



Sustainability Merit Badge at Riverbend Park

Welcome to the Sustainability Merit Badge program at Riverbend Park. The program may be held at either the Riverbend Visitor Center located at 8700 Potomac Hills Street in Great Falls, or the Riverbend Nature Center located at 8814 Jeffery Road. Please review your confirmation email or call the park at 703-759-9018 for location.

Important general Merit Badge information for parents:

Be sure that you are familiar with the requirements for the merit badge your scout has selected. Some badges may take considerable time and planning to complete and may not be appropriate for younger scouts. Blue cards must be signed by your Troop Leader prior to attending the merit badge class. Park staff will not sign off on any blue cards missing this signature.

Most merit badges are not designed to be completed in a single session with an instructor, so it is not always possible to walk away with a completed and signed blue card at the end of a program. Every badge requires some independent work by your scout.

FCPA-Riverbend Park will provide staff, meeting BSA Youth Protection guidelines for male and female scouts, and supervision ratios. Parent/guardian **MUST** sign-in, and sign-out each participant(s) from the class. If you provided your own transportation, you may sign-in and sign-out yourself from the class. There is no fee if adults wish to stay during the class.

Below is the recommended homework to be completed before the program:

There are some useful links at the end of some questions; however, scouts are encouraged to find their own sources (library, internet etc.).

Merit badge worksheets may be downloaded from meritbadge.org and brought to class. These worksheets help scouts organize their homework and classwork.

1. 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.

- 2.(Water **a**) 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 learned with your counselor and tell how you think your

plan affected your family's water usage. **Provide a written list of how your family reduced your water usage. Be prepared to discuss your results.**

2.(Food **a**) 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. **Bring in a copy of your baseline food consumption and disposal, as well as your two-week food tracking. The food baseline can be an excel spreadsheet, or any other means you documented your food consumption.**

2. (Energy **b** or Energy **c**)

(b) Develop and implement a plan to reduce the consumption of one of your family's household utilities that consume energy, such as gas appliances, electricity, heating systems, or cooling systems. 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. **Provide a copy of the plan you used with your family to implement the reduction of one household utilities. Be prepared to explain your results.**

(c) 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. **Provide a copy of your plan implementing three ways your family reduced their fuel consumption for one month. Be prepared to explain your results.**

2.(Stuff **a**) Keep a log of the "stuff" your family purchases (excluding food items) for two weeks. In your log, categorize each purchase as an essential need (such as soap) or a desirable want (such as a DVD). **Bring in a copy of your Stuff" log, with "wants" and "needs" labelled, for your counselor to review. For your convenience the last page of the Sustainability Workbook provides a "Stuffs" Log that is ready to fill-in, or you may use your own form of data log keeping.**

6. 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. **Provide a copy of the research used for your career interest.**

After the Badge:

5.(a) After completing this badge, **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.

This requirement will be signed off during the badge with the intent that the Scout and their families will have a family meeting at some point afterwards to discuss how their thoughts and behaviors about being sustainable may have changed, evolved, or how their lives were affected by attempting to be more sustainable.

What to bring to the program:

- Bring your completed homework. It is OK if you cannot complete the homework before class. You can bring completed homework in at a later date for sign-off.
- Come prepared to discuss and present your homework. As we move from one topic to the next during class, scouts will be asked to present homework elements completed. It will be more important to prove that you have understood a requirement orally rather than just presenting written information.
- Bring your blue card signed off by your Troop Leader. (Riverbend does not have blue cards.)
- Bring/wear weather appropriate clothing/outerwear. We will not go outdoors in heavy rain or thunderstorms. Boy Scout uniform not required.
- Bring a pencil and pen.
- Bring a flashlight, if the program is held after dusk.
- Download the merit badge worksheets from meritbadge.com and bring these worksheets to class.
- Bring a snack and drink. Bring more substantial food if your program is longer than four hours.

Work completed after the program:

During the program, the merit badge counselor will do a demonstration or explain the process for completing the final merit badge requirements. Your scout must provide evidence of completion in order to obtain blue card sign-off. Digital photographs of your scout doing the element and a picture of the completed requirement will be sufficient evidence, unless otherwise stated.

If your scout needs blue card sign-off after the class date, please call 703-759-9018 to arrange a time to meet with a merit badge counselor.

We're looking forward to working with your scout.

Riverbend Park
703-759-9018
8700 Potomac Hills Street
Great Falls, VA 22066
<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/riverbend-park/>