

Note to the Counselor

We enjoy our environment, especially during Scouting activities. There is so much to learn about the science behind our environment.

Scouts are strongly encouraged to discuss the badge with their counselor before starting the requirements.

Scouts have a choice between Environmental Science and Sustainability merit badges on their Trail to Eagle. These brief descriptors may help you explain to the Scout so they can decide which to pick:

- **Environmental Science:** is about our place in the ecosystem and that our actions have impacts on all other living things. It's about the science of our place in and interrelationships within the ecosystem. (*Science*)
- **Sustainability:** is about social responsibility, knowing that we share the planet with 8 billion other people. Our responsible actions can ensure that we continue to use resources in ways that allow others to have that ability in the future. (*Ethics*)

Our environment is a whole connected network of life around us. Our neighborhoods, our camps, our communities, and our world. We are responsible for protecting the environment and leaving it better for future generations. Environmental science seeks to understand and protect our environment. In this merit badge, Scouts will learn to appreciate various aspects of Environmental Science.

In the requirements, “living organisms” include both animals and plants, where “animals” include insects, birds, vertebrates, and worms; “plants” include trees, ferns, mosses, grasses, flowers, and crops, as well as mushrooms and other fungi. Microscopic organisms are environmentally important, but Scouts are not asked to consider them for this badge.

Scouts are encouraged, but not required, to involve their family in some of the requirements.

If this merit badge is done at camp, it's helpful to get water- and air-quality reports for the camp ahead of time for the Scouts' use.

