



What You Told Us:  
Camper Input to the Three Mile Island  
2014-2018 Long Range Planning Process

The Three Mile Island Camp Committee

May 2014

During the summer of 2013, the Three Mile Island Camp Committee solicited input from campers, staff and crew in shaping the island's next, 2014-2018, Long-Range Plan. The material in this report comes, largely unfiltered, from two sources of Three Mile camper input:

106 campers participated in guided, semi-structured discussions led weekly through the summer by Beth Spencer, the Island Educator. Beth provided comprehensive notes from these discussions to Tracy Munn, Committee member, who organized them, by theme and topic, below.

109 campers responded in writing to a query included on the back of the Camper Survey, which asked for their input regarding future challenges and opportunities at Three Mile. These comments were transcribed and included in the same theme and topic sort.

In order to capture the breadth of input, as well as the volume (frequency) of interest in specific topics, all comments are included. Comments were sorted, but none were excluded or collapsed.

How representative is the input we received? It's hard to say. Because all comments were recorded anonymously, there is no way to tease out degree of overlap in the two source groups. It is also unclear what kind of bias was introduced by the likelihood that only one of each reservation party filled out the survey. (Although it is available for all, commonly the survey is completed by only one person from each reservation party, often the bill-payer.) Even with these and other pertinent caveats, however, the response set we have is notable for both its variety and consistency.

This is a heart-warming and stimulating read, full of useful food for thought. We hope you enjoy *What You Told Us*, and we thank you for supporting Three Mile and the Committee's work. If you are curious about the ultimate content of the new Long-Range Plan, it is still in process at this date, and due for final Committee approval at the Fall meeting. Comments and questions should be directed to the Committee Chair ([committeechair@3mile.org](mailto:committeechair@3mile.org)).

K. Tracy Munn, Committee Member

May 2014

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**I. HIGHLIGHTS: *What We Heard You Say***

Implicit in campers' responses was the wish that the Three Mile Island committee and management be aware, involved, educated and conscious about changes that could affect the island and campers' experience of their time on it. This is not a culture of reactivity: campers want us to be in a position to anticipate problems and be able to adapt when there is a need to. This also is not a culture of fear or impassivity. Campers appear united insofar as they want us to protect Three Mile so that the camper experience remains as unchanged as possible, yet they assume challenges and want us to be alert for them. Campers want us to be leaders in the wise and sensible integration of sustainability practices. Three Mile campers are balanced in their attitudes: they recognize both sides of most issues, and they are as concerned about the practicalities of fiscal responsibility and stewardship, as they are about ideals of community, simplicity and sustainability.

There is enormous consistency in what campers name as the core of *The Three Mile experience*. They want us to defend these values and take great care with any changes.

More than any other matter raised, there is a great deal of feeling and controversy around the use of technology and electronic devices at Three Mile. The debate is passionate, but complicated. The prevailing view is that the *off-the-grid* or *unplugged* experience at Three Mile should be protected and promoted ... but that existing policy suffers in some of its rigidities and exclusions. There are not adequate locations for charging devices. There is a call to shift to a *function over form* decision rule about certain forms of technology use. Campers are at odds with each other around e-Readers, but not so much around other devices, use of which they largely seem happy to confine to their cabins.

Many people identified specific and currently achievable means by which we could increase the physical accessibility of the island experience. Not just the elderly or impaired have concerns: the physically able want improvements.

There is an uneasy discomfort among many Three Milers about how *WASP* a place we are. There is also an uncomfortable awareness of how difficult it can be for newcomers (regardless of race, class or other difference) to feel welcome. Without quite acknowledging it, an underlying theme in campers' comments points to how ambivalent they are about sharing the island that they so much love keeping to themselves and their loved ones.

There is an impatience coming from Three Milers who don't understand why we have not established solar and/or wind-power generation, and why we still rely on kerosene lamps. They want us to answer to them about this.

People are feeling the pinch of our current rates. They worry about future affordability.

By and large, campers agree where to draw the line between desirable comforts and unnecessary (unwanted) luxury: they would like to see us improve chairs, lighting and safe access to cabins, water and boats. They want safe paths. Many of them do want better access to better toilets. But they say they do not want hot showers or flush toilets or electricity.

Sustainability is the prevailing value.

Sustainability in its widest sense

of Three Mile's natural resources

of its fiscal viability

of the uniqueness of the Three Mile experience

of Three Mile's traditional values and simplicity

of the human-power (staff, crew, volunteers) that protects and maintains the island, and

of the wider physical environment, locally and beyond

## II. CAMPER COMMENTS ORGANIZED BY THEME:

### A. Preserve TMI's Founding Spirit and Mission

- Keeping the island as it is today should be the goal—high standards
- Preserve the mission to ensure this is a place to get away and commune with nature
- We need to maintain the love of nature that comes from recreation in nature
- Look back to Rosewell Lawrence's original founding statement and try to be as true to the sense of that as you can be
- Preserve and protect TMI as a place focused on "good-old-fashioned fun" and multi-generational environment
- Keep TMI traditional. We love the traditions.
- Keep Rosewell Lawrence's vision
- Maintain the spirit and mission. TMI is so special b/c it is so reliable and genuine. This place is as close to religion as I get!
- Keep the simplicity and mission
- Continue to select staff and committee from people who know and love Three Mile.
- Keep asking people what they love about Three Mile and be sure to support those things.
- Keep sense of place and community
- I hope 20 years from now we can see TMI as a family reunion site (just like it is now).
- Please keep it an "island getaway"
- Keep it a "camp"—no electricity, no regular showers
- Preserve the natural beauty and keep it rustic—that's the idea for "getting away from it all"
- Most important is to maintain the structure of TMI in terms of minimal amenities (ie, no lights/electricity in cabins; group meals, etc.)
- Preserve Three Mile's mission!

### B. Protect the Personal Experience of Three Mile

- The world-to me-has gotten noisier. I would hope as TMI moves forward we dedicate more places as quiet (e.g. the Retreat).
- I would like a more quiet indoor space at the waterfront. (Like we had before the fire).
- Maintain spaces that kids can be kids and adults can be adults
- This is a place to live in nature and conservation, to swim in a clean and healthy lake
- Love having private places and social places
  
- People will always seek sun at TMI. The increasing treetop density at water's edge is severely reducing sunshine at individual cabins and docks, and thus reading in the sun has become more and more limited to the main dock—which doesn't give us the quiet and solitude we seek. Trees are wonderful, but I think each cabin and especially its dock should be evaluated annually with respect to availability of sunshine. Pruning should be a regular procedure.
- Open up the vegetation around the cabins so that they have *a bit* more sun
- I know the "conservatives" don't want trees cleared, but some vistas need to be more open
  
- Have smaller tables and try to make meals more relaxed. It's not very relaxing when there's competition for seats, and some people always get cut out, and then there's the mad grab for food when there's never enough set out in the dishes

### C. The Three Mile Experience: Intangibles

- Things are getting more and more complex. TMI has been able to isolate from that and therefore serves as a retreat.
- Even though times change and advance, people don't. We need this place in order to reset. I value the chance to rest and talk to people face to face.
- Choosing the less luxurious path makes us more special and unique over time (e.g. by not adding flush toilets and showers twenty years ago, we are that much more unique now than we were then).
- Intergenerational interactions and relationships regardless of familial connections

***What TMI Campers Told Us:  
Input for the 2014-2018 Long-Range Plan***

- Coming here is living in community. We should get better at exporting this community to our outside lives.
- The island should be conserved as a gift to future campers.
- Profoundly liberating place with a real balance. Life is respected—ours and those of the animals and plants
- The TMI experience helps preserve a quiet contemplative experience away from the iPhone syndrome and may actually extend attention span.
- I'd like to think TMI gives people the gift of time to reflect and make positive change in their lives.
- Survey old Croo—what are they doing now? How has the TMI Croo experience affected their lives?
- The biggest challenge is and will be the number of powerboats and giant houses that pollute the lake and threaten the TMI experience—already the boat noise is excessive. Can 3-Mile and the AMC monitor this? Can 3Mile/AMC lobby to reduce fast speedboat traffic on the West shore?
- Encourage (expect) campers to clean up after themselves--eg, at main house and dock—otherwise, it encourages/engenders entitlement, which is hostile to the *human* environment
- I like the concept of being ecologically *aware*.
- My vision is for the island to remain an oasis in an otherwise changing world.
- Connecting us with nature is an essential part of Three Mile; people are more likely to become disconnected with nature in the future.
- Love eating family style and the social lessons that provides our kids.
- Things that make TMI special:
  - Uniqueness
  - Rhythms of nature
  - Community with nature
  - Charter
  - Not about convenience
  - Rediscovery of imagination and creativity—separate and wonderful thing from the changes and technologies of life at home
  - Vista and backdrop that is strictly centered around nature
  - Sense of responsibility has been well developed here compared to Sandy Island (where the respondent was on their committee); there is equitability of accommodations
  - Focus on essentials—food, water, shelter

**D. Take Great Care with Changes**

- Long range plan should contain a set of values as a litmus test
- Re-state core values that guide future decision-making
- Think about understanding of all ideas against core values
- Ask the question: If the place wasn't here or completely burned down, what would you build? How would you do things differently if you were building it today?
- Has there been a retrospective analysis of larger decisions and changes (e.g., the Clivus)? As we deal with controversial changes, do we have a process of evaluation for future decisions?
- Look at the island's history and challenges. How did we handle each and how does that prepare us for the future?
- We need to successfully hold onto things and ways that are 100 years old. It should stay the same ecologically for the critters and plants, but for us, too.
- For the most part TMI should not make changes except to promote health, safety, and conservation--definitely not for convenience.
- Maintain the thoughtful and intentional manner of changing things (eg the new dock is more sustainable and will last longer without being wood)
- Keep it simple and rustic
- Keep it the same as much as possible
- Preserve 3 Mile exactly as it is.
- Keep Three Mile as simple as possible
- Maintain simplicity and peace regardless of whatever changes.
- TMI offers an experience that is atypical and difficult to replicate. Any changes to schedule, rules, infrastructure or activities *should be approved with careful considerations*. When major changes are considered, I would re-read

the plaque regarding “The Club Camp at Lake Winnepesaukee” to determine if the change is consistent with these statements.

- I think the biggest challenge TMI faces is in *resisting* change. In order to preserve the essential experience we value—access to nature and a simple existence with a community of like-minded people. I hope we can think very carefully about every change we make, and try to provide access to nature and a simple existence, to all who come here.
- Perhaps the most important and difficult challenge will be how NOT to change.
- We don’t like to think about future changes! We like tradition.
- I wouldn’t change much! It is wonderful as it is.
- Change is inevitable (eg, kayaks are creeping up on canoes) but we should be careful that change doesn’t alter the basic character of TMI
- I personally don’t think a lot should be changed. I think that’s what’s great about the place.
- I love the camp as it is now. I appreciate living a somewhat rustic life.
- If people want electricity, showers and paved pathways, there are other places they can go.
- I see nothing wrong with the Rec Hall. It just needs a paint job.
- Hopefully the future of the island will be no different from the past
- What we love about Three Mile is that it never changes—rustic, peaceful, etc. and that there’s no technology. One challenge will be keeping it the same in this changing world.
- Keep the island as is, in spite of external pressures to change
- This should not become “everyman’s” vacation. We should not become the AMC’s Highland Center.
- Simplicity is key!
- It’s a simple place. Not many people like it. Those that do, love it and will return.
- If you want formality, go somewhere else for vacation.
- If you try to make it work for everyone forever, it won’t be simple and it will lose the things we love
- Hope that AMC does not demand facility improvements like electricity in cabins, or showers.
- The Committee needs to maintain the authority to say no to “improvements” that sacrifice what makes TMI special and different.

#### **E. Technology and Electronic Devices**

- As electronics decrease in size, it may be impossible to avoid letting them out on the island.
- It is only going to get more difficult to keep technology off the island.
- It is going to get harder and harder to unplug as employees.
- The world will become more connected. Maintain the disconnect.
- It is easier to maintain a technology ban today than it will be in twenty years.
- The struggle to keep 3mile “off the grid” will only intensify as technology becomes a larger and larger part of our lives. We currently limit ourselves (at TMI) to the technology of two or three generations before us. But as cell phones and iPads become the “old” technology of campers’ grandparents, their acceptance on the island may become as much a given on the island as plastic kayaks and fluorescent light bulbs have become today.
- Electronics are becoming more and more prevalent.
- Electronics are always plugged in at the Retreat/Main House. This might be the only way to keep younger generations returning—ie, allow a designated place for electronics.
  
- We reach people through our island culture. Maintain the current rule and let the island culture change people’s mindset about wanting/needing phones etc.
- Continue to push no electronics
- Lack of technology creates incentive to be with people here.
- Prefer to still allow no electronics outside of cabins 20 yrs from now—even if we don’t use print books in twenty years, TMI can be a place to try one out for a week
- I don’t want to ever see or hear someone walking down the path or sitting at the dock on the phone.
- Electronics are isolating. They are a distraction for those around them.
- I come here to get away from work. If the person next to me is working on a phone/ipad/laptop, then I can no longer get away.

***What TMI Campers Told Us:  
Input for the 2014-2018 Long-Range Plan***

- There is an insidious creep of more “toys” and technology. Keep the place simple and based on creativity, quiet, shared experience, community and individual space. A respite. Time to unite families
- I like the disconnect from machines
- Please keep us off the grid!! As a kid of the tech age, I cannot express how much I value my TMI time!!
- Technology-free will continue to be important
- Electronics a no-no. It’s great.
- Maintain no public technology policy—very important! A slippery slope that we cannot foresee.
- I appreciate the current policy on electronics. Sometimes I need to deal with life off island and it is nice to know I can at my cabin.
- I like the no electronics in common areas
- Probably, as technology and work patterns change, more people will come to the island with electronics. Please keep the “electronics out of sight” policy.
- Keep Three Mile as un-plugged as possible!
- Maintain as much as we can “no electronics”. It’s wonderful to unplug.
- No electronics (including any type of e-book) anywhere except cabins.
- I value the no tech policy! A lot.
- Do not waver on the technology policy, please. I’ll admit that I cheat (check emails in the outhouse, etc.), but having the prohibition against all electronics in public makes a big difference to me. There is no other place in the world that I can go that fosters the sense of being present in the here and now than TMI. Please, no Kindles, etc.
- Continue to keep out electronic devices (except in cabins)
- I believe 3 Mile should hold the line on pressures to allow phones, etc. It’s so nice to detach from the 24/7 mentality
- I love the no electronics “off the grid” policy and hope it never changes. For people who do not buy paper books anymore, they can still use the main room library.
- Please keep all electronics equipment out of view (confined to cabins) FOREVER. Pretend we really ARE off the grid. It is the only place in some of our lives which is electronics-free (if we chose to make it so.)
  
- Photos and iPhones—make people even more aware of the no technology rule so that they are more likely to come prepared with a camera other than an iPhone
  
- The e-book issue a few years ago was interesting. It will probably return as people move further and further from printed books. As soon as an exception is made for e-books though, people will be on game systems, watching movies, etc.
- The world is going to get more “connected”; maybe using Kindles here will be ok! So much easier to read from.
- I think an e-Reader is different than an iPhone.
- People enjoy reading in different ways—Kindle, e-readers, MP3 (audiobooks). Readers of these types feel excluded from the community. It would be great if the Three Mile community would embrace all people who listen/read books that are not on paper. Small and simple is beautiful—encourage campers to travel light by not having to carry extra books to the island.
- Paper based books are dwindling: 10-15 years from now, e-books will be primary. When and how will we adapt to this? What about charging books etc?
- Kindle usage may need to be re-discussed as separate from other electronics, much the way that digital cameras are now allowed.
- Kindle is different and can be better than print books
- Technology is a big challenge: I agree with limiting cell phones and computers to cabins, but am not sure about e-books.
- The technology ban started with amplified music, which is different than an e-reader.
- I’d like to see kindles here for reading books and newspapers. We wind up being ostracized at Three Mile for reading in a more green way (ie, on kindles). This distressed me and many of my neighbors this week.
- But what about those with handicaps that prevent them from reading traditional books (eye problems, etc)

***What TMI Campers Told Us:  
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- We need to think about form versus function instead of saying it is all bad—people used to come here to write, read, etc. Now all of these things are done on computers but we don't allow them. We should consider which functions we value and consider allowing them.
- The point is to be amused by nature not by electric toys
- The current technology rule is very clear, however, technology blurs lines. Keep the mission paramount when considering technologies.
- We need to think about what it is about electronics we are trying to stop (isolation, disengagement, cutting off sense of community).
- I challenge the committee to discern when and how we draw lines as people use iPhones as cameras and readers too.
- We have to clarify our Core Values and how we balance these with the influx of new technologies.
- Technology doesn't have to be bad. I would like to see technology to be used to educate people
- Newer technologies can help us get more done more efficiently. (*Ed. note: All bullets below are from same person*)
  - We still keep our telecommunications as if it were the '70s
  - Cell access/email of staff can provide better customer service, making the island experience more natural
  - As technology improves, we can use it to make island life easier, e.g. solar power
  - Technology doesn't need to be something we are afraid of
  - It's better to keep an open mind and choose sustainability
- I understand/believe in embracing technology in ways that will benefit the sustainability of the island/community/world. I do NOT want technology interfering with the ways people interact while vacationing on the island. Lack of cell phones/etc. is what helps TMI become a magical place for all of us.
- Need to keep reviewing the electronics policy. There are grey areas—eg, kindle vs. book; or phones that serve as peoples' primary camera. Are we clear on what determines what is in and what is out? Why is a kindle such a bad thing?
  
- Make one building or one day "designated" for folks who may need the use of electronics—I personally needed to check work-related emails.
- Perhaps we should provide a list of WIFI hotspots in Meredith so that people can go use the web if needed.
- Provide and role-model increasing green energy options (phone chargers etc). This could decrease people charging at Retreat/Main House.
- Make solar-powered chargers available at individual cabins—so as to lessen the crowd of device-charging in the Main House and Retreat
- Consider adding designated charging stations apart from the Retreat/Main House, as the outlets in these spaces are constantly filled with people's personal devices.
- Perhaps arranging for a special place for charging and keep the Retreat outlets for lamps only.
  
- What about motion sensing lights in common areas to decrease wasted electricity? Is that better than the pedagogic of turning lights off?
- What is TMI going to do about Google Glass? (note: Editor *Googled* this term and found that *Google Glass* is a funny-looking pair of eyeglasses that follows voice commands to take a picture or record whatever is being looked at. The glasses appear to operate hands-, wire- and screen-free ... and they're affordable.)

**F. Accessibility (Physical, For All Concerned)**

- Have a set of cabins with easier access and smoother trails (e.g., all Edgewater cabins are easier to access)
- Have a space where it is easier to get in and out of canoes/kayaks (shoots)
- Make it known which cabins are accessible and give priority for those cabins to people with decreased motor skills or younger children
- It would be nice to have a few more cabins with ramps
- I can no longer get in and out of kayaks/canoes at the dock--I need a beach to do it. Can we revamp the waterfront to create a space where people can more safely enter and exit the boats?
- Are there small ways that the island can be adapted so that people can continue to use it as they age? E.g. adding railings to the steps at cabins--it may not be "required for code" but it would be nice.



***What TMI Campers Told Us:  
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- We need more ADA accessibility. One cabin is not enough. It is nearly impossible to get from that cabin to the main house for meals, as the path isn't good enough.
- We need to know our accessibility plan so one isn't foisted upon us.
- Give the people who have built the traditions the ability to come as they age
- Consider making all Edgewater and Idlewilds ADA with good paths.
- We do a great job adapting to good needs
- It can be treacherous at some cabins to get to/in/out of the water. Making this safer is an accessibility issue for able-bodied people and a liability issue for camp.
- What do we do when today's 45-65 year olds are 65-85? How do we need to adapt paths and cabin accesses?
- If we go too far, we will ruin the island
- Environment and general appearance of the island should remain the same
- As median age of population increases, there will be more mobility issues. Liability waivers won't stop lawsuits, so the trail maintenance I see happening is a good thing.
- I don't think it's practical to be handicap accessible and maintain the rustic environment we all love
- Since we older people hope to keep coming, we would like more adjustments for older people: railings on cabin stairs, help with sun showers, more latrines (esp on West Shore)
- Accessibility: I don't have the strength or balance to fill a sunshower, carry it up a tilty grade, hoist it on its hook, and then pull it up to a usable height. I don't know how children or women over 50 can do this. Realistically, is the island doing the best it can with this?
- Trail markings are un-findable in many locations, especially at night when you most need them.
- Access to the outer toilets is pretty rough in many places—the distance from cabins, the difficult-to-find signage at night to locate them, and the minor paths that get you to their front steps... pretty hazardous.
- Outhouses are hard to find, particularly on the northern end of the island: consider larger signage or more of it; hang moon signs lower so they are easier to see
- Consider dim solar lights at outhouses to make them easier to find at night without diminishing the darkness at cabins/on lake
- Consider small red reflectors at ground level at start of outhouse trails so they are unnoticed during the day but reflect off flashlights at night
- Look at making one or two of the Idlewilds more accessible so the older generation can come to TMI for a few more years.
- Will need more handicap-accessible, and trails need to be as easy to travel as possible. This generation is far more active than long ago, or even more recently.
- Good job filling in the main paths, but I think all the paths will need it due to erosion and difficulty for aging campers to manage paths.
- I appreciate the small but significant ways that you help people with limited mobility to have an opportunity to be close to nature.
- I think it's fine if people want to come to TMI in their 90's and 100's, but only if they are functional and able to get around to the point they can make it from Edgewater or other close cabins to the Main House and dock.
- More handicap accessibility, especially up to Main House
- Need railings on cabins
- Need to be able to access kayaks—shallow water access is easier.
- As the population ages, and 90 is like 80, etc., we need more consideration for access to the cabin's dock and getting into the water
- More accessibility for the handicapped or less mobile might be considered
- We may need to make a few more cabins and the main house more accessible as the population ages.
- TMI has to be accessible for folks who are 95
- The elderly population will definitely increase. More campers will be elderly. More cabins need ladders from the water to their docks.
- Eventually a ramp may be needed from the main dock into the water.
- An older population might mean different management structures and staffing to accommodate them
- As to age, and the aging process, there comes a time when people cannot be safely accommodated. The environment cannot be changed to be accessible to those who cannot enjoy it safely.

***What TMI Campers Told Us:  
Input for the 2014-2018 Long-Range Plan***

- As all of us live longer, TMI needs water access that is more easy and safe, eg. walk-in access at the main dock rather than a ladder. Also need safe water access from cabin docks.

**G. The TMI Community: Demographics, Newcomers, Sharing**

- Keep the minimum age 4+
- Open the island to parents with children under 4
- Why do we exclude children under 4? Can we overcome the obstacles in the way of welcoming all ages?
- Respect older people to know their own limits, do not set an upper age limit
- The island self-thins as people decrease in ability
- We are thought of as a family resort but might become more groups of people as families change and people marry later in life.
- As the population ages, we might want to ensure that children can always come—that families might actually need to have priority at some point!
- I'd hate to see TMI become a place that discourages single people from coming.
- The most unique and important thing to me is that families can gather at Three Mile and have the whole week or parts of weeks to relax and play. I hope some flexibility can be built in for those who cannot come for a whole week.
- TMI is a rare find for a single parent, or a grandparent traveling with a grandchild. This camp has provided intergenerational opportunities of all kinds and, along the way, offers a community in the truest sense. Amazingly, in one week a year.
- I value the multigenerational presence
- Encourage family style meals, family entertainment and keep family values going.
- Keep up family values and community meals.
  
- Is there a way to diversify and make ourselves less homogeneous?
- Do we have an obligation to the AMC to open up to more people (incr. diversity)?
- Are we welcoming?
- TMI is very white compared to the overall US population. We should work on changing this to catch up with society's increasing diversity.
- It's tough to be a minority here. Why do we cater to a WASP'y crowd? Can we look at diversity? Recruitment practices for crew? Choice of music for Friday night dance? Programming offerings?
- Recruit a diverse staff—maybe with help from other agencies, nonprofits.
- Three Mile needs to ask itself: how does it respond to a racially diverse society? Also our global community?
- Diversity—this is the whitest place I come; what does our lack of diversity mean for us?
- Do we have space for more people and diversity? We seem pretty full.
- Would we lose some of our sense of community if we start seeking out many newcomers who don't know our ways?
- To have community, you have to have similar interests—if we try to recruit tons of diversity, will we have similar interests?
- Socio-economic class is responsible for much of the missing diversity
- For those without, coming to a place with no showers, flush toilets, electricity sounds like deprivation, not fun times.
- Open the TMI experience to families and children who have no (financial) access—like NYC's Fresh Air Farm. We are so blessed and we should share.
- Work on increasing diversity in Croo and campers, while yet maintaining the sense of families-over-generations at Three Mile (and the continuity and commitment that come from that).
- Some diversity (in people who come here) would be good.
- I think it is worrisome that only 2 of 89 (or so) of campers this week represented new blood. We risk stultification. There needs to be a way of opening the Three Mile experience to new people, new families, new sorts of people, not just for their good, but for ours. Yes, we want familiarity ... up to a point. But Three Mile has become incestuous. I suppose it always has been. I, for one, would like to see more unfamiliar faces.

***What TMI Campers Told Us:  
Input for the 2014-2018 Long-Range Plan***

- We also don't have much political diversity—we are predominantly well educated. I have friends who came once and said we had too much intellectual snobbery. This prevented them from returning—TMI has a level of thoughtful conversation higher than the American average.
- We're a big group of likeminded individuals and that is not necessarily a bad thing.
- Maybe we can outreach to different groups, do outreach based volunteering instead of only inwardly focused.
- Maybe doing Outdoor Education in the fall and spring for inner city kids of urban family experiences
- Some people are advocating opening the camp to more "diversity"—perhaps "inner city" is one of the populations referred to. Please keep in mind that in order to keep 3-Mile the treasure it is, it is important that those who attend be made aware of the "3-Mile culture" (e.g., respect for others' property, times of quiet, being open to meeting new people, mingling). Perhaps having a "host-3-Mile mentor" might work—integrating very slowly...
- This will continue to be an exclusive place for the privileged few unless we find ways to be more inclusive.
- Help improve camper diversity and ensure TMI traditions are developed for families from different race and ethnicities. Consider financial support.
- Campers should be more welcoming (considerate and accommodating) towards the feelings of newcomers at mealtimes, when it can be very difficult to find seating arrangements with your party. Mealtimes give people an opportunity to meet new people and make new acquaintances, however, accomplishing this may be difficult with some "long-timers"
- Think about limiting cliques by limiting family groups to fewer cabins, to promote more overall community at the dinner tables.
  
- New people need to know what to expect when they arrive so that they can become part of the culture of the island
  
- Social Isolation is hard for newer campers (throughout first decade).
- The number of long time extended families makes it harder for new people to make connections.
- Create a slogan about inclusiveness and remind campers (of all ages) to be inclusive
- Try having a getting to know activity at end of town meeting
- Foster a group of hosts/ambassadors of long-timers who adopt newcomers and help them get to know others
- Tap a long-timer to host a BYOB "Everyone's Invited" Happy Hour early in the week to help people get to know each other.
- TMI is a tradition but it needs to *not* be a closed society. How do we help newcomers become part of the tradition?
  - Pre-island communication from long-term camper starting in April
  - BBQ dinner at dock on Sunday night so people have to mingle
  - Open BYOB Happy Hour on Sunday night
  
- Continuity of families through generations leads to generosity of time, money, knowledge, etc. This also makes demand high as families get larger. How can we deal with increasing demand?
- A challenge: optimize reservation access for everyone, but avoid becoming "too popular/successful"
- What happens when/if we get long waiting lists? How will we handle this? What is our maximum build up and how do we plan to handle it?
  
- It would be great if a Ridebuzz was created for each week like is done for Miles of Music, this way people who fly up for camp wouldn't need to rent a car to come.
- It would also be nice if the enrollment form had a box people could check if they were a single in a cabin and interested in a roommate of the same gender to help defray costs.
- We have a Facebook page?? No one knows!

**H. Sustainability: Island Practices and Resources**

- Can we sell our Humanure? It is valuable stuff and we shouldn't just be dumping it on the grounds.
- Garbage! My wish is that we dramatically decrease the amount of garbage we produce.
- Ask for and encourage families to take #3-7 recycling home with them, share the responsibility of caring for the environment with campers

***What TMI Campers Told Us:  
Input for the 2014-2018 Long-Range Plan***

- Keep adding fill to paths, to raise them to their original level. Over the years compaction and erosion have exposed more rocks and roots—bad for the trees and dangerous for campers
- Continue removing alien invasive plants.
- We've apparently outrun our regular annual supply of firewood.
- Island erosion due to motorboats
  
- Monitor ecological impact of increasing use off-season
- Global Warming: How will it affect lake levels, tree species, plants, pest problems?
- Changes visible in forest every year
- Keeping aware of surrounding areas and what's happening
- Is climate change a qualitative thing, what are the predictions for this area?
- As global warming happens and the lake temperature or level goes up, how will this affect food production and fishing?
  
- Should we consider replanting specific species of trees new to see them later on the island? "The best time to plant a tree is 100 years ago." What trees do we want to see in 60 years?
- Mink can be very destructive to this environment; we should consider harvesting the animals.

**I. Energy Sources and Conservation**

- Need to explore various energy options; society will most likely see a decrease in oil/oil dependency
- Want to see intentional increase in sustainable energies and solar
- We need to balance solar power and energy frugality
- Campers should be presented with the data on the feasibility of solar panels and/or wind turbines on TMI, specifically launch house, parking lot and Hawk's Nest.
- Use of solar power could be utilized
- Eliminate use of propane and gasoline by switching to solar
- Solar powering, wind turbine
- Please attempt solar and wind resources. Is it an oversight that new rec hall doesn't have solar panels?
- Look into solar power/electric technology. Solar at Shep's parking lot might be a good option.
- SOLAR POWER!
- Solar panels?
- Could solar or wind power work on the island?
- I'd like to see solar hot water panels for the Main House, to reduce the use of gas needed to heat hot water.
- Solar panels on Main roof or Boathouse roof?
  
- Continue concern over our impact on environment, e.g. our carbon footprint
- Renewable Sources
- Make sustainability vision a visible reality
- Refit and upgrade Change House for off-season use and charge for its use. Limit off-season access to Main House.
- Aim at 100% renewable energy
  
- We use hundreds of gallons of propane heating water. We should switch to solar water heating at the main house and then use that to teach people about the differences between solar and propane
- We've switched the island to CFLs, but those are now archaic and LED are the best to use
- Appy is romantic but inefficient--creates huge wake, which is lost energy and also erodes shorelines. Is it worth it to replace with a better more efficient vessel?
- An electric powered Appy would be ok as long as it has a reasonable maximum speed so that it can get back and forth to TMI against headwinds and waves in a reasonable amount of time.
- The existing Appy is a fuel hog and a noisemaker, despite its lovely wood. We should have a long-range plan now for its replacement. That would inform the amount of maintenance-investment we put into it until it is replaced.

***What TMI Campers Told Us:  
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- Rent out portable solar chargers with directions on how to use and where to use, so people can charge electronics at cabins instead of common areas. This would also give TMI the opportunity to dictate where they are used.
- Phase out kerosene—use rechargeable lanterns
- Kerosene lanterns scare me but I've been afraid to bring it up. What about solar lights or LED lamps?
- It would be great to see a Kerosene-free TMI in the future
- Transition to solar lanterns in cabins
- Kerosene lanterns versus solar lights
- Kerosene is scary—we would rather have camping lanterns
- Kerosene: Love the lighting versus the environmental impact
- Years ago we discussed switching to biodiesel but it never happened.
- Increase safe practices with kerosene?
  - Can we offer lessons to people or place instructions in cabins--using Kerosene lanterns is a lost art
  - Have Croo check wick levels, etc when they go around on Saturdays.
- It may soon be better to do solar LEDs hardwired into each cabin over batteries.

**J. Sustainability: The Local Environment**

- AMC does advocacy, is there anything we at TMI can do?
- Can we get more involved with lake interests and water quality?
- The committee should participate more in efforts to maintain the health of the lake.
- Work with local organizations and government to protect lake
- Next long range plan should have a goal of becoming more involved in local interests and politics to protect island and lake
- TMI should seek to impact land and water use policy preserving Lake Winnepesaukee
- Are we involved in lake planning? We should be.
- Lake levels continuing to rise could be a problem for some cabins?
- I'm seeing changes in the lake water common to many lakes—strange algae I haven't seen, possibly an indication of excess fertilizer from lawns and probably acid rain related changes to the water that make it less supportive to fish and other critters. I'd like to see our organization take an increasingly more active role as stewards and activists for protective rules that would preserve the lake. The loon society was able to get the lead out. Maybe we can lobby for rules against fertilizers in the watershed that feeds the lake? A big goal, I know, but an important one, and better now than in the years when it will be too late.
- What about water quality and where we'll get our drinking water in the future
- Are there projections for Lake Winnepesaukee on how water levels will change with global warming? How will this impact our buildings?
- Water Quality: I've seen a huge increase in pipewort in the water. What does this mean about lake quality?
- We need to become a respected neighbor and leader on lake issues so people will listen to us on conservation issues.
- How does offseason lake use affect water quality and islands? Snowmobilers driving up onto rocks and pooping on shore? The Derby?
- TMI has been doing well on sourcing locally. This should continue to be a focus.
- As we move forward and look at replacing buildings in the future, we should assess our level of responsibility if continuing to utilize our grandfathered status with buildings and the shoreline. Is it responsible to rebuild on current footprints or should we follow the spirit of the law?
- Beware of using our "grandfather's clause" too much (if at all) in future building.
- As we build new structures/replace old, can we think about our responsibility to the lake and land? What is possible in new buildings in 40 years is hard to fathom right now.
- Future access to Three Mile: would we ever need our own dock on Meredith Neck?

**K. Costs and Island Fiscal Responsibility**

- The price is fantastic!
- Does price negate the demand? It seems like it gets more expensive every year, which perhaps balances out as families with kids or families from further away may not be able to afford it?
- As the Committee balances the price tag with needs, how will this impact the cost?
- What causes people to not return? Is it cost or something else?
- Can we define affordability for “X, Y, Z sort of family” as a guiding principle for future pricing?
- I worry about affordability as I retire and family members have kids, etc.
- Remaining financially accessible is important
- Financial access to the island is an issue. Consider using some camp surplus revenue for needs-based support to families and economically disadvantaged. This can be done for a few spots in early or late weeks, when the island is not fully subscribed.
- Please remain affordable
- I worry about changes in discretionary income. As people have less discretionary income, how will this change things? People may not be able to afford coming here. How will TMI handle this and adapt?
- TMI is very affordable, can we do anything for families that cannot afford it?
- Do we do anything to attract families without resources? Can we provide any support to those that cannot afford TMI?
- The problem of under-subscribed weeks (ie, week one, this year), how about giving a 20% reduction in fees, in part as an experiment to see how responsive participation is to price, but of course primarily to fill up a low week.
- Financial Stability and funding. We need to have a balance of being open to all people but also attracting those with the \$\$ to put into the island.
- Important to continue to keep cost down so that all people can participate
- Maintain affordability
- Stabilize the price
- Maintain the higher price for campers who are here less than a week b/c of more work for Croo and higher use of resources (clean sheets. etc.)
  
- What is the current average age/distribution of ages amongst campers? Should we be marketing to more people in the 20s and 30s?
- The committee should understand TMI’s market niche and the demographics of this group. Then think about the growth ways to build that camper base.
- I believe that places like Three Mile will become less popular as global warming occurs. I hope it means more time here for me.
  
- Are we doing cost/benefits of our own sustainability actions?? As we add things like the Clivus or consider solar panels in the parking lot, does the actual cost make sense over using the money to replace other important things like the oven or Hobart? What about efficiencies of scale? Can we do our sustainability moves as part of the AMC instead of as isolationists?
- TMI is able to fund minor things. Do we have the reserves to rebuild from a major catastrophe? We may want to consider continued fundraising to build coffers if we don’t.
- Can we financially continue to do what we are doing the way that we are doing it? How do we currently stand and what happens if and when we start losing money?
- Charge rates that allow TMI to establish and maintain a solid and large enough capital fund to keep the facilities in great shape. Aim to eliminate the need for fund-raising and be able to respond quickly to sudden emergency needs.
- How are capital expenses justified and examined? It seems like the committee spends more time worrying about a new sunfish than the state of the Hobart. It seems like we rush towards pretty and important (Clivus, new paint shed) instead of focusing on urgency and need.
- Do we need all the Croo or do we have too many? When I was on Croo, we ran maintenance--do we need a maintenance “Manager”? We never used to have an educator, do we actually need one? Have these things been examined?
- Are we setting enough aside to handle a disaster?

***What TMI Campers Told Us:  
Input for the 2014-2018 Long-Range Plan***

- What about giving people the option of planned giving to the island in their wills?
- Has there been any transparency in the budget? Do campers have the opportunity to know what the budget looks like and where any shortfall is?
- Consider openness on the registration form/fee structure. Here is the per-person rate this year \_\_\_\_, but it actually costs \_\_\_\_ per person to run camp. Please consider a donation to help cover the difference. This way prices can stay low and people who have it can give more, knowing the need is there.
- As a fund-raising idea, perhaps a masseuse could come over to the island and do “a massage by the lake” one or two afternoons a week.

**L. Increasing Island Use and Habitation**

- I don't think year-round use is a good idea
- I am concerned by the pressure to expand and hope we will not, despite extended families and their desire to return.
- Off-season use must be limited: not enough firewood; there are liability risks from irresponsible actions (less oversight); and people taking advantage of the island
- I oppose year-round access and camping at TMI: summer weeks and fall weekends are ok, and maybe re-introduce spring weekends, but keep offseason use limited.
- Limit winter-weekends
- The idea of year-round operation of TMI is GREAT
- As long as TMI's founding values are not compromised, additional weeks for campers who are artists, musicians, writers, or engaged in other creative endeavors should be encouraged.
- We could extend use of the island further into the Fall, maybe to ice-in. Maybe 20+ years from now, we could have a full-service lodge towards the center of the island—use could be week-long school trips for bio/ecology; conferences. Winter use could be for ice-fishing, x-country skiing, etc.
- Off-season management and organization is weak! Liability issues ... people all over the island who may not be connected to 3Mile
- More off-season use might mean new management structures and staffing
- The growing push for year-round public schooling would dramatically change the season options at TMI as well as hiring for those season(s).
- If the climate became such that TMI could be open year-round, I think its use would be limited by school schedules.
- A more formalized annual survey of flora and fauna, particularly in light of climate change, forest progression and human impact. It seems that the previous century's data is a good base.
- We ran out of firewood early this summer, after many years of answering our own supply-needs without eating into our own woods; what do we do about that if we increase island use?

**M. Our Human Resources: Staff, Crew, Committee, Volunteers**

- The integrity of the community is integral
- Choice of committee members seems more intentional (than in the past) and the diversity of high experience levels is wonderful!
- Committee leadership has always been amazing and flexible
- Love that we are a volunteer managed facility and that we do it so well!
- It's great that our relationship with the AMC is more positive than it has historically been.
- Great to see thoughtful and intentional Croo hiring
- It may become more difficult to find good Croo due to educational and life demands.

**What TMI Campers Told Us:  
Input for the 2014-2018 Long-Range Plan**

- Can we work towards adding educational value for Croo studying something that could benefit TMI-e.g. environmental studies, engineering, etc. It would change the look of the job some but provide a huge benefit for returning Croo.
- The Croo are historically huge role models for kids. This is a wonderful thing.
- The Croo is integral to the feelings of the island. Are we having a hard time getting good Croo?
- Do we pay enough to get the Croo we want?
- Will we need to consider hiring HS kids again as college kids continue to have big demands on their summers?
- Think about ways to incentivize returning Croo with regard to school. Is there a way to get college credit or offer a scholarship? The problem is that the older college-age Croo jeopardize their summer internship opportunities in order to come back.
- Editor's note: See also some comments above about recruiting for racial diversity in staff and croo.
- We need to think about Croo housing. Time to create a better quality place for our fine young adults to live.
- How about more time off for Croo? Are the staff getting more than our young adults who work very hard, too!
  
- Volunteerism is the backbone of TMI; gives a sense of ownership in island; builds a level of connectivity
- Attention needs to be paid to volunteering and ALL people need to feel invited and welcome to volunteer.
- Maintain a volunteer Committee, b/c it invests people in this place
- Ownership is key—we have such jewels in our committee able to take on special roles. We need to instill ownership in younger generations to maintain this.
- Use work- weekends to help people feel closer to the camp and more confident in their skills. It is experiential education.
- Sustaining our human resources: are we developing the next generation of TMI leaders? How?
- Keep opening and closing weekend volunteer oriented and free.
- Can we do more with youth stewardship on the island?
- People who have put the most into the island are aging up, which will leave gaps in knowledge and expertise.
- Can we have a youth member on the committee?
- Could we have youth staying on the island help with Jobbers 1-2 days/week as volunteers?

**N. The Food We Serve**

- The increase in vegetables, especially local ones, has been wonderful.
- Would like to see profound increase in composting efforts and gardening efforts. Grow more food and herbs on island.
- Loved the pigs
- Local food is great!
- Love that meals are healthier than they used to be
- Make the gardens bigger, they are a joke right now
- Last 12 years at TMI has shown an emphasis and improvement in the food we eat
- Consider growing more food on island
- Food is important; it is currently exceptional with the attentiveness of the cook and staff to special dietary needs. Love the relationship with the local farmer.
- Participate in "Meatless Monday" and/or shift to more meat-free and/or vegan meals. It's a HUGE way to lower our environmental impact.
- Wish that gluten-free baking were more main-streamed at meals. Wish there was effort to use "healthier" sweeteners in the baking. Less processed sugar, less processed flours, and less wheat would be so much better for everyone. The cooking doesn't seem as oriented toward sustaining campers' *health* as it could be. If sustainability is a value we're trying to inculcate, there's a strange disjunction in the thinking about the foods put out for us.
- Augment Naturalist duties to grow vegetables and herbs on-island
- Local sourcing is good to keep having salads and vegetables fresh and abundant. With aging, people may eat less vegetables and need more fruit.
- I approve the dock veggie planter and composting trials!
- Only local meat and produce. Super Important ☺
- Develop plan to use more foods that are not genetically-modified



- Develop plan to use more organic produce, especially those where it's more critical. (Kripalu.org and other sites identify which kinds of produce are more important to get organic.)
- Continue to build local sources for food

#### **O. Education and Programming**

- I LOVE that this is a community that asks questions about sustainability and impact and is willing to experiment. I learn by coming here.
- We have had a core of people at TMI who are really involved and interested in protecting nature on and off island. The next generation doesn't have the same reverence for nature. We need to do more to teach them to revere nature (more island education, fairy houses, etc)
- Build/cultivate relationship with nature and island in youth
- We didn't used to have an Island Educator—this is a wonderful addition. I love the intentionality of our natural awareness.
- Adding an Island Educator to TMI was a huge plus--it connects kids with nature and they need more of that.
- This intentionality helps renew my personal goals and sustainability off island.
- Determine what experiences increase camper awareness of living sustainably and develop those
- Love the programming like Squam Lakes.
- Love the intentional focus on conservation, environment, and education here and the value of staff time to research sustainable choices
- The composting demo was extremely useful. Wondering if the things people are introduced to on the island could be brought back to "the real world".
- Increase level of environmental/conservation education for young campers to instill lifelong awareness
- Bring back the pigs!!!: connect campers to the circular nature of food production/consumption even more than we already do.
  
- I want to see more stargazing--maybe classes? A permanently mounted telescope? Can it be integrated into the new Rec Hall?
- Offer Value Added Options at extra cost
  - Sailing, kayaking, canoeing lessons
  - Special trips such as riding the Sophie C or Mount Washington that require little personal organization (people will pay extra to take a boat ride to and from the dock to take a boat trip)
- Have plotted out "grab and go" paddles with landmarks and time estimates at the dock for people who don't know the area well.
- Consider more theme weeks like music week, potentially even at the loss of having nine full weeks of regular sessions. (After weighing the financial impact of course). Perhaps a writers's week?
- Should TMI be homogeneous—each week the same? Or explore a different emphasis each week?
- Wish there were ways to participate in the island culture off-island—eg, could the book talk sustain itself over the entire year? (our talk quickly morphed into all kinds of larger issues). Wish we could maintain the support and energy found in community on the island, during the times we're not there.
- Post weekly/daily weather reports.
- Really like having 2-3 Child-Centered activities during that week to give kids and parents a break from one another.
- History and Archives: afraid to lose the history of the island over time. It would be great to do a history slideshow of "Then and Now" every week.

#### **P. Facility Upgrades**

- Outhouses--can we make the outers two-seaters? Can we increase technology (Clivus) of these too?
- More composting toilets
- Replace single outhouses with doubles
- Try to convert all the outhouses to self-composting
- Maybe build another Clivus
- The outer johns are so hard to get to, it's hardly worth trying to use them. Really wish there were more "local" and less-offensive toilets for the outer parts of the island.

***What TMI Campers Told Us:  
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- Keep TMI no flush toilets, no showers, no KOA camp!
- Outhouses should be maintained but not improved
- Simple outhouses should all be painted white inside, like the Turtle john.
- Need a new outhouse near the West Shore cabins. It's 7 minutes to West Point.
- Would like more of the toilets to be of the composting type—reduces odor
- Solar-powered smell control fans in all the johns
- Convert Breezy john to a composting system
- Can we build some more user-friendly johns on the outskirts, and rehab the original Outers' structures into technology-use stalls ... for charging or brief e-use? Kill two birds with one stone?
  
- Decisions on capital structures should include sustainability—the new Rec Hall should be solar!  
    This is an opportunity to challenge ourselves to be a leader in sustainability and to work towards being fossil free
- We should aim to be a leader in environmental sustainability with new buildings—why aren't we with the Rec Hall?
- The white roof of the Rec Hall sticks out like a sore thumb on the lake. Glad to see the proposal with a brown finish on the roof.
  
- I dream of some new tower at 3-Mile giving 360 degree views of the lake from above the tree-line.
- Establish a quality, long-lasting base for the tennis court so there is a more level surface.
- Do away with the tent cabins
- The Retreat is badly neglected

**Q. Comfort and Safety Issues**

- Continue to maintain the paths
- Paths are hazardous where roots and rocks have become overexposed by human use.
- Continue to improve pathways with gravel, especially at the north end, off the Ridge path.
- Trails should be maintained but not improved
  
- Put bannisters on all cabin steps
- Get ladders on all cabin docks
- Wood steps to dock at each cabin; steps starting on land or at the cabin depending on physical layout. Wood steps from each cabin's dock into the water. These are SAFETY issues and I sincerely hope you will address them.
  
- Remove kerosene lamps and replace with LED lights
- It would be really great if the cabins' second doors could be screened, so that they could be left open for greater airflow as temperatures rise. We had some tough nights sleeping this summer due to heat trap in the cabin.
- Can we find non-energy ways to cool cabins? The second doors could be given screens
  
- I would love to see some updates in the furniture on the island—keep a “camp” feeling, but bring chairs, tables, cabin bureaus, etc. up to date.
- I understand roughing it and maintaining simplicity, but there are some issues in the main house: need better lighting for reading and games in both the card room and main room. Also, those green-cushioned chairs and couches in the main room are **so** uncomfortable—the seat supports need re-stringing
- More comfortable CHAIRS at dock and cabins
- Can we get new chairs in the retreat?
- We need more deck chairs
  
- Two (2) bags of sun-showers per cabin perhaps?
- Hot showers
- Don't ever add showers. Never!
  
- If science allows, consider mosquito eradication when the technology becomes realistic

***What TMI Campers Told Us:  
Input for the 2014-2018 Long-Range Plan***

- Certified lifeguard? for certain hours of the day?
- Don't allow smoking **anywhere**

**R. Conveniences, Preferences, Wishes**

- Credit cards: keep technology at bay as long as possible.
- Accept Credit Cards. Not everyone carries checks anymore and this is only going to continue to be a problem.
- Email is here—need to be able to have more email communication with the island during the summer.
- It would *not* be unreasonable to make luggage restrictions to save/redirect Croo hours
- Flexible meal-plan and times. We enjoyed the buffet meals (for these reasons), especially Friday breakfast, which was 8-9:30!! (this comment comes from a camper who enjoyed an anomalous breakfast buffet that occurred one day).
- Stagger meal-times, allowing for early- and late-risers
- A water trampoline for kids!! A bigger slide ... WAY BIGGER! Ice cream on the island.
- Make a flower garden
- Commemorative shirts for sale annually
- Establish a permanent TMI logo
- New postcards!!!
- Airport shuttle paid for by campers who use it (eg, to Manchester or Logan)
- It would be great if there was some way of promoting a total AMC experience for campers--such as suggested fun add-ons to either end of a week at camp (Huts, lodges, etc)

**S. Other**

- Will Campers have access to these notes and the plan???
  - Is there going to be access to the LR Plan or Sustainability Plan on the website in the future? How do we find it?
  
  - TMI is well run, but what if something happens in the future that would cause the AMC to go out of business? What would we do then?
  
  - Local sourcing: All our t-shirts should be made in the US
-