



Scouts BSA

JPL Troop 509

Est. 1952

La Cañada Flintridge, CA

jpltroop509.org



Eagle Project Guide

Read the Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook, which is a .pdf that can be found either on the troop's website or on BSA's website. This is the official document that must be filled out and submitted with your Eagle application. It includes the official BSA requirements that must be met. This guide provides additional information and tips to help you meet those requirements. As the process is subject to regular changes at both the National and Council level, always check with your Eagle Advancement Coordinator if you have questions.

Overview

The Requirement

As stated in your Boy Scout Handbook:

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

Limitations

Certain project ideas are not permitted:

- Not routine labor (not a job or service normally done by volunteers like cutting grass)
- Not something for the benefit of BSA properties or activities
- Not a project benefiting a business or commercial enterprise (although there are some exceptions, e.g., museums, homes for the elderly)
- Not a fundraiser (fundraising is permitted only to secure project materials or supplies)
- Not maintenance

Size

There are no specific size requirements, however, try to choose a project you will be proud of for the rest of your life, something that really stretches you. Keep in mind these important characteristics:

- Must be a challenge requiring planning, communication and leadership (small, easy projects don't get approved)
- Typically involves 100 to 500 work hours by you and your volunteers, including planning
- Must clearly benefit the organization

Participants

You may be surprised at how many people will be involved with your project:

- You, your parents, your family

- Your troop
 - Scoutmaster
 - Eagle Advancement Coordinator
 - Committee Chair and Committee members
 - Project Coach
 - Other Scouts and helpers who carry out the project work
- Beneficiary representative (i.e., the organization benefiting from project)
- People who will use whatever your project produces / accomplishes
- Donors of materials, supplies, tools, money, etc. (if not the Beneficiary)

Approvals

You must use your Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook for recording approvals. Your project proposal must receive approvals **before** you start your project:

- Scoutmaster
- Unit Committee
- Rose Bowl Eagle Advancement Chair
- Beneficiary

Project Phases

The period of time from when you start thinking about your project, to the time it is finished, is typically 6 to 12 months. That may sound like a long time but there is more to do than just the project work. You will spend time selecting the project, developing the project proposal and detailed plan, gaining the approvals required before you start work, recruiting helpers, doing the actual work, getting final approval, and writing a report on the results and lessons learned. No matter what project you choose it will take a significant amount of time to complete, so give yourself plenty of time.

The following series of phases are typical for Eagle Service Projects:

1. Identify project ideas
2. Select your project with approval from the Scoutmaster
3. Define the project scope
4. Create a project proposal and detailed project plan
5. Obtain approvals for your project proposal and target work dates
6. Revise or add more detail to your project plan if needed
7. Recruit volunteers to do the work
8. Carry out the project, leading others in doing the work
9. When all the work is done, write a final report
10. Obtain final acceptance / approvals for your completed project

The following sections explain the details of these phases.

1. Identify Project Ideas

Identifying a project that you are excited about and feel will make a difference to your community will make the experience more enjoyable. Plan to spend a fair amount of time doing research. Every community has problems or things that can be solved by the leadership and dedication of a young person. There are many ways to get ideas for projects:

- Talk to Eagle Scouts you know and ask them where they got their ideas.

- Discuss previous troop projects with your Scoutmaster, the Eagle Advancement Coordinator, or other adults who have been involved in the troop for several years.
- Refer to the list of troop Eagle Projects
- Think about merit badges you have earned or want to earn and how they could be the basis of a project or connected to a project.
- Read stories in the local newspaper discussing a problem, issue or opportunity in the community. See if it tells who is thinking about the problem or call Town Hall to ask.
- Ask leaders or staff at organizations you know personally, for example your current or former school, museums or community centers that you visit often, or your place of worship. A personal connection to the Beneficiary will make the project extra special.
- Identify organizations that address issues about which you care deeply, for example a homeless shelter, an animal shelter, or an elderly care facility.
- Ask your friends, family, and adult mentors for ideas.

After you have collected a list of project ideas that interest you, sit down with the Scoutmaster, your parents, or a trusted adult. Explain your ideas and see which ones appeal to you AND which the adult feels are appropriate for you to do. Keep this in mind: YOU make the final determination of what project you want to do. However, if the adult advises against all of your ideas, then you'll need to get advice on more appropriate ideas and continue to research possible projects.

Take your time, don't rush, and use your community's resources to assist you in finding a problem, researching it, and identifying potential solutions. Don't spend much time actually planning a project until you have discussed the idea with your Scoutmaster or other leaders to ensure that your idea is acceptable. While not required, you may want to ask a troop leader (other than the Scoutmaster) or other adult to serve as a Project Coach. This adult can provide advice as you evaluate ideas, plan your project, and prepare your proposal for approval.

2. Select Your Project

The Eagle Project must provide an adequate opportunity to demonstrate leadership of others and provide service to a worthy organization. Your project idea should be something which is valuable to the community and a challenge to you. It does not have to be an original idea, but you must do all of the planning for your project and may not use someone else's plan.

Briefly (in one or two paragraphs) describe your preferred project idea. This should not include lots of detail; that will come later. Write this as though you were telling a friend what you were going to do. Think of this as an executive summary of the overall project. Review this with your Scoutmaster. Make sure it is acceptable and you have approval to go forward. You will need to answer questions like:

- Who will benefit from your project and how? (Are there others besides the Beneficiary?)
- Who from the Beneficiary will be providing guidance in planning the project? What other adults do you have supporting you?
- What challenges do you foresee (e.g., costs, construction or engineering skills needed, logistics)?

Once the Scoutmaster is satisfied that the project will provide both a challenge and leadership opportunities and that it is feasible, he will allow you to start developing your proposal and project plan.

3. Define the Project Scope

After your project idea has approval from the Scoutmaster, you are ready to define the project in detail. Before beginning any plans, it is vital that you define the exact scope of the project in consultation with the Beneficiary. Both you and the organization with which you working need to be in clear agreement on what it is you are doing and what the results will be. The most common problem with project approval arises from misunderstandings between the Scout and the Beneficiary about what the project outcome was supposed to be.

You should have several discussions with the staff at the Beneficiary. People you may need to talk to include the Beneficiary Representative, the overall manager, the site manager, maintenance staff, and others. Items to discuss include:

- What is the expected result of the project?
- Are there specific plans, vendors, tools, or materials that the Beneficiary will require you to use?
- Does the Beneficiary have a deadline for the project completion? Are the limitations on when the work can be done (e.g., seasonal)?
- What are the specific tasks that must be accomplished?
- Is there any special work sequence required?
- What materials, supplies and tools can the Beneficiary provide? Can they provide funding or suggest donors? What will you need to purchase and/or provide?
- Who will transport materials, supplies and tools to the job site? How?
- Are there any work site access restrictions or safety considerations?
- If there is a gap between work sessions, where will everything be stored?
- Who from the Beneficiary will act as advisor or coordinator for the project work days? This may be different from the Beneficiary Representative you work with in planning. Be sure to write down names, positions, emails, and phone numbers of all your contacts.
- Who from the Beneficiary will formally approve the project?

A lot of information is needed to fully define the project scope. Visit the job site and take pictures or make sketches of work areas. Record important measurements and dimensions needed to calculate material and time requirements. Look around to identify any potential safety issues. You will likely need to make more than one visit to gather information. Once you have enough information to describe the most significant aspects of the project, hold a project concept review with the Beneficiary team members to check and see that your scope of work matches their expectations. It is a good idea to invite your Project Coach, or at least a parent, and to bring a written description of the project.

Costs are of particular concern. Be sure both you and the Beneficiary understand all financial obligations, and have them in writing. Is the sponsor going to "fund your project" or "pay up to \$100 toward your expenses"? A misunderstanding can create hard feelings or cost you more than you had planned. Explain that any funds raised for the project are held by the Troop until the completion of the project, when the Beneficiary will receive any remaining funds.

Permits and permissions are an area which needs to be discussed with the Beneficiary when you are scoping out the project. Depending on your project, you may need a variety of permits before you can begin work. If you are doing renovations, you may need a building permit from the city or town. If you are holding an event, this may also require a permit from the city. Projects

requiring you to dig may need permits from the gas, water, or electrical company to ensure you do not damage underground lines. Finally, if you are doing backcountry work, like trail renovations, you may require access or wilderness permits.

Another area where you should ensure complete understanding is the materials, tools and supplies. Does the Beneficiary have requirements as to what is used (e.g., type of wood or paint). What, if anything, will be provided by the Beneficiary. When the Beneficiary says they will provide materials, tools or supplies, make sure you both understand exactly what is to be provided, where and when. Find out if the items will be delivered to work site by the Beneficiary or if you must pick them up. If you are going to have to pick up the items, find out exactly where (i.e., company name and the address) and from whom (i.e., name and phone number of the person you need to talk to when you get there). Will you need to call ahead and set up an appointment for pick up?

Once you have agreement over the written project description, including the cost and materials issues, you are ready to proceed. It is a good idea to keep and attach this description to the proposal that the Beneficiary and others will approve before you begin the work.

4. Create a Proposal and Detailed Plan

Careful and thorough planning is crucial to ensuring successful project work. Before any actual work can begin on the project, you must have an approved proposal. This includes things like fundraising, donation requests, material/supply/tool purchases, and site preparation.

In the Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook, you will find one section titled “Eagle Scout Service Project Proposal,” followed by a section titled “Eagle Scout Service Project Plan.” The proposal is a high level description of the project which is reviewed and approved by the Beneficiary, Scoutmaster, Committee, and Council. Often, however, you will need more detail than is required in the actual proposal to sufficiently explain your project to those who will approve it. The project plan covers each of the topics in the proposal in more depth and has a few additional ones as well. Ideally, you should develop your proposal and an initial draft of your project plan in parallel. This will better prepare you to answer questions that arise and will reduce the additional planning needed before you can begin work. During the approval process, you will receive feedback which you can use to revise and finalize your project plan.

Preparing the proposal as a presentation, e.g., with Powerpoint or a similar program, will allow the Committee to better visualize and understand your project and allow you to provide more detail than can be provided in the workbook pages. Including some of the tables from the project plan section will provide information that Committee members may ask to see. A presentation template is available on the troop website which follows the project plan very closely.

The following are the headings of the “Project Proposal” and “Project Plan” sections of the Workbook and the information is a guideline for what you should include. Those headings specific to the “Project Plan” section follow. Your project may require more or less detail in each of these areas depending on the type of work you plan to do.

A. Project Description and Benefit

This is the area where you should describe the scope of the project, including what you will do and what the result will be. Discuss how the Beneficiary will gain value from the project, as well

as others in the community (e.g., students at the school, visitors to the park or museum, parishioners). State when you plan to begin and finish the work. You should have already defined this information in your discussions with the Beneficiary.

In the “Project Plan” section, you are asked to describe any changes made to the description (scope) after the approval process and how this will enhance or diminish the benefits.

B. Giving Leadership

For the proposal you are asked about the approximate number of volunteers you will need, how you will find them and what you think will be challenging about leadership. If you have given thought to the various tasks that need to be done and how long each will take, you should easily be able to estimate your requirements. You can refer to section seven below for ideas on recruiting volunteers.

In the project plan, this section requires more detail. You will have already defined the work processes, or tasks, and you will use these to create a table with the skill requirements and number of helpers for each task.

You also need to describe how you plan to train your volunteers and to ensure communication before the project is sufficient. Describe how you are going to organize the workers to get the work done efficiently. Will they be divided into groups and, if so, who will lead the groups? What tasks will each group be doing? How will you communicate what they need to do? What will adult leaders do? Remember, you do not have to DO any of the physical work yourself; you are responsible for LEADING others in carrying out the project the way you want it done. See sections seven and eight below for more on leadership and training.

C. Materials

Materials become part of the finished product. Examples are lumber, nails, hooks, paint, concrete and plants. In your project proposal you should enter a summary list of materials that you need and the basic dimensions. For the project plan, you are essentially creating a shopping list, so include the material specifications (exact size, quality, brand, finish, etc.), quantity needed, and cost. Don't just say "lumber," instead describe exactly what pieces of lumber. If items are to be donated, state that. You can use the table in the Workbook and add lines as required. You may have to abbreviate the descriptions and sources to fit them. If you prefer, you can create a separate table and attach it to the Workbook.

Example materials table:

Item	Description	Quantity	Unit Cost	Total Cost	Source
Plywood	3/4", 4' x 8' B-C interior grade	3 sheets	\$20.00	\$60.00	Home Depot - donation
Nails	16 penny galvanized	3 boxes	\$3.00	\$9.00	Home Depot - donation
Paint Brushes	4 inch wide soft bristle	4	\$7.00	\$28.00	Home Depot - donation
Paint	Glidden interior off-white #1342, semi-gloss	2 gal	\$15.00	\$30.00	Glidden Paint

D. Supplies

Supplies are expendable things which do not become part of the finished product but that are used to complete it. Examples are sandpaper, gloves, trash bags, posters, pens, markers, paper, paint rollers, and drop cloths. As with the materials, you will need a summary list for the proposal and a detailed table including costs for the project plan.

E. Tools

Tools are those items used to aid in making the work easier, or even make it possible to do at all. Unlike supplies, tools do not get used up; they should be saved and used again. Examples are hammers, shovels, tractors, and saws.

Provide a list of all tools required to work the project. Be specific, e.g., number of hammers, type of shovels, lengths of extension cords. Don't assume that required equipment will be available – confirm the source for everything. You should be able to borrow most tools from the Beneficiary, your family, project volunteers, or other adults you know. Try not to spend much money on tools since they are not part of the finished product but if you must buy them, include them in the financial plan and discuss what is to be done with them after your project is complete. Are you going to keep them, give them to the troop or to the Beneficiary?

Consider safety issues when planning who will use the tools. The BSA has guidelines on what ages can safely and appropriately use various types of tools based on the typical maturity and physical strength. Refer to the “Guide to Safe Scouting,” available at scouting.org.

Example tools table:

Tool	Quantity	Unit Cost	Total Cost	Source	Who will operate/use?
Digging shovels	6			Scouts will bring	All volunteers
Garden rakes	4+			Church will supply	All volunteers
Power circular saw	1			My dad	My dad
50' extension cord	1	\$22.00	\$22.00	Home Depot	My dad (for saw)
Battery-operated hand drills	3			2 – my dad 1 – Mr Jones	Volunteers over 14 years
5-gallon cooler	1			Quartermaster	All volunteers

F. Other Needs

This section is where you list out anything else that you will need for the project. This could include a marketing flyer for your fundraiser, parking for volunteers, or food for lunch. As with the other sections, write a summary of these needs in the proposal and then a detailed list in the project plan.

G. Permits and Permissions

When you defined the scope of the project you should have discussed any permits or permissions needed with the Beneficiary. With them, you should have agreed who will apply for and pay for

these. Property owners must apply for most permits, but you may need to apply for some. Agree beforehand if you will reimburse the Beneficiary for any permit costs. Make sure that you understand, before you seek project approval, how long permits take to obtain and if there is any chance they will be denied. You do not want to risk having your project fail because you cannot obtain the correct permits. Here again, the proposal requires a high-level discussion of permits required, while the project plan should go into more depth about the process. Note that the BSA no longer requires Tour and Activity Plans, so you can skip this question. Each participant is, however, still required to have a completed Activity Consent Form (available on the troop website).

H. Preliminary Cost Estimate

Every project costs something and those costs need to be discussed in your proposal and project plan. If you have done a good job of defining your requirements for materials, supplies, tools and other needs (discussed above), you will have no problem filling in the financial needs. For the proposal, you need only the cost estimate for each area. For the project plan you need to detail out the items in that cost estimate. The more time you spend getting the list correct, the better you will understand how much money you need.

Once you have determined how much the project is going to cost, you must figure out how to get the money to pay for it. You can have several sources of funding, such as the Beneficiary, a fundraiser, donations from others, your allowance and savings, or any other legitimate source.

While your project may not BE a fundraiser, you may CONDUCT fundraising activities to finance the purchase of materials, supplies and tools. You may have a local restaurant (e.g., Blaze, Habit) designate an evening when a portion of sales go to your project or you may decide to sell candy or other goods at troop meetings or a community event. Make sure to get the proper permissions any the sales or fundraising activities.

Many companies are willing to donate materials and supplies to Scouts working on their Eagle Projects. Talk to Eagle Scouts you know and adults in the troop to ask about local organizations that have donated in the past. When you ask for donations, make sure you wear your full Class A uniform to the store, ask to speak to the manager, and have a clear list of what you would like them to donate. You may have to go to multiple stores to get all the donations you need. Plan to send a letter of thanks, ideally with a photo of the project result, to the stores who gave you donations.

Consider how the money is to be handled. Exactly how will supplies and materials be paid for? Any funds you collect must be held by the troop until they are needed. Work with the troop treasurer on how to handle the money. Be sure to have a complete paper trail (e.g., receipts, copies of checks) for all financial transactions and a summary in your final report. Obtaining and managing funds for the project is your responsibility, so make sure everyone involved understands your plan.

I. Project Phases

This is where you describe the major parts of your project. This is not a list of specific tasks but rather the main work areas. Some will be sequential, like developing the plan before getting approvals, while others may be concurrent, like doing fundraising at the same time as purchasing and preparing materials. These phases will allow you to organize the specific tasks that you will

list in the *Work Processes* section of the project plan. Describe the project phases at a high level in the proposal and then provide a more detail in the corresponding section of the project plan.

J. Logistics

Logistics is an important part of project planning. It deals with the movement of people and equipment, as well as how needs such as supervision, food, breaks and restrooms will be met. Transportation needs will depend on where your project is being done. Other needs will also depend on where and when you do your project. Some questions to things about are:

- What are the start, end, break, and meal times? Make sure the basic schedule is clear.
- Will scouts meet and carpool to the location or will each be responsible for their own transportation? If carpooling, make sure you have parent volunteers who can drive. If scouts or friends are driving, follow BSA policies for drivers under 21.
- Will drivers need passes to enter the site? Where can cars be parked for the project duration? Are there parking fees?
- Can scouts arrive late or leave early? How will scouts/parents locate the work area?
- What gear or tools should scouts have with them? What clothes are appropriate? Do they need to bring their Activity Consent forms?
- How will scouts sign in and out? It is good to have an adult responsible for keeping track of the sign-in sheets.
- Will work be done at one location and materials then need to be moved to another? Will volunteers need to move locations during the day? How will they be transported?
- What kind of vehicle do you need to transport your tools, materials and supplies?
- Will volunteers have ready access to restrooms, shade for breaks, water? Will they need to leave the work area? If so, make sure the buddy system is enforced.
- Is there cell phone coverage at the work site?
- How will the project area be organized to ensure safety (e.g., blood circles)?
- How will tools be shared and tasks assigned?
- How will food be provided? Will you bring it or will it be delivered? Will someone need to meet a delivery person at an entrance and carry the food in?
- Will there be sufficient adult supervision? The BSA requires at least two adult leaders to be present and at least one adult for every ten youth. Adult leaders must have current “Youth Protection Training” and at least one adult must be certified in first aid.

K. Safety Issues

It is vital that you give thought and make preparations for a safe project. Safety has two aspects: (a) whatever is being made is safe to use, and (b) the activities to make it can be done safely by your helpers. Scouts are experts at finding new and creative ways to get hurt. An injury during the work can be devastating so take steps to minimize the possibility of accidents and prepare for any mishaps that may still occur. Always have a safety plan and appropriate precautions included in your overall work plan. Have a first aid kit and an adult certified in first aid available throughout the project.

During you planning to this point, you should have considered safety issues at the sight. Typical outdoor project hazards include sun, rattlesnakes, and poison oak, but there may be others like overhead electrical wires or flash-flood risks in a ravine. Tools can also pose a danger and you should have reviewed the guidelines for use in the “Guide to Safe Scouting.” Make sure that protective gear like safety glasses, work gloves, and dust masks are used. You should also consider any toxic or hazardous materials or supplies that you may be using and create a plan to

ensure only older volunteers use them and that they do so safely. You may need proper ventilation in addition to safety gear for these. Create a list of these hazards and your plans to mitigate them in the project plan. Provide an overview of safety concerns in the proposal.

L. Project Planning

This section of the proposal is for discussing the steps for creating the detailed project plan. If you are working on the project plan at the same time, you can simply write up what you have been doing for this section.

Additional heading for the Project Plan:

1. Comments from Proposal

During the approval process you will receive feedback from the Beneficiary, Scoutmaster, Committee members and Rose Bowl Eagle Advancement Chair. Take notes when you meet with these people and write them up in this area.

2. Present Condition or Situation

Describe in depth the current condition or situation that your project will address. Do not repeat the benefit of the project; focus on explaining why the present condition is a problem or does not meet the needs of the Beneficiary. Remember, it is unlikely that the people who will be reviewing your project know what your church, school or park looks like, so they cannot understand why your project is important unless you tell them.

3. Work Processes

This section challenges you to define all of the tasks that will be required to accomplish each of your project phases. A task list will help you realistically schedule the time needed for your project, develop instructions, and delegate work. Start with the list of project phases and think about each step needed. The number of people and duration required will depend on who is doing the work and their experience, and training. Example tasks that you need to plan:

- Project preparation tasks
 - Develop Project Plan
 - Hold planning meetings with Beneficiary
 - Write up Project Proposal, Project Plan and create presentations
 - Obtain approvals
 - Create handouts, flyers, sign-in sheets, instructions
 - Secure materials, tools and supplies through purchase or donation
 - Raise fund if needed to pay for materials, etc.
 - Recruit volunteers
 - Order or purchase food for volunteers
- Implementation tasks
 - Train volunteers
 - Transport all materials, tools, supplies to worksite
 - Prepare materials and worksite
 - Execute project steps (cleaning, building, installation)
 - Direct breaks for rest, food and water
- Completion tasks
 - Cleanup the worksite

- Return borrowed tools and give away or dispose of extra supplies and materials
- Walk-through the result with Beneficiary
- Obtain final approvals

A realistic, well thought-out work schedule is part of any successful plan. It shows when everything will be done and in what order. You would be wise to include a high-level schedule in your proposal and create a detailed one for the actual work day(s) in your final project plan. Your schedule may be in the form of a Gantt bar chart, a calendar with tasks shown on the appropriate days, or just a list of the project tasks and when they will be started and finished. Projects never exactly follow the planned schedule, but without one it will be harder to ensure everything gets done when needed. Be sure to coordinate your project schedule with the troop schedule and be aware of potential conflicts. When you complete your project and do the final write-up, you can discuss how well the project followed the planned schedule and why you think things deviated from the plan.

Example Work Day Schedule:

- 8:00 am My dad and I arrive at work site and set up tables and tools and materials
- 8:15 am Workers and other leaders arrive. I provide donuts for people as they arrive.
- 8:30 am Brief 3 group leaders on their duties.
- 8:45 am Get all workers together and tell them what we are going to do.
Assign workers to one of 3 groups.
- 9:00 am Group 1 begins clearing work area ground.
Group 2 begins cutting materials according to design specifications.
Group 3 begins clearing brush and moving dirt to back area.
- 10:00 am Groups 1 & 2 begin putting together the thing-a-ma-jig according to design.
- 12:00 pm I provide pizza and soda for lunch, cookies for dessert
- 12:45 pm Groups 1 & 2 construct the thing-a-ma-jig according to plans.
Group 3 finishes moving all dirt and brush to the designated areas.
- 3:00 pm Groups 1, 2, and 3 paint the thing-a-ma-jig with one coat (note: 2nd coat will be applied next week)
- 4:00 pm All workers begin cleanup and put trash bags in Mr. Smith's truck.
- 4:30 pm All workers go home; Mr. Smith takes trash to dumpster

4. Attachments

Providing additional information in your proposal and project plan are an excellent way to bring your project to life. In this section you can add before, during and after photos to illustrate what your project accomplished. While pictures and drawings can be pasted into the Workbook, you can also attach them. This allows you to show them in a larger scale. Make sure to also include all photos and illustrations in your presentation for the Committee.

If your project is to build something, you will need detailed plans or drawings. These are like blueprints and should show all dimensions, paint schemes, floor plans, layouts, or other details that can be drawn. Plans or drawings can be done electronically or by hand as long as you are neat. Photographs may also be of value for some projects to illustrate your plans.

If you have created a design (e.g., emblem, logo) include it in this section. Any handouts, posters, letters, or other written materials that are part of your project should also be included. All attachments should have a Figure Number and Title (e.g. "Figure 6, Sample handout to the troop") and be referenced in the appropriate section of the text.

5. Contingency Plans

As discussed before, projects seldom follow their plans exactly. Issues arise that require changes or modifications to the original tasks and schedules. While some are unforeseeable, thinking about what can happen and having contingency, or backup, plans can reduce the risk or major project delays. You may want to discuss a backup work date with your Beneficiary or alternate material options if the first choices are not available. Some things to address in your contingency planning:

- Inability or delays to securing permits or permissions
- Materials, supplies or tools not available
- Inclement or extreme weather conditions on your scheduled work days
- Illness preventing you or critical support (e.g., truck driver for materials) from participating on scheduled work days
- Too many or too few volunteers on site
- Broken tools or construction mistakes (e.g., poles cut too short) during project work
- Work not finished on time; need to for additional work days

6. Comments From Your Project Coach About Your Project Plan

This is a section where you can add comments that your Project Coach or other adults advising you on the project can be included.

7. Fundraising Application

If you decide to hold a fundraiser or ask for donations, and most scouts do, you will need to fill out this form with details of what you plan to do. As long as your plans are appropriate to the size of your project, you should have no problem with this being approved.

4. Obtain Approvals

It is important to understand that you may not begin any actual work on the project until you have obtained ALL approvals for your project. Once your project proposal, detailed plan, and presentation are drafted, you will need to do the following:

- Send them to the Eagle Advancement Coordinator. He or she can identify issues which you need to address before meeting with the Committee and give you advice on what questions are likely to arise.
- Contact the Committee Chair and ask him or her to put you on the agenda for the next Committee meeting. Remember that the Committee typically meets once a month, so plan early. In some cases, the Committee Chair may be able to schedule a special session to review your proposal, but don't rely on it.
- When you appear before the Committee, wear your full Class A uniform and have several copies of your project proposal (in presentation form) that you can handout and explain to Committee members. The Committee will ask questions similar to the Scoutmaster, but not necessarily the same questions, and make suggestions. Have a parent or scout take "notes" of the Committee's suggestions. The Committee may not approve the project or may ask for revisions or more information before approval. In this case, you will need to revise your proposal and schedule another presentation. When the Committee has approved your project, request that dates be reserved on the Troop Calendar for your project. Check the calendar beforehand to ensure your desired work dates don't conflict with other troop outings.

- After your project plan has been approved by the Committee, you can begin requesting the signatures required in the Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook.
- You contact the Beneficiary representative for the first required signature. It is also a good idea to get an approval letter from the organization if possible.
- Next, the Scoutmaster and Committee Chair sign your workbook. The Scoutmaster will give the project a final review and may raise additional concerns.
- Finally, your proposal is ready for review and approval by the Rose Bowl Eagle Advancement Chair. He reviews and approves every Eagle Project in the district. You may be asked to visit his office or home. Remember, you are working towards your Eagle. Wear your full Class A uniform when you meet with him. Your meeting is a good time for him to get to become acquainted with you and your project. Let him. He has a great deal of experience reviewing these projects and can offer you important advice. He may also sit on your Eagle Board of Review when the time comes.

Once your proposal has all the required approvals, THEN you can begin doing the project!

5. Revise Your Plan

Based on the feedback you receive during the approval process, you may need to update your detailed plans. This may include updates in materials or tools, dates for when you will do your work, or other small details. Remember to address these before you forget.

6. Recruit Volunteers

You may recruit volunteers from the troop, your friends, or other sources. It's a good idea to have plans in place in case of either too many and too few volunteers. More often, you will have more people than you expect and will have to keep them busy. If there is a clear limit on the number of people needed, make that clear during recruiting and ask people only to come if they are signed up.

Most of the volunteers on Eagle projects are usually other scouts from the troop. They need service hours and are familiar with Eagle projects, so may be more willing to work and more dependable than some of your friends. Younger Scouts should be included in your project to learn from your leadership and so they can gain experience with Eagle Projects. The easiest way to recruit other scouts is to announce your project at several meetings. Make sure you are clear on what you are doing and the date and time. You should prepare a flyer and have copies at the back of the room, along with a sign-up sheet. Remember to ask for a contact number or emails.

You can also arrange for an adult leader to send an email to the whole troop with the project information. You can include not only the project flyer, but also an Activity Consent Form with your project and contact information filled in and any release forms required by the Beneficiary (e.g., Descanso Gardens requires volunteers to fill out their own release form). It's a good idea to send out a reminder email to the troop the several days before the project. This makes sure that those signed-up remember and may also prompt others who realize they are free to come as well.

7. Carry out the Project

Now that the planning and recruiting are finally done, you can begin the actual project work! Make sure you get to the site well in advance of everyone else to make sure everything is ready to go. Do what you said you were going to do. Follow your plan and specific time goals. Use compliments and encouragement, and delegate tasks to your volunteers to make the project

happen.

You may want to write out copies of instructions for people if the job they will do involves several steps to complete. If you are doing a project that will have group activities, you will need to have dependable people be group leaders. If you have prepared a good project plan and task descriptions, it will be easy to explain to people what the jobs are and what is involved in doing them. Check on your workers, answer questions, and correct them if they are not doing the work as described. You may find you need to rotate volunteers to maintain interest or reallocate them to where they can be most effective.

It is important that you keep good notes about everything that is done. For your final report, you will need to discuss how well the plan worked and any areas where you were not able to follow the plan. Some ideas to help you collect information:

- Make sure all volunteers sign in and out on a time log.
- Save all receipts.
- Keep track of all materials, supplies, tools, etc. used, paying attention to differences from your original plan.
- Take pictures at each stage of the work.
- Keep track of who does what work
- Jot down notes once an hour on progress to date
- Write down any problems and how you handled them.

All of this information should go in your final report and will be a visual reminder of an important milestone in your life.

Not everything will go as planned. That's OK and to be expected. Usually the problems you encounter will be solvable during the project but some scouts encounter larger issues which may require extra work days or even reworking the whole project. Some of the common causes leading to larger problems are:

- Too much optimism or pessimism – over or underestimating your abilities and the time and complexity of the project can lead to unrealistic planning.
- Procrastination – waiting until the last minute to plan or buy materials, to check details on specifications (e.g., drying times for paint), getting approvals, or recruiting can lead to problems at the last minute when it too late to address them.
- Work started before final approvals – not only can this work be considered inadmissible, changes to the approved scope may mean that time, money, and effort are wasted.
- Project size too big or too small – large projects can become unwieldy and prohibitively expensive while small projects may not provide enough leadership or impact for final approval.
- Weak or poor leadership – if you are not clear on what needs to be done, your volunteers may not carry out the work correctly, requiring extra time and effort to fix.
- Inadequate preparation – project plans with insufficient detail run the risk of unexpected issues or unclear directions for volunteers.

8. Write a final report

After the actual work on the project is completed, you are ready for the last phase of your project -- the Project Report. A final report is required for every project. There are three pages in the Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook where you describe what actually happened as you

carried out the plan.

As with any project, it is important to review what was done and see what lessons can be learned, as well as providing a historic record. Draw information from your project plan in preparing the final report. In your workbook you will reflect upon what worked well and what challenges you had, report changes you made from the plan, evaluate your leadership, discuss material shortages or overages, report time spent, and summarize the financials.

Since the objective of the project is to demonstrate leadership of others, discuss how you carried out your leadership role. Give examples of how you were able to lead the volunteers. Did you have any problem with getting them to understand the work or to stay focused on the assigned tasks? How did you get people to do unpleasant or complicated tasks? Leading people is a difficult skill and you most likely learned something about it. The reviewers on your Eagle Board will want to know what you learned about yourself and leadership through this project.

Attach a record of all hours worked by your volunteers. This can be a sign-up sheet or table showing names, dates, and hours worked by each. Hopefully, you took many photographs during each phase of the project. There is room in your report to attach them. A photo of you presenting the finished product to the Beneficiary Representative with whom you worked helps to show off the value of the project. Always caption your photographs. You can attach any other interesting information related to the project (e.g., drawings, maps or handouts) that you did not include in the project plan.

You may want to ask advice from your project advisor before you turn in the project report for final signatures. He or she can give tips on what you might add to give a clearer picture of the project.

9. Obtain Final Approvals

Only a couple of signatures are required on your final report, the most important of which is yours. If you are proud of your effort and pleased with the write-up, then sign it on the last page. Next, ask the Beneficiary Representative to both give you a signed and dated letter of completion and to sign your workbook. If there are any final questions or concerns they have, you must address them before proceeding. Finally, you need the signature of the Scoutmaster.

While these are the only signatures required in order to submit your final report, the project will be discussed at your Eagle Board of Review. You will submit the project materials (proposal, plan and final report), along with your completed Eagle Scout application and a number of other documents, to the Eagle Advancement Coordinator for review and then schedule your final Scoutmaster Conference. After this you will submit the materials to the Council, which will work with the Eagle Advancement Coordinator to schedule your Eagle Board of Review.