

# BSA DISTINGUISHED CONSERVATION SERVICE AWARDS GUIDE



For Scouts BSA, Venturers, Sea Scouts, and Scouters



Greater Los Angeles Area Council  
Conservation/DCSA Committee

# Executive Summary

**Background** The BSA has maintained an active conservation awards program since 1938. The current group of awards seek to reward Scouts and Venturers who complete large, Eagle sized conservation projects and numerous Merit Badges. The BSA Distinguished Conservation Service (DCS) Awards are the highest conservation awards for Scouts and Venturers and the rarest awards in Scouting.

**Who** Scouts interested in earning a DCS Award may be currently working on conservation related Merit Badges, an applicable Eagle project, or have time left in Scouting and be looking for a challenging, rewarding, and meaningful conservation experience.

**Awards** Scouts, Venturers, and Sea Scouts earn the DCS Award by planning and leading two conservation projects and completing either seven Merit Badges or conservation-related Venturing requirements. One project may be combined with an Eagle project. There is also an adult award and a non- Scouting individual or organizational award.

**Projects** A DCS Award project must be a significant and lasting effort in natural resource conservation or environmental improvement. Each project must be chosen from a list of different disciplines of conservation. Only one project may be completed on Scout property; other organizations are usually excited to help Scouts find projects. You may think of a DCS Award Project as an “Eagle Scout Service project sized” with lasting results.

**Starting** Before starting to work on a DCS Award, Scouts must contact the Greater Los Angeles Area Council DCS Awards Committee Chair to obtain a Conservation Advisor. These individuals will help Scouts decide on appropriate projects and make sure that they are meeting the application requirements.

**Time** DCS Awards must be completed before Scouts turn eighteen or Venturers turn twenty-one. The award typically takes a year or more to complete. Adult awards require twenty years of service to conservation.

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## Greater Los Angeles Area Council Conservation Awards Honor Roll

The history of the Hornaday Awards at the National and Local levels

Since 1914, 5,300 Hornaday awards have been bestowed to conservation-minded Americans. Nearly half of those were Hornaday badges. Fewer than 1,000 have been unit certificates, which were introduced in 1940.

A total of 897 medals were given from 1914 to 1974. In 1975, bronze, silver and gold distinctions were created. Since then, fewer than 50 gold, 150 bronze and 150 silver medals have been earned. Adult Gold Badges were introduced in 2000 and almost 600 have been awarded so far.

This is a list of all the individuals who have earned Hornaday Awards in the Greater Los Angeles Area Council

### Hornaday Award Recipients

YEAR	Issued	AWARDED	First Name	Last Name	Unit	Council Name	City
1969	1969	Medal	Wallace	McCloskey	Troop 4	San Gabriel Valley	
1969	1969	Medal	James	Scholler	Troop 4	San Gabriel Valley	
1969	1969	Medal	John	Scholler	Troop 4	San Gabriel Valley	
1999	3/23/1999	Bronze Badge	Jason	Marmor	Troop 201	Old Baldy	Ontario
1999	3/23/1999	Unit Certificate			Troop 201	Old Baldy	
2000	11/02/2000	Gold Medal	James	Spencer		Los Angeles Area	Los Angeles
2002	11/25/2002	Bronze Badge	Perry	Poon	Troop 511	San Gabriel Valley	Pasadena
2003	2/24/2003	Unit Certificate			Troop 511	San Gabriel Valley	Pasadena
2004	4/16/2004	Bronze Badge	Samuel	Wegner	Troop 509	San Gabriel Valley	Pasadena
2005	7/29/2005	Adult Gold Badge	Craig	Murray		Old Baldy	Ontario
2006	6/02/2006	Bronze Badge	James	Owenby	Troop 888	San Gabriel Valley	Pasadena
2007	2/16/2007	Adult Gold Badge	Dennis	Matthews		San Gabriel Valley	Pasadena
2007	2/16/2007	Unit Certificate			Troop 724	San Gabriel Valley	Pasadena
2008	10/3/2008	Bronze Badge	Michael	Caughron	Troop 5	San Gabriel	Pasadena
2008	8/13/2008	Unit Certificate			Troop 5	San Gabriel Valley	Pasadena
2009	10/13/2009	Bronze Badge	Sean	Brady	Troop 841	Los Angeles Area	Los Angeles
2009	10/13/2009	Bronze Badge	Jorge	Estrella	Crew724	San Gabriel Valley	Pasadena
2009	4/23/2009	Bronze Badge	Alexander	Matthews	Troop 724	San Gabriel Valley	Pasadena
2009	4/17/2009	Bronze Badge	Dale	Radford	Troop 724	San Gabriel Valley	Pasadena
2009	4/7/2009	Bronze Badge	David	Salazar	Troop 724	San Gabriel Valley	Pasadena
2009	3/20/2009	Adult Gold Badge	Peter	Honea		San Gabriel Valley	Pasadena

2009	10/13/2009	Unit Certificate			Troop 841	Los Angeles Area	Los Angeles
2010	7/8/2010	Bronze Badge	Kevin	Anderson	Troop 985	Los Angeles Area	Los Angeles
2010	11/24/2010	Bronze Badge	Michael A.	Garza	Troop 730	San Gabriel County	Pasadena
2010	2/27/2010	Bronze Badge	Robert W.	Morgan	Crew 561	San Gabriel County	Pasadena
2011	5/19/2011	Bronze Badge	Brandon	Gentry	Troop 888	San Gabriel Valley	Pasadena
2011	10/25/2011	Bronze Badge	James	McCreary	Troop 730	San Gabriel Valley	Pasadena
2011	10/25/2011	Bronze Badge	Wesley	Ru	Troop 730	San Gabriel Valley	Pasadena
2011	9/19/2011	Bronze Badge	Esteban	Ventura	Troop 724	San Gabriel County	Pasadena
2011	2/23/2011	Adult Gold Badge	Glenn	Ault, M.D.	Board Member	San Gabriel Valley	Pasadena
2011	2/23/2011	Adult Gold Badge	Steve	Silbiger		Los Angeles Area	Los Angeles
2012	1/16/2012	Bronze Badge	Joshua	Lundblade	Troop 730	San Gabriel Valley	Pasadena
2012	3/9/12	Adult Gold Badge	Brian T.	Wilder	OA Lodge	Los Angeles Area	Los Angeles
2013	9/25/2013	Bronze Badge	Marcus	Gerges	Troop 985	Los Angeles Area	Los Angeles
2013	2/15/2013	Bronze Badge	Paul David	Sonner	Troop 7373	San Gabriel Valley	Pasadena
2013	4/16/2013	Bronze Badge	Amanda	Ventura	Crew 724	San Gabriel Valley	Pasadena
2013	11/21/2013	Adult Gold Badge	William Thomas	Althoff	OA Lodge	Los Angeles Area	Los Angeles
2013	11/21/2013	Adult Badge	Louis	Smith		Los Angeles Area	Los Angeles
2013	10/17/2013	Silver Medal	Kevin	Anderson	Troop 985	Los Angeles Area	Los Angeles
2013	4/16/2013	Unit Certificate			Crew 724	San Gabriel Valley	Pasadena
2013	4/16/2013	Unit Certificate			Troop 724	San Gabriel Valley	Pasadena
2013	4/16/2013	Unit Certificate			Pack 724	San Gabriel Valley	Pasadena
2014	12/19/2014	Bronze Badge	Aric	Belsito	Troop 595	Los Angeles Area	Los Angeles
2014	8/1/2014	Bronze Badge	Anthony Augustus	Stenzel	Troop 658	Los Angeles Area	Los Angeles
2015	10/26/2015	Bronze Medal	Aric	Belsito	Troop 595	Los Angeles Area	Los Angeles
2016	5/12/16	Bronze Badge	Zachary J.	Becker	Troop 483	Los Angeles Area	Los Angeles
2017	3/23/2017	Bronze Badge	Zachary	Becker	Troop 483	Greater Los Angeles Area	Los Angeles
2017	3/23/2017	Adult Gold Badge	David	Ledford	HAT Committee	Greater Los Angeles Area	Los Angeles
2018	12/18/2018	Bronze Medal	Zachary Jacob	Becker	Troop 483	Greater Los Angeles Area	Los Angeles
2019	1/17/2019	Bronze Badge	David	Clancy	Troop 373	Greater Los Angeles Area	Los Angeles

The Conservation Office at the National Office provided this database. If you see an error please contact the Ross Arnold, Hornaday Committee Chair at [rossarnold1213@gmail.com](mailto:rossarnold1213@gmail.com) or at 323 605-2740.

The National Conservation Committee have renamed the Hornaday Award to the BSA Distinguished Conservation Service Awards and changed the requirements and the number of awards offered. The three youth awards were reduced to one and the Gold Badge and Unit Award were eliminated.

**Distinguished Conservation Award Recipients in the  
Greater Los Angeles Area Council**

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>Issued</b>	<b>AWARDED</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>Last Name</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Council Name</b>	<b>City</b>

## **Introduction of the BSA Distinguished Conservation Service Award**

Conservation and the Boy Scouts of America have been partners for a long time. Camping, hiking, and respect for the outdoors are a part of the Scouting heritage. Many of the requirements for advancement from Tenderfoot through the Eagle Scout rank call for an increasing awareness and understanding of the natural sciences. Many former Scouts have become leaders in conserving our environment and protecting it from abuse. Right now, Scouts are involved in learning about environmental problems and actively working to make a difference.

The fundamental purpose of the BSA Distinguished Conservation Service Awards program is to encourage learning by the participants and to increase public awareness about natural resource conservation. Understanding and practicing sound stewardship of natural resources and environmental protection strengthens Scouting's emphasis on respecting the outdoors. The goal of this awards program is to encourage and recognize truly outstanding efforts undertaken by Scouting units, Scouts and Venturers, adult Scouters, and other individuals, corporations, and institutions that have contributed significantly to natural resource conservation and environmental protection.

BSA Distinguished Conservation Service Award Individual awards are granted by the National Council through the local Council's Conservation Committee to a member of a Scouts BSA, Sea Scout, or Venturing unit for exceptional and distinguished service to conservation and environmental improvement.

The BSA Distinguished Conservation Service Awards are presented for distinguished service in natural resource conservation. The award is given in one of three forms. The awards are:

**Youth:** BSA Distinguished Conservation Service Award

**Adult:** BSA Distinguished Conservationist

**Organizations and Individuals:** BSA Distinguished Conservation Service Award Certificate

The award, the most distinguished in Scouting for exceptional conservation service, will be awarded for clearly outstanding efforts in planning, leadership, execution of plans, involvement of others, and opportunities taken to help others learn about natural resource conservation and environmental improvement.

The award includes the BSA Distinguished Conservation Service Award certificate and an embroidered square knot.



# Conservation Service Projects

The BSA Distinguished Conservation Service Awards program encourages and recognizes Scouts, Sea Scouts and Venturers who design, lead, and carry out conservation projects that are based on sound scientific principles and practices. The projects should contribute to sound conservation and environmental improvement in the local community, the region, or the nation. The applicant is expected to research potential projects and to choose, with guidance from a conservation adviser, a worthy project.

Because the awards are individual awards, two or more individuals cannot claim credit for the same project. However, a project may be a part of a larger conservation effort, with different applicants carrying out different aspects of the same project. An Eagle Scout leadership service project may be used as a conservation project if it meets the aims and objectives of the awards program as listed below. Applicants are encouraged to involve their unit members in project work and demonstrate Scout leadership.

To assist the applicant with the documentation needed in completing the service projects, and the documentation of the completed projects, the [BSA Distinguished Conservation Service Award Project Workbook](#) has been developed and is required to be used by the applicant.

## What Qualifies as a BSA Distinguished Conservation Service Award Project?

First and foremost, the project must be a conservation project—it must be designed to address a conservation issue or need in the local area, and it must benefit the environment or the creatures that live there. Making an area more accessible for people is rarely for the benefit of the environment.

How big a project should be and how long it should last are commonly asked questions.

Collecting aluminum cans over a weekend along with many other Scouts is a fine public service, but since little learning took place and there was no lasting impact on the community, the project would not qualify towards this Award. Similarly, a simple, one-time tree planting effort would not qualify.

However, a reforestation project in cooperation with a professional forester or park planner, learning which trees are appropriate to the area, ensuring proper spacing for best growth, following proper planting methods, and caring for the trees after planting might well qualify. Starting a community-wide recycling project and encouraging people to recycle might also qualify. Size of the project is not necessarily the important element. Rather, the results, the learning that took place, the applicant's demonstrated leadership, and the significance of the contribution to the community, park, or other lands are what count.

## Required Projects

Applicants for the BSA Distinguished Conservation Service Award must plan, lead, and carry out at least two significant projects in two different categories. One project could be the

applicant's Eagle Scout leadership service project, if it is suitable, and one could be performed on BSA property. The others must benefit a school, community, or religious organization, or fulfill some other public service purpose. Applications are reviewed and awarded through the Council's Conservation Committee.

The categories are listed below. They are designed, in part, to make conservation awards available to Scouts living in suburban and urban areas as well as those in rural settings, and to acknowledge the growing interest among Scouts and their leaders in actively improving the natural environment within their own communities. These categories also focus on the relationship between environmental abuses in urban centers and their impact in relatively unpopulated, some- times distant, areas.

### **Projects Categories**

- Energy conservation
- Soil and water conservation
- Fish and wildlife management
- Forestry and range management
- Air and water pollution control
- Resource recovery (recycling)
- Hazardous material disposal and management
- Invasive species control

### **DCS Awards Requirements**

Scouts, Venturers, and Sea Scouts may earn a BSA Distinguished Conservation Service Award. Adults from all these programs may be nominated for BSA Distinguished Conservationist Award. Non-Scouting organizations and individuals may be nominated for the BSA Distinguished Conservation Service Award Certificate.

### **Scouts BSA, Venturers, and Sea Scouts**

Scouts, Venturers, and Sea Scouts are able to earn the DCS Award. Cub Scouts, Explorers, participants in Learning for Life, and STEM Scouts are not eligible. There is a Merit Badge requirement for all awards for Scouts, and Scouts **must be First Class rank**. There are no age or rank requirements for Venturers or Sea Scouts except they must complete the requirements before their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday. Merit Badges relate to conservation and environmental management and fall into two groups: required and optional.

**Required Merit Badges** - Environmental Science Bird Study Fish and Wildlife Management Energy Forestry Fishing Soil and Water Conservation Fly-Fishing Sustainability Gardening Geology Insect Study

**Optional Merit Badges - (Select Two)** Landscape Architecture Mammal Study Nature Nuclear Science Plant Science Pulp and Paper Reptile and Amphibian Study

Venturers or Sea Scouts who are dual registered in a Troop and a Crew or Ship may choose to complete either the Merit Badge requirements or the special Venturing requirements until they turn eighteen. Sea Scouts should follow the Venturing requirements.

All Venturers registered only in a Crew and those over eighteen must complete components of the Venturing Ranger Award including the Ecology, Plants and Wildlife, and Conservation electives, with some minor variations discussed below.

Scouts who turn eighteen while completing DCS Award projects may transfer their registration from Scouts BSA to Venturing but will need to complete Venturing requirements if they apply for a DCS Award through a Venturing Crew. Projects completed in Scouts BSA may transfer over to Venturing, but it is important to remember that Venturers are expected to develop projects with an increased level of complexity that may not have been present when the Scout completed a project.

**Other Ideas** - Other good ideas for projects may be found in the publications and pamphlets of groups such as the National Audubon Society, the National Wildlife Federation, or governmental agencies including the Environmental Protection Agency, USDA Forest Service, Army Corps of Engineers, Bureau of Land Management, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, state natural resource conservation agencies, and your state cooperative extension service. The best way to identify a project is to discuss the options with a conservation adviser.

**Monitoring** - Each project should be designed in part to publicize the need to conserve natural resources and to improve environmental conditions. The DCSA Committee will provide guidance and to help identify qualified advisers. The role of the conservation adviser is to guide the young person into selecting significant conservation projects and to coach the youth into preparing, researching, consulting others, designing, planning, and giving leadership to others in carrying out the projects. The adviser must approve the application, indicating that the applicant's activities have been monitored and ensuring that the projects meet local needs. The applicant's unit leader must also approve the conservation project.

## **Applications**

[BSA Distinguished Conservation Service Award Application, 430-107a](#)

[BSA Distinguished Conservationist Application, 430-107b](#)

[BSA Distinguished Conservation Service Award Certificate Application, 430-107c](#)

# **THE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES OF EARNING THE DISTINGUISHED CONSERVATION SERVICE AWARD THROUGH THE GREATER LOS ANGELES AREA COUNCIL**

**Conducting a Project** - (Intended for Scouts working on a Distinguished Conservation Service Award (DCSA) project)

**How to Start** This section pertains only to Scouts, Venturers, and Sea Scouts seeking to earn a DCSA. Scouters, organizations, and individuals do not need to complete projects, nor do they apply for the award; rather, they are nominated.

Any Scouts interested in earning a DCSA from the Greater Los Angeles Area Council **must** first contact the Council BSA Distinguished Conservation Service Awards Committee Chair to receive additional information and to obtain a DCSA Advisor. Scouts are required to be First Class or higher before starting a DCS Award. Venturers and Sea Scouts must have held a leadership position in their crew or ship and have begun earning their first rank. This is a requirement simply so that Scouts have some Merit Badge and project leadership experience before undertaking one of these significant awards. It is important to understand the general process for earning a DCS Award before starting. The list below illustrates the needed actions that will help clarify some of the DCS Award requirements.

## **For BSA Scouts – This is a summary of the steps in earning the DCS Award**

1. Contact the council DCSA Committee Chair.
2. DCSA Committee Chair will select an DCSA Adviser,
3. The DCSA will work with the Scout to select a Conservation Adviser.
4. The Scout, Conservation and DCSA Advisers will work together to develop a project outline.
5. The Scout, Conservation and DCSA Advisers will work together to develop a proposal and help the Scout to complete Pages 1 to 15 in the Workbook.
6. When the Scout, the Conservation and DCSA Advisers are satisfied that the proposal is ready to be shared with the council DCSA Committee, the proposal is sent to the committee for their approval or disapproval. If a member of the committee does not approve the proposal, that individual must provide specific reasons and examples of why the proposal is not approved.
7. If the proposal is approved, the DCSA Adviser lets the Scout know that they may begin implementing their project. If the proposal is not approved, the DCSA Adviser works with the Scouts to address the areas of concern and address the reasons for not receiving approval. Once the reasons for not receiving approval have been addressed, the DCSA Adviser once again sends the proposal to the committee for approval. This process continues until the Scout receives approval to start the project.
8. The Scout and DCSA Adviser conducts a meeting with the DCS Award Project Advisory Group who consists of the candidate, the DCSA Adviser, the DCSA Committee Chair, the Conservation Adviser, the unit leader, and a representative from the benefitting organization. The Scout presents his/her plan.

9. Once the Advisory Committee has approved the project to go ahead and conduct the project.
10. Upon completion of the project, the Scout, the DCSA and Conservation Advisers work together to complete the project report, the DCSA Application, the first page of the Conservation Council Board of Review (BOR) form, and the Executive Summary.
11. The DCSA Adviser assembles the Advisory Committee together again for the Board of review. The Scouts emails all of the above forms to the committee for review. The DCSA Adviser chairs the BOR but except for the introductions and laying the ground rules for the BOR, the Scout does the presentation and answers questions. Each person on the committee completes Page 2 of the Conservation Council Board of Review. If this is the second of two projects, the committee members complete Page 3 instead of page 2. The DCSA Adviser completes Page 4 and completes the BOR Checklist.
12. After the BOR, the DCSA Adviser completes Council Conservation Committee's documentation. If the BOR is not successful, the DCSA Adviser works with the Scout until they are ready for a second try. If the BOR is successful, the DCSA Adviser works with the Scouts, so they receive the recognition they deserve. If the Scout has completed both projects and has conducted two BORs, the DCSA Adviser works with the Scout and their family to arrange the certificate and knot presentation. The DCSA Committee Chair submits the DCSA Application, the Workbook, the Conservation Council Board of Review (BOR) form, and the Executive Summary to the Scout Executive for signature. The Scout Executive submits these forms to the National Office to obtain the certificate and knot for the Scout. When the Scout Executive receives the certificate and knot, the DCSA Adviser is notified and asked to contact the Scout and his/her family to arrange for delivery.

**For Venturing and Sea Scouts – Venturers and Sea Scouts will follow steps 1 to 12 above while completing the requirements listed below.**

1. Plan, lead and carry out two conservation projects, from two different categories (Categories include Air and Water Pollution Control, Energy Conservation, Fish & Wildlife Management, Forestry & Range Management, Hazardous Materials Disposal and Management, Invasive Species Control, Pollinator Management, Resource Recovery, or Soil & Water Conservation). The projects must be developed under the guidance of and pre-approval by the applicants Unit Leader, a BSA Distinguished Conservation Service Award Adviser and the Council Conservation Committee. One of the projects may include the Scout's Eagle Scout project (if applicable). All projects must contribute to environment improvement on a long-term scale. Applicants must use the BSA Distinguished Conservation Service Award Workbook to document each of the service projects.
2. Do 2 (a) and (b)
  - a. Make a tabletop display or presentation on one of your conservation projects for a crew, ship, post, a Cub Scout or Scouts BSA group, or another group.
  - b. Submit an article about your project to a local newspaper, council newsletter radio station, your school newspaper, internet publication, or TV station.

3. Lead a Cub Scout or Scouts BSA group in carrying out an age-appropriate conservation project from a BSA Distinguished Conservation Service Award project category (see list in requirement 1 above).
4. Write a paper or make a presentation on a plant or wildlife species. Include its value as seen from various perspectives, some of the problems various species face, and how we might be able to help.
5. Do both 5(a) and (b).
  - a. Select an area approved by your BSA Distinguished Conservation Service Award Adviser that contains several species of wildlife or plants. Observe this area thoroughly in various conditions and seasons of the year. Study the history of this area, paying attention to how it has changed over time, ownership, land use patterns, and landform and climate changes.
  - b. Make a presentation on interaction between species; the reaction of various species to changes in conditions or outside influences; the degree to which this area provides food, shelter, materials, and protection for each species; population trends; your predictions on the future of these species; suggested actions to protect or enhance the populations; and the investigation methods that you used.
6. Do 6(a) and (b)
  - a. Study a specific plant or wildlife species approved by your Adviser that can be found in several different areas. Observe this species thoroughly in various areas and seasons of the year. Study the history of this species paying attention to how it has adapted over time.
  - b. Make a presentation on this species; any reactions to changes in conditions or outside influences; this species' needs for food, soil, shelter, materials, protection, assistance with propagation, etc.; population trends; your prediction for the future of this species; suggested actions to protect or enhance the population; and the investigation methods you used.
7. Explain the basic natural systems, cycles, and changes over time and how they are evidenced in a watershed near to where you live. Include the four basic elements, land use patterns, and at least six different species in your analysis and how they have changed over time. Discuss both biological and physical components.
8. Describe at least four environmental study areas near where you live. Include the reasons for selecting these areas, their boundaries, user groups, past inventories, any outside forces that interact with them, and a list of what things could be studied at each of them.
9. Plan a field trip to each of the above areas, including detailed plans for consolidating various investigations. Follow all the requirements such as landowner permissions and/or needed permits, safety plans, transportation plans, equipment needs, etc.
10. Do 10(a) and (b).
  - a. Under the guidance of a natural resource professional, carry out an investigation of an ecological subject approved by your BSA Distinguished Conservation Service Award Adviser in one of the areas selected above. Inventory and map the area. Conduct a detailed investigation providing specific data for a specific topic.

- b. Document and present your findings to a crew, ship, post, pack, troop, or another group.
11. Teach others in a crew, ship, post, pack, troop, or another group how to carry out an ecological investigation. Use steps 9 and 10 above with the group so that they may also learn by doing.
12. Successfully pass a board of review conducted by the local Council's Conservation Committee.

## Venturing and Sea Scout Requirements

Venturers and Sea Scouts have alternate requirements to fulfill instead of completing Merit Badges. These alternatives are listed in items 2 through 11 of the Venturing section of the DCS Award application. However, the list below notes that --- aside from two differences --- these requirements amount to completing the Plants and Wildlife and Ecology Venturing Ranger award electives. Additionally, DCS Award applicants are not required to submit the work that they conducted to fulfill these requirements as a part of the DCS Award application. Therefore, we recommend that Venturers earn the corresponding components of the Venturing Ranger award with a Venturing Ranger award advisor. Then, the DCS Award applicant can provide the Council DCSA Committee with documentation showing that these two electives were completed and append information about the two additional requirements noted below.

DCS Award Requirements	Venturing Ranger Award Requirements
2a	Plants and Wildlife 21e(i) (mandatory)
2b	Plants and Wildlife 21e(ii) (mandatory)
3	Plants and Wildlife 21d
4	Plants and Wildlife 21a
5a	Plants and Wildlife 21b(i)
5b	Plants and Wildlife 21b(ii)
6a	Plants and Wildlife 21c(i)
6b	Plants and Wildlife 21c(ii)
7	Ecology 12a
8	Ecology 12b
9	Ecology 12c
10a	Ecology 12d(i)
10b	None
11	Ecology 12d(ii)

There are two major differences between simply completing the Venturing Ranger Award Ecology and Plants and Wildlife electives and the DCS Award requirements:

1. In the Venturing Ranger Award, Venturers may choose to complete either Plants and Wildlife 21e(i) or 21e(ii). To meet the DCS Award requirements, Venturers must complete **both** Plants and Wildlife 21e(i), **and** 21e(ii). This amounts to both making a tabletop display or presentation about one of your conservation projects **and** submitting an article about your project to local media.

2. Venturers seeking to earn a DCS Award must complete requirement 10b, which is not part of the Venturing Ranger Award requirements. This requirement asks Venturers to “present your findings from the investigation you are finding from the investigation you completed in 10a or Ecology 12d(i) to a Unit or another group.”

DCS Award applicants can add a photograph of and the text from the presentations required for items (1) and (2) as well as the submitted article to the end of their DCS Award application, along with signatures from their Venturing Ranger award advisor indicating that the Ecology and Plants and Wildlife electives were completed.

A description of the Venturing Ecology and Plants and Wildlife electives follows, along with a description of the Conservation requirements which a Venturer completes by completing a DCS Award project.



**Ecology:** This Ranger Award elective requirement involves explaining natural systems and cycles in watersheds, describing environmental study areas, and going on a field trip to the environmental study areas. Then, with professional guidance, complete an inventory of the study areas and teaching others how to do a similar investigation. This inventory should not overlap completely with either of your DCS Award projects.

**Plants and Wildlife:** First, Venturers will select an area to study wildlife or plants and study these species in different seasons and during different periods of the year. Then, plan a project designed to benefit plants or wildlife and present this project to a group, detailing the awareness raised as a result of this project. Notice that this project is distinct from a DCS Award project because you are required to “carry out a project” instead of “carry out a significant conservation project.”

Again, this project should not overlap completely with either of your DCS Award projects. Although the language is vague, the intent is that these two parts of the Ranger Award are meant to count for a number of Merit Badges, so you should plan on putting in significant additional effort beyond just completing your DCS Award projects. However, the site inventory for the Ecology elective or the Plants and Wildlife elective project could be linked to parts of your DCS Award projects. For example, most projects will require some site investigation before beginning planning. You could expand this investigation to a full-on site inventory and exceed even the DCS Award expectations for this part of a DCS Award project. Doing so could set you up to count the site inventory for the Ecology elective and to discuss the inventory in the DCS Award project. Similarly, the project you must conduct for the Plants and Wildlife electives could be a suggested for future work that arose from one of your DCS Award projects.

**Conservation:** This is a core requirement for the Ranger Award. The single requirement is to complete a DCS Award style project and present it to a group of youth. Venturing does not care about double counting projects, so, if the project for the Conservation core requirement qualifies for a DCS Award project, it can be utilized. Frankly, earning the Conservation requirement is redundant if a Venturer is earning a DCS Award.



Whether the DCSA candidate is an BSA Scout, Venturer, or Sea Scout, they must adhere to the following criteria:

### **DCSA Project Criteria**

The following criteria *must* be addressed in every DCS Award project. Many excellent conservation projects do not qualify as a DCS Award project because they fail to meet one or more of these criteria.

**Interest** - Candidates must choose a project of interest in order to put the most effort possible into the workings of their projects.

**Conservation Science** - Candidates must demonstrate that the project is planned and executed to the highest standards of conservation science. This means that the Candidate must show that the project not only will be beneficial, but that conducting it in the planned manner will provide the maximal benefit given available resources. The project should begin with the Scout identifying a potential problem, justifying that the problem actually exists and should be solved, proposing several solutions, and selecting the best one. This often involves using the scientific method (see below). If someone suggests a project idea to you or a possible solution, you are still responsible for approaching the project by justifying its need and the design you choose.

**Lasting Impact** - Choose a project that will produce a result for others to enjoy far into the future. This does not limit the project exclusively to construction efforts. For example, an Energy Conservation program with Habitat for Humanity that involves developing a curriculum and providing materials for people to teach a course in Energy Conservation would certainly fit this requirement.

**Significant** - A DCS Award project is much more than an Eagle project. An Eagle project is typically a short-term effort that requires some pre-planning and minimal after project work. (See Page 19 for more detail pertaining to the differences between an Eagle and DCSA projects.) The Eagle Project may take from 100-200 hours on average. DCS Award projects require extensive pre-planning and a good deal of after project work, taking up to 400-500 hours to complete (sum of all hours Candidate and volunteers spend on the project). Thus, Candidates should choose a project that is not too limited. Planting some trees one day is definitely not sufficient.

**Education** - The chosen project should teach conservation practices to others. Both those who work on the project and those who interact with the project into the future should learn about the project. Though this can be as easy as speaking about the project to the crew for ten minutes at lunch and placing an educational sign in front of the project, we advise that at least one project should include a major education component. The education part could be the entire project or just a significant component.

**Age** - The number of hours that one is expected to spend on each project increases with age, as does the complexity of the project. For Candidates thirteen to sixteen years of age, 200-300 hours per project (sum of all hours Candidate and volunteers spend on the project) are recommended. For Candidates sixteen to eighteen, 300-400 hours are recommended. Venturing Candidates (eighteen to twenty-one) should expect to spend 400-500 hours per project. We

recommend trying to complete most or all projects within one age range interval as the amount of expected effort for each project jumps when the Candidate turns sixteen and eighteen.

These general hours guide also corresponds with an increasing amount of complexity. Venturing Candidate's' projects should be significant more complex in their design well as taking more time to complete. For a Scout or Venturer planning on taking more than three or so years to complete his or her projects, he or she should make the first project especially significant so that it will stand the test of time until the project is submitted as part of a DCS Award application.

**Scientific Method** - The project development process must follow the scientific method. This does not mean that a hypothesis must be proposed and tested, rather, it suggests that the Candidate should identify a problem in the community, complete background research, propose a research question, develop a procedure, complete the procedure, identify the results, discuss the conclusions, identify future impacts, and suggest alternative and additional projects. These parts of the method should be clearly identified in the write-up. Many Candidates fulfill this requirement by testing a number of different site locations or project designs and choosing the best one based on pre-established criteria.

**Research** - The DCS Award project is expected to be extremely conservation sound. That means that extensive background research should be conducted. Expect to contact and speak with at least ten professionals (many of them in-person or via phone, you cannot only rely on information on the Internet) in the conservation related field of each project. These professionals should help the Candidate plan the project, and the individuals should be consulted regularly throughout the completion phase of the effort. You are expected to be the expert on your conservation project and the conservation science behind it by the end of the project. To further understand what makes DCS Award projects different from Eagle projects or other service work, see the below descriptions of example projects.

### **Project Plan Summary**

- Organization
- Design
- Materials and Budget
- Leadership and Workers
- Schedule
- Benefit
- Safety Plan

### **Project Report**

- Service Hours by All Involved
- Maps & Pictures
- Lessons Learned
- Communication Plan
- Publicity
- Letters of Appreciation
- Maintenance Plan

### **Approvals Include**

- Benefiting Organization
- Conservation Advisor
- DCSA Committee Chair
- Unit Leader
- DCSA Committee Adviser

#### **Non-Project Requirements**

- Scouts - 5 Required, 2 Optional Merit Badges, 2 Projects
- Venturers - Venturing Ranger Award Ecology and Plants and Wildlife Electives, 2 Projects

### **Adult Award - BSA Distinguished Conservationist**

This award is by nomination only and is for an adult Scouter who has rendered distinguished and exemplary service to natural resource conservation and environmental improvement over a sustained period (at least 20 years). The focus of the award nomination should be on the nominee's involvement with youth, especially in the areas of education and volunteerism and inspiring them to excel in conservation, natural resources management and environmental improvement. Nominations are accepted from any recognized conservation or environmental protection organization.

The nominee's accomplishments must be at a regional, national, or international level. In an attached letter of nomination, indicate the contributions made by the nominee and whether the accomplishments cited were part of the nominee's paid professional responsibilities and/or voluntary activities. Central to the selection process is the influence the nominee has had on educational programs emphasizing sound stewardship of natural resources and inspiring youth to excel in conservation, natural resources management and environmental improvement. The nominee should have no part in writing the nomination and should not be aware of the nomination until the time of presentation, if possible.

*This application to be submitted to the National BSA Director of Conservation and reviewed by the National Conservation Awards Committee.*

### **Organization - BSA Distinguished Conservation Service Award Certificate**

This conservation award is granted to organizations or individuals by the National Council of the Boy Scouts of America. Nominations are accepted from any recognized conservation or environmental protection organization. The organization or individual should have demonstrated leadership and a commitment to the education of youth on a regional, national, or international level reflecting the natural resource conservation and environmental improvement mission of the BSA Distinguished Conservation Service Awards program. A letter of nomination should be addressed to the BSA Director of Conservation. Letters of endorsement are encouraged.

*This application to be submitted to the National BSA Director of Conservation and reviewed by the National Conservation Awards Committee.*

## Eagle and Distinguished Conservation Service Award Projects Comparison

An Eagle project (or Venturing Summit Award or Sea Scout Quartermaster project) may be combined with a BSA Distinguished Conservation Service project, but only if the Eagle project meets the standards and requirements of a conservation project. There are a few extremely important distinctions to make between projects for both types of awards. The following table should help summarize the differences to keep in mind:

<b>Distinguished Conservation Service Projects</b>		<b>Eagle Scout Service Projects</b>
Two	Number of Projects	One
Unit Leader, Beneficiary, Conservation Adviser, Council Conservation Committee (or equivalent)	Proposal Approval	Unit Leader, Committee, Beneficiary, District
Natural Resource Conservation Related	Scope	Any Topic
Must Lead Both Projects	Leadership	Must Lead a Group
Research Required	Answer the “why?”	Research Not Required
Restricted to Nine Broad Conservation Categories	Focus	Unrestricted Choices
Fundraising Sometimes Needed	Fundraising	Fundraising Can Show Leadership
Must be Long-Lasting / Sustainable	Impact	Tangible Impact at Time of Accomplishment
Unit Leader, Committee, Beneficiary, Landowner, Award Adviser, Conservation Adviser	Approval of Proposal	Unit Leader, Committee, Beneficiary, District
Follow-on work required	Duration	No Follow-on work required
Must monitor to test hypothesis	Monitoring	None required
May Be Done Individually, but Best to Involve Others	Involvement by Others	Group Labor Required
Generally, 200-400 Hours or more *	Time Investment	Generally, 100-200 Hours or less
Council Review & Approval of Projects & Application as part of the DCSA Board of Review	Board of Review/Approval	Local Review & BSA HQ Approval
More Proposal and Planning Time	Phase Time Investment	Balance Proposal and Planning and Reporting, with Accomplishment
Can be Anywhere to Include Scout Property & Private Land	Place	Not on Scout Property
Must Utilize Scientific Method to Select Project Solution	Scientific Method/Hypothesis	Scientific Method Not Required
Must Use Entire Workbook, Plan must address comments from Conservation and Award Advisors	Workbook Use	Proposal & Report Required, Planning Optional
Must Educate Others	Education	Education Not Required
Must Inform Others via Media	Publicity	Publicity Not Required

\*Note that project hours include those invested by all involved: The Scout/Venturer/ Sea Scout, the Award Adviser, the conservation adviser, the unit leader & approvers, beneficiaries, and landowners. It is not just the hours invested on the workdays.

*Distinguished Conservation Service Award projects are like “supersized Eagle Projects” in the field of natural resources conservation. If one is to take an Eagle Scout project and add research on the front end, education throughout the project, and follow-up and monitoring on the back end, it is likely that the Eagle project could be worked into a Distinguished Conservation Service Award project. It is important to keep these distinctions in mind when planning an Eagle project to fit the DCSA requirements.*

## **DCS Award Project Advisory Group**

### **DCS Award Project Candidate will:**

- Develops project ideas Plans and researches projects
- Documents project Obtains labor and materials
- Records budget information Completes DCS Award workbook
- Finds publicity outlets
- Ensures project is long-lasting
- Contacts advisors and professionals
- Integrates Eagle project (if desired)
- Contacts media for publicity

### **Council BSA Distinguished Conservation Service Awards Committee Chair** - First point of contact

- Assigns DCSA Adviser to candidate based on area of interest
- Works with adviser to support candidate
- Chairs the Board of Reviews
- Submits all required documentation to the Scout Executive for review and signature

### **Council BSA Distinguished Conservation Service Awards Committee Adviser**

- Answers application questions
- Discusses project ideas
- Helps select appropriate project
- Shows how to document project
- Delivers application

### **Conservation Advisor**

- Selected by DCS Awards Adviser and candidate
- Answers conservation questions
- Discusses project ideas
- Helps select appropriate project Introduces
- Candidate to his/her role in conservation

### **Benefiting Organization**

- Gives location to complete project
- Provides materials or funding for project (if requested)

### **Eagle Scout Service Project Coach (optional)**

- If needed, ensures project meets Eagle requirements

*The five individuals listed above are the major players in a DCS Award project. Consult the information below to determine who should be responsible for the major tasks of a project.*

### **Council BSA Distinguished Conservation Service Awards Committee Chair**

The first step in any DCS Award process is to contact the Council DCS Awards Chair. This individual is responsible for overseeing all Scouts currently working on DCS Award projects and setting them up with Conservation Advisors. He/she is in charge of the overall DCS Award effort as well as the technical details of the DCS Award application. The DCS Awards Chair presents and provides the final review for each DCS Award application. He/she is the individual who leads the DCS Award Board of Review with the DCSA Committee.

**Technical:** The DCS Awards Chair is an expert in the DCS Awards process and knows what the DCSA Committee wants to see in a DCS Awards project and application. He/she will help review the application and suggest written improvements to the documentation to help improve its chances for approval. He/she also makes sure all award requirements are met and oversees the Conservation Advisor.

**Project Options:** The DCS Awards Chair will be able to approve or decline project ideas and is the best judge of whether a project is DCS Award “worthy.” Though the DCS Awards Chair can get involved in the technical and conservation related details of the project, this is more the job of the DCSA and Conservation Advisors.

**Approval Role:** The approval role of the DCS Awards Chair is one of the most important. All draft and final applications come to the Chair for initial and final review. The DCS Awards Chair presents the final application to the Council DCSA Committee and conducts the Board of Review.

**Resources and Contacts:** Chief to the DCS Awards Chair provide additional resources and knowledge to the Candidate so that their application can be successful during the Board of Review.

### **DCSA Conservation Advisor**

The GLAAC DCSA Adviser will work with the candidate to select Conservation Advisor. A Scout may choose his own Conservation Advisor if they wish, but the DCSA Committee generally likes to review Advisors to make sure they are qualified. It may be tempting to choose an individual from the Benefitting Organization or from your Unit to serve as your Conservation Advisor. Sometimes these individuals work out well because they reduce the number of additional advisors working on the project. However, combining advisors in this way should only be done if the Benefitting Organization or the Unit has an expert in the specific field of conservation in which you are conducting your project, not just someone who has general conservation experience. Your Conservation Advisor will have knowledge about appropriate

conservation practices specific to your project. You will work with a different Conservation Advisor for each DCS Award project. Your Advisor will assist you with the following items:

**Technical** - Conservation Advisors are experts in different fields of conservation. They know how to devise a technically accurate project that will benefit conservation, while also being doable for the Scout. Technical designs like architectural plans, structure sketches, or species management plans need to be reviewed by the Advisor in order to ensure that the work completed will maximize the benefit of the project.

**Project Options** - The Scout is responsible for finding a project to complete. The Scout must actively seek out organizations to work with that have adequate conservation projects to complete. However, a Conservation Advisor will know about general project categories and potential organizations with whom to perform projects.

**Approval Role** - The Conservation Advisor serves as an approved liaison to the council DCSA Committee Adviser throughout a Scout's planning and completion phases of a DCS Award project. There are five milestones that are important for DCS Award projects. First, the Advisor must approve the Project Outline, Project Proposal, and Project Plan that contains information detailed in the following pages. The Advisor should review all documentation associated with the Project Plan, as well as major decisions that occur when executing the project. Finally, the Conservation Advisor provides their approval for final DCS Award applications before the Council DCSA Committee conducts a Board of Review.

**Resources and Contacts** - A chief role of the Conservation Advisor is to provide the Scout with DCS Award related resources, professional organizations, conservation guidelines, and general advice that will help throughout the project. The Conservation Advisor is the chief source of help for the Scout during the project. Many Councils do not have approved Conservation Advisors through the Council Conservation Committee. If this is the case, we recommend that the Scout choose either a member of the Benefiting Organization who is familiar with the conservation science behind the project or a Scouter in his Council who has a professional conservation affiliation related to the project.

## **Benefiting Organization**

The Benefiting Organization is the owner of the space where the project takes place. This organization can be virtually any group. Often, Scouts find that it is easier to do their first project at Scout owned property, although Scout property may not be used for the site of an Eagle project and for only one DCS Award project. Examples of Benefiting Organizations include the Greater Los Angeles Council camps, Habitat for Humanity, local schools, the [California Department of Fish and Wildlife](#), the [California Department of Forestry and Fires](#), local parks and recreation, religious organizations, service organizations, United States Department of Agriculture, National Parks and Forests, river authorities, caving associations, and many others. Candidates should choose a Benefiting Organization that does work of interest to them. Many organizations where the Scout works, or volunteers will benefit from a conservation project. If this is not an option, try working with a group that has some relation to Scouting in the Candidate's Unit. An established connection with the group will make it easier for the organization to approve Scout suggested projects. Sometimes, the Scout can find a collaborative

opportunity with an organization that lets the Scout work on a portion of current research or implementation. The organization is able to save money and resources by using Scout supplied labor, while also getting meticulously planned and executed work. This qualifies as a DCS Award project if all the criteria described below are met.

### **Eagle Scout Service Project Coach**

The Eagle Scout Service Project Coach is tasked with providing insight and help throughout the Eagle project process and has a role in DCS Award projects only if the Scout seeks to combine his or her Eagle project with a DCS Award project. The Eagle Scout Coach is similar in role to the Conservation Advisor but is responsible for the Eagle part of the DCS Award project. Since the Eagle project requirements are more structured, it is important for the Eagle Scout Coach to make sure that the leadership and group involvement portions are adequately addressed and that the Eagle documentation is properly finished. A similar Coach can be used for Scouts working on the Sea Scout Quartermaster Rank or Venturing Summit Award.

### **Council DCSA Committee**

The GLAAC DCSA Committee serves not only to approve DCS Award Project Proposals and to provide final approval for DCS Award applications, but also acts as a potential resource for excellent DCS Award projects and advisors. Members of the Committee work in and are associated with myriad organizations that can provide suggestions for good Benefiting Organizations and general advice on most all aspects of a DCS Award projects. Many members are specialists in certain aspects of conservation, and they can supplement insights from your Conservation Advisor.

### **Detail on Project Categories**

What about the required categories? A sample project that would meet DCS Award criteria from each category is briefly described below. Recall that projects for a DCS Award must come from two *different* categories. A Candidate may **not** make a category of his or her own.

**Air and Water Pollution Control** - Work with the Department of Environmental Quality to determine the benefits of emissions testing for cars. Write a program to implement these tests statewide or to eliminate them based on research determining the number of cars that exceed these requirements.

**Energy Conservation** - Work with a local government agency to develop a program to LEED certify existing buildings. Run the program through one certification and train individuals to continue the program. For more information about the LEED Raking System, [click here](#).

**Fish and Wildlife Management** - Track the movement of deer populations using radio tags. Find where the populations are concentrating in different seasons and work to get high concentration areas designated as conservation land. Selectively plant plants that deer eat in those conserved areas.

**Forestry and Range Management** - Determine detrimental effects related to human traffic in forests, especially in the form of footpaths. Using this information, plan the least invasive paths



for four different trails through the forest. Build these trails using only natural resources found in the forest.

**Hazardous Materials Disposal and Management** - Examine the ability of tomato plants to remove DDT from the soil. Plant various types of tomatoes on land that has large concentrations of DDT and determine which plant is most effective. Make recommendations to the Department of Environmental Quality as to the most effective removal method.

**Invasive Species Control** - Use competitive inhibition techniques to selectively place plants to outcompete kudzu. Report on the best inhibitor and the effectiveness of the inhibition. Monitor the lasting impacts of the inhibitor on the rest of the natural environment.

**Pollinator Management** - Work with a local master gardener program to conduct a pollinator survey. Based on the results, develop an experimental garden that measures the effectiveness of different plants at attracting pollinators. Install several demonstration gardens, and host garden build days to help community members construct their own gardens according to the best practices resulting from the survey and experimental garden.

**Resource Recovery (Recycling)** - Examine the merits and detriments to recycling different kinds of plastic. Find which types will provide the greatest revenue for the local government and help them implement an awareness campaign about the chosen types of material to be recycled. Note that it is often more difficult to plan a sufficiently impactful DCS Award project in this category.

**Soil and Water Conservation** - Work with the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries to develop a Hydrilla management plan. Start this program. Record data relating to the effectiveness of Hydrilla control and publish media articles educating the public on the program.

## **Research**

Some projects can fit in multiple categories. The Candidate should choose the category that best fits the project or has not been used for another project. For example, the Hydrilla project in the Soil and Water Conservation category could just as easily fit into the Invasive Species Control category.

The Candidate is expected to be an expert in his own project so that he can educate others about the merits of the work conducted. Research is not only finding out about the technology that you will be using, but also contacting experts and asking for their opinion. Start your information quest with a quick Google Scholar search for relevant articles about the project. Take some of those links and expand the search by looking at governmental organizations and non-profit groups. Even an encyclopedia or science textbook can help somewhat. With this information in mind, ask your Conservation Advisor, Unit Leader, and or a Conservation Committee member for help. They can refer you to people who do “this” for a living and know all the technical details about the technology being used. Sometimes these individuals have done similar projects before and give advice not available in books or through Internet searches. Keep track of the people with to whom you speak. You are responsible for logging all time both you and others spend on this project and for properly thanking them when the effort is complete.

## **Project Outline**

The GLAAC DCSA Committee recommends a four-step process for proposing and planning a DCS Award project. These steps are the Project Outline, Project Proposal, Project Plan, and Project Report. This structure is modeled off of the Eagle Project Workbook. [You must use the DCS Award Workbook \(2020, 430-815\) available on the National Outdoor Programs website.](#) This Workbook will guide you through the Project Proposal, Project Plan, and Project Report phases. In GLAAC, we also strongly encourage those starting DCS Awards to begin with a Project Outline, described below.

In the Project Outline, the Candidate should briefly describe the following basic ideas:

### **Who:**

- Who is the Benefiting Organization?
- Who is doing the work?
- Who is advising you in this project?
- What: What is the work?
- What difference will the project make?
- What is the origin of the project idea?

### **When:**

- Estimate the time when the project will begin and end.

### **Where:**

- Where will all work take place?

### **Why:**

- Describe why this project is needed.
- How do you or will you know that the project is necessary and that selected site and design are the best?

### **How:**

- Give a few sentences description of the project plan describing some basic project milestones. How will the project continue into the future?
- Though you cannot conduct the project with only this simple information completed, at this point, both the Conservation Advisor and Benefiting Organization should approve your Outline to make sure you are on the right track.
- This should be completed in writing, either via e-mail or by signing the Outline.

You should turn this Project Outline into your DCS Award Committee Advisor. They will provide you with detailed feedback, with the DCS Award Advisor focusing especially carefully on the criteria you say you will meet. Once you work with these advisors and they approve your Project Outline, you should start the actual planning proposal process as described in the DCS Award Project Workbook. Pages 1 to 15.

## **DCS Award Project Workbook**

You are required to use the DCS Award Project Workbook (2020, 430-815) for both of your projects. However, keep in mind that the space provided to answer each question may or may not

be enough. On the other hand, you may find that some questions simply do not apply to your type of project. If you leave a question blank or place a “N/A” as a response, you should include a rationale. Your overarching objective is to convince the Council CSA Committee that you met the requirements for the award, not to answer each question in the Workbook. The GLAAC DCSA Committee strongly recommends that you place an Executive Summary, sometimes referred to as an abstract where you describe what you want to accomplish. This summary should not be more than 50 words. This summary should briefly outline how you fulfilled all of the DCS Award criteria with your project.

**Project Proposal** - Beginning on page six of the Project Workbook, the Project Proposal should be completed after you share your Project Outline with your DCSA and Conservation Advisors. Based on their feedback on your Project Outline, you should be able to complete this Project Proposal and articulate how your project will fulfill all of the DCS Award criteria.

**Area Description and Issues** - To complete this section, you will want to have visited and photographed the project area. Do not worry about completing any testing on the site; this may be a part of your actual project. Use interviews with the Benefiting Organization to help determine their perceived issues with the area. Visit the area on multiple days at different times to get an understanding of how the area is used. For example, a stream bank with erosion problems can manifest in many forms. The bank may be clear of vegetation, making the problem obvious. Alternately, the vegetation on the bank may be planted in such a way that the water is channeled down the bank, creating a place for erosion to occur. This could only be discovered by examining the site in the rain.

**Current Condition or Situation** - When describing what you believe has happened to the area, look for ways to incorporate scientific research later in the project. The Benefitting Organization may not have information about inventories or surveys in the area or these data may not be relevant for your particular project, so document how you could help add to existing data with your project. Assessing how the area has changed over time can best be done by looking at photographs of the area from various years. Google Earth or state or city GIS data might be helpful for this task. Additionally, it is critical to interview someone who maintains the area or has been familiar with it for a long period of time so that this individual can describe any changes about which you might not be aware. The questions about inventories or surveys mean different things depending on the type of project you are conducting. If the project deals with animal life, the survey will probably include the type, quantity, and quality of the animals in a given area. For soil and water conservation, the Benefitting Organization may have access to current or past soil tests they can share with you to help inform your planning. If no survey has been conducted, you should consider if you need to incorporate such a survey into your project in order to better understand the current situation in the area. Figuring out ways to find missing information will greatly aid you in demonstrating a commitment to the scientific method and research with professionals. It is very important that you take pictures of the area before you begin any work.

**Project Alternatives** - The project alternatives section is an excellent place to demonstrate that you have talked to professionals in your field of conservation and completed research on the area and your proposed solution to your conservation problem. As the text mentions, one of your

alternatives should be doing nothing. Do not simply assume that the conservation problem will continue if you do nothing. Evaluating the doing nothing alternative is a good way to make sure the project is really necessary and will have its intended effects. Develop a list of criteria to help you evaluate the doing nothing option against other alternatives. You may have a preferred solution to the problem but treat the project alternatives section as an honest look at different possible solutions. Choosing alternatives aside from your proposed solution and doing nothing can be challenging. One good way to approach this problem is to split your project into components and see what effect choosing to complete a different number of components may have on the project or what would happen if one component was significantly changed in some way. For example, suppose you are designing an erosion control landscape to stabilize the side of a creek. Your proposed solution calls for certain types of native plant species, building a retaining wall, educating citizens, and putting down erosion control barriers. An alternative would be to decide not to build the retaining wall; another viable alternative would be to build the wall out of rock instead of wood, or you could consider moving the wall location slightly which might have a different impact. In order to evaluate your alternatives effectively, you will need to develop some criteria that you believe are important to your project. We suggest you split these criteria into two categories: conservation criteria and DCS Award criteria. The former is a list of criteria that impact the conservation effectiveness of the project such as cost, habitat created, erosion mitigated, and other similar factors. The second set of criteria will help you see which projects fulfill DCS Award criteria. Evaluate items such as opportunity for research, use of scientific method, lasting impact, and number of hours spent on the project. If you have a hard time translating your criteria into a proposed project solution, try assigning numbers and weights to the criteria to help.

**Criterion Objective** Want developed area for wildlife habitat Lasting Impact Must be a significant part of project Use of Scientific Method Must be a part of project

Criterion	Objective
Erosion Mitigated	More is better, closer to creek is better
Habitat Developed	Want developed area for wildlife habitat
Lasting Impact	Must be a significant part of project
Use of Scientific Method	Must be a part of project
Hours Worked	At least 300

	Alternative A	Alternative B
Criterion	30' x 60' on the upper bank of the creek	25' x 70' on the lower bank of the creek
Erosion Mitigated	Lots of plants planted, no trees planted, some shrubs	Some plants planted, some trees planted, no shrubs
Habitat Developed	Educational sign	Community group formed
Lasting Impact	To determine types of plants and erosion barrier	To determine types of plants and erosion barrier
Use of Scientific Method	400	350

Here the Scout chose to evaluate the projects on a five-point scale with "5" being best with indicating the importance of each criterion. You should choose a system that works for you and your project.

	Alternative A	Alternative B
Criterion	4	5
Erosion Mitigated	3	3
Habitat Developed	3	4
Lasting Impact	3	3
Use of Scientific Method	5	4
<b>Average</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>3.6</b>

Our analysis here shows that, though the two alternatives we evaluated were very close in the end, Alternative B is preferable. Of course, you will want to complete this analysis including many more criteria and alternatives.

Another method to evaluate various alternatives is using a Pro vs. Con chart.

Alternative 1		
No.	Pro	Con
1		
2		
3		
4		

Alternative 2		
No.	Pro	Con
1		
2		
3		
4		

**Proposed Project Description and Benefits** - Now that you have selected an alternative, you can easily complete this section by describing the results of your project alternatives analysis. Be sure to include pictures of the proposed project area and any conceptual plans that you might have already developed for your project. Use this space to reinforce the fact that the site and design maximize the impact of the project. Projects typically take about six months to complete from initial design to finished paperwork, so keep that in mind when you make your time estimates.

**Providing Leadership, People** - Remember to discuss the leadership you intend to provide before the actual project “workday.” For example, you will likely speak to a number of conservation professionals and use their advice to make decisions about the best ways to conduct your project. Organizing a working group of conservation professionals for your project is one way of demonstrating leadership.

**Materials, Supplies, Tools, and Other Needs** - Once you have developed a basic conception of your project, *roughly* estimate costs for the project. You will fully detail these costs in your Final Plan, so this section wants to know if the plants you are planning on purchasing cost hundreds or thousands of dollars.

**Permits and Permissions** - Remember that if you are coordinating a Scout group to drive in a caravan to your project location, you will need obtain permission from parents and complete a

safety review similar to a Tour Plan (though Tour Plans are not formally approved). You will likely need to research laws where the project is being conducted to figure out if you need a digging or building permit. The Benefiting Organization traditionally would request these permits, but it is your responsibility to determine whether they are needed and to make sure the Benefitting Organization requests them. Call the local utilities company before you begin any project involving digging.

**Preliminary Cost Estimate** - Simply total your cost estimates from the above sections and demonstrate that you have a plan to obtain money to pay for the project. Often supplies and tools can be donated by the Benefiting Organization. You will complete this section in much greater detail in the project Final Plan. Recall that DCS Award projects are not made any stronger if they include a fundraising component, so do not feel obligated to fundraise unless the need arises.

**Project Phases** - You will have the opportunity to develop another project phase list in the project Final Plan, but we believe that the earlier you can plan out the project, the better. Thus, in contrast with the materials and cost estimates, which we recommend finalizing in the Final Plan, complete the project phases list as soon as possible. You can use the simple list that is provided in the Workbook, but we often find it more effective to use a Gantt chart which more professionally presents your project phases and assigns a timeline from the beginning to end of the project. Below is such a Gantt chart, used for a DCS Award project that also was an Eagle Scout Service Project. Expect to spend at least six months from the initial discussion about project ideas until the completion of the project. Below is a sample Gantt Chart. There are many sample designs, or you may create your own. There is a rule of thumb to keep in mind as you plan your projects. *Everything takes longer than you think.* Add at least 10 percent more time for everything.



**Logistics and Safety Issues** - Provide a simple list of how transportation will work as well as basic safety issues you foresee. You will complete a more detailed analysis of safety issues in the project Final Plan.

**Review** - DCS Award projects **must** be reviewed by the Benefitting Organization, your Conservation Advisor, and Council DCS Awards Adviser when the Project Proposal is completed, **but before any work starts on the Project. Before the actual work on the project begins, the DCSA Adviser will hold a meeting, live a Board of Review with the above members so the candidate may review his/her proposal. Any misunderstandings or miscommunications are resolved at the meeting.**

## **Final Plan**

Projects that the GLAA Council DCS Awards Chair is not made aware of until after they are completed cannot be approved. Preapproval is required, though it is not a guarantee that the final DCS Award project will be approved by these signatories. You should obtain approval from the Benefitting Organization and your Conservation Advisor before submitting your Project Proposal to the Council DCS Awards Adviser. He/she will coordinate approval with the Council DCSA Committee.

**Project Final Plan Overview** - Complete your Final Plan by expanding as much as possible on the information provided in the Project Proposal. You will notice that almost all of the sections in the Final Plan are the same as in the Project Proposal, but the DCS Award Workbook encourages you to actually write down and plan everything you will do during the project and everything you will need.

**Comments and Changes** - Include how your project Final Plan has changed from your Project Proposal. For example, if your Conservation Adviser had to be replaced because that person has moved on to a new position or moved away. Also, plan for changes to occur as you conduct your project. In writing, state parts of the plan that are subject to change and how these changes will affect the project result.

**Project Phases and Work Phases** - You can simply revise or add to the Gantt chart that you made earlier to create the work phases for your project. Also plan the actual workdays. Publish a flyer that lists the work that will be completed and schedule for the applicable workdays. It may be helpful to use technology like Facebook or Unit e-mail lists to publicize the project. Consider finding ways to involve the community and Benefitting Organization in project workdays.

**Attachments and Technical Design** - Create a design diagram, architectural drawing, landscaping plan, or some sort of depiction of the project. This will not only help on the DCS Award application, but it will also make it easier for Scouts and participants in the project to understand exactly what you are doing.

**Materials** - Make a detailed materials list including all the required items, prices of those items to be purchased, and the location of items that are donated. Overestimate the amount of a given material needed to ensure that the project does not stop simply because you ran out of materials.

**Supplies, Tools, and Other Needs** - Do not assume that the Benefitting Organization has or has the means to obtain the machinery or specific equipment for the project. Frequently, the organization will have some basic equipment, but not specific items like augers, tillers, or

fertilizer spreaders. Arrange to get this equipment to the site and make sure to over allocate these resources so that workers are kept busy.

**Expenses** - Use the materials list to create a budget for the project. Keep in mind that money will be needed for lunch or food for the workers. Also, include a ten or fifteen percent contingency fund for unplanned materials. In the budget, you can indicate fundraised or donated money or supplies. You need not budget for pieces of equipment like shovels, gloves, and saws if participants will bring these items. However, anything that is rented should be included in the budget, and donated items should be verified far in advance.

Itemized List of Materials/Shopping List  
(You may add additional lines as needed)

Item Name	Quantity	Cost/Item	Total Cost
		<b>TOTAL</b>	

You need not fundraise. Raising money will not help your DCS Award application, nor is it a requirement. It is up to the Candidate to see that the project has the money required to succeed, but he does not need to go and raise the money. First, speak with the Benefiting Organization about funding the project. Frequently, they will be able to donate some or most of the money for the project. Check with members of your Unit to see if they can provide materials or know companies that can help. Check with your Eagle Scout Coach/Adviser for guidelines pertaining to using a DCSA project to also be used for your Eagle Project.

If there still is a budget shortfall, look into getting a grant from a governmental organization or local service club. However, keep in mind that these grants are usually competitive, little money, and require months of advance planning. Thus, it is best to choose a project that can get a stable source of funding; either the Benefiting Organization promises to donate the money or donations can be easily obtained.

**Providing Leadership** - DCS Award projects have no specifics pertaining to who must complete the actual labor in the project. Thus, the Candidate can choose whether to do the work alone or with a group. The group effort will correlate with Eagle project requirements and also demonstrate the education component of a DCS Award project. Scouts, Scouters, adults, and others may participate in the project. Base the timeline for work on the number of individuals expected to help on the project. Recruit early and remember that only adults should operate most power tools (see *BSA Guide to Safe Scouting*). Sources of workers can be your Unit, the Order of the Arrow, Venturing Crews, school service groups, and other clubs. Choose several members to serve as crew leaders as you split up the work that will be completed. Remember that your job as a DCS Award Candidate is not to physically do the labor involved in each project, rather you are to supervise and act as the expert in all parts of the work. Organize the group of volunteers into different crews based on the types of work they will complete. Assign a crew leader to each



crew and train him to know all the responsibilities of his crew. This forms the “two-deep leadership. where the volunteers report to the crew leaders and they report to you. Such a practice cuts down on unnecessary questions and allows the Candidate to supervise and monitor process instead of being stuck with only one group. One incentive for participation in your projects is that they count toward service hours required for rank advancement. Be sure to make mention of this fact in your announcement and report the hours earned after the project is completed.

**Safety** - Assess safety needs including people designated to provide first aid and how help will be contacted if needed. The first point of Leave No Trace is “Plan ahead and prepare.” In your project, planning for potential problems is essential. Consider two major themes: weather related issues and help related issues. For weather problems, plan something for volunteers to do inside or in the shade. At a minimum, have a weather safe location to stay. Also, plan for low attendance and high attendance. Make sure that there are jobs to perform if a larger number of individuals attend. Compartmentalize the work so that fewer people can perform part of the project if attendance is very low. Manage safety risks carefully by having equipment on hand and personnel to deal with emergency situations. A Tour Plan is no longer required for any trip; however, you should still document drivers and emergency contacts as well as obtain permission forms for Scout participants. Visit the work site and plan safety equipment that needs to be worn and an evacuation plan to the nearest hospital. Bring extra safety goggles and gloves for those who forget. Make sure that there are people on hand that know CPR and have some extra food and water for people who feel sick or need extra food. Prepare a safety briefing that you will conduct with volunteers before the start of each workday reviewing potential hazards and how to avoid harm as well as providing a clear overview of the work and tasks assigned to each volunteer. If volunteers arrive later in the day, you might need to conduct additional safety briefings.

**Hazard Analysis, Recognition, and Control** - Refer to the *BSA Service Project Guidelines* (680-027), *BSA Program Hazard Analysis* (680-009), *BSA Guide to Safe Scouting* (34416), and *Guidelines for Tool Use and Work at Elevations or Excavations* (680-028) to complete a hazard analysis including work hazards, weather hazards, tool use hazards, emergency preparation, and preventative measures you will take to help reduce the risk of hazards. If you have any concern about safety or hazard mitigation, contact your DCSA Adviser. He/she might need to reach out to the council Risk Management Vice President.

**Publicity** - Plan to document the project well so that you can send pictures and information to local newspapers or media. They will be most responsive if you combined a DCS Award project with an Eagle project, but it does not hurt to send material from each project. Briefly describe the purpose and results of the project as well as the importance of the DCS Award. This will raise awareness about the awards and give you publicity for your hard work.

**Continuation** - This is one factor that differentiates DCS Award projects from other projects. Put simply, it is not a DCS Award project if everything stops at the end of the last workday. Planting one hundred trees simply is not sufficient, for there is no follow-up or continuation. This continuation is difficult to plan out and sometimes is abstract. A habitat reconstruction project could, for example, be continued through an agreement with a landscaper to keep the area

maintained and to provide periodic photographic updates. What about a publicity project? These are much more difficult to continue. You could choose to educate an employee of Habitat for Humanity about your Energy Conservation program so that they can continue to teach the material after your project is complete. Think about ways in which you can help the Benefitting Organization maintain the project. Maintenance plans, educational programs, and suggestions for future work based off your research determining how effective the project are all important ways to show the lasting impact of your project.

**Announcements** - The project is a success only if Scouts and individuals come to help you. Thus, a well-written announcement paper containing a brief description of your project. Distribute this announcement at least three weeks in advance. Also, follow-up by making phone calls or sending e-mails and try to have a list of participants a couple of days before the workday.

## **Project Report**

This section states that the Project Report “is the only document that the DCSA Committee with reference to review your project.” Final approval for the DCS Award is at the Council, not the National level. Additionally, the GLAAC DCSA Committee requests both of your DCS Award Workbooks with attachments (your entire project write-up) when turning in a DCS Award application. Unlike Eagle Project Reports, a DCS Award Project Report should tie the entire project together. Review all the DCS Award criteria and really sell the project as having a lasting and significant impact on conservation and demonstrate that you are a newfound expert in the relevant fields of conservation.

**Project Description** - Provide a description of the completed project and the impact it will have.

**Observations** - What was successful during the project? What was challenging?

**Changes** - What changes were made from the Project Proposal? Justify why these changes were made and the impact you believe they had on the quality of the conservation work completed.

**Leadership** - Describe how you demonstrated leadership during the project and the most rewarding part about being a leader.

**Service Project Data** - List all individuals that worked on the project and the number of hours worked by each individual. Remember to try to meet the age and hour guidelines presented earlier. If your project does not meet these guidelines, consider additional ways to add hours and significance to your project. Could you develop a committee in the Benefitting Organization to oversee the project? Could you train others on how the project works and help them suggest ideas for new projects? Don’t forget all the time you put into your research, planning the project, working with your advisers, and the Benefitting Organization.

**Fundraising** - Was fundraising completed? If so, how were donors thanked and how will leftover money be used?

**Photos and Other Documentation** - Attach photographs and other relevant materials. Almost all material that you develop for your project should be included. Space is not at a premium, and

extreme detail is valued. Plans, documentation, drawings, suggestions from others, and even proposals for alternative project solutions that were not adopted should all be included.

**Monitoring** - How will you monitor the project? What follow-up activities can be completed by the Benefitting Organization to maintain the project? Every project should have a follow-up and monitoring plan that you deliver to the Benefitting Organization. This way you can end the project without having to conduct extensive monitoring years after the project has ended, but you can also be sure that such plans are in place.

**Learning** - How did the project help people, especially community members, learn? What educational materials did you provide to the work crew? How did you educate the community and those who interact with the project?

**Community Impact** - What impact did the project have on the community? Did you invite community groups to participate in planning and executing the project? Have organizations that may be interested in using the project been alerted?

**Media Coverage** - Provide copies of any media coverage of the project. Remember that you should plan for media exposure, so this is an easy item to complete.

**Benefitting Organization Acceptance** - DCS Award applications require a letter from the Benefitting Organization thanking the Applicant for his or her work on the project. The BRMC also recommends attaching letters from any other person or group that was integral to the success of the project. Your Conservation Advisor and DCS Award Advisor should review your Project Report, but their signatures are not required on the Project Report.

**Application Presentation** - Include the Project Outline, Project Proposal, Project Plan, and Project Report for each project and your application; everything should be professionally and neatly presented. This goes a long way to convince the DCSA Committee that you are serious about your conservation work. You are required to submit two hard copies of your completed Workbook and send a PDF document via e-mail to the Council DCS Awards Chair. One of these hard copies will be returned to you with the completed signature page upon successful completion of your BOR. Use labels and title pages and have dividers between project sections. Computer draw all designs and print everything in color. Include videos, letters, newspaper articles or other publicity that distinguishes your application from that of others, if you have these items. Remember, detail is key, as it indicates careful planning and preparation.

**Application Approvals** - The Applicant should get his or her application approved and reviewed by as many individuals as possible. Though not required, a thorough review by an English teacher will only help to prevent careless errors and unclear language. Show your application in draft form to the Council DCS Awards Adviser and have him/her make suggestions. If possible, also arrange for your Conservation Advisor to read over the application for secondary review. Both of these individuals will likely provide you with detailed suggestions for additional material in the application.

Although you may tire of revising the application myriad times, conducting these reviews and incorporating suggestions dramatically increases the probability of your application being accepted. When the draft form of the application is complete, show the finished application to your Unit leader and get approval for the Merit Badges or Electives completed before proceeding with the more technical approvals. Then get final approval from your Conservation Advisor. You may have two Conservation Advisors --- one for each of your projects if you have completed two projects. If this is the case, ask both Conservation Advisors to review the application and to sign in the Conservation Advisor space on page two of the DCS Award application. At this point, you are ready to submit your DCS Award application to the Council DCSA Committee and to conduct your DCS Award Board of Review. To do so, submit all of your application materials to the Council DCS Awards Chair. The Council DCS Awards Chair will coordinate your Board of Review.

## **Board of Review**

You will hear from the Council DCS Awards Coordinator Chair shortly after your application is submitted in order to schedule your Board of Review. Before scheduling the Board of Review, the Council DCS Awards Chair will review your application and identify any unforeseen issues that may result in the application being rejected. If any such issues arise during this initial review, the Council DCS Awards Chair will communicate them with you and provide you with the opportunity to revise your application before proceeding further. After the workbook has been revised and prior to the Board of Review, the Council DCS Awards Chair will conduct a thorough review of the application and do an analysis for the Council DCSA Committee regarding whether each of the projects meets the DCS Award criteria. The Chair will share the analysis with the BOR.

The Council DCS Awards Chair will then invite the applicant to attend an upcoming Council DCSA Committee meeting to participate in a Board of Review. The Council DCS Awards Chair will also distribute all of the application materials to Committee members in advance of the meeting, so that they can be prepared to ask questions or to seek clarification.

The Board of Review may take place in person, via telephone, or via videoconference software depending on what works best for all participants. DCS Award applicants are welcome to invite their Unit Leader and parents to the Board of Review for support, but they may not participate in the proceedings, in fact, they will be asked to leave the room during the review.

The DCS Award applicant should prepare for the Board of Review by considering potential questions that the Board may ask. Though the structure of the Board of Review may be formal, and DCS Award applicants should appear in fully Class A uniform, the questions asked during the Board of Review are not meant to trick the applicant or to be stressful. If the Scout has worked with and diligently followed the advice of the Council DCS Awards Committee and Conservation Advisors throughout the entire process, the DCS Award applicant should be fairly well prepared for the Board of Review and have a very high probability of their application being approved.

The applicant may wish to think about and be prepared to provide answers to questions of the following nature:

- What do you think is the impact of your projects?
- What is the biggest thing you have learned while working on a DCS Award?
- What are your career goals?
- How might you use what you learned working on a DCS Award in the future?
- What inspired you to start working on a DCS Award?

The Board of Review should last about thirty minutes. At the start of the Board of Review, the Council DCS Awards Chair will introduce the applicant and outline the procedures for the Board of Review. Members of the Board will then ask questions to the applicant in a round robin manner. Following questions from the Board, the applicant, and the Unit Leader (if applicable) will be asked to leave the room so that the Board can discuss the application. During this discussion, the Board will consider the merits of the application and any written comments from Council DCSA Committee members who reviewed the application, but who could not attend the Board of Review in person. Each member of the Council Committee, 18 years of age or older (for Scouts BSA applications) or 21 years of age or older (for Venturing applications), who attends the Board of Review is eligible to vote on approval of the DCS Award application. Eligible Committee members who are not able to attend the Board of Review may submit written comments for consideration by the Board, but they cannot vote on the outcome of the application.

The Council DCSA Chair will then conduct a vote on the outcome of the application, with two thirds (2/3) of the eligible votes needed to decide. The Board will issue one of three decisions to the DCS Award applicant at the conclusion of the Board and in writing:

1. **Approved:** The DCS Award application meets or exceeds the DCS Award requirements. The DCSA Committee Chairman will sign the application and recommend that the Scout Executive provide final approval.
2. **Returned:** The DCS Award application substantially meets the DCS Award requirements but needs some relatively minor improvements in order to fully meet the requirements. The Board is fully confident that these relatively minor improvements can be made within a reasonably short time period. If the DCS Award applicant makes all of the requested changes, the Board is fully confident that the DCS Award application will then be approved. Applications may be returned when one of the two DCS Award projects is sufficient, but some additional work remains on the second project. Applications may also be returned when the Board needs more information about one or more DCS Award projects.
3. **Declined:** The DCS Award application does not fully or substantially meet the DCS Award requirements and cannot be improved to fully meet the requirements within a reasonably short time period. Applications may be declined when both DCS Award projects require additional work.

If an application is approved, then the Council DCSA Committee Chair will sign the application and forward it to the Scout Executive with a recommendation to approve the application. Following this, the application will be submitted to National for processing. The Council DCS Awards Coordinator will let the applicant know when the award has arrived and arrange for a

suitable presentation. The Council DCSA Committee strongly encourages DCS Award recipients to earn the DCS Award only once and to help to support the DCS Award by mentoring applicants and supporting conservation through other avenues once they have earned a DCS Award.

If an application is returned, the Council DCS Awards Chair will provide the applicant with a letter outlining the reasons for this decision and a specific list of actions that the applicant must take in order to re-apply for the DCS Award along with a deadline for these changes to be made. Applicants whose applications are returned and who turn eighteen (for Scouts) or twenty-one (for Venturers) after the application is submitted may still be eligible to receive the DCS Award depending on the revisions required. The applicant will work with the Council DCS Awards Adviser to revise his or her application and resubmit it to the Council Conservation Committee. The resubmitted application will then be reviewed and DCSA Committee Chair in preparation for a second BOR. A Board of Review is not required for resubmitted applications.

If an application is declined, the Council DCS Awards Chair will provide the applicant with a letter outlining the reasons for this decision. The applicant may apply again for the DCS Award, but he or she may not use either of the projects that were included in a declined application. DCS Award applicants whose applications are declined have the right to appeal the decision within one month of the application being declined. To appeal a decision, submit a letter to the Council Vice President of Programs. The Council Vice President of Programs will then form an independent committee to review the application and to render a final decision. Since the DCS Award is approved at the Council-level, further appeals are not possible.

### **DCSA Committee Award Approvals**

(Intended for Scouters)

**Introduction** - The Council DCSA Committee is responsible for approving DCS Award Project Proposals and conducting a Board of Review for all DCS Award applications. Though the Council Scout Executive provides final approval for all applications, in reality, the Council DCSA Committee's Board of Review provides the information that the Scout Executive needs to be able to sign an application. Both the Project Proposal and Board of Review processes largely follow the Eagle Project Proposal and Board of Review processes outlined in the *BSA Guide to Advancement*.

**Composition of the Project Proposal Review or Board of Review** - All Council DCSA Committee members listed on a roster maintained by the Committee Chair are eligible to serve on the Board of Review. At least three Council DCSA Committee members eligible to vote on the DCS Award application must attend the Project Proposal review or Board of Review. In cases where there are an insufficient number of eligible Council Committee members to conduct a Project Proposal review or Board of Review, the Council Vice President of Programs will appoint two individuals to serve on the Project Proposal review or Board of Review alongside the Council DCS Awards Chair. It is recommended that these appointed individuals have a working knowledge of conservation science and the DCS Awards program. Eligible Committee members who are not able to attend the Project Proposal review or Board of Review may submit written comments for consideration, but they cannot vote on the outcome of the application.

Council DCSA Committee members should assess whether they have major conflicts of interest that prevent them from serving as impartial members of the Project Proposal review or Board of Review. Parents of DCS Award applicants are not allowed to participate in the Project Proposal review or Board of Review. Unit Leaders of DCS Award applicants may attend the Board of Review, but they cannot participate or vote.

**Project Proposal Approval** - The Council DCS Awards Committee Chair are responsible for approving DCS Award Project Proposals. Scouts should submit DCS Award Project Proposals to the Council DCS Awards Chair having already obtained approval from the Benefitting Organization and their Conservation Advisor. Upon receiving a completed Project Proposal, the Council DCS Committee should prepare a detailed, written review of the Project Proposal, outlining whether and how the Project Proposal meets DCS Award criteria. This review should also contain a recommendation for the Council DCSA Committee regarding whether the Project Proposal should be approved and what changes the Committee should recommend to the applicant to help ensure that his or her project will meet DCS Award criteria.

The Council DCS Awards Committee Adviser will be the first person to review the proposal. The Adviser will work with the Candidate until the proposal is ready to be reviewed by the entire Committee. After the Candidate and Adviser are satisfied with the proposal, it is emailed to the committee members for approval and disapproval. If a committee member does not agree the project should go forward, that person must provide rationale for this decision. The decisions and rationales are all emailed to the Adviser who shares these comments with the Candidate. After the Candidate has made the suggested changes to the proposal, he/she meets with the project Advisory Committee for approval. Once the candidate receives approval, they may begin their project. Upon approval, the Council DCS Awards Chair sign the Project Proposal approval section in the DCS Award Workbook. If necessary, Council DCS Awards Coordinator then prepares a letter to send to the applicant with the approved Project Proposal and a list of the changes discussed in the Project Proposal review in order to ensure that the final project will meet DCS Award criteria. DCS Award applicants must receive approval from the Council DCS Awards Committee Chair before beginning the Final Plan of their project.

**Board of Review Submission Process and Review** - The DCS Award candidate submits his or her completed application for a DCS Award to the DCS Awards Chair. Before scheduling the Board of Review, the DCS Awards Coordinator reads through the application to identify any major issues that might impact the timely approval of the application. These issues may include:

- Application signatures missing or workbooks not attached.
- Applicant turned 18 for Scouts BSA or 21 for Venturers before the application was submitted to the Council. The application is considered valid if it was submitted to the Council Office, Council Professional Staff, the Council Conservation Committee Chairman, or the Council DCS Awards Coordinator by these dates. The application should be forwarded to the Council DCS Awards Coordinator without delay.
- Too little information for the Board of Review to evaluate the application. The Scout has completed the required work, but someone unfamiliar with the projects cannot fully understand how the DCS Award criteria are met.

- Application contains projects that were not pre-approved by the Council Conservation Committee.
- Projects are missing key DCS Award components. For example, many projects do not fully meet the education or lasting impact criteria.
- Merit Badge or Venturing requirements are not met or proper paperwork to show that the requirements have been met is not included.

Should the application not have any major issues, the Council DCS Awards Chair then reviews the application carefully. The goal is that all major application issues are addressed before the applicant goes for a Board of Review. This ensures that the Board of Review experience is a positive one for the applicant. This recommendation is meant to provide guidance from an expert in the DCS Awards process and not to be final, as the applicant may be able to provide missing information before the Board of Review. Once the Council DCS Awards Chair has reviewed the application, he will proceed to schedule a Board of Review with the applicant. In general, the Board of Review will be scheduled within one month of receiving the application. The Council DCS Awards Chair will first invite the applicant to a Board of Review Meeting. If the applicant cannot attend a regular face-to-face meeting, the Committee will schedule a videoconference. Once a suitable time is found, the Council DCS Awards Chair will inform the applicant in writing of what to expect during the Board of Review including proper attire, the BOR format, the fact that the Scout's Unit leader may attend, and a description of potential Board of Review questions. At least one week prior to the Board of Review, the Council DCS Awards Committee Chair will email the Scout's Workbook to the Committee.

**Conducting the Board of Review** - Before meeting begins, the Committee Chair should ask the applicant and his or her Unit Leader and parent(s) to leave the room so that the Committee may prepare for the Board of Review. During this time, the Council DCS Awards Committee Adviser will discuss the application with members of the Board and answer any questions about the format of the Board. The applicant and his or her Unit Leader will then be invited back into the room, and the Board of Review will begin. The Council DCS Awards Adviser will introduce the applicant and outline the format of the Board. The Board members should then introduce themselves. During this time, the Council DCS Awards Chair will inform the applicant and the Unit Leader that they can ask for the Board to take a break at any time. Members of the Board of Review will then ask questions in a round robin format for about thirty minutes. Questions can be wide-ranging but should focus on the applicant's ability to fulfill the DCS Award criteria. Once all Board members have had the opportunity to ask questions and after no more than about thirty minutes, the Council DCS Awards Chair will ask the applicant and the Unit Leader to step out of the room so that the Board can discuss and vote on the outcome of the application. The Council DCS Awards chair will guide the discussion of the application and incorporate the comments of non-attending Committee members. Usually, a quick consensus is formed.

**After the Board of Review** - If an application is approved, then the Council DCSA Committee Chair will sign the application and forward it to the Scout Executive with a recommendation to approve the application. The Council DCSA Committee Chair may need to follow-up with or to educate the Scout Executive about the DCS Award or the application in order to ensure that he is comfortable with signing the application. Following this, the Scout Executive will submit the



application to National for processing. The Council DCS Awards Chair will let the applicant know when the award has arrived and arrange for a suitable presentation.

If an application is returned, the Council DCS Awards Coordinator will provide the applicant with a letter outlining the reasons for this decision and a specific list of actions that the applicant must take in order to re-apply for the DCS Award along with a deadline for these changes to be made. The contents of this letter should be reviewed by all members of the Board of Review to ensure that, should the applicant resubmit the application, the Board of Review will approve it. Applicants whose applications are returned and who turn eighteen (for Scouts) or twenty-one (for Venturers) after the application is submitted may still be eligible to receive the DCS Award depending on the revisions required. The Council DCS Awards Coordinator will work with the applicant to revise his or her application and resubmit it to the Committee. The resubmitted application will then be reviewed and either approved or declined. Applications can only be returned once. A Board of Review is not required for resubmitted applications. Instead, the Council DCS Awards Chair will review the resubmitted application and sign it and forward it on to the Scout Executive for signature.

**Handling Appeals** - DCS Award applicants whose applications are declined have the right to appeal the decision within one month of the application being declined. To appeal a decision, the DCS Award applicant should submit a letter to the Council Vice President of Programs. The Council Vice President of Programs will then form an independent committee to review the application and to render a final decision. An appeal is not another Board of Review. As such, the appeal committee will review all existing documentation and may choose to collect additional information from the Council DCS Awards Chair. The appeal committee should be comprised of the following people: a Scouter, a conservation professional, and a DCS Awards Advisor from another Council. The Council DCS Awards Chair can help recommend individuals who are qualified to serve on the appeals committee. The appeals committee members should not have served on the original Board of Review. The appeals committee will vote to either approve or decline the application, and a majority vote is needed to make a final decision. The final decision and the rationale for making it should be contained in a letter sent to the applicant, the Council DCSA Committee Chair, the Council Vice President of Programs, and the Scout Executive. Appeals committee decisions are final.

## **DCS Award Presentation**

After approval, the Council DCSA Committee will receive your award. Since earning a DCS Award is so rare, it will most likely be presented at a Council-wide event like the Eagle Recognition Dinner or Volunteer Recognition Dinner. An additional presentation may be done at the Unit level, if desired. The items sent by the National Conservation Committee for each award are listed below.

**BSA Distinguished Conservation Service Award:** A certificate and a square knot.

**BSA Distinguished Conservationist:** A certificate and a square knot.

**BSA Distinguished Conservation Service Award Certificate:** A certificate.

**Follow-Up** - Now what? You have earned a DCS Award. You should check on the progress of your DCS Award projects to see that they are still successful and continuing. Though there is no follow-up requirement after you receive the award, as a conservationist, it is your duty to see that the work you put in is still benefiting others. The biggest help you can provide, however, is to tell others about the DCS Awards. I found out about these awards while browsing the Scouting website and no one I spoke to knew anything about them. While the Council Conservation Committee is working hard to change this, you can help by answering questions about DCS Award projects and encouraging prospective Eagle Scouts to work on a DCS Award project at the same time. This little bit of additional work as a DCS Award representative or supporter will really help the Committee spread the DCS Award message.

## **Links to DCS Awards Documentation**

### **Applications:**

[BSA Distinguished Conservation Service Award Application, 430-107a](#)

[BSA Distinguished Conservationist Application, 430-107b](#)

[BSA Distinguished Conservation Service Award Certificate Application, 430-107c](#)

### **Service Project Workbook**

[BSA Distinguished Conservation Service Award Project Workbook](#)

[Executive Summary Template](#) (Complete one of these for each project)

### **Conservation Awards Frequently Asked Questions**

[Why did the BSA discontinue the William T. Hornaday awards program?](#)

[What are the categories of recognition in the BSA Distinguished Conservation Service Awards program?](#)

[Is the BSA Distinguished Conservation Service Awards program have the same requirements as the previous William T. Hornaday Awards?](#)

[How will the awards be processed?](#)

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[Do the conservation service projects have to be preapproved?](#)

## **Award Requirements**

[Complete list of award requirements](#)

## DCS Award Board of Review Checklist

1. Has the Candidate planned, led, and carried out two significant projects from separate project categories? Yes or No If so, which ones?
  - a. Air and Water Pollution Control \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Energy Conservation \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Fish and Wildlife Management \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. Forestry and Range Management \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. Hazardous Materials Disposal and Management \_\_\_\_\_
  - f. Invasive Species Control \_\_\_\_\_
  - g. Pollinator Management \_\_\_\_\_
  - h. Resource Recovery (Recycling) \_\_\_\_\_
  - i. Invasive Species Control \_\_\_\_\_
2. Has the Candidate performed research for all projects? Yes or No
  - a. The Candidate has shown documentation that research related to the project was performed. Yes or No
  - b. The Candidate has shown that alternatives were investigated. Yes or No
  - c. The project includes documentation related to other similar cases. Yes or No
  - d. The Candidate should have a sound explanation for the best practice that has been chosen for the project. Yes or No
3. Were the project requirements clearly stated in the documentation? Yes or No
4. Were the project success criteria clearly stated in the documentation? Yes or No
5. How much has the Candidate contributed to the improvement or better management of natural resources and the environment? Yes or No
6. Has the Candidate shown leadership during the project? Yes or No
7. To what extent has the Candidate encouraged other people to plan, understand, appreciate, and practice sound conservation and environmental protection methods. Yes or No
8. Have there been any public relations as part of the project? Yes or No
9. Are thank-you letters documented as part of the project? Yes or No
10. Is there a list of lessons learned as part of the project? Yes or No
11. Is there a project plan listing the planned and actual tasks, times, and resources used on the project? Yes or No
12. Is there an appropriate level of budgeting and records for this project? Yes or No
13. Are there an appropriate number of photographs and diagrams in the documentation to show the conditions before, during, and after the project? Yes or No
14. Did the project meet the success criteria? Did it have an impact to the community and the environment? Did it have an impact? Yes or No
15. Is there an ongoing piece of this project that continues into the future? Yes or No
16. Has the Scout presented the project in a professional manner? Yes or No