

A photograph of a dense forest with tall, thin trees and a dirt path covered in fallen leaves. The scene is bright and green, suggesting a healthy, sustainable environment.

2014  
 **BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®**  
SUSTAINABILITY  
REPORT



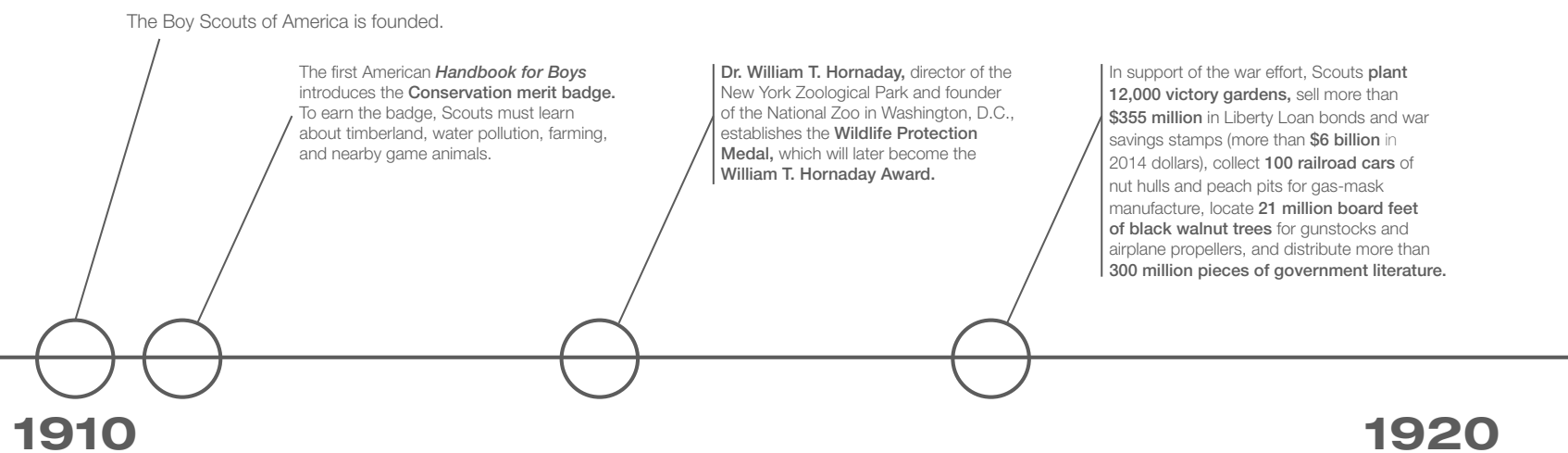
# Welcome Letter

When I was a Boy Scout in the 1960s, we didn't learn about recycling or climate change or sustainability. But we did learn to leave each campsite better than we found it, to leave nothing but footprints, and to take nothing but pictures. A half-century later, I still remember the Outdoor Code, and I still return from hikes with pockets full of litter I picked up along the trail.

Much has changed since I was a Scout, both in Scouting and in the larger society. Today, sustainability is critically important as a growing population taxes our planet's limited resources. We in Scouting are intent on helping our members move from leaving no trace to leaving a positive legacy. We are working hard to integrate sustainability at every level of our organization and are committed to developing the next generation of responsible leaders. We have been teaching leadership development for more than a century, and we are working hard to embrace ecological and sustainability literacy as a critical component of a good leader.

Scouting was green when green was just a color. But today, as this inaugural sustainability report describes, we are moving from green to deep green. I invite you to join us on our journey into a more sustainable future.

**Wayne Brock**  
Chief Scout Executive



# Introduction

We challenge Scout leaders to leave a legacy, and we ask them these questions: What will your legacy be? What impact will you have upon others? How will you bring leadership to Scouting and to America?

But we are not just asking those questions. We are answering them for our organization.

This report presents our first attempt to define what sustainability means to the BSA. In order to develop a vision for the future, we must first understand the present and come to a mutual understanding of our goals and philosophies.

By defining new methods of evaluating our organization, we can expand the focus and intention of our work, while leading our members and communities toward a more sustainable future.

This report, along with a variety of new online resources, is designed to start a dialogue about the meaning of sustainability for the BSA. In the years to come, we will build on that foundation to make meaningful, measurable improvements in every area of our organization.

BSA National President Dr. Robert M. Gates has said, "In each organization I have led, my goal has been to make good institutions better." This report represents an important step toward achieving that goal.

# 5 YR TL | Five-Year Sustainability Timeline

For the Boy Scouts of America, 2013 was a watershed year in sustainability. We opened the Summit Bechtel Reserve, unveiled the Sustainability merit badge, named our first Sustainability Director, and completed our award-winning Sustainability Treehouse.

- **2014:** We are defining what sustainability means for the BSA and establishing the scope for our sustainability efforts.
- **2015:** We will gather data to establish a sustainability baseline, define our systems for metrics, and set goals for the future.
- **2016:** We will measure and report on our achievements and launch new initiatives.
- **2017:** The national Scout jamboree will serve as a living laboratory for testing our new initiatives.
- **2018:** We will gauge our five-year progress and redefine our vision of future success.





## Defining Sustainability

**Sustainability.** [*suh-stey-nuh-bil-i-tee*] — noun — the ability to be sustained, supported, upheld, or confirmed. The word comes from the Latin *sustinere*, meaning “to hold up,” but what does it really mean?

Is it all about ecology? Does it go beyond recycling and energy efficiency? How does it apply to youth-serving organizations like Scouting, as opposed to construction, manufacturing, or extractive industries? As big as the BSA is, what can we do to address global issues like climate change and ecological overshoot?

In defining sustainability, most people rely on the Brundtland Commission (formally known as the World Commission on Environment and Development), which stated that “sustainable development meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

We embrace that definition, but we would add this description from the Sustainability merit badge pamphlet: “It’s a big word with many aspects. But when you break it down, it goes hand in hand with being a good Scout. Sustainability means the ability to endure. Conserving the land, forests, air, water, wildlife, and limited resources we all share is everyone’s responsibility. Reducing what we consume and recycling, repurposing, restoring, and repairing what we own all are parts of being thrifty, a key point of the Scout Law.”

Today, we are taking those words to heart and developing a comprehensive, multiyear strategy to adopt principles of sustainability at every level of the BSA. Rather than create another program, initiative, or emphasis, we are adopting a sustainability mindset that will guide everything we do as an organization. From the local unit and the council camp to high-adventure bases and our National Distribution Center, we want to set an example for our Scouts, our communities, and ultimately our nation.

For more than 100 years, Scouts have answered the call to serve their communities. From the Great Depression to World War II to more recent crises like hunger and homelessness, we have eagerly embraced big challenges. Today, we are answering the call once again.

To quote the Sustainability merit badge pamphlet again, “Sustainability is a journey, not a destination. It is a call to action. What can a single Scout do? A family? One community? It’s time to find out! This is a journey that begins with you.”

Our journey began more than 100 years ago with an emphasis on conservation. In time, we deepened our commitment to environmental stewardship. Now, our focus is on sustainability. We invite you to join us as our journey continues.

The government requests 69 war-related projects of the BSA. Scouts collect 210,000 tons of scrap metal, 590,000 tons of waste paper, and enough milkweed floss to make nearly 2 million life jackets. They distribute millions of government posters, plant 184,000 victory gardens, and plant nearly two million trees to replace those harvested for the war effort. More than 126,000 Scouts help shorthanded farmers harvest their crops.

After the death of Dr. William T. Hornaday, the BSA assumes responsibility for the Wildlife Protection Medal and renames it in Hornaday’s memory.

Nearly 300,000 Scouts receive the General Eisenhower Waste Paper medal for collecting at least 1,000 pounds of waste paper. The General MacArthur Gardening Award goes to 20,000 Scouts for outstanding achievements in gardening in support of the war effort.

Scouting introduces the **Outdoor Code**, which inspires generations of Scouts to be clean in their outdoor manners, be careful with fire, be considerate in the outdoors, and be conservation-minded.

1940

1950

## TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE



There was a time in America when the bottom line was the bottom line. Species like the buffalo were hunted to near-extinction. Timber companies clear-cut forests without reclaiming the land. Factories turned downstream waters yellow with industrial runoff. Commercial fishing disrupted vast marine ecosystems. And these industries were considered “successful.”



Today, the tide has turned. Now more than ever before, businesses and nonprofits alike are aware of the impact they have—not just on the planet’s future but on their own. And so they are adopting policies that focus not just on their own financial gain but on the prosperity of the entire planet.



This doesn’t mean ignoring profitability or forgoing goals. Instead, it means broadening the definition of success and examining what we do through the lens of the triple bottom line: People, Planet, and Prosperity. Only by balancing its priorities in these three areas can an organization understand its true impact and success in the world.







# People

**Education, community development, and quality of life**—those are key measures of social success and key values that have guided Scouting for more than a century. In Scouting terms, our social impact means ensuring that our suppliers have safe facilities and treat workers fairly, facilitating opportunities for community service, and using our camps as resources for community recreation and exploration. It also means providing the people we serve—Scouts, leaders, and chartered organizations alike—with the tools and resources they need to become responsible stewards of their communities and the planet.

## Teaching Sustainability

Each year, more than 56,000 Scouts earn the Eagle Scout Award. Beginning this year, each one of them will earn either the Environmental Science merit badge (introduced in 1972) or the Sustainability merit badge (introduced in 2013). Together, these badges teach the whys and hows of living in harmony with our planet and our neighbors.

But the learning doesn't start at Scouting's highest rank. The youngest members of the Scouting community will be the leaders of the next generation, so it's essential to teach them how to live more sustainably. In the new Cub Scout program unveiled this year, first-graders will plant trees, learn about the Outdoor Code and Leave No Trace, and make crafts using recycled materials.

Of course, learning about sustainability is not unique to Scouting. Today's teens recycle as a matter of course and learn about sustainability in school. But Scouting's classroom is the outdoors, where the connections to the environment are emotional, not just intellectual. In the outdoors, young people see firsthand the positive impact of what they are doing, and they are inspired to do even more. At our Irvine Ranch Outdoor Education Center in Irvine, California, for example, Scouts turn the camp's food waste into compost and then use that compost to enrich the soil in which they grow crops for a community cooking program.

The BSA conducts a National Conservation Good Turn, distributing 3.6 million conservation posters. In parks, rural areas, and wilderness areas, Scouts plant 6.2 million trees, build and place 55,000 bird-nesting boxes, and arrange 41,000 conservation displays.

Project SOAR (Save Our American Resources) is launched, encouraging Scouts to participate in conservation efforts.

Scouts collect more than 1 million tons of litter on Scouting Keep America Beautiful Day.

The BSA introduces the Environmental Science merit badge, which becomes required for the Eagle Scout Award. Scouts learn about ecology, ecosystems, and water, land, and air pollution. More than 2.7 million Scouts will earn the badge by 2013.

Scouting Environment Day is held on April 27.

1960

1970

## Embracing Diversity

A key factor in our social success is proactively addressing America's changing demographics. By 2050, the Latino population—already the nation's largest minority group—will triple in size, and non-Hispanic whites will be in the minority for the first time. Understanding how a range of ethnic groups interacts with Scouting will be key to our future success.

At the same time, urban sprawl has engulfed many of our older camps. While bright lights and traffic noise can diminish the camp experience, proximity to the suburbs also allows us to reach a new demographic and serve new groups of people.

## Giving Back

Service is second nature to Scouts. Each year, Scouts perform more than 17 million hours of service. While Scout service projects address an array of needs, many relate directly to sustainability. Eagle Scout candidates routinely build vegetable gardens, install rain-harvesting systems, build or refurbish hiking trails, install birdhouses, and affix “no dumping” medallions on storm drains.

And those are just Eagle Scout projects. Scouts pursuing a William T. Hornaday Award undertake even more extensive projects. Consider these recent projects:

- Sea Scout Victor Otruba of Mansfield, Pennsylvania, founded a nonprofit organization to clean up a river; set up demonstrations of limestone treatments that improve water quality; gathered hardwood nuts and planted them on reclaimed mining land; and rerouted a stream that was eroding a coal mine.

- Boy Scout Matthew Authement of St. Petersburg, Florida, removed invasive tree species at a nature preserve; improved a migratory songbird habitat; constructed nesting boxes and a birdcage for an environmental educational program; and managed a community battery recovery and recycling project.
- Boy Scout Lucas Reineke of Glendale, Arizona, developed a project to educate children on fish preservation; gathered information for a large tree-planting project; created a public education project concerning recycling and composting; and repaired erosion damage on a trail.
- Venturer Quentin Mullen of Winchester, Indiana, built an outdoor learning display at an environmental center; ran a battery recycling drive at a middle school; created a nature program for a Cub Scout day camp; and helped with a biological survey and monitoring project at 10 sites.

Projects like these address immediate community and environmental needs. Perhaps more importantly, they prepare Scouts to become solutionaries—passionate adults who can identify problems, envision solutions, and engage their communities in making a difference.





# Planet

Planet Earth is our common home and provides us with the fundamental natural resources for survival. These resources are limited, however, and can be depleted if we don't manage them carefully. Moreover, protecting the planet's biodiversity and ecosystem is critical to the survival of our species. By thinking globally and acting locally, we do our part to reduce humanity's impact on the Earth. That includes conserving available resources, preserving critical environments, and regenerating the resources and environments required for a healthy planet.

In Scouting terms, looking out for the planet means making outdoor ethics a given for every outing, whether it takes place in the backcountry or an urban park. But it also means cutting carbon emissions by improving the efficiency of our camps and offices, reducing travel and making transportation more efficient, and using resources that are certified for ethical and environmentally friendly practices. We believe our organization should lead by example, and we are implementing steps to both reduce our impact and improve the environment.

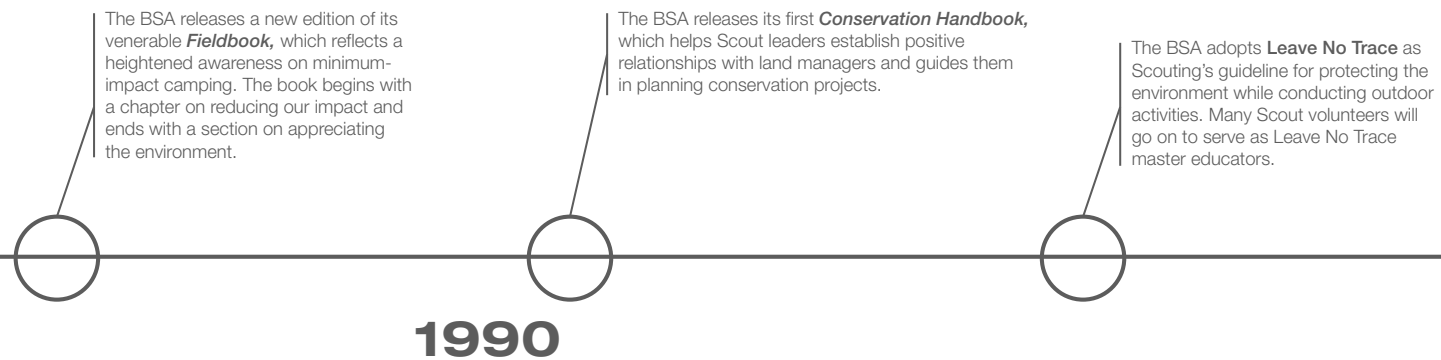
## Creating Sustainable Properties

The outdoors is where Scouting happens. So it makes sense to put our environmental values in action at our camps, properties, and high-adventure bases.

Our newer properties work to embrace sustainability from the start. For example, the Summit Bechtel Family National Scout Reserve near Beckley, West Virginia, is a showcase for sustainability. The 10,600-acre reserve was built using locally harvested and milled lumber and relies heavily on geothermal and solar energy and graywater recycling.

Most BSA camps are not new. Many of our nearly 1,000 properties were built between 1940 and 1970 and require extensive maintenance and renovation. Increasingly, these older facilities are embracing such solutions as installing solar panels, adding motion sensors to lights, and replacing wooden shingles with metal roofing.

This year, we sent sustainability expert Zach Carson on a road trip to see how well our camps are doing—and to show how they can do even better. In 2015, we will publish a camp sustainability resource guide to help camps continue to evolve.



## Addressing Administrative Impact


At our hundreds of offices across the country, we are working to reduce our environmental impact. By implementing recycling and zero-waste initiatives, moving toward environmentally friendly printing and digital publishing, and installing LED lights and low-flow toilets, we are moving toward the day when we can report that all our offices have become carbon neutral.

At our National Distribution Center in Charlotte, North Carolina, we have installed motion-activated lighting, zero-waste stations, and water-conservation measures. And our publications are greener than ever. Since 2009, both Boys' Life and Scouting magazines have been printed on paper certified by the Sustainable Forestry Initiative, which is dedicated to promoting sustainable forest management. Today, every issue of both publications uses wood fiber that has been tracked from the forest to the mill to the printer, helping us ensure that our medium doesn't dilute our message.

We are also moving toward making our core publications available electronically. Some, such as the Guide to Safe Scouting, are available as free downloads on our website. Others, including the Fieldbook, the Cub Scout Leader Book, and key merit badge pamphlets are available as e-books that can be read on tablets, smartphones, and personal computers.

Among the newest e-books is the Sustainability merit badge pamphlet. Now, Scouts can live sustainably even as they learn about sustainability.

## Travel

 Because of our far-flung camps and offices, travel is one of our largest environmental impacts. To curb our carbon emissions, we are beginning to evaluate strategies to reduce travel, increase efficiency, measure our impact, and devise incentives to encourage more conscious behavior.

We are also examining creative ways to offset and absorb all the carbon emitted from our travel. Reducing and sequestering carbon emissions has been identified as one of the most critical steps in reversing climate change, and we take that challenge seriously.

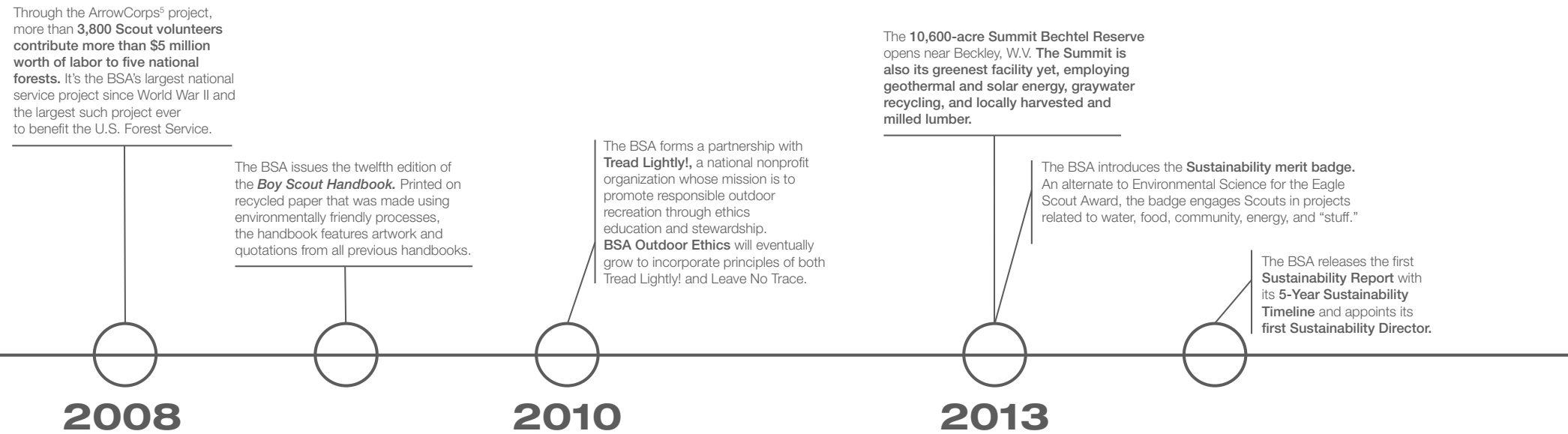


# Prosperity

Money is not the most important thing in life, but it is a primary influence in today's global economy and a critical component of our sustainability. To survive and thrive in our second century, we must identify sustainable sources of funding and incorporate sustainability into our long-term goals. In doing so, we will not only strengthen our financial position but also better serve our members and communities.

In Scouting terms, fostering prosperity means ensuring that our business model remains viable. To serve an ever-increasing number of young people, we must have the financial resources to continue to invest in sustainability across the organization. We must also support companies and organizations that are aligned with our values.

As our offices embrace zero-waste plans and renewable energy solutions, and as our camps harvest local timber for new buildings and begin to grow their own food, we save money while reducing our environmental impact. As we diversify the user base for our properties, we increase revenue and expand our influence. As we develop standards for energy efficiency and material sourcing, we create a road map that we and the communities we serve can follow into a more sustainable future.



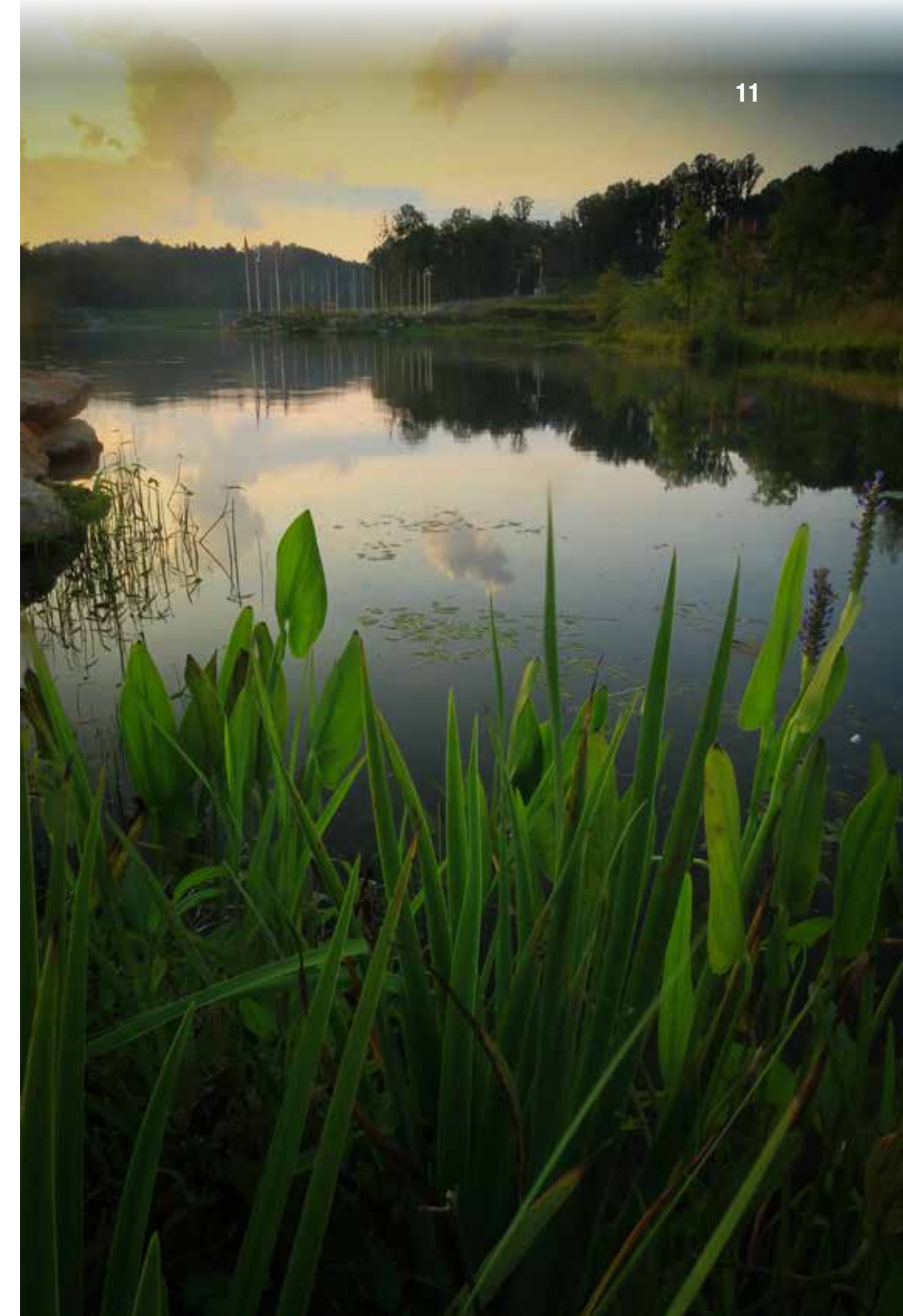
## Forging Partnerships

Becoming sustainable can save money in the long run, but it can cost money in the short term. One way we're making sustainability cost effective is by forging symbiotic partnerships with organizations that have common goals. For example, the Las Vegas Area Council worked with NV Energy to install a 100kw solar-power system in its council service center that generates enough electricity to cover a third of the building's total energy needs. In the lobby, visitors can view real-time statistics about the energy being produced by the solar power and how much carbon is being saved.

## Bartering

In an earlier age, bartering—the exchange of goods and services without money—was common practice. It remains a powerful tool for fostering prosperity. With the increasing popularity of social networks and localization initiatives, bartering is back and is a key component of the sharing economy. Today, we are leveraging our vast array of properties and resources to support local communities and, in turn, to garner support from them.

For example, the Mt. Allamuchy Scout Reservation near Stanhope, New Jersey, opens its land to highway patrol officers and their families in the offseason, allowing them free access to walk with their families and pets. In return, the officers provide the camp ranger with recycled building materials, which are used to build new cabins, greenhouses, and sheds, and cement road grindings, which he uses to reduce dust on camp roads—the same camp roads the officers and their families enjoy using.







## National Council Success Stories

### Sustainability Treehouse at the Summit Bechtel Family National Scout Reserve

The centerpiece of Scouting's commitment to sustainability is the Sustainability Treehouse at the Summit Bechtel Reserve, which was designed to Living Building Challenge standards, the built environment's most rigorous performance measure. Named one of the top 10 green projects of 2014 by the American Institute of Architects Committee on the Environment (AIA COTE), the Sustainability Treehouse is both an example of green construction and an interactive classroom where Scouts can learn how to live in harmony with the Earth.

In the 126-foot-tall, net-zero structure, visitors discover how trees, the forest, and the building itself all provide meaningful examples of sustainable stewardship they can emulate. Exhibits range from the interactive—a red oak tree is suspended horizontally, allowing Scouts to study its root structure—to the whimsical—a daisy chain of camp cups funnels rainwater into a 1,000-gallon cistern.

### Recycling at Philmont Scout Ranch

Each year, more than 22,000 Scouts and leaders complete backpacking treks at Philmont Scout Ranch near Cimarron, New Mexico. To reduce their impact, campers practice Leave No Trace camping techniques and complete at least three hours of conservation work in the backcountry.

But Philmont's commitment to sustainability has moved far beyond Leave No Trace and Tread Lightly! in the past few years. The ranch now annually recycles some 59 tons of cardboard, 2.8 tons of plastic, 900 pounds of aluminum, and 600 pounds of tin. The Philmont motor pool now recycles all used oil to heat its maintenance facility during the winter months. And the trading post now ships orders in recycled boxes and reuses packaging from incoming shipments. In 2013 alone, recycling provided more than \$91,000 of savings to Philmont.

### Sandy Bridges Program Center at Northern Tier

Since 1941, the Charles L. Sommers Canoe Base in Ely, Minnesota, has been the launching point for canoe trips into the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. Generations of Scouts have paddled these waters, marveled at the calls of loons and the grandeur of the Northern Lights, and pledged to preserve the pristine wilderness for future visitors.

The leaders of the Northern Tier High Adventure Program, which encompasses the Ely base, also take the Wilderness Pledge seriously. When they set out to build a new dining and assembly facility a few years ago, they committed to meet green-level LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) standards. The 13,000-square-foot Sandy Bridges Program Center, which opened in 2011, features a state-of-the-art, energy-efficient heating system that features radiant slab heating and gas backup. The site was selected to minimize erosion and disruption to the land, and lighting was specially designed to reduce light pollution—and to ensure that the Northern Lights never go dim.

### Eco Adventures at Florida Sea Base

With sites in the Florida Keys, the Bahamas, and St. Thomas, Florida Sea Base offers Scouting's most laidback high-adventure programs. That doesn't mean Scouts spend all their time soaking up the sun. Two special programs, Eco Adventure and the OA Ocean Adventure, add lessons in sustainability to Scouts' sailing activities.

On the weeklong Eco Adventure, Scouts discover and explore the wildlife and ecosystems of the four major marine habitats of the Florida Keys, study their plants and wildlife, and understand their delicate balance. On the 10-day OA Ocean Adventure, Scouts work with the Crane Point Nature Center and Marathon Wild Bird Center to preserve the Keys' native flora and fauna. Both programs let Scouts enjoy the beauty of a unique marine environment while helping to ensure that future generations can do the same.







## Local Council Success Stories

### Sea Scout Base Galveston (Southern Region)

The sparkling new Sea Scout Base Galveston boasts a fleet of watercraft, from dories to schooners. But it boasts something else: a five-story, 60,000-square-foot headquarters built to LEED Platinum standards, among America's highest standards for green buildings. It's the BSA's first building to earn that distinction but certainly won't be the last.

Thanks to features such as an extensive network of solar panels and a rainwater-harvesting system, the base is leading by example and making a major impact on kids' lives while having little negative impact on the environment.

### Camp Emerald Bay (Western Region)

Water conservation is a major concern in California, which is in the third year of a drought of historic proportions. Lakes, farm fields, and golf courses across the state are drying up, and Californians have been asked to cut their water consumption by 20 percent.

Camp Emerald Bay is doing its part. Over three years, the popular camp on Catalina Island reduced its water usage by more than half through a comprehensive set of water-conservation strategies—an important step considering that the camp's 4,800 summer visitors use an average of 35 gallons of water per person per day. At 4 cents per gallon, that means a water bill of more than \$6,700 for the season.

The camp has installed spring-loaded water fountains and sinks, showers with pull-string faucets, and low/high flush valves. It is diverting graywater into planter boxes and educating campers about water conservation through signage and television monitors that show real-time water-usage facts. The result: less water usage, lower water bills, and an increased understanding of the need to conserve water.

### Camp Loud Thunder (Central Region)

Camp Loud Thunder near Andalusia, Illinois, packs a lot into its 200 acres, including shooting ranges, two lakes, a small observatory, the area's largest ropes course—and a model aquaponics system.

Aquaponics is a modern technology with ancient roots that combines aquaculture (raising edible fish) with hydroponics (growing vegetables and herbs without soil). In a closed, symbiotic loop, waste products from fish provide nutrients to plants, which in turn clean the water in which the fish live. Growing crops aquaponically reduces water needs by almost 80 percent and recycles nutrients that would otherwise go to waste.

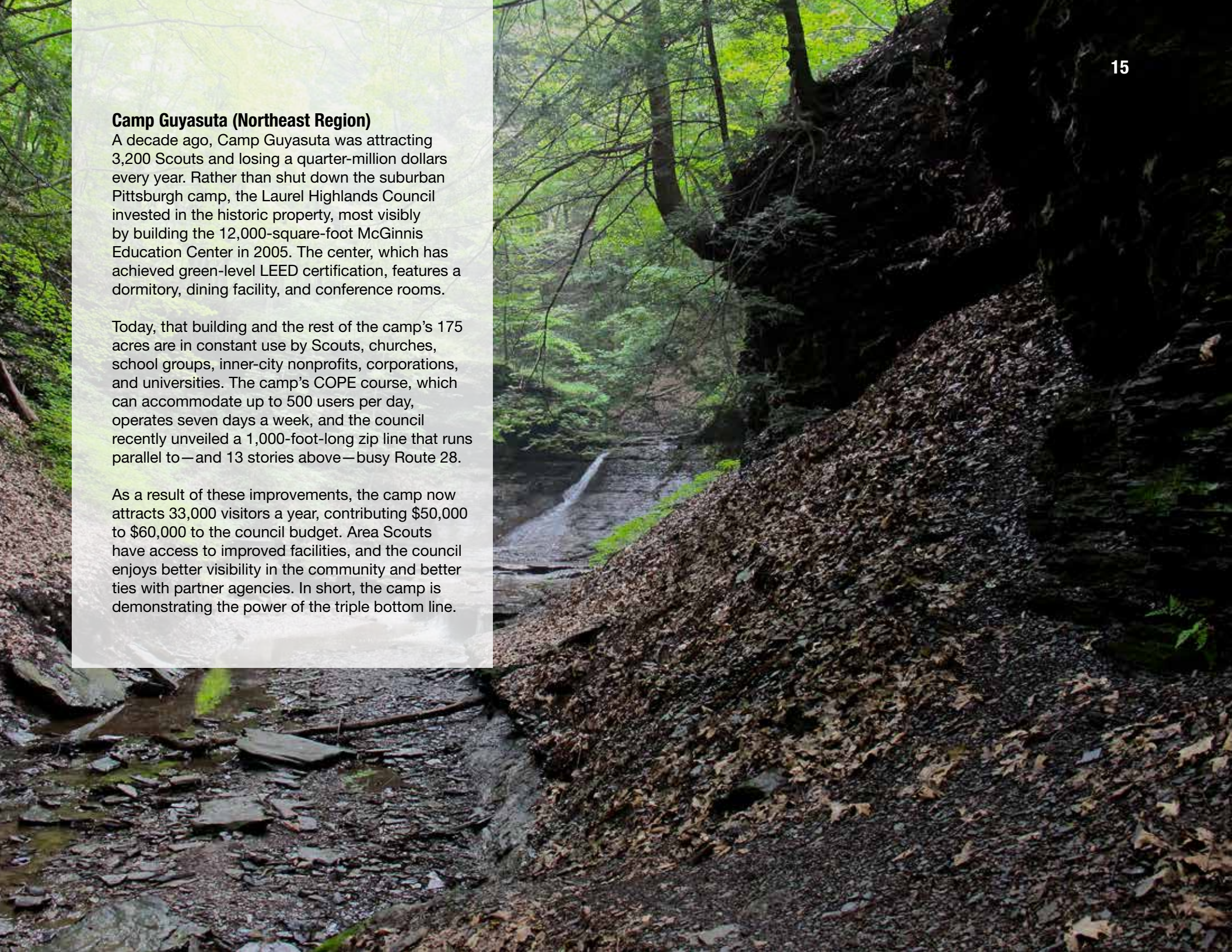
The model aquaponics system at Camp Loud Thunder costs less than \$500 to build and is helping Scouts learn creative ways to enhance their families' food and water security. Eventually, the camp hopes to build a large-scale aquaponics system to grow fresh, locally farmed fish to sell in the community.

### Camp Guyasuta (Northeast Region)

A decade ago, Camp Guyasuta was attracting 3,200 Scouts and losing a quarter-million dollars every year. Rather than shut down the suburban Pittsburgh camp, the Laurel Highlands Council invested in the historic property, most visibly by building the 12,000-square-foot McGinnis Education Center in 2005. The center, which has achieved green-level LEED certification, features a dormitory, dining facility, and conference rooms.

Today, that building and the rest of the camp's 175 acres are in constant use by Scouts, churches, school groups, inner-city nonprofits, corporations, and universities. The camp's COPE course, which can accommodate up to 500 users per day, operates seven days a week, and the council recently unveiled a 1,000-foot-long zip line that runs parallel to—and 13 stories above—busy Route 28.

As a result of these improvements, the camp now attracts 33,000 visitors a year, contributing \$50,000 to \$60,000 to the council budget. Area Scouts have access to improved facilities, and the council enjoys better visibility in the community and better ties with partner agencies. In short, the camp is demonstrating the power of the triple bottom line.







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