



Distinguished Conservation Service Award

March 20, 2025



Distinguished Conservation Service Award (DCSA)

- Can be earned by youth in Scouts BSA, Venturing, or Sea Scouts
- Scouts BSA use merit badges, Venturers and Sea Scouts use slightly different requirements
- Scouts BSA can continue working on DCSA projects as a Venturer or Sea Scout





Distinguished Conservation Service Award (DCSA)



The fundamental purpose of the 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.



Distinguished Conservation Service Award (DCSA)



- 2 Conservation projects from 2 different areas
- A DCSA project (properly designed) can be used as an Eagle service project
- A DCSA project can be done on Scouting America camp properties



Distinguished Conservation Service Award (DCSA)



Projects must be developed under the guidance and pre-approval of the Scout's Unit Leader, a Council Distinguished Conservation Service Award Advisor and the Council Conservation Committee



Scouts BSA DCSA Requirements

<u>Project Areas</u>	Air & Water Pollution Control
Energy Conservation	Fish & Wildlife Management
Forestry & Range Management	Hazardous Materials Disposal & Management
Invasive Species Control	Pollinator Management
Resource Recovery	Soil & Water Conservation

Required:

- Environmental Science, Fish & Wildlife Management, Forestry, Soil & Water Conservation, Sustainability

Pick Two:

- E Study, Energy, Fishing, Fly-Fishing, Gardening, Geology, Insect Study, Nature Landscape Architecture, Mammal Study, Nuclear Science, Oceanography, Plant Science, Pulp & Paper, Reptile and Amphibian Study, or Weather



Eagle Project for DCSA

A properly designed (and approved) DCSA project can be used as an Eagle service project

An Eagle service project can't be done on Scouting America properties

See the separate table comparing Eagle and DCSA projects



DCSA Priority



- An Eagle service project should not be started prior to consideration as a possible DCSA project
- Completing an Eagle service project and then requesting the project be used as one of the DCSA projects is not allowed



Comparison Table

DCSA to Eagle

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



Comparison Table DCSA to Eagle Cont'd

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 to Select Project Solution
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



DCSA Conservation Project

The 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.



DCSA Conservation Project



Because the DCSA is an individual award, 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, Venture Summit Award or Quartermaster Award Project service project may be used as a conservation project if it meets the aims and objectives of the awards program.



DCSA Conservation 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.
- 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.





DCSA Conservation Project



- 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.



DCSA Conservation Project

- 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.





DCSA Process

Scout develops a project(s) concept and then has a pre-approval discussion with the Unit Leader, Council Conservation Committee, and DCSA Advisor

Once the project concept is approved, the Scout submits a DCSA application supported by a DCSA workbook

The Scout will update the DCSA Advisor throughout the process

After both DCSA projects are completed, a Board of Review with the Conservation Committee will be conducted



DCSA Specifics

- The Conservation Project Advisor refers to the technical or scientific expert that normally represents the benefiting organization receiving the conservation project
- The Distinguished Conservation Service Award Advisor is a member of the Council Conservation Committee who is very familiar with this award. They are the person that can help guide the youth through the process of getting their projects pre-approved and completing the documentation



DCSA Specifics Cont'd

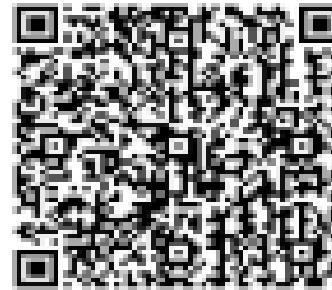
- Once a youth decides to pursue the DCSA, they need to contact Pam Galas who is a member of the PTAC Conservation Committee
 - Pam's email: pgalas@prodigy.net
- Applicants need to prepare a DCSA application plus a DCSA workbook for each project
 - With the workbook, it's important to be detailed and complete
- DCSA projects can take one to two years to complete



Additional DCSA Resources

Additional information about the BSA Distinguished Conservation Service Award can be found online at scouting.org.

Distinguished Conservation Service Award website:



Distinguished Conservation Service Award Video found here:





Conservation Committee

Contact Information

- Email: ptac.conservation@gmail.com
- Facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/PTACConservationCommittee>



- Web Site:
<https://pathwaytoadventure.org/specialtyprograms/conservation>