



Planning Commission Staff Report Hearing on November 3, 2022

County of Ventura • Resource Management Agency

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LOCKWOOD VALLEY BOY SCOUT CAMP, Conditional Use Permit Case No. PL20-0125

A. PROJECT INFORMATION

1. **Request:** The applicant requests that a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) be reinstated to authorize the continued operation of an existing Boy Scout Camp for a 20-year period (Case No. PL20-0125).
2. **Applicant/Property Owner:** Ventura County Council, Boy Scouts of America, 509 East Daily Drive, Camarillo, CA 93010
3. **Applicant's Representative:** George Villalobos, c/o Ventura County Council, Boy Scouts of America, 509 East Daily Drive, Camarillo CA 93010
4. **Decision-Making Authority:** Pursuant to Sections 8105-4 and 8111-1.2 et seq. of the Ventura County Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance (NCZO), the Planning Commission is the decision-maker for the requested CUP.
5. **Project Site Size, Location, and Parcel Number:** The 39.9-acre project site is located at 12260 Boy Scout Camp Road in the unincorporated Lockwood Valley area of Ventura County. The Tax Assessor's parcel numbers for the property that constitutes the project site are 003-0-230-110 and 003-0-230-560 (Exhibit 2).
6. **Project Site Land Use and Zoning Designations (Exhibit 2):**
 - a. Countywide General Plan Land Use Map Designation: Rural
 - b. Zoning Designation: Rural Exclusive (RE), 40-acre minimum parcel size.
7. **Adjacent Zoning and Land Uses/Development (Exhibit 2):**

Location in Relation to the Project Site	Zoning	Land Uses/Development
North	OS-160	Undeveloped
East	OS-10 and OS-20	Low-density Residential and Agriculture
South	OS-160	Undeveloped
West	OS-160	Undeveloped

8. **History:** The existing Boy Scout Camp ("Three Falls Camp") was first authorized in 1974 with the granting of CUP 3494. Table 2 below lists the permitting history of

this camp including the specific additional project components authorized by the various permit actions.

Table 2 – Permit History

Permit Number	Date Granted	Added uses/structures
CUP 3794	1974	Original camp
CUP 3494-1	12-24-74	First Aid Building
CUP 3494-2	03-19-75	Shower Building
CUP 3494-3	06-09-78	Dining Hall
CUP 3494-4	03-27-79	Water reservoir
CUP 3494-5	05-22-80	Camp Vehicle Garage
CUP 3494-6	09-03-80	Camp Office, Trading Post, Latrines
CUP 3494-7	10-25-89	Ranger residence and public restrooms
CUP 3494-8	02-18-97	Extend permit term to February 18, 2017.
CUP 3494-9	06-05-00	Validate existing 2,000 square-foot Fort compound, 43-foot-tall climbing wall, and 800 square-foot garage. Extend permit term to June 5, 2020.

The requested CUP would only serve to extend the effective permit term by 20 years to 2040. No changes in the existing camp facilities or operations are proposed.

10. Project Description: The applicant requests that a CUP be reinstated to authorize the continued operation of an existing camp owned and operated by the Boy Scouts of America for an additional 20-year period. The camp would continue to include the following components:

- Ranger residence
- Camp office
- Headquarters/Trading post
- Restroom buildings
- Dining hall
- First aid building
- Shower building
- Boat house
- Reservoir
- Swimming pool
- Meeting lodge
- Merit Badge shed
- Archery area

- Shotgun area
- Shade structure for shooting sports
- 10 Staff cabins
- Chapel
- 2,000 square-foot Fort compound
- 43-foot-tall climbing wall
- 800 square-foot garage
- 95 vehicular parking spaces

The above-listed components and road locations are delineated on the project plans (Exhibit 3). Recreation activities and uses customary and consistent with the continued operation of a youth camp are in the proposed project. Attendance at the camp would continue to be limited to a maximum of 817 persons for daily activities and a maximum of 408 persons for overnight occupancy. Occupancy by guests would not exceed 30 consecutive days. Transportation to and from the camp would be provided by personal vehicles of attendees. The project site would not include any trails.

This permit would not authorize any activities on the properties located outside of the 39.9-acre project site. Specifically, any activities conducted on the adjoining federal lands within the Los Padres National Forest must be authorized by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service.

B. CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) COMPLIANCE

The requested CUP is a “project” as defined by CEQA (Public Resources Code, § 21000 et seq.) and the CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, title 14, § 15000 et seq.).

The State Legislature through the Secretary for Resources has found that certain classes of projects are exempt from CEQA review because they do not have a significant effect on the environment. Section 15301 of the CEQA Guidelines exempts the operation and permitting of existing facilities, involving negligible or no expansion of existing uses, from environmental review. The proposed project qualifies for this exemption because it involves the continued operation of an existing camp with no expansion of existing uses. No changes to the existing camp facilities or operations are proposed. Further, the project will not trigger any of the exceptions to the exemptions listed under CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2. Therefore, the project is exempt from CEQA.

Based on the above discussion, staff recommends that the Planning Commission find the project to be categorically exempt from environmental review pursuant to Section 15301 of the CEQA Guidelines.

C. CONSISTENCY WITH THE GENERAL PLAN

The proposed project has been analyzed and determined to be consistent with all applicable Ventura County General Plan policies. A consistency analysis which evaluates the project's consistency with the policies of the General Plan is included as Exhibit 4 of this staff report.

D. ZONING ORDINANCE COMPLIANCE

The proposed project is subject to the requirements of the NCZO.

Pursuant to Section 8105-4 of the NCZO, the proposed use is allowed in the RE-40 zone with the granting of a CUP by the Planning Commission. Upon the granting of a CUP, the Permittee would be in compliance with the requirements of the NCZO.

The proposed continued camp use is subject to the special use standards for camps pursuant to Section 8107-17 of the NCZO. Table 3 lists each applicable special use standard and a description of whether the proposed project is designed and will be operated in conformance with that standard.

Table 3 – Special Use Standards Consistency Analysis

Special Use Standard	In conformance?
Sec. 8107-17.0 <i>Protection of Sensitive Biological Habitats. Camps shall be allowed on property zoned Open Space (OS) only if the property is in agricultural production.</i>	Not applicable. The subject property is located in the RE-40 zone; therefore, this standard does not apply.
Sec. 8107-17.1 <i>Minimum lot area shall be ten acres on property zoned Rural Agriculture (RA) and Rural Exclusive (RE). Minimum lot area shall be 50 acres on property zoned Open Space (OS).</i>	Yes. The subject property would encompass 39.9 acres in the RE-40 zone district.
Sec. 8107-17.2.2 <i>Camps on property zoned Rural Exclusive (RE) - lot size in acres x 10.24 = the maximum number of persons to be accommodated overnight.</i>	Yes. The subject property would encompass 39.9 acres in the RE-40 zone district. Thus, the overnight population remains limited by formula to 408 persons (includes guests and staff). This limitation would be incorporated into the conditions of approval for the requested CUP.
Sec. 8107-17.3 <i>Total daily on-site population of guests and staff shall be limited by the following calculations of Sec. 8107-17.3.2: Camps zoned Rural Exclusive</i>	Yes. The subject property would encompass 39.9 acres in the RE-40 zone district. Thus, the daily population remains limited by formula to 817 persons. This limitation would be incorporated into the conditions of approval for the requested CUP.

Table 3 – Special Use Standards Consistency Analysis

Special Use Standard	In conformance?
<i>(RE) - 20.48 x lot size in gross acres = total population allowed on site.</i>	
Sec. 8107-17.4.1 - Overnight Accommodations: <i>Structures or portions of structures intended for sleeping and restrooms/showers (excepting those for permanent staff as defined in Sec. 8107-17.4.3) shall be limited to a collective average of 200 square feet per overnight guest and staff allowed per Sec. 8107-17.2 (Overnight Population).</i>	Yes. The site remains limited to 408 overnight persons, pursuant to Section 8107-17.2.2 of the NCZO. Thus, structures intended for sleeping and restrooms would continue to be limited to a total of 81,600 square feet. A total of less than 20,000 square feet of structures have been installed on the site. Thus, the camp would remain in conformance with this standard.
Sec. 8107-17.4.2 – All Other Roofed Structures or Buildings: <i>The total allowed square footage of all roofed structures or buildings other than sleeping and restroom/shower facilities shall be limited to 100 square feet per person allowed per Sec. 8107-17.3 (Daily On-Site Population).</i>	Yes. The subject property would encompass 39.9 acres in the RE-40 zone district. Thus, the daily population remains limited by formula to 817 persons. Thus, structures not intended for sleeping or restrooms would continue to be limited to a total of 81,700 square feet. A total of less than 20,000 square feet of structures have been installed on the site. Thus, the camp would remain in conformance with this standard.
Sec. 8107-17.5 <i>Camp facilities shall have adequate sewage disposal and domestic water.</i>	Yes. The existing water supply facilities include two onsite private wells and various pipe connections. These water facilities have served the camp adequately for approximately 50 years and are not proposed to be altered. Septic sewage disposal systems would continue to serve the site. These systems are permitted and monitored by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board.
Sec. 8107-17.6 <i>Camp facility lighting shall be designed so as to not produce a significant amount of light and/or glare at the first offsite receptive use.</i>	Yes. No new lighting would be proposed as part of the project. Lighting at this remote camp would remain minimal and be limited to that necessary for security.
Sec. 8107-17.7 <i>Camp facilities shall be developed in accordance with applicable County standards so as to not produce a significant amount of noise.</i>	Yes. This camp remains largely isolated in a remote rural area. Thus, the potential for noise to disrupt offsite sensitive receptors would be minimal. The nearest two offsite residences are located 500 and 900 feet to the east of the project site. There are no offsite residences in the vicinity of the project site to the north, west or south.
Sec. 8107-17.8 <i>Occupation of the site by a guest shall not exceed 30 consecutive days.</i>	Yes. Compliance with this standard is incorporated into the project description and into the proposed

Table 3 – Special Use Standards Consistency Analysis

Special Use Standard	In conformance?
	conditions of approval for the requested CUP (Condition of Approval No. 4, Exhibit 5).
Sec. 8107-17.9 <i>To ensure that the site remains an integral and cohesive unit, specific methods such as the following should be employed on a case-by-case basis: open space easements; CC&R's that restrict further use of the land, with the County as a third party; low density zoning to prevent subdivision of the site; and/or merger of parcels to create one parcel covering the entire site.</i>	Yes. The camp has been in existence since 1974 with structures constructed in various locations throughout the project site. Additionally, both parcels involving the project site are commonly owned by the Boy Scouts of America.
Sec. 8107-17.10 <i>To avoid the loss of the site's natural characteristics several methods should be employed on a case-by-case basis to preserve these values: 60% of the total site should remain in its natural state or in agriculture.</i>	Yes. A total of less than 20,000 square feet of structures have been installed on the overall 39.9-acre project site and therefore, approximately 98 percent of the site would continue to remain in its natural state.
Sec. 8107-17.11 <i>Parking Standards - See Article 8.</i>	Yes. Article 8 allows for the decision-making body to determine the total number of vehicle and bicycle spaces required for the camp. A total of 85 vehicle spaces and zero bicycle spaces were required for the original CUP and would continue to remain in the location identified on the site plan (Exhibit 3). As the project would not include an expansion of use or additional structures, no additional vehicle or bicycle parking would be recommended.
Sec. 8107-17.12 <i>The Camp facility project description shall address transportation to and from and within the project site, including the types of vehicles, and road and trail locations.</i>	Yes. The project description includes transportation details, including types of vehicles. Refer to the site plan (Exhibit 3) for road locations. The project site would not include trails.

E. CUP FINDINGS AND SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The Planning Commission must make certain findings in order to grant a CUP pursuant to Section 8111-1.2.1.1a of the NCZO. The ability to make the required findings is evaluated below.

- 1. The proposed development is consistent with the intent and provisions of the County's General Plan and of Division 8, Chapters 1 and 2, of the Ventura County Ordinance Code [Section 8111-1.2.1.1a.a].**

Based on the information and analysis presented in Exhibit 4 and Section D of this staff report, the finding that the proposed development is consistent with the intent and provisions of the County's General Plan and of Division 8, Chapters 1 and 2, of the Ventura County Ordinance Code can be made.

- 2. The proposed development is compatible with the character of surrounding, legally established development [Section 8111-1.2.1.1a.b].**

The subject camp has been in existence since at least 1974 according to County records and is located on a 39.9-acre property in a remote area of the Lockwood Valley. No new effect on the character of the area would result from the continued operation of the subject camp. Given that the camp would remain located more than 500 feet from the nearest offsite residential use, it would continue to be compatible with the character of the surrounding development.

Based on the above discussion, this finding can be made.

- 3. The proposed development would not be obnoxious or harmful or impair the utility of neighboring property or uses [Section 8111-1.2.1.1a.c].**

The proposed project would be limited to the continued operation of an existing youth camp operated by the Boy Scouts of America. The project facilities are setback more than 500 feet from the nearest offsite residential use. The County does not have a record of any public complaints regarding the operation of the camp over many decades. No aspect of the proposed project has been identified that would impair the utility of neighboring property or uses.

Based on the above discussion, this finding can be made.

- 4. The proposed development would not be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, convenience, or welfare [Section 8111-1.2.1.1a.d].**

With compliance with the recommended conditions of approval (Exhibit 5), no aspect of the proposed project has been identified that would be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, convenience or welfare. The camp would continue to provide a public benefit as a youth recreational camp.

Based on the above discussion, this finding can be made.

5. The proposed development, if allowed by a Conditional Use Permit, is compatible with existing and potential land uses in the general area where the development is to be located [Section 8111-1.2.1.1a.e].

The subject camp has been in existence since at least 1974 according to County records and is located on a 39.9-acre property in a remote area of the Lockwood Valley. No new effect on the character of the area would result from the continued operation of the camp. Given that the camp remains located more than 500 feet from the nearest offsite residential use, the camp would continue to be compatible with the character of the surrounding development.

The project site is bordered by undeveloped federal land in the Los Padres National Forest on the north, west and south. To the east, existing development is limited to two houses and various ranch buildings. The nearest offsite residences are approximately 500 feet and 900 feet from the nearest camp building.

Given the remote nature of the area, and the predominance of federal land adjoining the project site, a future change in land use in the vicinity of the project is not foreseeable at this time.

Based on the above discussion, this finding can be made.

6. The proposed development will occur on a legal lot [Section 8111-1.2.1.1a.f].

The subject 39.9-acre property is owned by the Boys Scouts of America. The County of Ventura has granted nine separate discretionary permits for uses and structures on this property. In addition, the County has issued a number of ministerial zoning clearances and building permits for structures on this site. The project site has been developed subject to land use permits issued by the County and qualifies as a legal lot eligible for a Certificate of Compliance pursuant to Section 8214-3.1 of the Ventura County Subdivision Ordinance.

Based on the above discussion, this finding can be made.

7. The proposed development is approved in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act and all other applicable laws [Section 8111-1.2.1.1a.g].

As explained in Section B of this staff report, the project was found to be exempt from environmental review pursuant to Section 15301 of the CEQA Guidelines.

Based on the above discussion, this finding can be made.

F. PLANNING COMMISSION HEARING NOTICE

The Planning Division provided public notice regarding the Planning Commission hearing in accordance with Section 65091 of the Government Code, and Section 8111-3.1 of the NCZO. On October 21, 2022, the Planning Division mailed notice to owners of property within 1,500 feet of the property on which the project site is located and placed a legal ad in the *Ventura County Star* and the *Mountain Enterprise* newspapers.

G. RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

Based upon the analysis and information provided above, Planning Division Staff recommends that the Planning Commission take the following actions:

1. **CERTIFY** that the Planning Commission has reviewed and considered this staff report and all exhibits thereto, and has considered all comments received during the public comment process;
2. **FIND**, on the basis of the entire record and as set forth in Section B of this staff report, that the project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to Section 15301 (Existing Facilities) of the CEQA Guidelines, which exempts the operation and permitting of existing facilities that involve negligible or no expansion of existing uses, and that no unusual circumstances or any other exception set forth in CEQA Guidelines section 15300.2 preclude use of the exemption;
3. **MAKE** the required findings to grant a CUP pursuant to Section 8111-1.2.1.1a of the NCZO, based on the substantial evidence presented in Section E of this staff report and the entire record;
4. **GRANT** the Conditional Use Permit (PL20-0125), subject to the conditions of approval (Exhibit 5); and,
5. **SPECIFY** that the Clerk of the Planning Commission is the custodian, and 800 S. Victoria Avenue, Ventura, CA 93009 is the location, of the documents and materials that constitute the record of proceedings upon which this decision is based.

The decision of the Planning Commission is final unless appealed to the Board of Supervisors within 10 calendar days after the permit has been granted, conditionally granted, or denied (or on the following workday if the 10th day falls on a weekend or holiday). Any aggrieved person may file an appeal of the decision with the Planning Division. The Planning Division shall then set a hearing date before the Board of Supervisors to review the matter at the earliest convenient date.

This staff report has been reviewed by County Counsel.

If you have any questions concerning the information presented above, please contact John Kessler at (805) 654-2461 or John.Kessler@ventura.org.

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EXHIBITS

- | | |
|-----------|-----------------------------------|
| Exhibit 2 | Maps |
| Exhibit 3 | Project plans |
| Exhibit 4 | General Plan Consistency Analysis |
| Exhibit 5 | Conditions of Approval |