

Scouts Face Loss of a Second Camp

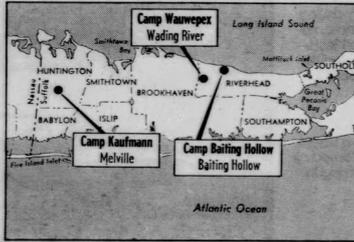
By Neill S. Rosenfeld

Melville—Long Island Boy Scouts, many already worried about the possible loss of Camp Wauwepex as their private long-term camping preserve, now face the sale of another exclusive wilderness area, the 217-acre Kaufmann Scout Camp here.

If Suffolk County consummates deals to acquire the two tracts at an estimated combined cost of \$6,500,000, it would leave the 170-acre Baiting Hollow Camp, owned by the Suffolk Scouts, as the only Boy Scout-owned camping ground on Long Island. However, Suffolk parks commissioner John D. Chester said yesterday that Suffolk scouts could continue to use both parks along with other county residents and their escorted guests.

A hearing in State Supreme Court on the condemnation of the Kaufmann camp was adjourned yesterday to April 28. Chester said that Kaufmann, north of the Northern State Parkway and east of Sweet Hollow Road, would be kept for camping, general picnicking and horseback-riding. It is adjacent to the 420-acre West Hills County Park and to another proposed county park purchase, the 150-acre Straight Improvement Corp. property.

The financially pressed Greater New York Council of Boy Scouts has decided to maintain fewer



Newsday Map

camping grounds and chose to dispense with Kaufmann, its least-used site, according to Harold Sokolsky, the council's public-relations director. He said that 40 per cent of Kaufmann's users were Nassau and Suffolk scouts. While Chester would not disclose an asking price, he said a "rough estimate" was \$2,500,000.

The Nassau Boy Scouts have been negotiating

with Suffolk to sell Wauwepex, its 420-acre camp in Wading River, to pay off a debt topping \$1,000,000. The Suffolk planning commission has recommended its purchase, but when Suffolk County Executive Klein embraced the plan, he received over 350 letters from outraged Nassau scouts.

Robert Crockett, a scoutmaster from East Rockaway, formed a fund on April 2 to raise \$100,000 to pay the interest on the Nassau scout debt and "keep" Wauwepex for exclusive scout use.

While Nassau and Suffolk scouting officials said the sale of Kaufmann would not hurt their programs Crockett said yesterday that the loss of both camps would "severely curtail even weekend camping" for the Nassau troops, since Suffolk would limit access only to its residents or their guests. "The Nassau Boy Scouts own a camping ground in Livingston Manor, more than 150 miles from here, and it's too far and too expensive for us to get there," he said.

The Queens Boy Scouts are also opposing the sale, not only because they would have to travel to New Jersey to camp, but also because they donated about \$250,000 to purchase Kaufmann in the late 1950s, according to their lawyer, retired Court of Appeals Judge Charles Froessel. They want another camping ground to replace Kaufmann, he said.