



## Benton County Parks Department: Eagle Scout Projects

Benton County Parks Department manages ten different parks, with over 2,000 acres of recreation and conservation area. As such, we are approached regularly by local Boy Scouts seeking direction and approval of Eagle Scout projects. We enjoy working with Scouts and are committed to assisting in any way that we can. However, there are a limited number of projects that meet both Eagle Scout criteria, but also the County's needs and goals.

There are two ways that projects develop – either a candidate approaches us with a specific idea of their own, or they come to us without a specific proposal and ask us if we have needs we are trying to address. As such, we have prepared for both approaches. Below, first is a section of general criteria that the County uses in assessing a proposal from an Eagle Scout candidate. These criteria are general, and each proposal has to be evaluated in further detail on a project-by-project basis. The second section is a list that the County has already identified of potential projects it thinks would make for qualified Eagle Scout projects while also addressing some of the County's needs.

### Criteria Used for Assessing Eagle Scout Project Proposals

- Is the proposal something that the Parks Department is already investing in or planning to invest in?
- Does the proposal meet an existing or stated goal of the Parks Department?
- Are County resources (i.e. staff time, finances, planning, etc.) needed to develop or complete the project?
  - If so, how much: \_\_\_\_\_
- Is the project feasible to complete within a reasonable timeframe?
- Are all safety issues addressed?

### Possible Projects an Eagle Scout Candidate Might Consider

The following projects have already been reviewed by the Department and could easily be assigned to an Eagle Scout candidate.

<b>Project:</b>	Fence Removal
<b>Location:</b>	Candy Mountain Preserve
<b>Description:</b>	Our new park on Candy Mountain has a section of old, abandoned boundary fencing. The Department would like to have this removed. The Scout would need to characterize the fencing (how long, how much of it is in the ground, what is it made of, etc.), come up with a removal plan (how would it be disassembled, how would it be taken off of the mountain, how would it be disposed of), come up with a safety plan (there is rusty metal, nails, etc.), and then of course, execute the removal.

<b>Project:</b>	Sunsplash Path Improvement
<b>Location:</b>	Horn Rapids Park
<b>Description:</b>	The Sunsplash Path is a crude trail of about ¼-mile running along the bottom of the Sunsplash Bluff and connecting the Boat Launch with the area upstream of Wanapum Dam. The project would involve pruning and brush removal, a litter detail, and perhaps other things to open up the trail.

<b>Project:</b>	Russian Olive Removal
<b>Location:</b>	Horn Rapids Park
<b>Description:</b>	Russian Olive ( <i>Elaeagnus angustifolia</i> ) is a species of trees from Asia first brought to our area as an ornamental landscape tree but that have quickly spread and become an invasive weed. We know that we have at least five of them in Horn Rapids Park. This project would involve canvassing the entire park looking for Russian Olive trees, documenting them, coming up with a plan for removing the ones that are found, and executing the removal. This project is seasonally limited because they need to be identified while the leaves are still present.

<b>Project:</b>	Wood Duck Nest Boxes
<b>Location:</b>	Horn Rapids Park
<b>Description:</b>	The project involves construction and installation of an agreed-to number of artificial nest structures. These are placed above the ground on poles, near the water. While the primary target species is wood ducks, other birds are known to use these boxes, notably screech owls and kestrels. The candidate would have to research the project, coming up with both construction and placement plans, then build and install the boxes.

<b>Project:</b>	Columbia Camp Research & Cleanup
<b>Location:</b>	Horn Rapids Park
<b>Description:</b>	The central area of Horn Rapids Park was developed as a small internment camp during World War II. The Parks Department has long wanted to create an interpretive piece for the park exploring this history. The project would involve compiling information on Columbia Camp, specifically focusing on the physical layout of the camp. The historical information would be reconciled with the remnant foundations and other items still found in the park from that time (labeling these things), and then planning for a clean-up of these foundations.

<b>Project:</b>	Rivershore Tree Inventory
<b>Location:</b>	Horn Rapids Park
<b>Description:</b>	The park is about five miles long. The riparian zone (area right along the river) is sparsely treed overall, but there is a variety of trees present. The project would involve recruiting expertise in tree identification, then walking the shoreline (using the Tapteal Trail) and inventorying (including mapping) the trees present at the species level. The County would use this information in its effort to create a healthy shoreline environment focused on native trees. This project is seasonally limited because they need to be identified while the leaves are still present.