



2023 NATIONAL JAMBOREE

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<https://jamboree.scouting.org/media>

From Coal to Conservation: The Remarkable Transformation of Summit Bechtel Reserve, Site of BSA's 2023 National Jamboree

Scouting's Commitment to Sustainability and Respect for Natural Resources Evident at One of the Nation's Most Successful Reclamation Projects

MOUNT HOPE, West Virginia (June 27, 2023) — Relatively few of the over 15,000 Scouts, Venturers, Explorers, staff, volunteers and local community members attending the Boy Scouts of America's 20th [National Jamboree](#), taking place July 19-28, 2023, are likely to know that for many decades, extensive coal mining, strip mining, and tree harvesting operations were located on the [BSA's Summit Bechtel Reserve's](#) 10,600 acres. Hundreds of people lived and worked in mining and forestry camps on the property, beginning in the 1850s.

In 2009, when Scouting selected the Summit property to develop as its permanent home for future Jamborees – and consistent with its longstanding commitment to sustainability – the organization committed to undertake what was a significant reclamation project, to convert the property back into an ecologically sound environment where forestation and wildlife could thrive and humans could enjoy responsibly.

A few examples of Scouting's reclamation and sustainability efforts on the Summit property include:

- **Resource Conservation** – Initiatives targeted Abandoned Mine Lands (AML), including addition of a 2:1 slope over sheer rock faces left from strip mining, and planting seed beds to prevent erosion. The Summit participated in the Appalachian Forest Renewal Initiative which included the planting of 100,000 trees, and continues to partner with the American Chestnut Foundation to help repopulate the American Chestnut in West Virginia.
- **Energy** – Buildings are designed to use 30 percent less energy than conventional structures. Scouting has also made investments in on-site renewable energy generation, including geothermal wells, photovoltaic solar panels, and wind turbines to reduce operating costs.

- **Water** – Recognizing its role in protecting the New River, the Summit uses a network of 60 acres of swales and rain garden to treat runoff by filtering it through plants. The Summit also employs gray-water systems, low-flow fixtures, and composting toilets to reduce water use by two-thirds. On average, the Summit treats approximately 3.5 million gallons of water onsite daily. During a Jamboree, there is normally an additional 3 million gallons of water that is recycled, reused and or treated and then put back into the forest.
- **Materials** – Scouting is committed to thrifty and resourceful use of construction materials. Timber was salvaged for reuse in structures, while other materials were sourced from within 500 miles of the project to reduce emissions.
- **Economy** – By requiring at least a 25 percent local labor force and materials from nearby, developing the Summit supports the local economy. It’s estimated that every dollar spent in a local business re-circulates seven more times in the regional economy.
- **Habitat Conservation** – More than 1,000 acres of the Summit’s most ecologically-valuable land has been dedicated as a nature preserve. The Summit has also planted many thousands of hardwood trees, and established native grasses on campsites to restore wildlife habitat.

Regardless of whether they ever visit the [Summit Bechtel Reserve](#), every member of Scouts BSA is challenged to “think globally and act locally, by following the *BSA Outdoor Code*:

Be clean in my outdoor manners: I will treat the outdoors as a heritage. I will take care of it for myself and others. I will keep my trash and garbage out of lakes, streams, fields, woods, and roadways.

Be careful with fire: I will prevent wildfire. I will build my fires only when and where they are permitted and appropriate. When I have finished using a fire, I will make sure it is cold out. I will leave a clean fire ring or remove all evidence of my fire.

Be considerate in the outdoors: I will treat the land and other land users with respect. I will follow the principles of outdoor ethics for all outdoor activities.

Be conservation-minded: I will learn about and practice good conservation of soil, waters, forests, minerals, grasslands, wildlife and energy. I will urge others to do the same.



About the 2023 National Jamboree

Media can find more information about the National Jamboree, as well as [register for media credentials](#) at <https://jamboree.scouting.org/media/> or contact PR@Scouting.org



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2023 National Jamboree Logo

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About the Boy Scouts of America

The Boy Scouts of America provides the nation's foremost youth program of character development and values-based leadership training, which helps young people to be "Prepared. For Life.®" The Scouting organization is composed of more than 1 million youth members between the ages of 7 and 21 and approximately 960,000 volunteers in local councils throughout the United States and its territories. For more information on the Boy Scouts of America, please visit www.scouting.org.



How to Join Scouting

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