



# Environmental Science

## Merit Badge Workbook



The requirements shown in this workbook were issued in 2015 and were in effect until changes were made in 2016 and should be used only by Scouts who started work on the merit badge during that period.

The work space provided for each requirement should be used by the Scout to make notes for discussing the item with his counselor, not for providing the full and complete answers. Each Scout must do each requirement.

No one may add or subtract from the official requirements found in *Boy Scout Requirements* (Pub. 33216—SKU 34765).

The current requirements were issued (revised) in 2020 • This workbook was updated in February 2015.

Scout's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Unit: \_\_\_\_\_

Counselor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Counselor's Phone No.: \_\_\_\_\_

<http://www.USScouts.Org> • <http://www.MeritBadge.Org>

Please submit errors, omissions, comments or suggestions about this workbook to: [Workbooks@USScouts.Org](mailto:Workbooks@USScouts.Org)  
Comments or suggestions for changes to the requirements for the merit badge should be sent to: [Merit.Badge@Scouting.Org](mailto:Merit.Badge@Scouting.Org)

1. Make a timeline of the history of environmental science in America.

1500s	
1600s	
1700s	
1800s	
1900s	
2000s	

Identify the contribution made by the Boy Scouts of America to environmental science. Include dates, names of people or organizations, and important events.

Date	People/Organizations	Event

2. Define the following terms: population, community, ecosystem, biosphere, symbiosis, niche, habitat, conservation, threatened species, endangered species, extinction, pollution prevention, brownfield, ozone, watershed, airshed, nonpoint source, hybrid vehicle, fuel cell.

Population:


Community:


Ecosystem:


Biosphere:


Symbiosis:


Niche:


Habitat:


Conservation:


Threatened species:


Endangered species:


Extinction


Pollution prevention:


Brownfield:


Ozone:


Watershed:


Airshed:


Nonpoint source:


Hybrid vehicle:


Fuel cell:


3. Do ONE activity in EACH of the following categories (using the activities in this pamphlet as the bases for planning and carrying out your projects):

a. Ecology

- c 1. Conduct an experiment to find out how living things respond to changes in their environments. Discuss your observations with your counselor.
- c 2. Conduct an experiment illustrating the greenhouse effect. Keep a journal of your data and observations. Discuss your conclusions with your counselor.
- c 3. Discuss what is an ecosystem. Tell how it is maintained in nature and how it survives.


b. Air Pollution

- c 1. Perform an experiment to test for particulates that contribute to air pollution. Discuss your findings with your counselor.
- c 2. Record the trips taken, mileage, and fuel consumption of a family car for seven days, and calculate how many miles per gallon the car gets. Determine whether any trips could have been combined ("chained") rather than taken out and back. Using the idea of trip chaining, determine how many miles and gallons of gas could have been saved in those seven days.

- c. 3. Explain what is acid rain. In your explanation, tell how it affects plants and the environment and the steps society can take to help reduce its effects.


c. Water Pollution

- c. 1. Conduct an experiment to show how living things react to thermal pollution. Discuss your observations with your counselor.
- c. 2. Conduct an experiment to identify the methods that could be used to mediate (reduce) the effects of an oil spill on waterfowl. Discuss your results with your counselor.
- c. 3. Describe the impact of a waterborne pollutant on an aquatic community. Write a 100-word report on how that pollutant affected aquatic life, what the effect was, and whether the effect is linked to biomagnification.


d. Land Pollution

- c. 1. Conduct an experiment to illustrate soil erosion by water. Take photographs or make a drawing of the soil before and after your experiment, and make a poster showing your results. Present your poster to your patrol or troop. (Per National, "troop" means "unit".)

- c 2. Perform an experiment to determine the effect of an oil spill on land. Discuss your conclusions with your counselor.
- c 3. Photograph an area affected by erosion. Share your photographs with your counselor and discuss why the area has eroded and what might be done to help alleviate the erosion.


**e. Endangered Species**

- c 1. Do research on one endangered species found in your state. Find out what its natural habitat is, why it is endangered, what is being done to preserve it, and how many individual organisms are left in the wild. Prepare a 100-word report about the organism, including a drawing. Present your report to your patrol or troop.
- c 2. Do research on one species that was endangered, threatened, or of special concern but that has now recovered. Find out how the organism recovered, and what its new status is. Write a 100-word report on the species and discuss it with your counselor.
- c 3. With your parent's and counselor's approval, work with a natural resource professional to identify two projects that have been approved to improve the habitat for a threatened or endangered species in your area. Visit the site of one of these projects and report on what you saw.


**f. Pollution Prevention, Resource Recovery, and Conservation**

- c 1.** Look around your home and determine 10 ways your family can help reduce pollution. Practice at least two of these methods for seven days and discuss with your counselor what you have learned.
- c 2.** Determine 10 ways to conserve resources or use resources more efficiently in your home, at school, or at camp. Practice at least two of these methods for seven days and discuss with your counselor what you have learned.
- c 3.** Perform an experiment on packaging materials to find out which ones are biodegradable. Discuss your conclusions with your counselor.


- 4.** Choose two outdoor study areas that are very different from one another (e.g., hilltop vs. bottom of a hill; field vs. forest; swamp vs. dry land). For BOTH study areas, do ONE of the following:
  - a.** Mark off a plot of 4 square yards in each study area, and count the number of species found there. Estimate how much space is occupied by each plant species and the type and number of non-plant species you find.

Study Plot Location 1: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Species: \_\_\_\_\_

**Plant Species** **Space each occupies**

Plant Species	Space each occupies

Non-Plant Species	Number found

Study Plot Location 2: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Species: \_\_\_\_\_

Plant Species	Space each occupies

Non-Plant Species	Number found





- b. Make at least three visits to each of the two study areas (for a total of six visits), staying for at least 20 minutes each time, to observe the living and nonliving parts of the ecosystem. Space each visit far enough apart that there are readily apparent differences in the observations. Keep a journal that includes the differences you observe

**Study Area 1:**

Visit 1 Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time Started: \_\_\_\_\_ Time Ended \_\_\_\_\_

**Observations of living parts:**


**Observations of nonliving parts:**


**Differences noted:**


Visit 2 Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time Started: \_\_\_\_\_ Time Ended \_\_\_\_\_

Observations of living parts:


Observations of nonliving parts:


Differences noted:


Visit 3 Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time Started: \_\_\_\_\_ Time Ended \_\_\_\_\_

Observations of living parts:


Observations of nonliving parts:


Differences noted:


**Study Area 2:**

**Visit 1 Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Time Started:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Time Ended** \_\_\_\_\_

**Observations of living parts:**


**Observations of nonliving parts:**


**Differences noted:**


Visit 2 Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time Started: \_\_\_\_\_ Time Ended \_\_\_\_\_

Observations of living parts:


Observations of nonliving parts:


Differences noted:


Visit 3 Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time Started: \_\_\_\_\_ Time Ended \_\_\_\_\_

Observations of living parts:


Observations of nonliving parts:


Differences noted:


Then, write a short report that adequately addresses your observations, including how the differences of the study areas might relate to the differences noted, and discuss this with your counselor.


5. Using the construction project provided or a plan you create on your own, identify the items that would need to be included in an environmental impact statement for the project planned.




6. Find out about three career opportunities in environmental science.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Pick one and explain how to prepare for such a career.

Discuss with your counselor what education and training are required, and explain why this profession might interest you.

**Education**


**Training**


**Why this profession might interest you.**


**Requirement resources can be found here:**  
[http://www.meritbadge.org/wiki/index.php/Environmental\\_Science#Requirement\\_resources](http://www.meritbadge.org/wiki/index.php/Environmental_Science#Requirement_resources)

## Important excerpts from the [Guide To Advancement - 2013](#), No. 33088 (SKU-618673)

### [1.0.0.0] — Introduction

The current edition of the *Guide to Advancement* is the official source for administering advancement in all Boy Scouts of America programs: Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, Varsity Scouting, Venturing, and Sea Scouts. It replaces any previous BSA advancement manuals, including *Advancement Committee Policies and Procedures*, *Advancement and Recognition Policies and Procedures*, and previous editions of the *Guide to Advancement*.

### [Page 2, and 5.0.1.4] — Policy on Unauthorized Changes to Advancement Program

*No council, committee, district, unit, or individual has the authority to add to, or subtract from, advancement requirements.* There are limited exceptions relating only to youth members with special needs. For details see section 10, "Advancement for Members With Special Needs".

### [Page 2] — The "Guide to Safe Scouting" Applies

Policies and procedures outlined in the *Guide to Safe Scouting*, No. 34416, apply to all BSA activities, including those related to advancement and Eagle Scout service projects.

### [7.0.3.1] — The Buddy System and Certifying Completion

A youth member must not meet one-on-one with an adult. Sessions with counselors must take place where others can view the interaction, or the Scout must have a buddy: a friend, parent, guardian, brother, sister, or other relative—or better yet, another Scout working on the same badge—along with him attending the session.

When the Scout meets with the counselor, he should bring any required projects. If these cannot be transported, he should present evidence, such as photographs or adult verification. His unit leader, for example, might state that a satisfactory bridge or tower has been built for the Pioneering merit badge, or that meals were prepared for Cooking. If there are questions that requirements were met, a counselor may confirm with adults involved. Once satisfied, the counselor signs the blue card using the date upon which the Scout completed the requirements, or in the case of partials, initials the individual requirements passed.

Note that from time to time, it may be appropriate for a requirement that has been met for one badge to also count for another. See "Fulfilling More Than One Requirement With a Single Activity," 4.2.3.6.

### [7.0.3.2] — Group Instruction

It is acceptable—and sometimes desirable—for merit badges to be taught in group settings. This often occurs at camp and merit badge midways or similar events. Interactive group discussions can support learning. The method can also be attractive to "guest experts" assisting registered and approved counselors. Slide shows, skits, demonstrations, panels, and various other techniques can also be employed, but as any teacher can attest, not everyone will learn all the material.

There must be attention to each individual's projects and his fulfillment of *all* requirements. We must know that every Scout—actually and *personally*—completed them. If, for example, a requirement uses words like "show," "demonstrate," or "discuss," then every Scout must do that. It is unacceptable to award badges on the basis of sitting in classrooms *watching* demonstrations, or remaining silent during discussions.

It is sometimes reported that Scouts who have received merit badges through group instructional settings have not fulfilled all the requirements. To offer a quality merit badge program, council and district advancement committees should ensure the following are in place for all group instructional events.

- Merit badge counselors are known to be registered and approved.
- Any guest experts or guest speakers, or others assisting who are not registered and approved as merit badge counselors, do not accept the responsibilities of, or behave as, merit badge counselors, either at a group instructional event or at any other time. Their service is temporary, not ongoing.
- Counselors agree not to assume prerequisites have been completed without some level of evidence that the work has been done. Pictures and letters from other merit badge counselors or unit leaders are the best form of prerequisite documentation when the actual work done cannot be brought to the camp or site of the merit badge event.
- There is a mechanism for unit leaders or others to report concerns to a council advancement committee on summer camp merit badge programs, group instructional events, and any other merit badge counseling issues—especially in instances where it is believed BSA procedures are not followed. See "Reporting Merit Badge Counseling Concerns," 11.1.0.0.
- There must be attention to each individual's projects and his fulfillment of all requirements. We must know that every Scout—actually and *personally*—completed them.

### [7.0.3.3] — Partial Completions

A Scout need not pass all the requirements of one merit badge with the same counselor. It may be that due to timing or location issues, etc., he must meet with a different counselor to finish the badge. The Application for Merit Badge has a place to record what has been finished—a "partial." In the center section on the reverse of the blue card, the counselor initials for each requirement passed. In the case of a partial completion, the counselor does not retain his or her portion of the card. A subsequent counselor may choose not to accept partial work, but this should be rare. A Scout, if he believes he is being treated unfairly, may work with his unit leader to find another counselor. An example for the use of a signed partial would be to take it to camp as proof of prerequisites. Partials have no expiration except the Scout's 18th birthday. Units, districts, or councils shall not establish other expiration dates for partial merit badges.

### [7.0.4.8] — Unofficial Worksheets and Learning Aids

Worksheets and other materials that may be of assistance in earning merit badges are available from a variety of places including unofficial sources on the Internet and even troop libraries. Use of these aids is permissible as long as the materials can be correlated with the current requirements that Scouts must fulfill. Completing "worksheets" may suffice where a requirement calls for something in writing, but this would not work for a requirement where the Scout must discuss, tell, show, or demonstrate, etc. Note that Scouts shall not be required to use these learning aids in order to complete a merit badge.