

Conservation Good Turn



Since 1910, conservation has been an integral part of the program of the Boy Scouts of America. The BSA has been a positive force in conservation and environmental efforts. Scouts have rendered distinguished public service by helping to conserve wildlife, energy, forests, soil, and water. Past generations of Scouts have been widely recognized for undertaking conservation Good Turn action projects in their local communities.

Scouts of today have grown up hearing words such as ecosystem, biodiversity, and climate change. They recognize the need for, and the benefits of, conserving natural resources. Scouts understand that we all must work together for the betterment of the land, forests, wildlife, air, and water.

Much has been accomplished in recent years by individual Scouts and through unit conservation Good Turns. Much more needs to be done.

Support Your Local Conservationists

The Conservation Good Turn is an opportunity for Cub Scout packs, Boy Scout troops, Varsity Scout teams, and Venturing crews to join with conservation or environmental organizations (federal, state, local, or private) to carry out a conservation Good Turn in their home communities.

- The Scouting unit contacts a conservation agency and offers to carry out a Good Turn project.
- The agency identifies a worthwhile and needed project that the unit can accomplish.
- Working together in the local community, the unit and the agency plan the details and establish the date, time, and location for carrying out the project.

Participating Agencies

Many federal agencies are resources for the BSA's Conservation Good Turn. These agencies include

- U.S. Department of Agriculture
 - Natural Resources Conservation Service
 - Forest Service
 - Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service
- U.S. Department of the Interior
 - Fish and Wildlife Service
 - Bureau of Land Management
 - National Park Service
 - Geological Survey
 - Bureau of Indian Affairs
 - Bureau of Reclamation
- U.S. Department of Commerce
 - National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Recognitions

A Conservation Good Turn patch (shown above) is available for purchase at the council service center to recognize individual youth and adult members who participate in a meaningful conservation project.

A Conservation Good Turn certificate is also available at the council service center for units that participate and report on their efforts. The application is on the back of this brochure.

The World Conservation Award provides another opportunity for individual Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, Varsity Scouts, and Venturers to "think globally" and "act locally" to preserve and improve our environment. This program is designed to make Scouts and Venturers aware that all nations are closely related through natural resources and that we are interdependent with our world environment. Applications for this award are available at the council service center.

Project Ideas

Conservation and environmental agencies typically have a backlog of needed projects that they have been unable to carry out for lack of funding or volunteers. The list of possible Good Turn projects is limited only by the needs of the agency and the willingness of the Scouting unit. In every community, whether urban, suburban, or rural, worthwhile projects await all Scouting units.

Cub Scouts and Webelos Scouts

Cub Scouting conservation projects should involve the entire Cub Scout pack, each den, adult leaders, and family members. Hands-on projects help Cub Scouts and Webelos Scouts realize that everyone can do things to care for the environment. Cub Scouts and Webelos Scouts participating in the Conservation Good Turn can also meet some advancement requirements. Suggested projects include, but are not limited to

- Plant grasses, trees, shrubs, and ground cover to stop soil erosion.
- As a den or pack, adopt a park. Remove litter and garbage from a favorite neighborhood recreation area or park.
- Organize or participate in a recycling program in your neighborhood, or visit a recycling center.
- Arrange a natural resources awareness program. Invite natural resource professionals such as wildlife biologists, soil conservationists, foresters, or conservation officers to speak to your pack.
- Participate in a beach or waterfront cleanup. Record the items collected and determine the possible harmful effects to wildlife. With youth participation, develop a plan to educate the public about the dangers posed to wildlife.
- From a local, state, or national organization that is concerned about environmental protection, obtain suggestions for den and pack projects to improve the environment.
- As a den or pack, visit a public utility to learn about the wise use of resources, and become involved in programs offered by utilities to help consumers conserve resources.
- Contact the camp ranger or BSA local council property superintendent for information about camp needs and plans. Establish a nature trail, plant vegetation, or carry out other needed projects as requested by the camp ranger.

Boy Scouts, Varsity Scouts, and Venturers

Scouts participating in the Conservation Good Turn can meet certain rank and merit badge requirements. Troops and teams should consider advancement requirements when selecting projects to carry out. Suggested projects include, but are not limited to

- Plant shrubs to provide food and cover for wildlife.
- Build and set out bird and squirrel nesting boxes.
- Conduct stream improvement projects to prevent erosion.
- Plant grasses and legumes to provide ground cover in schoolyards, public parks, and recreation areas.
- Plant tree seedlings as part of a managed forestry plan.
- Help thin and prune woodlands in a managed tree improvement project.
- With a local forester, take part in or conduct a forest fire prevention program.
- Make an exhibit on conservation for a county fair.
- Develop a nature trail in a public park.
- Assist a local forester in a tree insect- and disease-control or public education project.
- Assist a local agency with a trout stream restoration project.
- Participate in a wildlife or wildfowl count.
- Conduct a rodent-control and public health education program under the guidance of the local health department or agency responsible for rodent control.