

The DeKalb County Community Foundation granted \$10,000 in the spring of 2008 to the Boy Scouts of America Three Fires Council to support the construction of an outdoor Cub Scout Adventure Camp. The council is developing 160 of 600 acres of natural property in Rochelle that will include a camping retreat for approximately 1300 Cub Scouts and their families in DeKalb County. The camp will be the only one of its kind in the area, and will benefit scouting programs throughout northern Illinois.

“One of the most common reasons that kids drop out of Cub Scouts is that there are not enough camping opportunities, so this facility will help that,” said Matt Ackerman, Scout Executive of the Three Fires Council.

The grant from the DeKalb County Community Foundation specifically went toward the construction of a six-room shower house. Ackerman explained that these working amenities also provide comfort for parents that wish to share the camping experience with their children.

“The camp has been used almost every weekend of the year, except on major holidays,” said Thomas Hurley, Business Manager for the Three Rivers Council. “Our winterized cabins allow for year-round activities.”

Despite its frequent use by the cub scouts, the camp is in the early stages of development. A lake that will be used for swimming, fishing, and canoeing is scheduled to be completed by the end of summer. The council also plans to add a new dining hall and training center to the site. Hurley indicated that other buildings such as cabins will be added as funding becomes available.

“Our fundraising for the camp has slowed down significantly due to the economy,” said Hurley. In order to be more efficient, the Three Fires Council has partnered with other councils and organizations to attempt to share resources. For instance, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources is helping to stock the lake with fish at no cost.

The camp is also being designed to be environmentally friendly. The dining hall that has been planned out will rely on thermal energy from the lake for heating and cooling. “In the spirit of nature, we’re trying to incorporate green principles,” explained Ackerman. “It should help to cut costs in the future too.”

The camp will serve cub scouts from 7 different counties in Illinois. “The facilities create an environment where youth can develop important leadership skills,” said Deanna Cada, DeKalb County Community Foundation Program Manager. “DeKalb County youth will benefit as well as youth throughout the northern part of the state.”

Ackerman and Hurley thanked Cada and the Community Foundation for the support at a recent site visit to the camp. “We’re inspired by the generosity,” said Hurley. “We’re excited to continue the development of the camp for the kids.”