



Scouting for Clean Waterways A Quick Guide



Overview

A Scouting America initiative empowering Scouts, Venturers & Sea Scouts to protect waterways through cleanup projects. Land-based cleanups are equally valuable, as 90% of aquatic trash originates on land.

8 Essential Steps

1. Location & Date Selection

- Choose accessible sites with visible trash
- Ensure parking and multiple access points
- Schedule April-June (recommended)
- Plan 3-5 hours for Scouts BSA/Venturing/Sea Scouts
- 90 minutes for Cub Scouts or younger participants

2. Obtain Permission

- Secure written permission from property owners/city
- Obtain necessary permits
- Document restricted areas

3. Safety & Youth Protection

- Implement buddy system (2-3 Scouts)
- Follow Barriers to Abuse guidelines
- No mixed-gender buddy pairs
- Adult supervision required
- Maintain age-appropriate buddy groups

4. Required Supplies

- First aid kit and cleaning station
- Gloves (work or medical)
- Trash bags (2-3 per person)

- Water and snacks
- Sun protection and insect repellent
- Collection buckets for sharp items
- Trash pickers (optional)

5. Safety Procedures

- Define cleanup boundaries
- Explain recycling sorting method
- Adults handle dangerous materials
- Report hazardous waste
- Water entry requires Safe Swim Defense/Safety Afloat

6. Project Execution

- Sign in/out process
- Review safety procedures
- Assign buddy pairs
- Provide regular breaks

7. Material Management

- Sort recyclables (during or after)
- Follow local recycling guidelines
- Track collection data

8. Disposal

- Arrange advance pickup
- Identify approved disposal sites
- Report large items to watershed groups
- Track weight (estimate 10lbs per bag)

Reporting

- Log hours in Scoutbook
- Share stories on social media/local news
- Join: [facebook.com/groups/cleanwaterscouts](https://www.facebook.com/groups/cleanwaterscouts)
- Optional: Submit Marine Tracker data to CleanWaterScouts@scouting.org