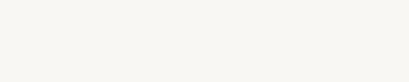


Business / Corporate Responsibility

# Sustainability and future forests at the World Scout Jamboree



Sustainable Forestry Initiative  
September 4, 2019



© SFI - Scouts and visitors from more than 150 countries attended the 24th World Scout Jamboree.

The Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) and Project Learning Tree (PLT) joined Scouts from more than 150 countries at the [24th World Scout Jamboree](#) last month. PLT is an environmental education initiative of SFI and focuses on taking students outdoors to learn and connecting youth to nature.

The Jamboree takes place every four years in a different country. This year, the event was held at the Summit Bechtel Reserve in West Virginia, which is comprised of land that is certified to the SFI Forest Management Standard.

The SFI/PLT exhibit was located beneath the Sustainability Tree House and included interactive activities that explored forest health including Forest Signs, where Scouts posted selfies next to SFI posters; a Green Jobs Quiz; and a Tree Cookies Activity.

SFI's tree cookies (cross-sections of tree trunks) helped Scouts learn about the many changes in a tree's lifetime by observing the annual ring growth. By correlating the time it takes for trees to grow with events in human history, Scouts were able to see the long-term effects of environmental impacts.



© SFI - Left: western red cedar from the Rocky Mountains of Idaho, originated 1844 and harvested in 2019 Right: loblolly pine from a churchyard in South Carolina, originated 1843, died 1988

By counting the rings, SFI helped Scouts determine that the Western Red Cedar tree cookie started out as a seedling in 1844. The Red Cedar's story was not a very happy one at first. Several holes indicated it suffered from rot, which it later overcame. By looking closely, Scouts noticed that the tree rings near the center were close together, indicating the tree was initially struggling to survive and growing very little in its infancy. The rings suddenly became much wider around 1917, indicating that a single event may have occurred to allow the tree access to all the light, water, and nutrients it needed to grow.



© SFI - Left to right: Barry Graden, Director of SFI's Forest Partners Program with the Polish Delegation of Girl Scouts

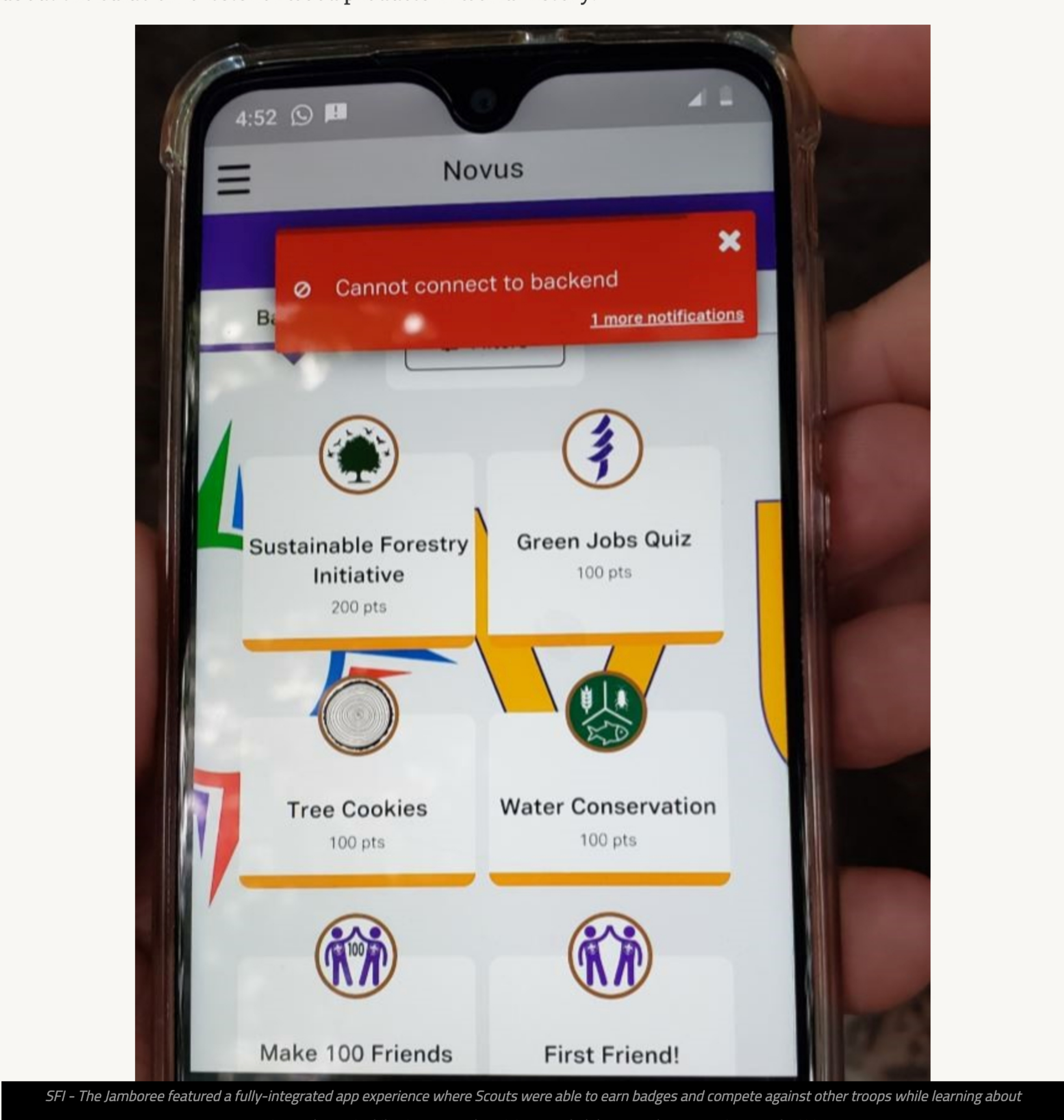
A delegation of Girl Scouts from Poland asked "What happened around 1917 that might have changed the way this tree grew?" and realized that 1917 was the year the US became involved in WWI. The girls wondered if nearby trees were harvested for American war efforts, and that's why the red cedar tree cookie – much too small to be sent to a sawmill at the time – might have then been allowed the full amount of resources it needed to grow without competition.



© SFI - Scouts and visitors from more than 57 countries and 29 States visited the SFI booth.

It turns out that the U.S. Army's Spruce Production Division was established in 1917 to produce high-quality Sitka spruce timber and other wood products needed to make aircraft for World War I. At that time, Sitka spruce was the most important tree species because its combination of lightness, strength, and resiliency was ideal for aircraft production.

The Spruce Production Division produced nearly 150 million board feet (350,000 m3) of spruce in just 15 months, which had an enormous impact on logging in the Pacific Northwest. Western red cedar grows in forest types that typically include Sitka spruce, so the Polish Scouts may well have been on to something about the value of forests for wood products in world history!



SFI - The Jamboree featured a fully-integrated app experience where Scouts were able to earn badges and compete against other troops while learning about conservation and sustainability issues. Each activity awarded the more than 2,000 Scouts who/CC BY 1.0

PLT recently collaborated with the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) to [correlate PLT activities to eight Cub Scout Adventures and six Scouts BSA merit badges](#). These correlations provide Scout leaders with ideas and hands-on, outdoor activities and help introduce youth to careers in the outdoors, including jobs in forestry and natural resources conservation.



© SFI - Scouts posted selfies with SFI fact posters throughout the Summit in an effort to earn Novus badges.



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