



Date: February 3, 2009  
To: ACA Council of Delegates (including Section Presidents and National Board Members)  
cc: Section Executives  
From: ACA 20/20 Task Force *Scott Brody Rich Garbinsky Ann Sheets Peg Smith Peter Surgenor Poste Taylor Diane Turrell Susan Yoder*

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Dear Colleagues,

As you continue to deliberate on the important work of the 20/20 Vision, we would like to share some additional context.

The 20/20 Task Force has dealt with this question:

*What must ACA look like and how must ACA act to meet the overall goal of 20 million campers and 20,000 participants in ACA by the year 2020?*

During our work, we noted some simple, yet powerful truths:

- Our existing structure will not serve us well in the future, as evidenced by our history and current realities.
- We must change if we are to be successful.
- We must have a shared vision and mission, and ends.
- We must maximize efficiencies and eliminate redundancies and internal competition because resources are limited.
- We must maximize nationwide potential in the areas of public awareness, fund raising, business development and cause marketing, and research and educational development based on promising practices.
- We must develop organizational systems that can achieve maximum potential at the local level in the areas of membership development, delivery of educational services, and local collaborations designed to enhance and expand influence and growth in the marketplace with parents, legislators, youth organizations, funders, customers, as well as ACA members and non members.
- We must use technology tools to inspire new forms of networking, education, and affiliation.
- We must have clearly defined and consistent organizational systems.
- We must not let comfort with the familiar obstruct our preferred future.

The world has changed and continues to change. We must change as well. We all recognize we have unrealized and undervalued potential that appears to be burdened by a dated structure. If we let our affection for status quo, an unhealthy fear of the unknown, or an underlying mistrust of one another prevail, we will not have the strongest, most relevant American Camp Association. The process of change is not the outcome, a power play, nor an attempt to simply realign staff.

It is our desire to be candid with you. We are confident that the model that will lead us to the greatest success is *one association*, not twenty-five. We believe that *one staff* and *one board* is the best structure to support one association.

However, what is paramount is our need to transform ACA and the camp community in order to advance our position to one of relevance and strength in this century giving us the ability to serve more children and youth through the high quality camp experience.

There are several models that can be used to achieve one association, if appropriately managed. At this time using ACA's historical evidence, the task force is recommending the one association model with one staff and one board. However, before we debate the governing and staffing structure for the desired outcome of one association, there are critical elements that must be deliberated that will inform the final decision about the governing and staffing structure.

In that spirit, we ask that you debate the model that is attached and the questions which are posed below during the next few days prior to the National Conference, during the Council of Delegates meeting, and within your local areas. It is our intent to use your input and deliberations over the next month in order to answer many of these questions. Furthermore, as we progress, we will share our thinking as we dedicate ourselves to building one strong and vital association and to succeeding in reaching our ambitious goals.

- How would this model give us economies of scale and scope?
- How would this model eliminate duplicative efforts and conserve careless resource consumptions?
- How would this model design a fee/dues system that is based on service delivery and benefit versus the need to balance a budget?
- How would this model support a cogent, nationwide system where discipline and rigor develops a shared operational structure with policies, protocols, and common business standards?
- How would this model result in a structure based on what is best for the association and the camp community and set aside our affection (for the time being) for who and what we know today?
- How do we streamline the current delivery system and move to a various delivery systems (including nationwide, regional and local) with the ability to facilitate smaller local affinity groups, and free up local volunteers from governance and administrative tasks in order to focus on education, networking, and services to the public and members.
- How would this model allow us to develop stronger staff support across the country?
- How would this model allow us we expand our influence with parents?
- How would this model allow us to further customize and facilitate local groups who come together based on need, culture, interest, or affinity?
- How would this model allow us to maximize our resources; time, talent, and money?
- How would this model allow us to shed duplicative work and take innovation to scale?
- How would this model allow us to advance strategic leadership that is nimble, informed, and accountable to the public and our members?

We hope this letter and the attached document adds value to your important discussions. We look forward to your input.

20/20 Task Force  
Report to Section Leadership and the Council of Delegates  
Regarding Future Delivery Systems  
February 2009

Thank you for your candid and insightful feedback following our recent communications on delivery systems. We have used your comments and questions to refine our recommendation for the design of a model for one association with multiple delivery systems.

Our work began with the premise that the various programs and services of ACA will require different types of delivery systems: local, regional, media market based, and nationwide. Our current system is inefficient and redundant. To maximize not just efficiency, but the effectiveness of our association, major changes are needed in our overall delivery systems.

In our earlier reports, we noted the following “non-negotiables” – factors that must be in place when considering delivery systems for the future. They are:

- ACA *is and will remain* a 501(c)3 organization, and we must *increase* our ability to reach and serve the public.
- ACA must continue to have engaged volunteers and opportunities for relevant, rewarding engagement.
- ACA must maximize the use of association-wide resources (human, financial, intellectual), thereby eliminating redundancy and inefficiency.
- ACA will have accountability and clarity. All will understand where the “buck stops.”

Recommendations:

We recommend the following as the model for one association with multiple delivery systems:

- One association with one mission, one vision, one governing board, and one management structure;
- 5 – 7 defined geographic areas for coordination of local services, each with assigned national association staff;
- State groups organized primarily for legislative and regulatory purposes;
- Enhanced technology providing social networking, in addition to in-person opportunities to build and sustain professional relationships; and
- Affinity groups created by demand, with association staff assigned as needed.

## One Association

After reviewing our current system and looking at a number of other models, we believe that the “one association” model will ensure our success in the future. In this model, there is:

- One shared mission and vision;
- One board of directors;
- One management structure, led by the national CEO;
- One staff, with national association employees assigned to functional areas (as they are now – public awareness, finance, fund raising, research, etc.) and to geographic areas;
- One National Advisory Council, including representatives from each geographic area (the number to be determined).

The national association would maximize potential in the areas of public awareness; fund raising; public policy; accreditation; funds development; fiscal management; technology; human resources business development and cause marketing; and research and educational development based on promising practices.

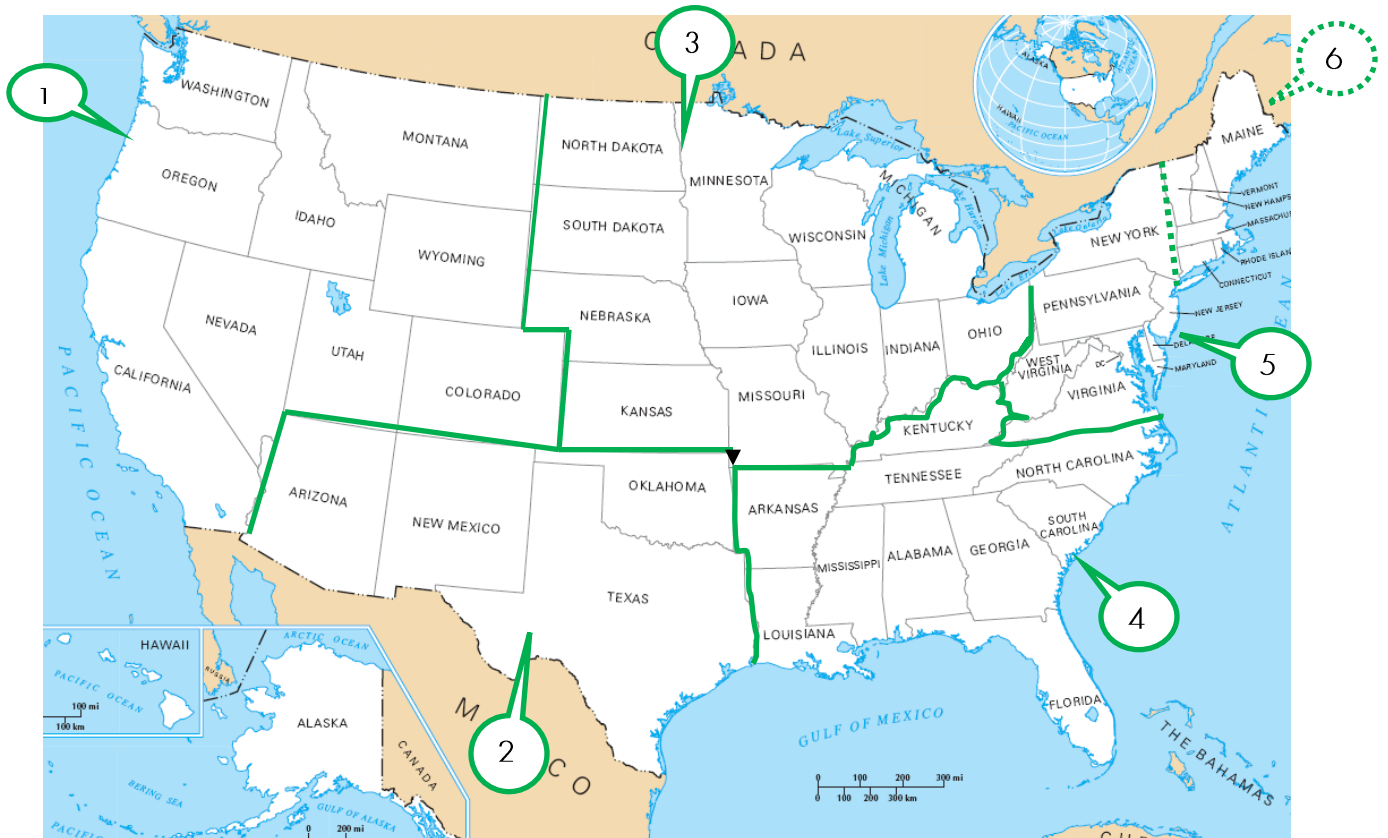
With one association, we will maximize potential at the local level in the areas of membership development, delivery of educational services, and local collaborations designed to enhance and expand influence and growth in the marketplace with parents, legislators, youth organizations, funders, customers, as well as ACA members and non members.

The location of the national office could be anywhere. There could be multiple offices. For example, the current national office could become a research or retreat location. Other existing offices could house area or functional staff. It is likely that the majority of national association staff would be dispersed, as many are now.

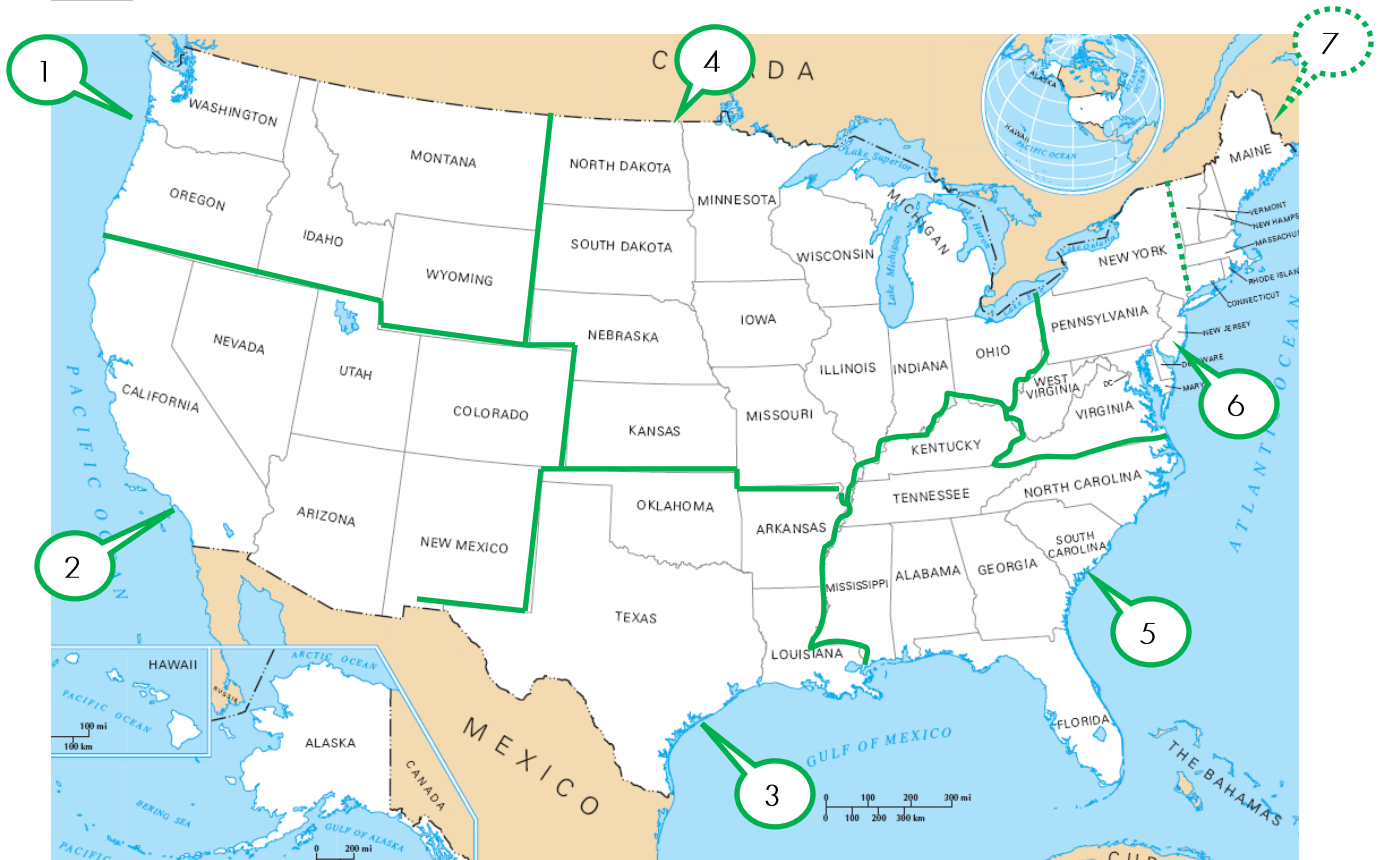
## Geographic Areas

The Task Force recommends that there be 5, 6 or 7 geographic areas. On the following two maps, we have suggested different ways to define these areas. Each area includes multiple major media markets, and states are never split. New England could become a part of a larger area with the New York/Washington, D.C. markets, or stand alone. There are different configurations for the south/southeastern part of the country, the southwest, and western part of the United States. We need input from each geographic area to determine what would work best culturally.

Map 1



MAP 2



Volunteer roles will be significant in each area. There will be representatives from each geographic area to the National Advisory Council. Representatives from each geographic area would work to coordinate overarching educational direction. Then, delivery of educational events would happen at the local level and virtually.

In addition, there will be Area Leadership Councils that provide leadership opportunities for members and coordinates education within each area; accreditation volunteers will continue to play an important role; and local affinity groups will self-organize in smaller geographic locales.

### State groups

A national committee would set the association's public policy agenda and work with volunteers in the 50 states plus DC and Puerto Rico. Some states now have formal or informal organizations for this purpose. Depending on the state, the state-based group could be ongoing or temporary, but all could be assigned national association staff, as needed.

### Technology

We will use technology to inspire new forms of networking, education, and affiliation.

## Affinity groups

Affinity groups will self-organize, with the potential for association staff support. Examples include the EPIC or Young Professionals groups; Not-for-profit groups; camps within the same metropolitan area; specialty camps; or any of today's kindred groups.

## Timeline and Process for Decision

1. Preliminary discussion materials to the Sections by 9/1/08. *(Completed)*
2. Preliminary discussion materials to the Presidents and Executives in preparation for the November meeting – by 10/15/08. *(Completed)*
3. In person discussion with Presidents and Executives 11/17-18/08. *(Completed)*
4. Follow up materials to the Sections in 1/09. *(Completed)*
5. In person discussion with the COD 2/2009.
6. Follow up materials to the Sections by 3/1/09.
7. Continuing discussions in the field following 3/1/09 - ?
8. Recommendation to the National Board no later than 10/2009.
9. Transition and implementation 10/2009 →