

# **SHELDON LAKE STATE PARK & ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING CENTER**

**15315 Beaumont Highway**

**Houston, TX 77049**

**281-456-2800**

**Updated 10/07**

## **POTENTIAL EAGLE SCOUT PROJECTS**

**DATE:** Fall, 2007-Spring, 2008

**TIME:** 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

In order for this eagle project to have real value to the park, a maximum one-day effort must be given or a second work day scheduled for a later date.

**LOCATION:** Meet at Sheldon Lake Environmental Learning Center at Park Road 138(Off Old Beaumont Highway), two miles east of Beltway 8. (See attached map).

**LOGISTICS:** After meeting at the learning center, park staff and scouts will walk to the project site. Lunches can remain at the cars, but most other gear, equipment, drinking water, snacks, etc. should be brought to the site. One-two vehicles will be driven closer to the work site as necessary.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** Ongoing projects include:

- **Habitat restoration.** Scouts work on controlling either Chinese tallow trees or Chinese privet shrubs in selected areas of the park. Privet would be cut by the scouts with long-handled pruners and the cut branches stacked at the edge of the trail. Alternatively, scouts would uproot the smaller privet shrubs using long handled levers with gripping jaws called "Weed Wrenches". (Depending on the project, the ranger or a designated adult may squirt Grazon P + D herbicide on the cut stem.). Chinese tallow is killed by cutting with a pruner for saplings before application of the herbicide. Non-target native vegetation will usually be marked with colored flagging to minimize mistakes.  
(There are several target sites for these vegetation control projects:  
1). Along the Learning Center trails and forested ponds,  
2). Along the forest edge adjacent to the fields or flood control ditch.
- **Containerized tree planting:** During the months of December-April, tree-planting projects may be available with containerized trees in 1-15 gallon sizes. This would include digging the holes, planting the trees, building a soil ring, fertilizing and watering the trees. Availability of the trees will dictate the scheduling of the project.
- **Other projects:** We are open to suggestions from the scout for other types of projects, but have enough work in the above two categories for many future scout projects. We generally do not need any benches, bird houses, etc. until we are able to reclaim and improve more of our existing habitat from these invasive plant species. Creation of plant or animal collections or other aids to the park's nature education programs would be a beneficial project.

**EQUIPMENT NEEDED:** Scouts should wear boots or strongly made sneakers and long pants.**(No shorts!).** Hats and sunscreen are strongly advised. Gloves and safety glasses **must** be worn by all participants. Scout assistance in bringing safety glasses, gloves, pruners, etc. from home to supplement park supplies would be appreciated(Items should be labeled)..

**SAFETY CONCERNS:**

1. The Grazon herbicide is safe for use unless it comes in contact with the eyes. Eye wash and first aid kit should be included. Safety glasses are worn.
2. For safety sake, park staff and selected adults only will use hatchets and only park staff and designated adults herbicide. Inform park staff immediately if scout rules or concerns require changes in this plan.
3. Long pants(jeans) are required due to the potential for poison ivy in the work area and to prevent abrasion from small trees or shrubs. Long sleeve shirts are recommended. Due to heat, regular breaks will be taken for water and cool-down.
4. Toilet and hand-washing facilities are available at the learning center.
5. Animal dangers are mainly fire ants and a small chance of encountering a venomous snake. Care should be taken before and while lifting logs. Alligators live in many of the ponds adjacent to the work area.

**EAGLE SCOUT REPOSIBILITIES:**

1. Recruit at least 10 scouts and adults to assist for the entire day.
2. Ensure that they arrive on time, are properly equipped and working safely.
3. Prior to project, instruct troop members on plant ID(poison ivy, Chinese tallow, privet)
4. With help of park staff, make work assignments and work teams.
5. With help of park staff, monitor the work as it progresses and make adjustments as necessary.
6. Keep scouts motivated, provisioned with food and water, and working effectively so that significant work can be accomplished even with frequent breaks.

Coordinate with park staff prior to project to ensure that it is successful and mutually beneficial.

(Tom Olson 281-456-2800 x225 [tom.olson@tpwd.state.tx.us](mailto:tom.olson@tpwd.state.tx.us)).

**PARK STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES:**

1. Provide work site, some of the hand tools and gloves, and the herbicide, if necessary. Provide rest room and hand-washing facilities.
2. Provide on-site briefing on method of hacking and lopping trees, use of herbicide, tree identification, potential hazards, etc.
3. Work with Eagle Scout candidate to monitor work progress and make adjustments as necessary.
4. Work with Eagle Scout candidate to keep crew working effectively and safely.