



## DUBUQUE COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD

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Brian Preston, Dir.  
**Board Members:**  
Pat Rea  
Jeff Cue  
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Roger La Barge

### An Equal Opportunity Employer

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4 March 2013

FROM: Brian D. Preston, Executive Director  
Dubuque County Conservation Board  
13606 Swiss Valley Road  
Peosta, IA 52068

TO: Camp Little Cloud  
Board of Directors  
Diane Nelson, CEO  
Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa, Wisconsin & Illinois  
940 Golden Valley Dr.  
Bettendorf, IA 50722

RE: Proposal to Close Camp Little Cloud

Dear Ms. Nelson and Board of Directors,

It has recently been announced that the Council is considering closure and sale of Camp Little Cloud located in Dubuque County. Above and beyond the loss of a camp tradition that goes back generations in the Dubuque County area, closing of the camp would eliminate a very important site for outdoor and environmental exposure and education. The Conservation Board is well aware of the difficulties of funding and maintaining such a facility, especially in recent times. Sometimes we must step back from these decisions though and look at the bigger picture. To close and sell the camp could bring funds to the Council now, but what would you be losing in the future? Camp Little Cloud is the only facility of its type in this area. This may be the only opportunity some girls and leaders will have to experience the camp environment and the bonds that can be forged and life lessons learned. We understand that Girl Scout programming has endeavored to keep up with the ever-changing needs and interests of the individuals they serve, but outdoor recreation and environmental education must continue to be an important component of scouting. Stewardship of our Earth depends on it.

The Dubuque County Conservation Board and professional staff would be willing to work with your agency to expand and present your programming in any of the areas of related outdoor recreation and environmental education. The location of Camp Little Cloud provides excellent natural resources as well as a place to explore the cultural heritage of the area along the nearby Heritage Trail. Individuals must experience firsthand the resources around us in order to understand and care for them today and in the future, it is not enough to read about them or watch a movie. The modern mind-set often vilifies exposure to nature and the concept of 'roughing it.' Too many of today's scout leaders have little or no experience to share with their

scouts when it comes to the “great outdoors.” Many Girl Scout and Boy Scout troops turn to our facilities and staff to fill this gap when they are working on specific awards, merit badges, or skill sets. We feel that the leaders need to receive training and information to assist them to lead and build confidence, and this should be one of the functions that Camp Little Cloud continue serving. We would also encourage you to contact other agencies and individuals that offer programming for youth to discover any partnerships that could be developed.

We hope the Council will carefully consider their decision, looking not just at tomorrow but the future as well.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss this issue further, feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian Preston". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "B".

Brian D. Preston, Executive Director