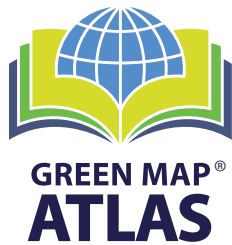




ROBESON

Green Mapmaking in Rural North Carolina USA



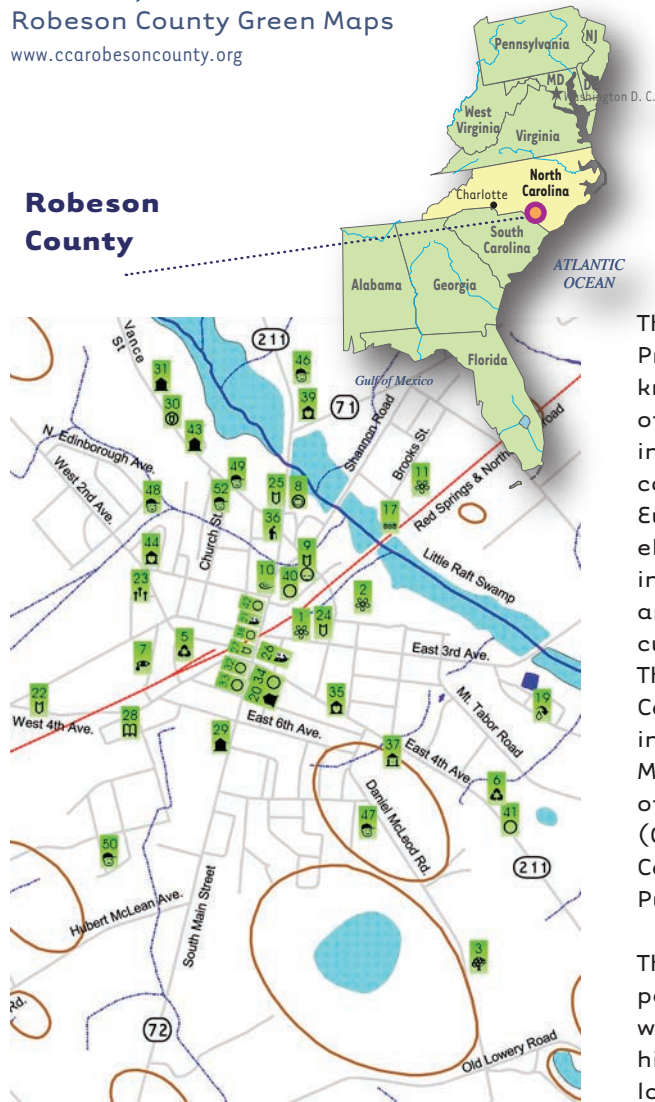
A project of the **Green Map System**:
promoting sustainability and citizen
action in communities around the
world through locally created maps
of the natural and cultural environment



Introduction

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 Robeson County Green Maps
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Robeson County

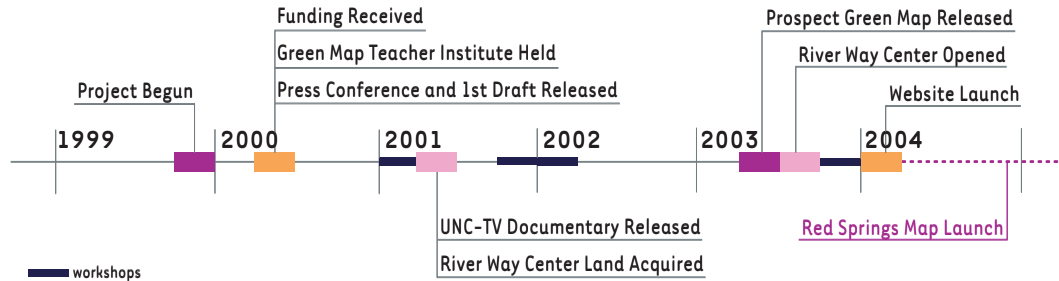


Detail of The Prospect Green Map (2003)

Through the Robeson County Green Map Project, youth and adults expand their knowledge and increase their appreciation of our biological and cultural resources in this, the most ethnically diverse, rural county in the US. Native, African and European American students, adults and elders in over 70 distinct communities in Robeson County, NC are investigating and charting local ecological, historical, cultural, civic and recreational treasures. These include 50 cypress swamps, 8,000 Carolina Bays and other glorious features in the Lumber River watershed. Green Mapping is a major educational project of the Center for Community Action (CCA) supported by the Rural School and Community Trust and endorsed by the Public Schools of Robeson County.

The project promotes interaction with people and nature including interviews with elders, community walks, nature hikes, kayaking and observation. Many local keepers of traditional knowledge are passing on, and the Green Map project

also helps to document, preserve and promote their wisdom and practices. We were seeking a project that would unite our rural communities and schools and provide grounding for educational efforts from civic engagement to curriculum reform, from nature and culture camps to ecological and cultural tourism. We found and broadened what we were looking for through Green Mapping.



Map Data

- Language: English
- Number of Maps: 2
- Published Map Formats: Print
- Number of Sites Charted: 89
- Number of Global Icons Used: 23



Three of Robeson's five local icons



Mapmaking

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1000 color copies of Prospect Map,
4000 draft copies of both Prospect and Red Springs

The Robeson County Green Map is a student-led project. Each of our 70 distinct communities will produce its own Green Map, which will be combined into six high school District Maps, and then eventually brought together to form one Countywide Map. Place-based curriculum materials, a County Green Map Atlas and postcards of every community will accompany our maps, as will place-based learning opportunities at River Way Outdoor Adventure and Education Center, and expanded tourism-related resources.

Our first color map highlights resources in Prospect. Here, youth drew draft base maps on poster board (4 X 8ft / 1.2 X 2.4m) to use in their investigation and charting of township sites. The published map is GIS-based and includes all sites discovered by students. The students also provided site narration, edited by CCA staff.

We drew inspiration from many GMS projects, including Yellowknife (Canada), Copenhagen (Denmark), Santa Monica/



(left to right)
The Red Springs Green Map (2004)
The Prospect Green Map (2003)
On left, Robeson Green Map Co-director Patricia Locklear reviews the medicinal properties of goldenrod, a native plant



Ballona (California, US) and LoMap (New York, US). We also learned from work on curriculum and cultural atlases undertaken by the Alaska Native Knowledge Network (www.ankn.vaf.edu).

We have learned that a Green Map is not an end product but a process of increasing community knowledge and pride of place that can lead to a variety of positive outcomes. Green Mapping can be most effective as part of a community organizing and leadership project. The more multi-dimensional the map is in terms of purpose, content and use, the greater and more diverse the community interest.

Maps are distributed locally free of charge, by mail or through CCA membership clusters, other community groups, classrooms, churches and government agencies.

Technical Data

Software:

ESRI ArcView
CoreIDRAW 9

Hardware:

Digital camera
Video camera
Kayaks
Digital projectors
Overhead projector

Paper:

Recycled paper

Map Structure:

Folding
· Both maps 35.6 X 21.6 cm / 14 X 8.5 in

Teamwork

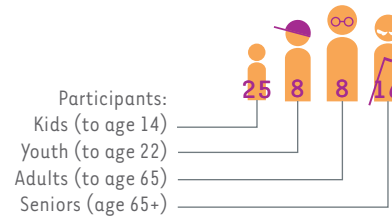
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CCA organized an intergenerational Map Making Team including students (pre- and post-secondary), teachers, parents and elders. For adults, Green Mapping is a focus of our membership cluster groups and our highly regarded Grassroots Leadership Development Institute. In addition, we have summer college interns assisting with the project. For all the maps, students are taking the lead in the investigation and narration of key sites. In the town of St. Paul's, special education students at the middle school began the Green Map project.

Maps are designed to fully represent the biological and cultural diversity of each community, and stakeholders have quickly grasped the potential of Green Mapping to increase pride of place and reconnect diverse residents to our extraordinary ecological and cultural resources. Teachers appreciate the potential to reform curriculum with a place-based focus, increasing enthusiasm for the communities we call home.



Partners, Advisors and Board members: 5



Our maps include not only what exists now, but also what had been there previously – the 'horizontal' and 'vertical' dimensions of mapmaking. Interviews with elders teach us our history and traditional life ways and help us to creatively connect our past and our present.

Outreach has been prolific, including insights shared through national meetings, abundant email with educators and environmentalists worldwide and important articles such as those appearing in *Mother Earth News* (June 2002) and in "Rural Roots" (April 2001). We have helped influence mapmaking in San Francisco, Atlanta and elsewhere, and we have learned much from mapmakers and their projects worldwide.

Educators at the >>
 Robeson County Green
 Map Teacher Institute,
 June 2000



<< Dr. William McKee Evans, (right) author and well-known historian of Robeson County, speaks with Reverend Arnold Walker (center) and Reverend Jimmy Jones (left), CCA Board Members



Mr. Leslie Sanderson, owner and operator of Sanderson's Pic and Pay Strawberry Farm, Site #13 on the Prospect Green Map



<< Members of the Fairgrove Green Map student team doing a plant and animal habitat survey of their schoolyard

The mapmakers meet on >>
 a monthly basis to work on
 their community Green Map



Economics

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Our countywide mapmaking has been supported primarily by tying Green Map fundraising to more concrete activities — place-based education, youth councils, leadership development, jobs and business development through tourism, and other efforts that can be more easily appreciated by funders. We describe Green Mapmaking as a core project that energizes and informs our other work, rather than as a stand-alone enterprise.

The Green Map project has generated numerous supplemental outcomes that consume resources but promise long-term benefits. Chief among these is the River Way Outdoor Adventure and Education Center, built on land generously provided by a local family who saw a newspaper article about the Green Map project. River Way provides youth, educators and parents with opportunities to experience, first-hand, the many ecological and cultural treasures of the Lumber River.

We have a number of future fundraising goals, including a Green Map festival



(upper, lower) Getting ready for a trip down the Lumber River at River Way. Youth fishing from kayaks in the vicinity of the North Carolina Indian Cultural Center

and stipends for older teens involved in supervising the Green Map activities of younger students.



Green Map Icons, as shown on the Robeson maps

These icons are the common currency of all Green Maps



Economic Data

Type of Organization: Non-profit organization and grassroots group

Support: Grants, private funding, in-kind services

Major Project Supporters:

Center for Community Action
Rural School and Community Trust
The R.M. Skipper Family
Evelyn Zuber Trust
Lumberton Kiwanis Club

Number of Paid or

Volunteer Jobs Created: 2

Cost of Map: Free

Spin Off Projects: Outdoor Adventure and Education Center, curriculum workshops, tourism resources

Assessment

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(left to right) The Robeson County Green Map story has captured media attention in "Rural Roots" (April 01), Fayetteville Observer (24 June 00) and the Robesonian (18 June 00)

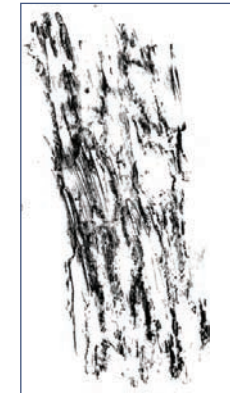
The Robeson County Green Map project is evaluated regularly by a group that includes CCA staff and board members, consultants, elders, adult guides, youth mapmakers and members of our community clusters.

Site criteria for the Robeson County map are somewhat broader than for other GMS-affiliated projects, explicitly including historical, recreational, and civic sites, and even past sites, as well as more conventional ecological and cultural resources. We have enjoyed extraordinary interest from local residents, the press (including newspapers in Lumberton and Fayetteville, NC) and from educators concerned about declining interest in our cultural and ecological assets, specifically by young people anxious to leave the area once they complete their formal schooling.

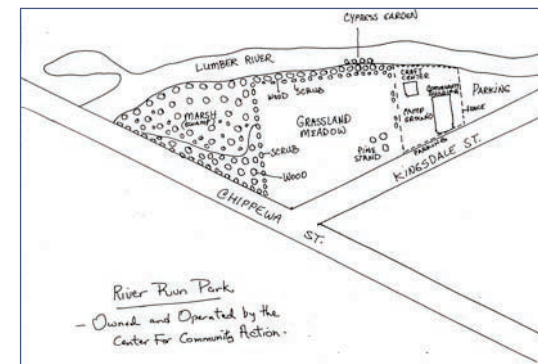
Our Green Map project has enjoyed great support from GMS staff, including workshops and consultations that have drawn new constituencies into the

mapmaking process. Moreover, we have helped highlight the potential of Green Mapping in diverse rural settings.

Public enthusiasm for our project, manifest in gifts such as the land that has become River Way and in intense discussions and planning for local sustainable tourism opportunities, has distracted us somewhat from the tasks of mapmaking. Also, a stricter timeline for map development would have improved our project to date. With so many strong institutional supporters, from governments to the schools, we can plan to spend more time in the future on the 'products' of Green Mapmaking, including web outreach to other rural communities seeking to expand educational and tourism-related opportunities through Green Mapmaking.



(left, upper & lower right) Bald Cypress tree rubbing – Robeson County Green Map curricula. At a monthly meeting, mapmakers discuss and add sites to a draft base map



A sketch map of River Way, where youth get involved in learning about their local environment



Conclusion

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“I got more familiar with my surroundings and am now able to distinguish some plants and herbs that grow naturally in our county, and pass this knowledge on.”

– Willa Robinson, Maxton Community Green Map team

Our project’s uniqueness lies in our setting — a large, ethnically diverse rural county; in our varied site selection — our ecology, history, culture, civic life and recreational resources; and in our focus — the community impacts of Green Mapmaking, more than its products. According to Green Map System, our program is one of the projects that is most comprehensively integrated into a local school curriculum.

Our youth and adults love the Green Map project. Interviews document its impact:

“I have taken for granted the wonder, benefits and importance of species. How wrong I was to think that the only habitat that meant anything was mine and mine alone.”

–Ryan Hunt, student, Fairgrove Middle School and Fairgrove Green Map team member

“The history and culture of where I live has been brought to life. The project gave me a keen interest to dig deeper to find out more about my Native American culture and exactly how we were a part of these stories.”

–Patricia Locklear, CCA staff member and Green Map Project Co-director

Mapmakers gather every month to share the abundant resources that the Green Map has helped all of us to discover, while we continue to map every community across the county.



★ The Lumber River at River Way Outdoor Adventure and Education Center



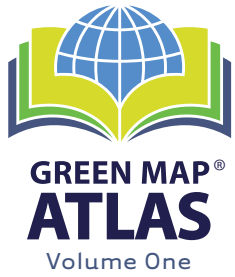
★ Cypress, the largest plant in North America east of the Rocky Mountains, is a major ecological feature in Robeson County’s 50 swamps and its river basin



✎ The home of Early Bullard, the first Lumbee Indian judge in North Carolina. Site #27 on the Prospect Green Map



☪ Ye Old Spring, Red Springs’ namesake and Site #10 on their Green Map

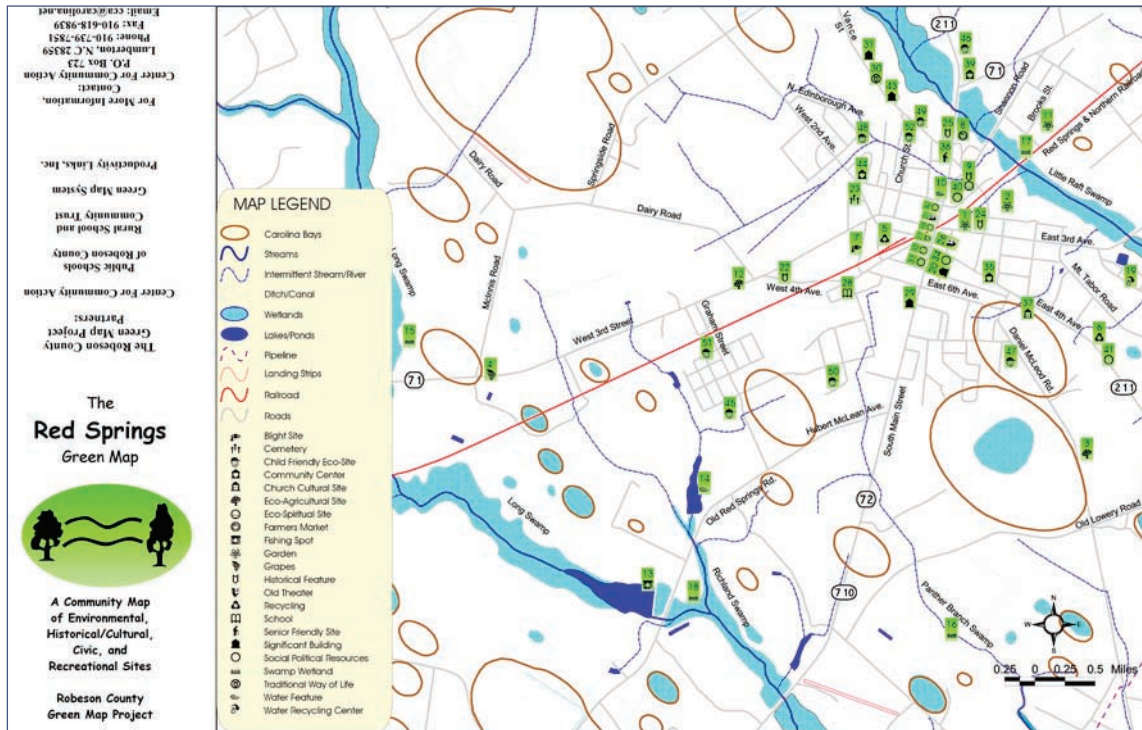


(left to right) On right, Reverend Jimmy Jones, Green Map elder and advisor to South Lumberton Green Map team at the Center for Community Action Festival. Carolina Bays, a land feature left behind by ancient lakes, are shown as ovals on the Map

Credits

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<< River Way work team takes a break while constructing a new porch

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The Red Springs Green Map (2004)