



BENTON COUNTY WA

Benton County Parks Department: Eagle Scout Projects

Benton County Parks Department manages 10 different parks, with over 2,000 acres of recreation and conservation area. As such, we are approached regularly by Boy Scouts seeking opportunities for completion of their Eagle Scout Service Project. 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 can 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 and can work with them to create a project. We are 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 potential projects that the County has already identified that may meet a scout’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?
 - o 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:

Project:	Sunsplash Path Improvement
Location:	Horn Rapids Park
Description:	The Sunsplash Path is a rough 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 extensive pruning and brush removal, a litter detail, and perhaps other things to open up the trail to make it more accessible.

Project:	Bird Nesting Boxes/Platforms
Location:	Horn Rapids Park
Description:	The project involves construction and installation of an agreed-to number of artificial nest structures. The scout would work with the County and outside wildlife biologists on determining the best species to target and best type of structure. Common examples are platforms for raptors and boxes for wood ducks, but there are many options. The candidate would have to research the project, make recommendations, coming up with both construction and placement plans, then build and install the boxes.

Project:	Russian Olive Removal
Location:	Horn Rapids Park
Description:	Russian Olive (<i>Elaeagnus angustifolia</i>) is a species of tree brought to our area as an ornamental landscape tree but that have spread and become an invasive weed. We know that we have several 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 the trees need to be identified while the leaves are still present.

Project:	Columbia Camp Research & Cleanup
Location:	Horn Rapids Park
Description:	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.

Project:	Rivershore Tree Inventory
Location:	Horn Rapids Park
Description:	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.