

AMBASSADOR ECO ADVOCATE BADGE

Badge Purpose: When you've earned this badge, you'll have learned how to advocate for environmental issues concerning nature.

Activity Plan Length: This plan should be completed at your own pace.

Activity	Materials Needed
Meet an Eco Leader <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spend time interviewing or shadowing a person with an environmental career. 	<input type="checkbox"/> Computer with internet access; <input type="checkbox"/> Notebook <input type="checkbox"/> Pencil
Community Eco-advocacy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring community members together to talk about environmental issues and brainstorm for solutions. 	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 – 8 community members <input type="checkbox"/> Meeting space <input type="checkbox"/> Community forum questions <input type="checkbox"/> Paper <input type="checkbox"/> Pens/pencils
Take the Lead <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a community-initiated idea as an eco-advocate! 	<input type="checkbox"/> Various materials
Keep It Going <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather and inspire a group to keep the momentum going. 	<input type="checkbox"/> Various materials

Activity #1: Meet an Eco-Leader

Badge Connection: Step 1 – Learn what eco advocates do

Materials Needed: Computer with internet access; notebook; pencil

1. Research local environmental advocacy groups to learn about what they do.
2. Choose one group that interests you, reach out to them, and set up a meeting with someone who works or volunteers there. You could also invite the person to a troop meeting.
3. Before your meeting, come up with at least five in-depth questions to ask the person.
4. Conduct an interview with the person. If you are interested in an environmental career path, or just want to learn more, you could also request to job shadow in the organization for a few hours, a day, or even on a regular basis!



Activity #2: Community Eco-Advocacy

Badge Connection: Step 2 – Find an issue you're passionate about and Step 3 – Come up with a solution

Materials Needed: 4 – 8 community members; meeting space; community forum questions; paper; pens/pencils

Prep Needed:

- Select an important environmental issue that you want to advocate for. You'll be gathering community members to discuss the issue and brainstorm potential solutions, so do your best to keep an open mind to all potential solutions.
1. Set up a date, time, and space for your group to meet. Reach out to local libraries, coffee shops with community rooms, or schools to reserve space.
 2. Research the issue beforehand. Come to the meeting prepared with facts about the issue locally and on the broader scale. Be sure to know specific details that might impact your community and make sure to use a variety of balanced, credible sources.
 3. Prepare questions for your community forum. Begin by discussing the issue and its complexities and its local impact. Eventually move to discuss the broader impacts of the issue and begin brainstorming potential solutions. Adopt a "no idea is a bad idea" mentality when brainstorming.
 4. Be sure to take notes throughout the meeting so you can revisit them later.
 5. Identify ideas that are the most feasible and that the group thinks will be the most effective. Discuss the pros and cons of those top ideas as a group.
 6. As a group, select an idea to pursue.
 7. Determine if follow-up meetings are needed to plan next steps.

Activity #3: Take the Lead

Badge Connection: Step 4 – Advocate for your issue

Materials Needed: Various materials

Prep Needed:

- After holding your community meeting, you will have an issue to advocate for and an idea of how you will advocate. Decide how you will advocate. Some ideas include: working with local environmental organizations, changing policy on a nature issue, gathering petition signatures, writing blogs or articles, creating art, participating in awareness campaigns, and many others
1. Before you begin your project, keep these advocacy tips in mind:
 - Collaborate with experts. You don't need to do everything yourself, chances are existing organizations have resources and knowledge to share!
 - Ask for help! Find others who are passionate about the issue and enlist them to help.
 - Keep it community-centered. It can be tempting to forge a path on your own, but listening to community input (like you did in Activity 2!) is important to make sure solutions are inclusive and have community buy-in! Continue to involve community members as you implement your plan.
 - Consider sustainability. Think about how the initiative will be continued. Will you personally maintain it? Could you pass it along to a younger Girl Scout troop?
 2. Implement your idea.
 3. Evaluate your success. Honestly reflect on what you would change if you were to do it again and what was successful!

Activity #4: Keep it Going

Badge Connection: Step 5 – Teach others how to advocate for your cause



Materials Needed: Various materials

1. Synthesize your existing work, including notes from your community forum, work that you've accomplished, and where you hope to go in the future. Write a mission statement or a set of goals that are easily understood and shared.
2. Using these materials, organize a group to continue working on your cause. These can be Girl Scout sisters, classmates, community members, etc.
3. Using the knowledge you've gained from earning this badge, teach the group how to advocate for your cause.

More to Explore

- Field Trip Ideas:
 - Visit a site that's currently being impacted by an environmental issue.
 - Attend an environmental advocacy organization's meeting.
- Speaker Ideas:
 - Invite a political leader (city council member etc.) who advocates for environmental issues to your troop meeting to give tips about advocating for a cause.
 - Invite an environmental policy advisor to your troop meeting to talk about the steps to creating environmental legislation.

