

The following letter was written by Ben Cagle, member of the First Baptist Church of San Diego and the Charter Organization Representative for BSA Troop 11. This outlines some of the history of the Palomar Mountain camp and Troop 11's involvement with it. Currently, the Palomar Christian Conference Center is located on the land at the top of the mountain. The original camp site is further down the hill and remains much as it was back when the troop first started camping there.

There is a long history of Troop 11 involvement with camping at Palomar. As early as 1930, Troop 11 was camping there and doing things for the owner, Bob Asher. They built him a cabin and packed in supplies for him.

This resulted in Asher dedicating the land for use by scouts. The Troop was not prepared to take title, so it was given to the Home Mission Society of the First Baptist Church of San Diego. That Society no longer exists, and the land became owned by the Church as it existed in downtown San Diego. The Church later moved to University City, where you have your Troop meetings.

The Camp grew and more troops became involved. Sometimes a district of troops held retreats there. As more churches began using the Camp, it became necessary to incorporate it as the Palomar Baptist Camp, an extension of the First Baptist Church of San Diego. It is now operated independently as the Palomar Christian Conference Center. I am a member of the Board of Directors of that Center.

The Center accommodates 300 clients and is full for months at a time. Reservations are made a year ahead of time. We are currently turning groups away, because we don't have the rooms and beds to accommodate them.

I am telling you this, because there is still a place for Troop 11. There is a wilderness area where Troop 11 camped with Asher in 1930. That area still exists. Several scouts and parents have been there, including Bruce Smith, Dick Kelly, Lee Wagner, and J. Bittle. If you asked Dick, he would probably go with you. Logan Piercy of Troop 11 did his Eagle Project on the trail down to the wilderness.

The area can only be reached by hiking, and it is intended to be a pristine wilderness. It is not, and it should be restored to its former pristine condition. I hope Troop 11 will take on a multiyear commitment to restore it, and will go there frequently. Patrols can go there and the Troop can go there. The Troop can take other troops to work on the restoration. It's a job worth doing for the future of scouting.

Ben Cagle
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