

Wildland Fire Management

Merit Badge Workbook

Merit badges are earned by doing: reading the pamphlet, practicing the skills, and showing your counselor what you have learned.
This workbook gives you a place to organize your notes and track your progress along the way.
Merit badge counselors may not require the use of this or any similar workbook.
You still must satisfy your counselor that you can demonstrate each skill and have learned the information.
Use the space under each requirement to note what you have done and what you want to talk about, not to write out full answers.
When a requirement says discuss, show, tell, explain, or demonstrate, that is what you must do.
No one may add to or subtract from the official requirements found on scouting.org (Guide to Advancement 7.0.4.8).
Scouting America last updated this badge's requirements page on July 22, 2026.
Requirements change from time to time. Double-check scouting.org before you start.

Scout's name: _____ Unit: _____ Date started: _____

Counselor's name: _____ Phone no.: _____ Email: _____

Links marked "Scouting America resources" are the ones Scouting America shares on its official badge page.
This workbook is unofficial and not endorsed by Scouting America.

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1. History of Wildland Fire. Research and discuss with your counselor the history of wildland fire, its suppression, prevention, and management in the United States.

Scouting America resources: A History of Wildfire Prevention (video) · Wildfire Education (website)

History of wildland fire in the United States

Topic	What I found (key events, dates, and changes)
wildland fire	
its suppression	
prevention	
management	

Requirement 1 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

2. Harms of Wildfire. Research the harm caused by wildfire in the United States, including annual acres burned for the past three years. Discuss with your counselor. Include the negative impacts that wildfire has on the following:

Scouting America resources: A Better Way To Think About Wildland Fires (video) · Effects of Wildfires and Forest Fires (video)

Annual acres burned

Year	Acres burned in the United States	Where I found it

(a) Commercial forest products

(b) Fish and wildlife habitat

Scouting America resources: The Impact of Wildfires on Wildlife (video)

(c) Soil and water

Scouting America resources: How Wildfires Affect Water Supply (video)

(d) Recreation and public use

(e) Homes, communities, and human resources

(f) Air quality and public health

Scouting America resources: How Are Wildfires Making Us Sick? (video)

Requirement 2 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

3. Fire as a Management Tool. Discuss with your counselor how prescribed fire is used to accomplish the following:

Scouting America resources: Misconceptions and Benefits of Fire (video)

(a) Fuel reduction

Scouting America resources: Good Fire: Prescribed Burning (video)

(b) Fish and wildlife habitat enhancement

Scouting America resources: Wildlife That Depends on Fire To Survive (video)

(c) Ecosystem restoration

Scouting America resources: How Does Fire Affect Wildlife? (video)

(d) Forest regeneration

Scouting America resources: Fire Effects in the Forest (video)

(e) Insect and disease control

Scouting America resources: Insects, Disease, Drought, and Fire (video)

Requirement 3 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

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4. Wildfire Prevention and Mitigation. Discuss the following with your counselor:

(a) Wildfire Prevention:

Scouting America resources: Fire Is Everyone's Fight (website)

(1) The main causes of wildfire in the United States

Scouting America resources: Wildfires 101 (video)

Main causes

(2) How you can prevent human caused wildfires in your community and on outings with your unit.

Scouting America resources: Wildfire Prevention With Smokey the Bear (video)

How I can prevent human-caused wildfires in my community and on unit outings

(b) Wildfire Mitigation:

(1) Wildland-Urban Interface

Scouting America resources: Understanding the Wildland Urban Interface (website)

What the wildland-urban interface is

(2) Defensible space and how homes and communities in the wildland-urban interface can be protected from wildfire

Scouting America resources: Separating Your Home From Wildfire—the Zones of Defensible Space (video)

Defensible space, and how homes and communities can be protected

Requirement 4 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

5. Fire Behavior. Do the following:

(a) Discuss with your counselor how the fire environment affects wildland fire behavior. Include examples of the influences of weather, topography, and fuel.

Scouting America resources: The Relationship Between Relative Humidity, Fuel Moisture, and Fire Behavior (video)
Wildland Fire Behavior (website)

How the fire environment affects fire behavior

Influence	Examples
weather	
topography	
fuel	

(b) Explain how a wildfire can be suppressed by removing heat, fuel, or oxygen.

Scouting America resources: Fire Triangle Explained (video)

Breaking the fire triangle

Remove	How removing it can suppress a wildfire
heat	
fuel	
oxygen	

(c) Draw a diagram to illustrate the parts of a wildfire.

Scouting America resources: How To Describe the Behavior and Parts of a Wildfire (video)

My diagram of the parts of a wildfire (draw here or attach)

Requirement 5 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

6. Wildland Firefighter Safety. Do the following:

(a) Discuss with your counselor the personal protective equipment used by wildland firefighters and its use.

Scouting America resources: Dressed for Fire (video)

Personal protective equipment

Equipment	How wildland firefighters use it

(b) Discuss the following with your counselor, including why each is an important consideration for maintaining personal safety and situational awareness during wildland fire suppression activities:

(1) 10 Standard Firefighting Orders

Scouting America resources: Standard Firefighting Orders (video)

10 Standard Firefighting Orders

#	Order	Why it matters for safety and awareness
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		

(2) 18 Watch Out Situations

Scouting America resources: The Watchout Situations (video)

18 Watch Out Situations

#	Situation	Why it matters for safety and awareness
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		
11		
12		

18 Watch Out Situations, continued

#	Situation	Why it matters for safety and awareness
13		
14		
15		
16		
17		
18		

(3) Lookouts, Communication, Escape Routes, and Safety Zones (LCES)

Scouting America resources: LCES (video)

LCES

Part	What it means and why it matters
Lookouts	
Communication	
Escape Routes	
Safety Zones	

Requirement 6 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

7. Wildfire Suppression Tactics. Do the following:

(a) Alone or with a small team, using the diagram you created in Requirement 5(c) or a map of a wildfire, and tokens to represent firefighting resources, demonstrate the following wildland fire suppression tactics. Explain under which conditions each tactic would be used:

Scouting America resources: How We Fight Wildfires (video)

Date _____ Diagram or map I used _____ Alone or with _____

(1) Direct attack

Scouting America resources: Direct and Indirect Attack Strategies on Wildfires (video)

When it would be used

(2) Indirect attack

When it would be used

(3) Minimum impact suppression tactics

Scouting America resources: Evolution of Fire Management and the Role of Knowledge (video)

When it would be used

(4) Use of hand crews, machinery, and aircraft

Scouting America resources: California Battles Fires With "Fire Plane" (video)

When each would be used

(5) Mop-up

Scouting America resources: Mop Up Operations on the Mosquito Fire (video)

When it would be used

(6) Repair and restoration

When it would be used

(b) Draw a diagram of the Incident Command System. Alone or with your team, explain the responsibilities of the Command and General Staff positions on a wildfire incident.

Scouting America resources: ICS Organizational Structure and Elements (PDF)

My Incident Command System diagram (draw here or attach)

Command and General Staff positions

Position	Responsibilities on a wildfire incident

Requirement 7 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

8. Wildfire Suppression Tools. Do the following:

(a) Demonstrate the use of three hand tools unique to wildland fire suppression. Use one of these tools to demonstrate how to construct a fireline.

Scouting America resources: Wildland Firefighting Tools (video)

Three wildland fire hand tools

#	Tool	How I demonstrated it	Date
1			
2			
3			

Tool I used to build a fireline _____ Date _____

(b) Discuss seven other tools, equipment, or apparatus that are unique to wildland fire suppression and explain how these resources are used.

Scouting America resources: Wildland Fire Engines (website w/ video) · Aircraft (website) · Firefighting Equipment (website) Dozers (website)

Seven other tools, equipment, or apparatus

#	Tool, equipment, or apparatus	How it is used
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		

Requirement 8 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

9. Taking Action. Do ONE of the following:

☐ **(a)** Develop a fire readiness plan for a wildland area with which you are familiar. The plan should include a map showing available resources, water supplies, natural and manmade barriers, and access. The plan should discuss fuel loads, available fire apparatus, structure protection needs, values at risk, medical and evacuation considerations, and potential fire suppression tactics.

Wildland area _____ Date _____

☐ Available resources
☐ Water supplies
☐ Natural and manmade barriers
☐ Access

My map (draw here or attach)

My fire readiness plan

Topic	My plan
fuel loads	
available fire apparatus	
structure protection needs	
values at risk	
medical and evacuation considerations	
potential fire suppression tactics	

☐ **(b)** Visit with a state or federal forestry official or your local fire warden. Discuss the causes of and types of wildland fire that occur in your area. Discuss the prime fire season(s) in your area. Identify the agency responsible for wildland fire suppression in your area. Discuss what you learned with your counselor.

Official or fire warden I visited _____ Date _____

What we discussed

Topic	What I learned
causes of wildland fire in my area	
types of wildland fire in my area	
prime fire season(s)	
agency responsible for suppression	

☐ **(c)** Conduct a Firewise assessment of a home or a building in the wildland-urban interface, which could include a Scout camp building or facility. Identify potential risks and fire hazards. With your counselor's approval, complete a project to reduce the wildfire risk and increase the preparedness of the building. Write a brief report about what you did and learned from the assessment and project.

Scouting America resources: Firewise USA® (website) · Fire Home Assessment (PDF)

Home or building I assessed _____ Date _____

Risks and fire hazards I found

Risk or hazard	Where

Project approved by counselor on _____ Project dates _____

My brief report: what I did and what I learned

☐ **(d)** Meet with a Fire Prevention Specialist or a local fire official to learn about fire prevention efforts in your community. From what you learned, prepare a fire prevention message (skit, video, or billboard concept) and share with your counselor and troop (or other group approved by your counselor).

Person I met _____ Date _____

Fire prevention efforts in my community

Skit, video, or billboard _____ Shared with _____ Date _____

My fire prevention message plan

☐ **(e)** Meet with a meteorologist or someone familiar with fire weather and discuss the fire weather concerns and typical fire seasons that exist in your area. Discuss the conditions that lead to a Fire Weather Watch or a Red Flag Warning. Discuss what you learned with your counselor.

Person I met _____ Date _____

What we discussed

Topic	What I learned
fire weather concerns in my area	
typical fire seasons	
conditions for a Fire Weather Watch	
conditions for a Red Flag Warning	

Requirement 9 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

10. Apply Your Learning to a Real Event. Research an historic catastrophic wildland fire incident that occurred in the United States. Discuss with your counselor and/or your troop or a group approved by your counselor the conditions that led to the incident, how the incident was managed, and how the incident could have been prevented. Explain what lessons were learned and how this incident affected future fire suppression policy or suppression tactics.

Scouting America resources: The Tillamook Burn Forest Fire of August, 1933 (video)
The Story Behind the Yellowstone Fires of 1988 (video) · The Smoke Jumper Tragedy of Mann Gulch (video)
Storm King Mountain Tragedy (video)

Incident I researched _____ Year and place _____

My research

Topic	My notes
conditions that led to it	
how it was managed	
how it could have been prevented	
lessons learned	
effect on future policy or tactics	

Requirement 10 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

11. Careers in Wildland Fire Management. Explore careers related to this merit badge. Research one career to learn about the training and education needed, costs, job prospects, salary, job duties, and career advancement. Your research methods may include—with your parent or guardian's permission—an internet or library search, an interview with a professional in the field, or a visit to a location where people in this career work. Discuss with your counselor both your findings and what about this profession might make it an interesting career.

Scouting America resources: Wildland Firefighting & Wildland Fire Ecology Jobs (video) · Fire Management Specialist (website)
The Forest Service's Wildfire Force (video)

Careers related to wildland fire management

Career	What the job involves

Career I researched

The one I researched

What I researched	What I found
training and education	
costs	
job prospects	
salary	
job duties	
career advancement	

What might make it an interesting career for me

Requirement 11 completed on counselor initials

Counselor sign-off

Your counselor signs your blue card or approves the badge in Scoutbook, and your unit records it. This line is for your own records.

Counselor's signature Date completed

Official Scouting America resources

Scouting America resources: Wildland Fire Management merit badge page (requirements and resources) · All merit badges

Made by Cole at ScoutSmarts.com, an Eagle Scout who loves helping Scouts.
Spot an error or a requirement change? Tell me at scoutsmarts.com/contact.
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