



To: All Life Scouts, looking for or working on, and those submitting Eagle Scout Leadership Service Projects:

I want to commend the *Enews Administrator* for the great idea of setting up a page for “Eagle Scout Project Opportunities” and hope it will be used with great success.

As most know, the Eagle Rank is for life, and Eagle’s are held to higher standards by everyone with any knowledge of Scouting and the Eagle Rank. One reason is because the Eagle Rank is not something purchased or given away but, is individually earned through personal hard work, and meeting all the requirements and standards. Only a very small total of all Scouts will earn the Eagle Rank.

In a discussion with the Administrator about this page, we both felt it would be useful to everyone submitting ideas, and to Life Scouts working toward their Eagle Rank, to have a better understanding of acceptable Eagle Scout Leadership Service Projects in general and why.

The following information is not to address ALL the many specific requirements for the Eagle Rank; it is only to address the Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project with a final note about Eagle Board of Reviews.

The following is taken from the “Eagle Scout Rank Application (512-728, 2009 edition)”:

While a Life Scout, plan, develop, and give leadership to others in a service project helpful to any religious institution, any school, or your community. (The project should benefit an organization other than Boy Scouting.) The project idea must be approved by your Scoutmaster and troop committee by the council or district, and by the organization benefiting from the effort before you start. You must use the Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook, No. 512-927, in meeting this requirement.

NOTE:

- The Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook (#512-927) and the Eagle Scout Application (#512-728) are available from the Norwela Council Service Center in print form and from the BSA in PDF format. The PDF forms can be filled in on-line and saved locally. These can be used by Scouts in lieu of the printed forms.

[Click here for the application.](#) [Click here for the workbook.](#)

- The 2009 edition of the application form **MUST** be used by all Scouts after August 1, 2009. It can be obtained at your local Scout Service Center or by printing the PDF from the NESA web site.
 - To see the changes which take effect on January 1, 2010, [click here.](#)

Preface:

There are a great number of possible project ideas and beneficiaries. Eagle projects, properly planned, approved, and carried out are not easy. So as not to be overwhelmed with project ideas that will not be allowed let’s look at some project requirements and reasons projects are not allowed.

The Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project is to demonstrate an Eagle Candidate’s ability in leadership and planning, while performing a meaningful service and providing a reasonable value for an approved recipient; where the Scout adequately and clearly demonstrates his “Leadership” and “Planning” ability, and carries out the project to completion. This can be compared in many ways, both in selection of a project and in carrying it out, to a

College Masters project.

A “good” project and its plan should be; at least some challenge for the Scout, require some thought, planning, setting of goals, and the written plan should be able to be read, understood, visualized, include items to insure success, and be able to be followed by others in the absence of the leader. The Scout must personally accept responsibility; do the planning, provide the direction of his project team, and see the project through to successful completion. **The Scout is the one earning the Eagle, not Leaders, Parents, or other adults!**

The point cannot be stressed enough, how well the plan is written, is as important as the project itself and what benefit it provides to the recipient!

Choosing and Carrying out Projects:

Besides the 9 listed limitations in the workbook, in general, for Norwela Council (and many other Councils), the following list are some examples of projects that are not normally or easily acceptable for Eagle Scout Leadership Service Projects. They are classed and seen as Unit or Patrol Service Projects for required service hours.

Boy Scouts and Units need to continue to support all of the following listed items to help others in need, including animals. Eagle Scout Leadership Service Projects are to be above and beyond these listed.

- Collection / Donation drives
- Cleaning / organizing storerooms
- Painting parking lots
- Clearing existing paths or trails
- Raking leaves
- Cleaning up around and or in buildings
- Cleaning up after events

It needs to be understood that just because a similar project was allowed in the past in another Council or even in Norwela Council, it is not guaranteed that it will be allowed again. All or any of the reasons of past project acceptance may not exist now. National allows each Council to decide what it deems a worthy Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project, for whom, and why in its own Council area.

Limitations listed in the Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook:

1. Routine labor (a job or service normally rendered) should not be considered.
2. Projects involving council property or other BSA activities are not acceptable.
3. Projects may not be performed for businesses or an individual.
4. Projects may not be of a commercial nature.
5. Projects may not be a fund-raiser. Fund-raising is permitted only for securing materials needed to carry out the project.
6. Donors to projects must be made aware of what entity is benefiting from the project, and that it clearly is not the Boy Scouts of America.
7. Any funds raised for a project and not used for the purchase of project materials must be returned to the donors.
8. No minimum number of hours is required.
9. The project is an individual matter; therefore, two Eagle Scout candidates may not receive credit for working on the same project.

While the following is not everything to consider, here are some additional items to keep in mind when choosing a project to submit for Council acceptance:

- NO projects are approved over the telephone, or via email!
 - A project must be submitted in writing for final Council approval.
 - *As said before, the written plan is very important and must be seen along with all the additional pre-project workbook requirements.*
 - Project ideas, questions, and etc. can be discussed via email or over the telephone but discussions of any kind are not to be misunderstood as APPROVAL.
 - The same basic project may be accepted for one Scout and disapproved for another, until rewritten, due to the submitted written plan. **IT IS THAT IMPORTANT** to submit a well thought out and understandable plan.

- Make sure to explain how you are going to lead your team to a successful completion and your back up plan to insure success in your written plan.
 - Don't use constant wording like I will, I want, or I plan, and for sure do not make it sound like you are going to do it all by repeated use of "I"!
 - **A better example is:**
 - My project will be...
 - It will benefit ____, because...
 - My project plan is...
 - It will require 5 team members that I will get from ____ and lead to its completion by...
 - The project should be completed by my team members in ____ amount of time...
 - My team will be successful in its completion because...
 - Etc.
- The Guide to Safe Scouting must be followed at all times such as; if the project requires the use of power tools, paints, chemicals, ladders, or if other potentially hazardous situations could occur. These items should be listed in the plan and the steps taken to comply with regulations to try and prevent accidents or injuries.
- The actual project work is not to be carried out by only the Scout himself but rather his team.
 - *It is not about if the Scout can do the work himself, but can he plan and lead a team of other people young and old to do the work successfully.*
 - *The Scout can certainly help do some of the work but his main job is the planning, leadership / supervision, and seeing the project through.*
- While not 100% required, it is greatly preferred that the team include youth as well as any required adults.
 - *Depending on the project, the team should consist of a minimum of 3 persons other than the Eagle Candidate.*
 - *More team members are always seen as better leadership in an Eagle Board of Review.*
 - *While adult family members are not prohibited, it is much better viewed in a Board of Review to be leading non family adults.*
- There is not a set minimum or maximum amount of time required completing an Eagle project nor is there a minimum or maximum amount of work or service that has to be provided.
 - ***Most importantly, the project does have to satisfy the Board of Review as being an Eagle worthy project that clearly demonstrates Leadership and Planning and provides a substantial benefit to the recipient.***
- It is not a requirement the project be totally unique. It is a requirement that the Eagle Candidate does his own unique planning and does not copy another's plan especially word for word.
- It is not a requirement that a project provide a tangible finished product.
 - *However, in a Board of Review, it may be much easier for the Scout to show and talk about his leadership, planning, and that his project was not seen as a routine service or a routine collection / donation drive that did not yield a significant benefit to the recipient(s).*
 - *It is wise that if the project does not have a tangible finished product, that it can be seen by the Board of Review as having some lasting benefit to the recipient(s) and not just an effort of labor that can be or should be performed anyway or will not last for any length of time.*
- Eagle projects cannot be purchased, and the Family or the Scout should not pay for all project materials!
- Doing an Eagle project for an employer and or having other employees help complete the project creates a potential situation that would invalidate the entire project.
 - *An Eagle candidate and his team may not receive ANY financial payments or other personal compensations for ANY work on an Eagle project. Carrying out all work on a project is to be volunteer based and carried out on personal time.*
 - *It is not allowed to have and use "paid" staff do any of the actual work. If a paid staff team member is not "on the clock" and helping, that is ok.*

- *Any work on the Project done while “on the clock” and / or compensated in any manner will invalidate the entire project.*
- Make sure the Project Description and Project Details pages are clearly stated and agree with each other in text.
 - *Don’t describe one thing and provide a plan for something else.*
- More often than not, changes are made during the course of putting together and writing a project description and its plan to be submitted for approvals, but those changes are not required to be stated in the workbook before Council project approval.
 - *In fact, listing them on the Project Changes page may cause the workbook to have to be rewritten as it will cause confusion for the Eagle Board of Review.*
- **It is very important to note:**
 - If a project description and plan is approved by all required parties, they should be followed as best as possible to achieve what is stated in the description as being the end result.
 - In the course of carrying out a project, there are many reasons why plans have to change to accomplish the described project and end result.
 - Changes in the original plan are most often acceptable as long as the described project did not change, the changes in the original plan are listed and supported to as why, and that the Scout’s leadership throughout the entire project can clearly be seen and the project was completed.
 - **If the focus and end result of the project description and plans need to change, it must be re-evaluated and approved by all parties including the Council!**
 - It is safe to add to a project as long as what was originally stated is completed.
 - It is not safe to subtract or change from the approved plan.
 - **Examples:**
 - **Approved:**
 - *My project is to build a foot bridge in the State Park. It will benefit... my plan is...*
 - Final result #1:
 - The bridge is built, but plans had to be changed because of...
 - Review Board’s view point:
 - OK as long as changes were listed, explanation provided, and Scout’s leadership was still clearly seen and performed.
 - Final result #2:
 - The bridge is built, but added a gravel path before and after the bridge.
 - Review Board’s view point:
 - OK as long as changes were listed, explanation provided, and Scout’s leadership was still clearly seen and performed.
 - Final result #3:
 - A new fire ring was built instead of the approved bridge.
 - Board view point:
 - NOT OK even if changes were listed and leadership was clearly seen.
 - **Other Projects and Pitfall Considerations:**
 - **Face Lift Projects:**
 - *(It is not they cannot be done, for an acceptable recipient, provide a substantial benefit, and show Eagle quality leadership and planning!)*
 - Make sure that if you are planning any kind of "face lift" project, it is not something that may be viewed as

what should be "normal routine, or upkeep and cleaning". This is to mean: Simply cleaning up the grounds around and or inside a building that should be done by the occupants or owners anyway, is not considered an Eagle project without very good supporting reasons and the project clearly demonstrating Eagle quality leadership and planning. Simply painting a room or similar, is also not an Eagle project that will easily be accepted. Pulling up some old flowers or shrubs and simply replanting is also a very shaky project.

- To give a better explanation and a method of self test for your project idea:
 - Consider how an Eagle Board of Review will see your project and honestly answer to yourself:
 - How much and what kind and quality of leadership does it require to do my project?
 - What details are in my project plan?
 - How does it substantially provide something and of real benefit to the recipient?
 - Remember; *Eagle Scout Leadership Service Projects are to be above and beyond routine and not usually performed by others or considered as a Patrol or Unit service hour project...*
- **Collection and Donation Drives:**
 - *(It is not they cannot be done and done well, for an acceptable recipient, provide a substantial benefit, and show Eagle quality leadership and planning!)*
 - A simple collection drive, sorting and delivering the collection to the recipient. What's the problem, who cannot understand that or why is not providing a benefit???
 - **The problem is that collection or donation drives could be hard for the Scout to convince a Board of Review that there was much leadership or planning involved, and that the project was completed providing a substantial benefit to the recipient.**
 - Let's look at a food drive, a clothing drive, and a blood drive.
 - These are certainly worthy drives and needed! The problem is that they are also routinely provided by many organizations throughout the year including some by the Boy Scouts as service projects.
 - For these example drives, a person only needs to make a simply call to; The Food Bank, Rescue Mission, Goodwill, or the Blood Bank, give the date, and have everything done for them.
 - Where is the Eagle quality planning and leadership demonstrated?
 - These drives can also easily be seen as "Routine".
 - Besides not being a routine drive, a collection project should have some goal to accomplish with an accompanying plan to reach the goal and insures success, clearly demonstrate planning, leadership, and provides a substantial value to the recipient.
 - Not setting a goal and having a plan to achieve the goal is very open ended to say the least.
 - Let's look at the example of collecting books: (or anything)
 - With no minimum goals and definition of the items to be collected:
 - Does the team take no books?
 - 1 book?
 - 100 books?
 - 500 books?
 - What kind of books?
 - How will the team let the public know about the collection drive, the goals, the items desired, its importance, and convince the public to donate?
 - What will be the method of presentation to ask for donations?
 - In the case of a single day drive (or even a weekend drive): If it storms the limited period of collection, or there is some other reason for team members not to show up, or no public is around for the team to solicit, is that the end of the project?

- If team members do not show up: Is the candidate the only person that works the drive?
- The results of the drive should be of substantial amounts to satisfy the stated reason and needs of the recipient.
- Please see the following link to an essay written about why collection / donation drives of any kind are dangerous Eagle projects to do or have as part of a project.
 - What to avoid:
 - Blood drives or any kind of collection drive (Really?)
 - ["Why you don't even want to consider a blood drive as an Eagle Leadership Service Project"\)](#)
- ***Final note, for now, about Projects and Eagle Board of Reviews:***
 - Please be aware... just because a project is approved... your team completes it... and you showed leadership and planning, it does not automatically guarantee that you will complete all the other requirements or pass the Eagle Board of Review.
 - The Eagle Review Board Members must be in unanimous agreement that you have met all requirements and standards of an Eagle Scout to pass an Eagle Board of Review.
 - There are many things looked at in a Board of Review and while your project is a big part, it is not all by any means.
 - All the things in Scouting you have done, learned, and understand about Scouting; your answers to questions about family / community / the nation / the world / your religious beliefs / life ambitions and life in general, etc.; your presentation of yourself and showing your maturity, how you apply Scouting principles in everyday life, and your leadership ability is what your Board of Review is looking at.
 - An Eagle candidate should know the Scout Law, Oath, Motto, and Slogan and be prepared to talk about them!!!
 - Wear your class A uniform and properly!!!

I hope this information helps all.

If I may be of any additional help please contact me.

Yours in Scouting,

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