AGENDA

Highlights from the “Mining in Society and Scouts BSA Video”
  • Who are “Scouts BSA”?
  • About Merit Badges and the Mining in Society Merit Badge
  • What’s a Merit Badge Counselor and How to Get Started
  • Full video can be found here: https://youtu.be/PpUfNgMl1c

Opportunities for SME Sections
  • Group Training Sessions, Online Training
  • Mine Tours
  • Mineral Kits
  • Fundraising
  • Volunteering at Events
Scouts BSA

• Formerly “Boy Scouts”
  – Program for boys & girls, ages 11-17, in separate troops.
  – Organization still known as BSA. ("Boy Scouts of America")
  – Cub Scouts also now includes both boys and girls, in separate dens.
  – Venturing (ages 14-21) has always been co-ed.

Does not preclude our working with Girl Scouts USA, which is a totally separate organization.

What Are Merit Badges & Why?

– The primary goal of merit badges is personal growth for the Scout. They are a way to explore new areas of interest, career fields, and hobbies.

– A Scout must earn twenty one merit badges (13 required, 8 elective), along with meeting other requirements, to earn Eagle Scout, the highest rank a Scout can achieve.
What is the “Mining in Society” Merit Badge?

- Elective merit badge introduced in 2014 by the BSA, earned by over 25,000 Scouts thus far.
- The “Mining in Society” title alludes to the societal and economic aspects of mining, and the badge requirements subsequentially lead to an exploration of what we mine, where and how.
- Complements other existing merit badges - such as Geology, Energy, Sustainability – but is a much deeper exploration of mining in particular.
- Also an elective part of the Nova Awards program, which focuses on STEM-related fields.
- Created with substantial input from SME members, actively supported by the MEC Scouting Subcommittee.

Overview of the Merit Badge

EIGHT primary requirements, with multiple options for meeting them, help Scouts learn and understand:

- The importance of mining in society
- What is mined – where and how
- Mining technology today and in the future
- Sustainability, safety and conservation practices in the industry
- Careers in mining
What Does the Merit Badge Counselor Do?

The mission of the merit badge counselor is to join fun with learning.

You are both a teacher and mentor as the Scout works on a merit badge and learns by doing. Your hands-on involvement could inspire a Scout to develop a lifelong hobby, pursue a particular career, or become an independent, self-supporting adult.

- Your duty is to be satisfied that each Scout who comes to you meets all the requirements for the merit badge.
- You do this by helping Scouts overcome the different hurdles of the requirements and making them aware of the deeper aspects of the subject through their learning experience.
- When the Scout has completed all the requirements, you sign off on the Blue Card and the Scout returns the completed card to his unit leader.

Am I in this alone? NO!

Many resources are available...

1) Mining in Society merit badge pamphlet
   Obtain at local council office or order at ScoutShop.org
2) MEC Scouting Page (bit.ly/mec-scouts)
3) Online BSA training for Merit Badge Counselors
   Example: Essentials of Merit Badge Counseling
4) MEC Scouting Subcommittee (mec@smenet.org)
5) Local BSA council and district
Getting Started

Opportunities for SME Sections

Mine Tours
Work with local mining companies or suppliers to host tours for Scouts. Volunteer as guides!

Mineral Kits
The Pittsburgh SME Section assembles and sends out mineral kits – but your section may have a completely different variety of minerals to share.

Fundraising
The MEC Scouting Subcommittee depends on financial contributions to fund training, our presence at events like the National and World Scout Jamborees, etc. The Minnesota and Pittsburgh Sections of SME have held raffles and other fundraisers to generate support.

Volunteering at Events
Your local Scout council is always in need of volunteers. An example is the 2021 ScoutFest in St Louis, which will incorporate a major STEM component that will include mining. Or come work at the next National Scout Jamboree!
Hosting Group Training Events*

Merit badge events can allow Scouts to pursue one or more badges in a short period of time, often working with highly qualified counselors in unique settings.

Each Scout must *actually and personally* complete each requirement before the counselor signs off.

- Each Scout must complete the requirements as written.
- If a requirement says “show” or “discuss” the Scout can’t just watch a demonstration or listen to a presentation.

Group events may even be desirable if there’s limited access to counselors and/or availability of special resources (group mine tours, etc.) that would enhance the learning experience.

*Adapted from the November-December 2019 issue of Scouting magazine

Who Can Teach in a Group Setting?

All instruction must be overseen by an adult member of the BSA who is registered as a merit badge counselor, approved for the specific badge and current in Youth Protection Training.

However, it’s OK to enlist non-registered guest instructors, speakers and other volunteers to facilitate learning, as long as YPT practices are being followed at all times.

Don’t go it alone!

Group instruction can be challenging – and youth protection rules require at least 2 registered adults be present. Local Scout councils may be able to help with planning and staffing.

Additional volunteers can help with small group discussions, individual requirement check-offs, event logistics, crowd control, etc.
How Big May Merit Badge Classes Be?

There’s no set limit, but the preference is for smaller groups, perhaps no larger than a patrol (6-10) in size.

Larger groups are feasible if qualified instructors are assigned to subgroups to ensure Scouts receive individual attention.

**NOTE:** It’s perfectly acceptable — perhaps even preferable — for a Scout to leave a merit badge event with only some requirements completed. The class can focus on requirements that work best in a group setting, and the Scout can then work with a counselor (subject to Youth Protection guidelines) to finish the requirements.

Summary: Large Group Training

Group instruction ideally focuses on requirements best worked on in a larger setting, but shouldn’t result in Scouts earning a badge just for being present.

Spending more time on a few requirements, versus rushing to complete them all, provides a more valuable and meaningful experience.

*A sample agenda and outline for a Mining in Society workshop is available on the MEC Mining in Society web page:*
Q & A

If you have questions, please feel free to reach out to the MEC or any of the MEC Scouting Subcommittee Members.

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