

Know Before You Go

- Classes can accommodate up to 20 students at once
- Bring your notebook and a sack lunch
- Bring in collected data for discussion

THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MERIT BADGE COVERED IN CLASS:

Before starting work on any other requirements for this merit badge, write in your own words the meaning of sustainability. Explain how you think conservation and stewardship of our natural resources relate to sustainability. Have a family meeting and ask family members to write down what they think sustainability means. Be sure to take notes. You will need this information again for requirement 5.

Do the following:

Water

- Discuss with your counselor two areas in the world that have been affected by drought over the last three years. For each area, identify a water conservation practice (successful or unsuccessful) that has been used. Tell whether the practice was effective and why. Discuss what water conservation practice you would have tried and why.

Food

- Discuss with your counselor the ways individuals, families, and communities can create their own food sources (potted plants, family garden, rooftop garden, neighborhood or community garden). Tell how this plan might contribute to a more sustainable way of life if practiced globally.

Community

- Draw a rough sketch depicting how you would design a sustainable community. Share your sketch with your counselor, and explain how the housing, work locations, shops, schools, and transportation systems affect energy, pollution, natural resources, and the economy of the community.
- Review a current housing needs assessment for your town, city, county, or state. Discuss with your counselor how birth and death rates affect sufficient housing, and how a lack of housing—or too much housing—can influence the sustainability of a local or global area.

Energy

- Learn about the sustainability of different energy sources, including fossil fuels, solar, wind, nuclear, hydropower, and geothermal. Find out how the production and consumption of each of these energy sources affects the environment and what the term “carbon footprint” means. Discuss what you learn with your counselor, and explain how you think your family can reduce its carbon footprint.

Stuff

- Discuss with your counselor how having too much “stuff” affects you, your family, and your community. Include the following: the financial impact, time spent, maintenance, health, storage, and waste. Include in your discussion the practices that can be used to avoid accumulating too much “stuff.”

Do the following:

- Explain to your counselor how the planetary life-support systems (soil, climate, freshwater, atmospheric, nutrient, oceanic, ecosystems, and species) support life on Earth and interact with one another.
- Tell how the harvesting or production of raw materials (by extraction or recycling), along with distribution of the resulting products, consumption, and disposal/repurposing, influences current and future sustainability thinking and planning.

Explore TWO of the following categories:

- **Plastic waste.** Discuss the impact plastic waste has on the environment (land, water, air). Learn about the number system for plastic recyclables, and determine which plastics are more commonly recycled. Find out what the trash vortex is and how it was formed.
- **Electronic waste.** Choose three electronic devices in your household. Find out the average lifespan of each, what happens to these devices once they pass their useful life, and whether they can be recycled in whole or part. Discuss the impact of electronic waste on the environment.
- **Food waste.** Learn about the value of composting and how to start a compost pile. Start a compost pile appropriate for your living situation. Tell what can be done with the compost when it is ready for use.
- **Species decline.** Explain the term species (plant or animal) decline. Discuss the human activities that contribute to species decline, what can be done to help reverse the decline, and its impact on a sustainable environment.
- **World population.** Learn how the world’s population affects the sustainability of Earth. Discuss three human activities that may contribute to putting Earth at risk, now and in the future.
- **Climate change.** Find a world map that shows the pattern of temperature change for a period of at least 100 years. Share this map with your counselor and discuss three factors that scientists believe affect the global weather and temperature.

Do the following:

- Discuss with your counselor how living by the Scout Oath and Scout Law in your daily life helps promote sustainability and good stewardship.

Learn about career opportunities in the sustainability field. Pick one and find out the education, training, and experience required. Discuss what you have learned with your counselor and explain why this career might interest you.

IN ORDER TO COMPLETE YOUR MERIT BADGE, YOU WILL NEED THE FOLLOWING REQUIREMENTS:

Do the following:

Water

- Develop and implement a plan that attempts to reduce your family's water usage. As a family, discuss water usage. To aid in your discussion, if past water bills are available, you may choose to examine a few. As a family, choose three ways to help reduce water consumption. Implement those ideas for one month. share what you learn with your counselor, and tell how you think your plan affected your family's water usage

Food

- Develop and implement a plan that attempts to reduce your household food waste. Establish a baseline and then track and record your results for two weeks. Report your results to your family and counselor.

Energy B or C

- Develop and implement a plan that attempts to reduce consumption for one of your family's household utilities. Examine your family's bills for that utility reflecting usage for three months (past or current). As a family, choose three ways to help reduce consumption and be a better steward of this resource. Implement those ideas for one month. Share what you learn with your counselor and tell how your plan affected your family's usage.
- Evaluate your family's fuel and transportation usage. Review your family's transportation-related bills (gasoline, diesel, electric, public transportation, etc.) reflecting usage for three months (past or current). As a family, choose three ways to help reduce consumption and be a better steward of this resource. Implement those ideas for one month. Share what you learn with your counselor and tell how your plan affected your family's transportation habits.

Do the following:

- After completing requirements 1 through 4, have a family meeting. Discuss what your family has learned about what it means to be a sustainable citizen. Talk about the behavioral changes and life choices your family can make to live more sustainably. Share what you learn with your counselor.

Sustainability Resources

- Water
 - Oregon Water Resources Department: <https://www.oregon.gov/DWRD/pages/index.aspx>
 - McMinnville Wastewater Services: <https://www.mcminnvilleoregon.gov/wastewater>
 - McMinnville Water & Light: <http://www.mc-power.com/water/>
 - Drought.gov
 - International Water Management Institute: <http://www.iwmi.cgiar.org/>

- Food
 - Discardstudies.com
 - Environmental Protection Agency: <https://www.epa.gov/sustainable-management-food/sustainable-management-food-basics>
 - American Community Gardening Association: <https://communitygarden.org/>
 - Farmers Markets: <http://www.portlandfarmersmarket.org/>
 - <http://www.foodispower.org/food-deserts/>
 - U.S. Department of Agriculture: <https://www.usda.gov/topics/food-and-nutrition>
 - Consultive Group for International Agriculture Research: <https://www.cgiar.org/>
 - Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security: <https://ccaafs.cgiar.org/>

- Community
 - Zero Waste: <http://zwia.org/> , <https://zerowastemcminnville.org/>
 - Permaculture: <https://permacultureprinciples.com/>
 - Wendell Berry's 17 rules for a sustainable local community: https://utahlinks.org/rp/docs/Rules_WBerry.pdf
 - Oregon Housing and Community Services: <https://www.oregon.gov/DHCS/pages/index.aspx>
 - Portland Housing Needs Analysis: <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/59298>

- Energy
 - Carbon Footprint: <https://www.carbonfootprint.com/>
 - Energy source comparison: <https://www.energy.gov/science-innovation/energy-sources>
 - Energy Consumption: <https://www.energy.gov/energysaver/energy-saver>

- Transportation: <https://www.energy.gov/energysaver/vehicles-and-fuels>
- Stuff
 - Recycling: <https://www.recology.com/recology-western-oregon/recovery-zone/> , <https://www.epa.gov/recycle/recycling-basics>
 - Planned Obsolescence: <http://www.technologystudent.com/prddesl/plannedobl.html>
- Earth Systems
 - Allan Savory: <https://www.savory.global/>
 - Aldo Leopold: <https://www.aldoleopold.org/>
 - Whole systems thinking: <https://sustain.ok.ubc.ca/whole-systems-plan/what-is-it/>
- Plastic Waste: <https://learn.eartheasy.com/?search=plastic>
- Electronic Waste: <https://www.cta.tech/Consumer-Resources/Greener-Gadgets.aspx>
- Food Waste: <https://www.epa.gov/recycle/composting-home> , <https://learn.eartheasy.com/guides/composting/>
- Species Decline: <https://www.earthday.org/2018/05/18/fact-sheet-global-species-decline/>
- World Population: <https://ourworldindata.org/world-population-growth>
- Climate Change: <https://nca2014.globalchange.gov/> , <https://climate.nasa.gov/> , <https://www.climate.gov/>
- Careers
 - <http://www.greenjobs.net/>
 - <https://www.bls.gov/green/>