fires, including Oregon's Biscuit Fire in 2002.

"Salvage logging and other post-disturbance practices can have profound negative impacts on ecological processes and biodiversity," the book concluded.

Recent Scout salvage harvests have occurred in Georgia, California, New York, Montana and Pennsylvania after tornadoes, fires, ice storms and insect infestations. After several fires, the Scouts' National Council conducted from 1999 through 2004 by far the largest of Scout salvage harvests reviewed -- in all, more than 3,400 acres -- at the nation's premier Scouting camp, the Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico.

Some critics say the 2002 salvage at the McCaleb Ranch never should have happened.

"The old woman who donated that property to the Scouts had entered into an agreement with the state to protect it from logging," said Keene, senior forester for the Institute for Wildlife Protection.

Along with the special river designation, the council and the ranch's donor, the late Betty McCaleb, agreed in 1974 to a state scenic easement on the camp, adding further safeguards.

"No trees, shrubs, or brush shall be destroyed, cut or removed from the restricted area without a written permit from (the state)," the easement states.

A logger for the Scouting council submitted plans seeking to log all "fire-killed trees of merchantable size" from the 106-acre ranch just a couple of weeks after the massive fire burned across it.

Jan Houck, an Oregon state parks official who approved the plan, said such logging "isn't necessarily prohibited" under the easement, "it just needs our permission first."

But both state and federal officials who oversee similar easements for land along protected Oregon rivers say logging on as wide a scale as that on the ranch has rarely, if ever, happened before, and can be prohibited.

Hearst also found discrepancies between the McCaleb Ranch logging and conditions imposed on it by state parks. An October site visit revealed a massive mound of logging debris, supposed to be burned years ago, remains piled on a ravine's edge above a protected salmon stream. The Scouts' logger also did not get required parks approval before taking equipment across, and logging near, the salmon creek.

Parks officials concede both issues would run afoul of approved conditions.

"The fact we didn't inspect here was an error," added state parks spokesman Chris Havel, saying his department plans to follow up with the council about Hearst's findings.

Rick Burr, current Crater Council executive who was hired after the logging and said he didn't know much about the project, said the harvest was "a one-time deal."

"The money from the (timber) sale was used to rebuild the structures," he said.

Tax records show the council made \$131,000 from logging over two years, and \$74,000 in insurance the year of the fire. In 2006, the first year rebuilt structures were assessed, the county valued all ranch buildings at \$39,490.

Burr wasn't sure if the Crater Council -- then suffering from funding losses due to the Scouts' ban on gays -- spent all the logging revenue on the ranch, or if some went elsewhere.

Some critics say they understand the need for landowners to make money from logging. But for a high-profile organization such as the Boy Scouts, which touts itself as pro-environment, conducting high-impact, commercial timber harvests that at times violate regulation, or simply push the limits of ecological best practices, smacks of hypocrisy, they say.

"I've got nothing against the Boy Scouts," said Joseph Vaile, an Oregon environmental activist. "But it was really disheartening to see clearcut logging right next to a Wild and Scenic River."

## **GREEN OR GREEN-WASHED?**

Boy Scout officials say the organization is a strong environmental advocate and good steward of land, but some critics say it doesn't practice what it preaches to youths. Here are some of the Scouts' key environmental positions and programs:

**Scout Law** -- Under Thrifty: "A Scout ... protects and conserves natural resources. He carefully uses time and property."

**Outdoor Code** -- "As an American, I will do my best to ... be considerate in the outdoors. I will treat public and private property with respect. ... and, (b)e conservation minded. I will learn how to practice good conservation of soil, waters, forests, minerals, grasslands, wildlife, and energy. "

**Forestry Merit Badge** -- Scouts earn this honor when they can proficiently "describe contributions forests make to ... clean water, clean air, wildlife habitat, fisheries habitat (and) threatened and endangered species," among other requirements.

**Soil and Water Conservation Merit Badge** Scouts earn this honor when they can proficiently describe "erosion-control practices," and "(e)xplain how removal of vegetation will affect the way water runs off a watershed," among other requirements.

**Leave No Trace** -- The Scouts promote *Leave No Trace*, the outdoor ethics guidelines that seek to minimize impacts by calling on campers and hikers to, among other things, "respect wildlife."



## Once-wooded camps sold off to developers

By Lewis Kamb

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The last large stand of woods in a Seattle suburb. A unique desert canyon just outside of Los Angeles. Rangelands deep in the heart of Texas.

All are set to be felled, filled and dozed so that stately homes, a sprawling reservoir and perhaps even a massive hydroelectric dam may one day rise in their place.

Aside from their now unspoiled, ecologically sensitive settings, the lands share another common bond: The Boy Scouts of America made big money selling them for development.

From Arizona to Virginia, New York to Washington, senior housing complexes, retail offices, even a casino's golf course have risen in place of timberlands and green spaces where boys once gathered amid nature to learn such values as being "thrifty."

Over the past 20 years, local Boy Scout administrations across America have reaped tens of millions of dollars from selling decades-old campgrounds and other properties. Several other Scout-owned lands are now, or soon could be, on the market.

But while its Outdoor Code directs youths to "be conservation-minded," the organization that uses land as a lure to instill such values in boys has often sought cash exclusively from developers, not land trusts or conservation groups, when seeking to divest property, a Hearst investigation found.

Forestland "will be in the hands of the Boy Scouts for a long time and then, 'Oh gee, we can make a lot more money if we sell it and develop it,' " said Brian Boyle, former Washington public lands commissioner who now leads the Northwest Environmental Forum, which seeks to keep timberlands forested.

"It's ironic. People work hard to save a piece of property for the Scouts, and then (the Scouts) turn around 10 or 15 years later and go sell it to developers."

The investigation -- a review of property deeds, court documents, federal tax filings and other records -- also found cases in which local Scouting councils have sold lands that were previously given to them with the intention they be used for outdoor recreation.

Some councils have sought to use revenues from land sales, or potential ones, to help make up for recent funding losses and other impacts due to the organization's recent ban of gay and atheist members.

Scout lands with sensitive and protected plants and wildlife have been sold for development, despite protests from the public and Scouting volunteers. In some cases, Scouting councils sought to conserve properties only after public controversy or criticism arose about pending land deals.

That happened in 1999, when the Dallas council sold a 177-acre camp, sparking outrage among local homeowners. They eventually were able to preserve most of the camp as green space, with little help from Scout leaders.

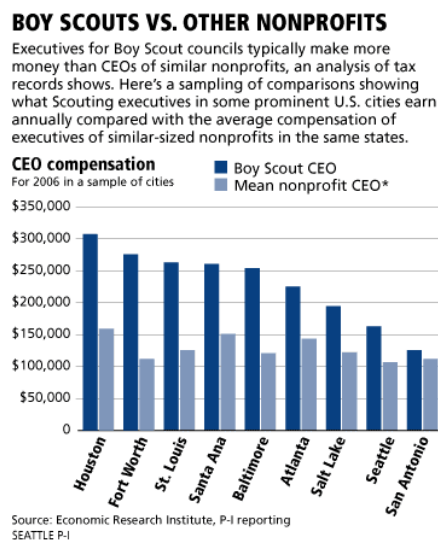
"They just wanted to get their money and go on their way," said Michael Jung, an attorney and board member of the Texas Land Conservancy, which helped the homeowners group work a deal to preserve the camp.

Such public controversies helped kill potential megadeals in Florida and Michigan, among several states where recent offers to buy Scout lands for development have ignited lawsuits and outraged communities.

Some Scouting officials cite perennial nonprofit fundraising challenges as the key reason behind such land sales. Encroaching development and high maintenance and operating costs also can spur a need to sell, they said.

Over the years, as membership and demographics shift, Scouting councils also have been forced to merge and economize, leading officials to streamline property assets that can cost millions to keep up, yet sometimes are rarely used, they say.

"All camp sales are not negative," said Dan Clifton, executive of the Longhorn Council in Fort Worth, Texas. "At some point, all assets need to be converted and redeployed."



## Million-dollar payday

Boy Scout enthusiast Frank Underwood had specific ideas for how his local Scouting council would use 1,200 acres of rugged and hilly woodlands near Amon Carter Lake in Texas' Montague County when he sold the land for \$56,000 in 1965. The sprawling terrain provided some of the most unique wild land in the region and harbored bobcats, turkeys and other wildlife.

Although his land deed imposed no restrictions, Underwood always thought the land would be used as a place where boys could learn about nature, the late-businessman's son said.

"I would have preferred it stay in Boy Scouts' hands, to protect as many wild areas as we can," said Gregory Underwood, an attorney and former mayor in Bowie, Texas, who remembers hunting and camping on the land as a child.

For years, the Scouting council kept what was dubbed the "Horizon Wilderness Scout Ranch" in its unspoiled state. But known today as the Silver Lakes subdivision, the property is little more than a testament to would-be suburban sprawl. In 2002, Northwest Texas Council officials sold the property

to Florida-based developers Bluegreen Southwest for \$1.1 million.

Still under construction, the 1- and 2-acre home lots that have since consumed the woodland recently were fitted with utilities. A swimming pool and clubhouse idly await the day when newly paved roads now dotted by "For Sale" signs will be crowded with residents.

Officials for the Scouting council cited the usual money woes in justifying the camp's sale: Stagnating income and membership. Cost of upkeep and improvements. Availability of other camps nearby.

"It was a strain on the budget and wasn't being utilized like it should," executive Guy Wilemon said. "The Scouts thought it was a wise business decision."

The million-dollar payday for the Northwest Texas Council, which was struggling to stay in the black, is a relative drop in the bucket as windfalls go for Scout land deals -- even within Texas.

Fort Worth's Longhorn Council has sold two properties to developers in recent years, collectively garnering about \$8 million. The council's 2001 sale of the Leonard Scout Camp -- land donated years earlier -- drew protests from volunteers who criticized the council for not publicizing the sale, and then not seeking a buyer to preserve the land.

A drawn-out legal battle in Michigan over plans to sell the nation's oldest continuously operating Scout camp for a massive housing development ended late last year, under a deal that spared the Owasispe Scout Reservation from the bulldozer.

Claiming the old camp was hemorrhaging money, the Chicago Area Council considered selling Owasispe and its 5,000 acres of wilderness near Twin Lake in 2002. Conservationists say they worked hard to strike a deal for the pristine forest, which harbors at least 19 different species of rare and protected plants and animals. But the Scouts largely ignored them, they said.

"They've already made their decision," Jim Schlichtling recalled thinking when Scouting officials finally agreed to meet with his conservation group. "We're not even in the picture."

In fact, the council struck a deal for \$19.3 million with a local banker in 2005 -- with one catch: The sale hinged on the council getting Blue Lake Township to rezone the camp to allow as many as 2,400 new homes.

Amid public outrage -- hundreds of people crowded public meetings and more than 3,500 opponents signed petitions against the sale -- township officials rejected the council's application for rezoning in 2006.

After spending about \$1 million and nearly three years in court trying to overturn the town's ruling, the council agreed in November to scrap the sales contract. Council officials now say they want to work with preservationists to save Owasispe.

Clashes over camp sales have grown so intense that two councils have ousted longtime volunteers who opposed them. B.J. "Red Dog" Maynard, 75, a Korean War veteran, was briefly expelled and told he was not exhibiting "Scout values" after a nonprofit group for which he also served as president sued the Southwest Florida Council over its considerations to sell Camp Flying Eagle in 2006 and 2007. The matter ultimately was resolved, the camp saved and Maynard reinstated.

In New York, John Heins, who served as a cubmaster under the Westchester-Putnam Council, claims he was ousted after he criticized the council's 2007 sale of the Durland Center, a Long Island Sound estate used for a teaching facility. That property was sold to developers, and Heins unsuccessfully

fought his expulsion in court.

Another legal fight erupted in California, after the Los Angeles Area Council sold more than 2,500 acres of its Firestone Scout Reservation in 2000 to the L.A. suburb City of Industry for \$16.5 million.

The town bought the land -- long designated an "ecologically significant area" -- with plans to build a reservoir. The Scouting council made the sale -- helping to offset upkeep costs and other financial woes -- despite receiving equal and higher offers from environmental groups. The Sierra Club and others unsuccessfully sued to block the deal.

Carlyle Hall, a lawyer who filed the lawsuit, said the city's planned "reservoir would, of course, flood and kill everything in the canyon."

"Everybody was quite disappointed that the Scouts were willing to sell it for what would be the utter destruction of whatever environmental values were there," Hall added.

Council officials said the environmental groups didn't have their finances in order and the deal allowed Scouts to continue using the land, which still would be subject to strict environmental regulations.

### **Chief Seattle Council sale**

Partnerships with conservation groups have led to several recent successful camp preservations. In Pennsylvania, the Natural Lands Trust has helped broker deals to preserve more than 5,200 acres at two camps. Other government entities and preservationists have helped to buy and save camp lands elsewhere.

Still, Scouting councils say the constant creep of development makes preserving formerly remote camps difficult.

"When you're on a camp-out and can hear the TV blasting and smell the steak barbecuing from the house just beyond the trees, that kind of kills the whole outdoor experience," said Rich Szymanski, properties director for the Cascade Pacific Council in Portland.

Often, the only financially viable solution, Scouting officials say, is to sell such lands to builders that typically have more money and less restrictions than conservation groups do.

A task force for the Portland council recently recommended selling its popular Scouters' Mountain camp for no less than \$30 million, with a chunk of revenues to be used to help replace \$600,000 in annual funding the council lost in part after Scouting organizations nationwide banned gays and atheists. A tentative deal was struck in 2007 with a developer that planned up to 500 homes on part of the 200-acre camp, but the deal fell through when the economy soured, officials said.

The sagging economy has helped delay at least one other project set for Scout land -- woods in suburban Bothell -- giving opponents time to prepare for what could be a lawsuit.

Developer CamWest's plans to build luxury homes where thick woods primarily owned by the Chief Seattle Council now stand has moved glacially in recent months. That suits Sandra Clement just fine.

Clement, who lives at the woods' edge, has spearheaded the grassroots "Help Our Woods" campaign to fight the project.

"I always thought the Boy Scouts were about trying to teach young boys about nature, how to

conserve it and make it better," Clement said. "Not logging it and building over it."

Her group contends the land contains old-growth stands and other trees that provide habitat for coyotes, owls, eagles and other wildlife. Opponents have gathered signatures, hired a lawyer and count among volunteers a wildlife biologist, who has observed protected species on the site, Clement said.

Another biologist, hired by the city, also found discrepancies in the developer's wildlife report, saying conclusions that "wildlife use of the site is minimal" weren't based on sound surveys, and seemed "opportunistic" to the builder's desires.

Officials for the Scouting council, which received the land in several gifts from local entrepreneur Eleanor Fortin in the early 1980s, say the project details are entirely the developer's. But the council's agreement to sell the woodlands was done to live up to the donor's intent, they said.

"The land was donated to us for the express purpose of selling it," said Alicia Lifrak, the council's chief operating officer. The late land donor's daughter confirmed that statement.

Clement and her supporters -- who also complain the new development would bring traffic problems -- say if the organization is truly "conservation-minded" as it claims to be, the Scouts should try to preserve the land.

Lifrak dismissed opponents as a few NIMBYs with their own self-interests.

Amid the stagnant economy, city planners say the developer hasn't pressed to advance the project.

But given today's financial realities, the public should expect Scouting councils to sell even more land in years to come, said the Longhorn Council's Clifton.

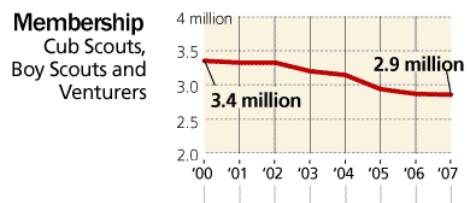
Already, some beloved Scout lands are on the market, including the 460-acre Camp Portaferry in upstate New York, now being shopped for \$1.3 million. One of America's oldest Scout camps may soon follow.

Late last year, Philadelphia's Cradle of Liberty Council announced plans to close the Treasure Island Scout Reservation -- what some enthusiasts call a "crown jewel" of Scout camps.

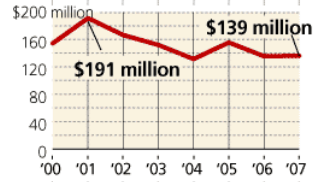
Council officials, who cited recent floods, high costs, attendance declines and environmental restrictions for the closure, said they'll soon decide what to do with the old camp.

## BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA BY THE NUMBERS

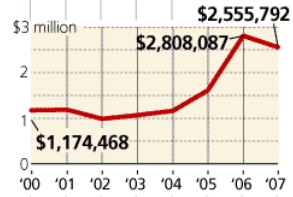
The Boy Scouts of America's national council in Texas loosely oversees 304 regional chapters known as "councils." National headquarters sets strategic direction, offers programs and sells scout uniforms to its chapters, while taking in revenue from them. The charts below indicate national headquarter's fiscal status in recent years.



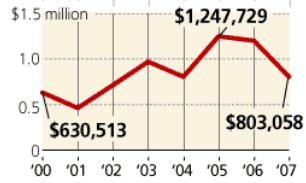
**Program services expenditures**  
Funds used for Scouts' primary purpose



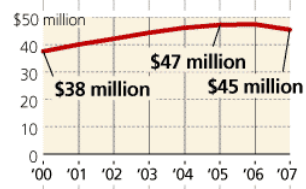
**Executive salaries**  
Does not include deferred compensation



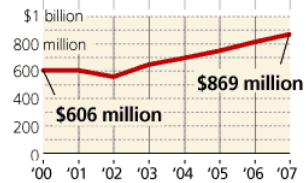
**Regional director salaries**  
Does not include deferred compensation



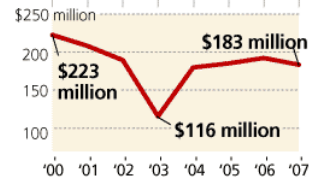
**Non-executive payroll**  
Does not include benefits, does include regional directors



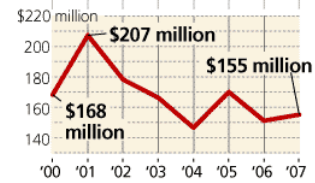
**Total assets**  
Investments, land, cash, etc.



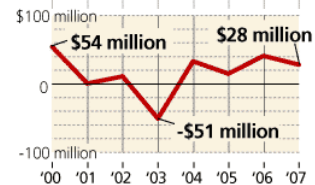
**Revenue**  
Funds received from donors, membership dues, investments, etc.



**Expenses**  
Funds spent on program services, management, fundraising, etc.



**Excess/deficit revenue**  
Revenue less expenses



Source: Boy Scouts of America annual reports and IRS forms

Data analysis by news researcher IIIIIF DCMEL for mal@evnrec.news.net

## Scouting rife with cozy ties

By Lewis Kamb

*The Seattle Post-Intelligencer, February 1, 2009*

In Oregon, two foresters for the state's largest Boy Scout council help advise how much of its vast camp properties to log, and when to log them.

Then, after the decisions are made, the same Scout volunteers are paid to write the logging plans, obtain permits and do other forestry work related to those timber harvests.

"I'm a volunteer on the forestry committee, but I'm hired to do forestry," said Jim Wick, whose company, Woodland Management Inc., manages timber sales for at least five of the Cascade Pacific Council's Scout camps.

In Washington, several current and former employees for corporate logging giant Weyerhaeuser Co. serve in key directors' board positions for the Pacific Harbors Council.

Last year, the council's board approved a logging project that paid "several thousand dollars" to use Weyerhaeuser logging roads as part of a lucrative clearcut at a Scout camp, the council's president, a Weyerhaeuser executive said.

Such cases are among 10 examples of seemingly cozy relationships between Scouting councils and their volunteers that a Hearst Newspapers investigation found in its review of Boy Scouts' logging and land deals nationwide. In such cases, professional and political roles blurred with the volunteer roles of individuals tied to Scouting councils.

Although not necessarily conflict of interests, the cozy relationships raise a perception of impropriety. Some of them have raised concerns about fairness among the public, environmentalists, even some elected officials.

The cases include the business ties of a California council board member to a city that bought part of a Scout camp; a Wisconsin Scouting council's alleged below-market woodland sale to one of its Scouting leaders, who turned around and logged the property for profit; and two New York Scouting councils using board members' real estate firms to help buy and sell Scout properties.

Boy Scout administrators say the organization guards against conflicts of interest. At the Scouts' National Council, all employees must read and sign the organization's conflict of interest policy, which has been in place for more than 32 years, spokesman Deron Smith said.

Questions raised by Hearst about a relationship between a Scouting council in California and a state forestry inspector have led California's forestry department to revise its public disclosure reporting processes, the department's lead attorney said.

"It's pretty clear from the research you guys did that we need to make sure we're properly training our employees to appropriately disclose information," said Giny Chandler, chief counsel for the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

The case involves Richard Sampson, who, as a private forester, worked for several Northern California Scouting councils from 1990 until August 2002. Among the councils that hired the forestry consulting firm where Sampson worked was the Pacific Skyline Council, for which he wrote logging plans in 1995, 1998, 1999 and 2000, records show. Sampson also served on that council's board in 1997, tax records show. In August 2002, after working on another council's logging plan, Sampson left the private sector for a state forester's job. His new duties included inspecting logging by private landowners, such as the Boy Scouts.

Sampson told Hearst that during his job interview, he and a state forestry official recognized the potential conflict that could emerge and sought to minimize it by agreeing Sampson would not inspect for three years any logging done by a landowner for which Sampson previously had worked.

The point of the "self-imposed moratorium," said Chandler, the state lawyer, "is he shouldn't be making decisions with someone from which he's received income in the private sector."

But in 2004, before the three years had lapsed, records show that, in response to a reported violation, Sampson conducted an inspection at a logging project for the Pacific Skyline Council. Sampson cited the council and its forestry consultant for a minor violation.

Sampson said he was the only inspector available. "It was right at the time of budget cuts," Sampson said. "I was the only inspector in the office for four counties."

Records also show that while serving as a state forester, Sampson was listed on a Pacific Skyline Council board in 2004 and 2005, tax records show. He said he wasn't aware that he had been listed as a board member, and when he learned of it, asked he be removed.

Since 2006, Sampson has since participated in the regulation process of at least two other Boy Scouts logging projects, including one by the Pacific Skyline Council, records show.

Nothing in state law or in the council's policies prohibit Sampson's ties between his former private sector work and volunteerism for the Scouts with his work as a state regulator. But the state has in place some disclosure requirements to ensure public transparency for at least some of those relationships.

Sampson failed to disclose private financial information required under state conflict of interest regulations when starting his state job, Hearst found. Both he and Chandler, the lawyer for the state's forestry department, said he had been given the wrong instructions by superiors when filling out his disclosure form.

### **Some relationships hard to avoid**

The Boy Scouts' National Council has had a conflicts of interest policy in place for 32 years, said Smith, the national spokesman. Scouting volunteers and officials are required to read and sign the policy.

All Boy Scouts officials "have a duty to be free from the influence of any conflicting interest when they act on behalf of the BSA or represent it in negotiations or advise others in the BSA with respect to dealing with third parties," Smith added.

Officials for some local councils said they also strictly implement no-tolerance policies and ask volunteers and employees to sign statements vowing to avoid conflicts.



But sometimes, some officials say, cozy relationships can be tough to sidestep.

"Many volunteers donate some of their time on BSA projects, but if the required work is more extensive than ... their volunteer commitment, they may be retained to provide work on a compensated basis," Oregon's Cascade Pacific Council said in a statement.

At a minimum, board members of any nonprofit group should disclose potential conflicts and recuse themselves from voting on matters where even the perception of a conflict exists, said Michael Smith of the nonprofit watchdog Charity Navigator.

"Where many board members get into trouble is when there is no disclosure and they do not recuse themselves from votes," he said.

Conflicts also can have federal implications.

"(O)rganizations will lose their tax-exempt status unless they operate in a manner consistent with their charitable purposes," the Internal Revenue Service's conflict of interest guidelines state.

In cases reviewed by Hearst, officials for Scouting councils said that in some instances, volunteers with potential conflicts either did not vote on such matters or publicly disclosed their ties.

### **Weyerhaeuser ties**

The Pacific Harbors Council in Tacoma includes at least four board members with ties to Weyerhaeuser, including the company's former chief executive officer.

Jimmy Collins, a current Weyerhaeuser vice president, is now the Scouting council's board president. Doug Dorr, a retired Weyerhaeuser construction engineer, is properties committee chairman. Both were in favor of and among those involved in recommending a recent logging project that paid Weyerhaeuser for use of logging roads from a 2008 clearcut at Camp Delezene in southwest Washington, though they did not specifically say whether they formally voted on the matter.

In order to properly conduct the timber harvest, council officials noted, the deal was unavoidable. Weyerhaeuser owns most of the logging roads surrounding the Scouting camp.

"There was no conflict for me," added Collins, who said his work for Weyerhaeuser is in a division "separate from the timber side" and therefore resolves the issue.

Collins and the council's forester also said they don't think the situation presented conflicts for Collins or other members with Weyerhaeuser ties because the Scouting council probably did not directly pay Weyerhaeuser -- but that the company was paid by its hired logger. Weyerhaeuser got "probably several thousand dollars," Collins said. "I asked a (Weyerhaeuser) colleague if that was something they could gift, and he said no, because they had to prepare the roads for our use."

In Oregon, the Portland council is the most prolific logger among more than 100 locally operated councils involved in timber harvests since 1990, available records show. It has conducted at least 34 harvests since 1996, and, officials say, has averaged about \$100,000 in logging revenue each year for the past 20 years.

"We're very much into producing as much revenue as we can when it's appropriate to do so," said Wick, one of the council's volunteer foresters.

Wick and another forester, Stan Beyer, serve on the council's Forest Management Committee. They

were involved in at least 34 timber harvests since 1996.

An executive for the Crown Zellerbach Corp. -- which owned property next to one of the council's camps and has swapped land with the council -- formed the committee in the 1980s, officials say.

The committee now consists of current and former forestry professionals, said member Rick Ross, a retired United States Forestry Service employee.

In a statement for this story, the council called the committee "purely advisory."

"We are not aware of any voting by board members having conflicts of interest."

But Ross told a local tree farmers group and Seattle P-I journalists visiting a Scout camp last year that although the committee is technically advisory, it called the shots when it came to logging.

"We are pretty arrogant," Ross said. "We pretty much dictate what's going to happen. We do have a lot of influence."

Some Scouting councils and their officials disclosed potential conflicts.

In California, a company tied to two board members on the Monterey Bay Council received more than \$627,000 for doing environmental work for the council.

"The contract was awarded to his company on the basis of competitive bidding and in accordance with our conflict of interest policy," the council's executive said. "This was an absolutely transparent process."

The business transaction also was disclosed in the organization's federal tax filing.

## 10 EXAMPLES OF COZY TIES

**COZY TIES:** The cozy relationships that can lead to conflicts of interest can have serious implications for nonprofit groups, such as the Boy Scouts of America. Some charity watchdogs say executive board members and others associated with nonprofits should disclose potential conflicts and recuse themselves from matters where even the slightest perception of a conflict exists. In its review of Boy Scouts logging and land deals nationwide, Hearst found 10 examples of cozy ties between Scouting councils and current or former volunteers. Although not necessarily conflict of interests, the cozy relationships raise questions and a perception of impropriety.

**Scouting council:** Cascade Pacific Council

**Location:** Portland

**Year:** Ongoing

**Issue:** The council's two primary foresters -- Jim Wick and Stan Beyer -- serve as members of the council's volunteer Forest Management Committee that advises the council what, when, how often and how much to log. After a different committee decides on and approves such projects, Wick and Beyer are paid for forestry services, including writing logging plans and obtaining needed permits.

**What Scouts say:** The Forest Management Committee is purely advisory; a different executive

committee makes any decisions of consequence, and no members on that committee have any conflicts with such logging decisions.

**Other key info:** During a tour of the Butte Creek Scout Ranch property last year, another forest management committee member, Rick Ross, told a local tree farmers group that the forest management committee essentially calls the shots in determining the council's logging projects.

**Scouting council:** Cascade Pacific Council

**Location:** Portland

**Year:** 2002-2008

**Issue:** While serving on the Scouting council's executive board, Eugene Grant also served as the mayor of the town of Happy Valley, Ore., and as member of a regional growth committee -- both of which were considering zoning changes that affected a council camp property, Scouters' Mountain.

In 2002, the regional growth committee's parent commission included the camp within a new growth boundary, greatly increasing its market value. In 2004, the city of Happy Valley approved the Scouting council's application that the camp be annexed by the city. In 2007, the council decided to sell the camp, after a council task force recommended it be sold for no less than \$30 million. The council agreed to a sale for an undisclosed sum with Newland Communities, a developer that wanted to build up to 500 houses on the newly residentially zoned camp property. The sales deal ultimately fell through during the due diligence process last year.

**What Scouts say:** The Scouting council, the city and Grant all say he disclosed his ties to the Scouts while serving in his political roles. Hearst does not know whether Grant recused himself from any discussion or votes regarding the camp while serving on the Scouting council's board. In his political roles, Grant said that the growth committee he served on had no voting authority and that the camp was just one small property well within the growth boundary that was ultimately decided by the parent commission.

**Other key info:** While Happy Valley's mayor, Grant signed a city document approving the council's application to have Scouters' Mountain annexed into the city, records show.

**Scouting council:** Pacific Harbors Council

**Location:** Tacoma

**Year:** 2008

**Issue:** At least four current or former executives and employees of the Weyerhaeuser Co. served in 2008 on the executive board of the Pacific Harbors Council. Among them, Jimmy Collins, a Weyerhaeuser vice president, served as the council's board president; and Doug Dorr, a former Weyerhaeuser construction engineer, served on the board and as the properties committee chairman. In 2008, the council's board approved a 12-acre clearcut at Camp Delezene, which paid Weyerhaeuser "probably several thousand dollars" for use of its logging roads, Collins said. Both Collins and Dorr were among those who recommended the project, but Hearst is not sure if either they, or other board members with Weyerhaeuser ties, formally voted to authorize the project.

**What Scouts say:** Collins said he works for Weyerhaeuser in a division separate from timber, so he doesn't believe there was a conflict with his involvement. He and a forester for the council also said that because the Scouting council probably didn't directly pay Weyerhaeuser -- the council's hired

logging firm likely did -- there likely isn't a conflict for any of the other board members with Weyerhaeuser ties.

**Other key info:** Collins said he asked a colleague at Weyerhaeuser if the Scouting council's use of the company's logging roads could be donated to the council, but said the colleague told Collins that couldn't happen because of costs incurred by Weyerhaeuser to prepare the roads for use.

**Scouting council:** Monterey Bay Area Council

**Location:** Salinas, Calif.

**Year:** Starting in 2005.

**Issue:** Federal officials accused the council of improperly operating a recreational summer dam on the Little Sur River and killing threatened steelhead trout in 2002. The council denied the charges but agreed to extensively modify the dam and install a fish ladder. The council awarded the contract to Don Chapin Construction Co., a construction firm owned by Don Chapin, a member of the council's board of directors. The contract ultimately cost \$627,176.

**What Scouts say:** Albert Gallegos, the council's executive, said there was no conflict of interest because Chapin was not involved in discussions about the contract or the vote to award it to his company. "The contract was awarded to his company on the basis of competitive bidding and in accordance with our conflict of interest policy," Gallegos said in an e-mail to Hearst. "This was an absolutely transparent process."

**Other key info:** The council's dealings with Chapin's firm were disclosed in federal tax records.

**Scouting council:** Hiawatha Seaway Council

**Location:** Syracuse, N.Y.

**Year:** Ongoing

**Issue:** The council hired the real estate firm of one of its executive board members, George Lee, to market and sell its 460-acre Camp Portaferry in upstate New York.

**What Scouts say:** The Scouts and Lee have repeatedly refused to comment.

**Other key info:** Camp Portaferry is now on the market for \$1.3 million.

**Scouting council:** Andrew Jackson Council

**Location:** Jackson, Miss.

**Year:** Ongoing

**Issue:** During the 1960s, Warren Hood, a Mississippi lumberman and philanthropist, donated more than 1,200 acres of woodlands on an 86-acre lake near Hazlehurst to the local Boy Scouts council for a camp, which is today named the Warren Hood Scout Reservation. Since deceased, Hood for years served on the local Scouting council's board of directors, which later also included as members Hood's son, Jimmy Hood, and his daughter, Kay Adams. A district forester with the Mississippi Forestry Commission said that for years, Warren Hood helped manage and log the Scouting camp, using professional foresters from his family's lumber business. As part of at least two logging projects at the camp since 2005 -- when both Jimmy Hood and Kay Adams served on the council's

board of directors -- the Scouting council sold timber to the Hazlehurst Lumber Co., a sawmill owned by Adams.

**What Scouts say:** Council executive Arnold Landry said he knows of only two projects involving Adams' company since his hire in 2004 -- one in 2005 and one in 2007. "They were the high bidder both years, and because of the location of their mill (about 10 miles from our camp), they are able to make high bids in the county," Landry said. Landry said he could not find any information about the bid amount or about any other bids received for those projects. Warren Hood died four years ago, and Jimmy Hood wasn't involved in decision making for either project, Landry said. "Due to our conflict of interest policy, he did not vote on nor approve the timber sales and does not serve on the camping and timber management committees."

When initially asked about the matter, Landry did not volunteer any information about Adams, who also serves on the board and owns the sawmill that bought the camp's timber.

In separate interviews, Jimmy Hood said he doesn't recall voting on any matter related to his sister's sawmill, but he said he may have, based on committee recommendations. Adams said she didn't specifically disclose or recuse herself during board discussions about the logging projects despite her company's connections to them because "everybody on the board knows that already." She added her company won the right to buy timber as the highest bidder through a sealed-bidding process. "I can't see where there's a conflict at all," Adams said. "Our father was the one who donated the land to be used by the council as they saw fit. It just so happens that my brother, Jimmy, is on the board, and so am I. But there was no hanky-panky going on."

**Other key info:** The council routinely logs parts of the Hood Scout Reservation as a certified tree farm, including a clearcut harvest of 142 acres in 2007.

**Scouting council:** Voyageurs Area Council

**Location:** Duluth, Minn.

**Year:** 1996

**Issue:** The council quietly sold a 40-acre woodland near Solon Springs, Wis., for \$9,500 -- at least \$1,500 below some appraisals obtained by critics of the deal -- to David Epperly, a former Scoutmaster who also headed the county's forestry department. Epperly and a partner turned around and logged the property, garnering at least \$11,000, according to some estimates obtained by critics. Epperly says he can't remember how much the logging generated, but it was about enough to pay taxes on the property.

**What Scouts/others say:** Council officials say Solon Springs no longer had an active Boy Scouts troop, although a Cub Scout pack still existed. The council needed to raise money to repair fire damage done to another camp by vandals, and Epperly, who then was no longer a Scout volunteer, expressed interest in buying the property.

Epperly, who now is the Minnesota state forester, said he and his partner bought the property fairly. Ken Jones, then a volunteer on the council's properties committee, concedes now the land sale should have gone to public bid.

**Other key info:** Douglas County donated the land in 1944 to the local Boy Scout troop for a "boy scout sanctuary," records show. A revisionary clause called for the property to be returned to the county if the land wasn't used as stipulated. With the Boy Scout troop no longer active, the

Voyageurs Area Council had the property deeded under its name just nine days before selling it to Epperly in 1996, records show. Epperly and his partner recently listed the property for sale. Critics of the deal say they're asking for more than \$100,000, although neither man would tell a reporter his asking price.

**Scouting council:** Pacific Skyline Council

**Location:** California

**Year:** Various

**Issue:** Forester Richard Sampson worked for the private consulting firm Pacific Meridian Resources, handling forestry work and submitting logging plans to the state on behalf of at least six different Boy Scouts groups in Northern California from 1990 to 2002. In 1997, Sampson also served on a board for the Pacific Skyline Council.

In August 2002, Sampson took a state forester's job with California's Department of Forestry, for which he was responsible for inspecting logging projects for private landowners. In 2004, Sampson responded to a reported violation at a logging operation being conducted for the Pacific Skyline Council. Sampson cited the loggers for failing to put down straw to prevent erosion during winter rains. At the time, Sampson was listed as a member of the Scout council's board, as he was in 2005.

**What Scouts/others say:** In interviews with Hearst, Sampson said that when he applied for the state forestry job in 2002, he and his future boss recognized the potential conflict of his inspecting logging projects for landowners for which his firm had worked in private industry. Sampson volunteered not to review plans or inspect logging operations being done for any of those landowners for three years, even though state rules did not prohibit him from doing so. He said he followed his voluntary plan, but that in 2004 he was the only forester on duty when the violation was reported at the Pacific Skyline logging site. Because it was winter, it was important to inspect it promptly. Sampson acknowledged that he had been on the Scout council's board in the 1990s, but said he was not aware he was listed as being on the board in 2004 and 2005. He said that when he became aware of that, he asked to be removed from the board.

**Other key info:** After his three-year self-imposed moratorium, Sampson was involved in the department's regulation of another Pacific Skyline Council logging project in 2006.

A lawyer for the state forestry department said that when Sampson joined the department, he made his supervisors aware of his past work as a private forestry consultant, but did not properly file a public disclosure form on which he was supposed to list prior income from that job. Both Sampson and the lawyer said Sampson inadvertently was given wrong instructions for filling out the form. Because of Hearst's inquiries, the department is now revising its public disclosure processes, the attorney said.

**Scouting council:** Los Angeles Area Council

**Location:** Los Angeles

**Year:** 2000

**Issue:** The council sold more than 2,500 acres of the Firestone Scout Reservation in the wildlife-rich Tonner Canyon to City of Industry, a Los Angeles suburb, for \$16.5 million -- about \$1.5 million less than what conservation groups had offered. The city was considering building a reservoir on the

property. Scout officials said the city's offer was the most solid financially and allowed them to continue using the land.

It turned out that John H. Semcken III, a volunteer member of the council's board, facilitated the land sale to the city. Semcken was a top official of Majestic Realty Co., a politically powerful firm that had done prior business with the city.

In an interview with Hearst, Semcken confirmed that he helped facilitate the transaction and "I did work to help put the terms of the deal together." But he said he did not participate in the Scout council's discussions, did not lobby the council and did not vote on the sale. He added that he and Majestic received no payment for his effort and that his dual role posed no conflict of interest.

Paul Moore, the current executive of the Scout council, said Semcken had followed the council's conflict of interest policy and had broken no rules. Semcken is a valued member of the board, he said, adding that "Scouting relies on community leaders to help us succeed."

**What Scouts say:** Scout officials say they gave no special treatment to the city, adding that other offers made by conservationist groups fell through and came in late. Semcken said he helped "put terms of the deal together," but denied lobbying for the sale or receiving any remuneration because of it.

**Other key info:** The Sierra Club and other conservation groups unsuccessfully sued to block the sale.

**Scouting council:** Cayuga Council

**Location:** Auburn, N.Y.

**Year:** 2004

**Issue:** The council hired and paid one of its board members, Don Simpson, for real estate services. Simpson, a real estate agent, helped negotiate the council's purchase of a property for \$195,000. The work drew him a Realtor's fee.

**What Scouts say:** Simpson said he can't remember how much he received and denied any conflict exists. "The council asked me to help out," he said.

**Other key info:** The council also paid another board member, lawyer Norm Chirco, \$600 for title services as part of the property purchase. Chirco said he gave the council a discount.