

Sponsoring an outing.

Firstly, thank you for taking on this critical function. The Boys get more out of going to camp and going on outings than almost any other activity - but nothing happens without an adult in the background helping get things organized. Sponsors do not have to GO on the outings - but they are welcome to attend. Please read through this entire document. It has valuable tips and instructions.

Troop 166 is a boy lead, but adult supervised Troop. That means the boys make decisions, and the adults follow up to make sure they've been made or to remind them to do things - at times providing some (but not too much) guidance as to what decisions need to be made and by when. Adults step in directly when there is a safety issue, aside from that our role is advice and support.

Outing Sponsors need to get their draft Trip Bulletins to the Outdoor Committee Chair one month before the outing for presentation at the Troop Committee meeting. That allows the Scoutmaster and Outing Chair to check them over and make sure they are complete, accurate, AND THEN (once fixed) the Scoutmaster can get the bulletin to the PLC on the following Monday after the outing. The key is to get the complete and corrected bulletin to the PLC so THEY can manage most of the processes associated with organizing the boys.

The troop uses the Patrol Method - so whenever possible the PLC (not the outing sponsor) will create groups of scouts to work together on an outing, based mostly on patrols. On some outings, patrols may be combined - but it is the SPL or SPL for that outing to do this - not the sponsor.

Similarly, it is the SPL's job to organize transportation in concert with the sponsor. The sponsor identifies who is driving and how many seats they have, and the SPL makes the car assignments not the sponsor. If there are issues related to patrols hiking in limited group permit areas, wilderness and alpine lakes, the sponsor must work with the SPL but cannot take it upon themselves to make assignments. Often this doesn't get done until the morning of, but that's OK.

It is the patrols' job to appoint a grub master, set their budget for food, identify the equipment they'll need for an outing, and allocate procuring and carrying food or gear within the patrol. The sponsor can provide a check list or a planning work sheet to the Patrol leaders if they want, but leave the decision making up to them. It is important they learn to plan and execute these aspects. This work should be done at the troop meeting prior to the outing, hence the requirement of getting the bulletin done a month before, so the Troop Committee and the PLC can check it.

We all understand that sometimes this is difficult - but for the patrol method to work, the sponsor needs to mentor the SPL and patrol leaders - not do their jobs for them

At times some aspects of some outings must be 'rationed' - i.e. if there are only 14 seats available in a group going to the Bowron Lakes then a procedure needs to be spelled out in the bulletin as to how decisions will be made. The troop uses skills as the primary determinant of priorities. Sometimes however, it is appropriate to use a 1st come, 1st served approach. On routine outings, the PLC will decide tie breaker criteria for any rationing, not the sponsor.

Drivers: Please always select drivers with vehicles capable of the most passengers and gear over those with less- Vans and large SUV's. This will help keep down costs. If needed, don't be bashful about asking an adult if they will be a passenger instead of a driver. If they insist on driving to attend the outing but you have sufficient vehicles without them, they should not be reimbursed. You will have to explain this to them. Parents understand and are willing to accommodate this to help keep costs down. Remember this cost impacts each scout, not just one driver.

Groups will be assigned in patrols by the SPL or boy helping to organize an outing (also known as the SPL for that trip). Sometimes adults sign up to go on outings, and frequently they want to hike or paddle with their sons. This should be discussed with the SPL to ensure that Scouts receive priority over adults for constrained spaces. The troop needs parent volunteers to go on outings, and when possible and appropriate it is fine for those adults to hike or paddle with their sons. HOWEVER, adults should understand that sometimes, to retain the integrity of the patrol method and meet other regulations like 2 deep leadership, wilderness party size limits, etc. they might not be able to hike with their sons. These types of potential conflicts should be worked out at the PLC prior to the meeting before the outing so that patrol meal planning, etc. can go on efficiently at the troop meeting. This may entail a good deal of telephone work by the sponsor, and should not be left until the last minute. If you need help to resolve such a conflict, speak with the Scout Master, Bill Montgomery.

So when the Outdoor Committee Chairman asks you to think about writing up your bulletin 6 months in advance so it can go on the web site - it might be a good idea to do it so that there is much LESS work to do in the weeks right before the outing.

Items needed:

- Bulletin complete with permission slips.
- Sign up sheet.
- Budget.
- Roster of Scouts and contact phone numbers. 1 copy for each driver
- Chief Seattle Council Local Tour Permit. 1 copy for each driver
- Detailed directions and if possible a map for each driver.
- Copies of topological map of hiking area. Especially if it's a backpack trip.
- Na. Forest Parking permits if applicable. 2 for each driver
- Other applicable permits. (Campground permits are obtained at the campground)

Bulletin:

Please complete the trip bulletin as soon as possible so we can post them on the Troop's web site. The bulletins are needed at the Patrol Leader Conference (PLC) meeting, which is held the Monday after the previous month's outing. Email it to the outdoor committee chair. Please have it ready at least one month before the scheduled date(if outing is in November, it should be ready October 1). You can attend the PLC meeting if you want and present the outing but it isn't necessary.

Look on the troop's web site under the Categories "Monthly Outing Bulletins" <http://troop166.net>. You may find a similar outing minimizing edits.

Or use the MS Word Bulletin example on the troops web site (<http://troop166.net/> Outdoor Sponsor Resources under Calendar) and edit accordingly. Hover your cursor over the yellow boxes to see helpful notes on the section and what to write. Change the Header and Footer information to the outing name and dates. The Adult leader is you, the sponsor. The scout leader is usually the Senior Patrol Leader. You can leave this blank for the PLC meeting and the Scout sponsor will be decided there. Be sure to state that Scouts should bring their scouting book. They can always work on advancement requirements and scout skills. (If you don't have a copy of MS Word, get OpenOffice <http://download.openoffice.org/index.html> It works with all MS Word documents and it's free.)

Use hiking guidebooks for a description of the hike or state park information available on the web. You can google the destination name and usually get good descriptions and directions from various web sites. Find any necessary topographic hiking maps available at REI and <http://www.greentrails.com/>. Look on the troop's web site under useful links for [Free Topological Maps in PDF](#), a link to the USGS Topological Map page.

If you have any questions, don't be bashful about contacting the Outing Committee Chair, or previous outing sponsors for help, answers, kibitzing, whatever else you need.

Sign-up:

The Outdoor Committee chair will email you an "Outing Participation Roster" sign-up sheet with scout names. This is the preferred method. All one need do is fill in the blanks. If you don't get one, use a simple piece of paper with columns for names, permission slips, and payment - it helps you keep track.

Budget: This is not as difficult as you might believe. Plan on 4 vehicles and 15 scouts. Use the spreadsheet at the troops web site under 'Outdoor Sponsor Resources under Calendar' <http://troop166.net/>. The food for the patrols is separate from you're budgeting. Let the patrols handle that. But do suggest 8 or 10 dollars for food cost in the bulletin.

Mileage: Don't forget its round trip mileage. You can go to <http://www.mapquest.com/> to get directions from Seattle to the nearest town. If you are a member of AAA you can go to <http://www.aaa.com> and get a triptik with directions and mileage to the nearest town. (You can choose to avoid ferries by selecting preferences.) These sites' directions will include the mileage. Add the mileage to the trailhead or campground. Current mileage rates are on the spreadsheet.

Fees:

Ferry: Go to <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/ferries/index.cfm> to get the latest fares and schedules. Vehicle and driver pay both directions. Passengers pay only Westbound. Scouts qualify for youth fares.

National Forest Parking Permits: Each vehicle must have a Na. Forest Parking Permit displayed in the front window. Each driver needs two permits for the weekend. These passes are available at REI, and on-line at <http://www.wta.org/~wta/cgi-bin/wtaweb.pl?5+os+passes>. As of September 2005, Daily passes are \$5.00. One for each driver is needed and one for each day.

National Park Entrance: An entrance fee is charged for driving or bicycling into Mt. Rainier and Olympic National Park (Some entrances of Olympic Na. Park). Please verify the amount on the Parks web site. Give money for entrance fee to each driver. There is no entrance fee for walking into a National Park.

Campground: Camping fees are paid at the campground. Plan on one site for each vehicle. Give the funds to the Trip Leader. Budget for on non-hookup sites.

State Parks-go to <http://www.parks.wa.gov/> or call (888) CAMPOUT or (888) 226-7688 which is their reservations line. They can answer questions about camping fees.

National Forests and Parks: It's best to go to the web site for the park or forest and find the campground fee information. Most Na. Park and Na. Forest campgrounds are closed from after Labor Day until nearly Memorial Day. If you google the park name, you can find it easily.

Boy Scout Camps: If the outing is at a Boy Scout Camp, get fee and application information at <http://www.seattlebsa.org/Default.htm>. Select Council Camping and the appropriate camp.

Permits:

Wilderness camping permits are needed for camping in National Parks, Mt. Rainier and Olympic. There is no charge for the permit. There is a charge to reserve a campground. Some areas have group wilderness campsites and during peak season it is a good idea to reserve one. Some areas require groups to use these campgrounds. They can be obtained at the entrances and other locations near the Parks. Call the park to find where permits may be obtained and costs. For Mt. Rainier, in the town of Wilkeson South of Enumclaw on Hwy 165. Communicate to drivers where they will stop to obtain the Wilderness camping permit. This can be a rendezvous point.

Some National Forest areas require backcountry camping permits. The Enchantments is one. Check the Na. Forest web site to see if permits are required for that area and group size limits.

A local tour permit **must** be obtained from the Chief Seattle Council. You can download one from the troop's web site, <http://troop166.net> Outing Sponsor Resources page under Calendar or <http://www.scouting.org/forms/34426.pdf>. Fill out the form and fax it to them-206-721-8985. They usually fax it back that day. The "Tour Leader" is you. Bring this form to a troop meeting and have one of the Adult leaders sign the "Signed by member of Unit Committee" area. You need to fill in the vehicle information for each driver. For the insurance if you haven't been told that by the driver, you can state "Meets State Minimums". This is sufficient for the required amounts listed on the form. Include a copy of the outing bulletin with the fax. Don't worry about the menu. **THIS PERMIT MUST ACCOMPANY THE SCOUTS AND BE WITH THEM AT ALL TIMES.** Make copies and give one to each driver.

Green Trails Maps: Check with the Parents, Scout adult leaders, and Outdoor committee chair to see if they have a topological map of the hiking area. If not, please obtain one. They are available on-line at <http://www.greentrails.com/> and REI. Many of the hiking books and on-line hike descriptions referencing which map number covers the destination. Give several copies to the drivers for distribution to the scouts.

Drivers Package: To be given to each driver the morning of the departure. Each driver needs their funds, the phone list of Scout's contact numbers, local tour permit, Scout permission slips, any parking permits, and topological maps. Who will be in which car is decided by the Scout Leader ahead of time or in the parking lot before departure. Give them an extra copy of the roster to mark up. It's best to have one set of all permission slips for each driver. For last minute attendees, you'll need to give that permission slip to their driver. Put all paperwork in a one-gallon zip lock bag and give one packet to each driver.

Two/Three Weeks Prior To The Outing

Come to the Troop Meetings and bring paper copies of the bulletin, permission slips, sign-up sheet,

and any other required information to hand out. Sign up participants, recruit drivers, get signed permission slips, and collect money. Remind the Senior Patrol Leader before the meeting that you need time to talk at the end of the meeting, and then make a stirring speech at the end of the meeting about how great this outing will be, and encourage the boys to sign up. Check the Troop meeting schedule, if there is a vacation before the outing, you may need to bring the bulletin 3 or 4 weeks before the outing. 20 copies of the bulletin are sufficient for distribution. Approved Bulletins are posted on the Troop's web site. Save your receipt for any copies made to give to the treasurer.

Monday Prior To The Outing

Come to the Troop Meeting and bring copies of the bulletin, permission slips, and any other required information to hand out. Sign up participants, recruit drivers, get signed permission slips, and collect money. Patrols should know who is going, and plan their menus and activities at this meeting. Verify that the Permission slips are complete, fees are paid, and that you have all the phone numbers you will need to get the job done during the next few days.

Week of the Outing

This week entails making calls to the Scout Sponsor to ensure that things are getting done. Call or e-mail boys without permission slips to get them in. Calling can and does also occur the night before, but that isn't recommended. Be certain the Scout sponsor and Patrols know of any special planning they should be doing. Bring extra permission slips to the parking lot as sometimes the Sponsor finds themselves on morning of the outing doing paperwork because boys procrastinate, forget, don't get permission slips turned in, etc.,. Fax in the Local Scout Tour Permit and make sure it's returned signed. Add a few scouts to the number attending for late sign-ups if you think there will be some. Prepare a phone list with all scouts listed and the contact phone number stated on their permission form. One copy for each driver will be needed.

Morning of Departure

Pre-bag (gallon size zip lock bags work well) all the paperwork, including: driver's mileage reimbursement money/ferry tickets, driving maps and directions, rosters with home contact phone numbers, and permission slips for each boy in a car. Give the Scout sponsor a roster of participants. The Adult Trip leader should get a copy of all the permission slips, and the budgeted funds for any campsite fees or other anticipated costs.

After The Trip

When the trip is all done, send a financial report to the treasurer to account for all money collected and spent. Use the spread sheet on the troops web site. You may have already turned the funds over to the treasurer - or you may have chosen to manage it all yourself. Save receipts and use the spreadsheet to account for actual expenses. Give the Troop Historian and the Outdoor Committee Chair a copy of the roster so they can credit scouts with attendance and write up a summary of the trip itself.