FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Wenatchee Valley YMCA to Sell Camp Property and Create an Outdoor Recreation Endowment to Expand Offerings

The Wenatchee Valley YMCA announced today that it will be creating a multi-million-dollar endowment intended to provide local residents with access to a wide variety of outdoor recreation experiences and programs, including overnight camping experiences. The endowment will be funded by the sale of its Lake Wenatchee YMCA Camp property.

"The Wenatchee Valley YMCA will be embarking on an audacious strategy to dramatically increase the number of local residents who can experience outdoor recreation, including overnight camping experiences," said Dorry Foster, President and CEO of the YMCA.

"The needs of kids and families in our area are changing and the Wenatchee YMCA must adapt its programs and services to meet those needs," said Dorry Foster, President and CEO of the YMCA. "The development of an outdoor recreation endowment will allow the Y the ability to better serve its members and the community and do so in a financially sustainable manner," added Foster.

The Lake Wenatchee Camp serves about 300 campers a year, 125 of those are from Chelan and Douglas counties, that is 1.24% of the total school districts population for the age groups we serve. The capital and operating losses to the camp have grown annually and over the last ten years, have totaled more than $2M. The camp buildings are not financially viable with today's child safety policies, and renovations of the buildings to meet these standards more efficiently are in the tens of millions of dollars.

Foster acknowledged that from an emotional standpoint, choosing to put the Y Camp up for sale was difficult. The Y has had the Lake Wenatchee property for 98 years and countless kids have had transformational experiences at that camp. But the mission of the Y is through programs first and we believe we can better offer children and young adults a chance to explore the great outdoors, build lasting friendships, and develop important life skills without the burden of owning and managing camp property. The board and staff believe that the future of outdoor recreation lies in innovative, year-round, personalized experiences that reach more of our valley's youth.

Cindy Ulrich, President of the YMCA Board of Directors states, "We are incredibly grateful for the many years of memories created at the camp and the impact it has had on countless young lives. While this decision was not taken lightly, we believe this brings a new opportunity to create partnerships with State Parks, Forest Service, and recreation businesses in our community that share our mission, providing more opportunities for everyone to access the outdoors. Working together, we can continue building healthier communities and ensure the YMCA is financially viable for the next 100 years."

"The Board & Trustees believe the time is right to embrace a more dynamic and inclusive approach to outdoor recreation, one that allows us to expand our reach and offer a diverse range of experiences for participants of all ages and backgrounds. After looking at years of data and recent industry changes, it has also been recommended through third party specialists to consider program alternatives," added Ulrich.

With its new outdoor recreation endowment, the YMCA will develop adventure-based programs in natural settings, hands-on learning opportunities, outdoor education, leadership development, and overnight camp experiences at other camps in the northwest. Additionally, the YMCA is working to ensure a smooth transition for former camp staff and volunteers, many of whom will be involved in the new program.

After the summer 2025 camp season, Lake Wenatchee YMCA Camp will continue to offer group rentals and outdoor education opportunities when we can. Foster said the organization expects to start marketing the 25-acre property in the fall.

YMCA leadership has sanctioned an appraisal on the property and guidance from third party partners. Although expected, it is unclear if the sale of the camp property will help fund the construction of the new facility or alleviate any long-term debt service for the new YMCA campus on 5th Street in Wenatchee.

"We believe these decisions will help the Wenatchee Valley YMCA be successful in supporting kids and families for the next 100 years," added Foster.

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About the Wenatchee Valley YMCA:
At the Y, strengthening community is our cause. We believe that lasting personal and social change can only come about when we all work together to invest in our kids, our health and our neighbors. That's why we focus our work in three areas:
-Youth Development - Nurturing the potential of children and teens
-Healthy Living - Improving community health and well-being
-Social Responsibility - Giving back and supporting our neighbors

History of Lake Wenatchee YMCA Camp