

**Youth Green Map System (YGMS)
Youth Green Mapping Resource Set
IV. Green Map Icons: Icon Activities**

Created by GREEN MAP SYSTEM

GreenMap.org

Updated June 2008, comments welcome!

Icon Story Definition Activity

These icon stories are meant for students to read, decode, and then explain to each other or to the class. Students can write the symbol definition below the symbol. This activity is useful to help get the students familiar with the language of icons. After this activity students are encouraged to write their own icon story on the back using the provided icons plus any new icons they might invent. After they create their own story they can be put up on the board to be shared, traded with a neighbor, or read to the class. New symbols should be announced and shared with the class also.

Community Gardens

There was once a (**t** _____) ***Blight site** filled with lots of old trash and rubble. Students at an ***Environmental School** decided that the abandoned lot was actually a ***Redevelopment Opportunity Site**. With some hard work a ***Community Garden** grew, and a ***Special Tree** was planted so people could later enjoy ***Autumn Leaves**. There was a ***Drinking Water** source that helped ***Spring Blossoms**, ***Birds and Wildlife** to thrive. In the garden ***Insect Watching** became popular. The ***Community Garden** was a ***Child and Senior Friendly Site** and ***Wheelchair Accessible**. People would go there as part of a ***Best Walk**, because there was a ***Bicycle Site** stop, or to ***Compost** or ***Recycle**. Students at the ***Environmental School** painted a mural creating an ***Art Spot**. Everyone in the neighborhood loved the ***Community Garden** and worked hard to take care of it and keep it growing and producing healthy ***Organic Produce** for all to share and appreciate.

Stopping Air Pollution as We Build Our Communities

There once was an ***Air Pollution Source**, and ***Toxic Chemical Storage** in a neighborhood that was very worried about the health of the people. Rates of child asthma were very high along with stress caused by ***Noise Pollution**. Students at an ***Environmental School** researched their community for ***Social and Political Resources** and found that they had the power to close down the ***Blight Site**. The ***Environmental School** worked hard to educate the community and mayor about the health and environmental effects of the ***Air Pollution Source**, and ***Toxic Chemical Storage**. Finally the ***Environmental School** and community activists were able to shut it down. The area became a ***Redevelopment Opportunity Site** and the ***Environmental School** along with community members helped to create a ***Community Center** with a ***Garden** and ***Solar Energy Site**. The ***Community Center** created a much needed space for people to gather, see performances, and visit the ***Garden**. The lights were powered with solar panels that turn the sun's rays into

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electricity. The ***Garden** helped make the air cleaner and everyone was happy to have a community center for all to share in their cleaner and healthier neighborhood.

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Youth Icon Story Activity Definitions List

... Air pollution source: anything from industrial smokestacks to truck routes, to poorly-run composting projects can be included here, even poorly-run waste or composting facilities.

E Art Spot: Ecologically oriented artworks, may include earthworks, public art, performance art, or other. May include resources for making eco art that is produced in a sustainable way, or may include sites where you can get information on events or programs related to environmental art.

A Autumn leaves: are especially beautiful and bountiful in this area.

Q Best walks: follow a path around an especially interesting area. Walks can be established or recommended by the Green Map team but should be non-intrusive to sensitive areas. Icon can be used to designate a running path through a natural area. Icons can be used in a line: q q q

B Bicycle Site: This is a good place to buy, borrow or rent bicycles for recreation as well as work bikes and other kinds of human-powered vehicles. Can also include organizations and places to find out about bike safety or advocacy. This Icon can be used to indicate other kinds of bike-friendly services and sites.

V Bird and wildlife watching site: animals in the wild, using their instincts to thrive. Sites may be delicate nesting areas or habitats, so Green Maps should stress that people to approach with care and understanding. Officially recognized sites as well as locally-known sites could be accompanied by 'rules' for viewing, and details on the species you might see.

T Blight Site: An area generally characterized by toxic waste and other ugliness caused by industry and people. Set and state your criteria for the use of this Icon.

U Child Friendly Eco-Site: An environmentally-engaging area that is safe and accessible to children. Our thanks to kids in Calgary Canada for designing this Icon.

Y Community Center: A place where clubs, meetings and social gatherings involving the whole community are held. May be a formalized community center, or one established informally through frequent and common use.

J Community Garden: Often on public or formerly abandoned land, community gardens allow people to plant and grow their own vegetables and flowers in small plots. People can also grow relationships and a close connection to the land/city. Sometimes gardens are fenced and

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locked, though gardeners have keys. (Text should include contact numbers.) Sometimes gradients are threatened by development.

• **Compost/Composting:** Sites where food scraps, leaves and garden trimmings are turned into rich new soil, with the help of worms, containment bins and Mother Nature. Large-scale or demonstration project, information and resources for home and garden composting. May include drop-off sites for food scraps, or good places to buy locally produced compost. May be run by the city or an independent group.

P **Drinking water source:** indicates the source for your drinking water. May be used to show reservoirs, and major elements of water system. Water purity and conservation information. Icon can be used in a line to indicate major underground pipelines.

S **Environmental School:** this designation can range from intensive "magnet" programs that are part of regular public school system or university, to schools offering one-time environmental workshops and lectures open to the public. Could be a hands-on learning center or a technical school with an environmental focus.

Â **Insect watching:** good areas to view insects and bugs as they fly or crawl through life.

i **Noise pollution source:** sometimes difficult to pinpoint, but it has a powerful effect on quality of life. Can come from traffic, industrial sources, airports, quarries, heavy equipment, transportation terminals etc.

3 **Organic Produce/Natural Food Shop:** Local food that is grown very near to where it is consumed, so it has fewer 'food miles' that decrease freshness and increase ecological impacts associated with shipping long distances. Organic food is grown without pesticides (biocides), genetic modification or synthetic fertilizers. No chemicals or waxes are added after harvesting. If processed, it is usually prepared in a way to maximize the nutritional value. Some natural food places include fair trade practices in their definition of ecological foods. Some supermarkets have a few kinds of organic vegetables amidst a large selection of conventionally grown produce. Should such a store be designated with the organic food Icon? You have to decide.

5 **Recycling Site:** Drop-off sites for materials that can be reprocessed or refilled. Also, businesses that buy, work with or sell products made from recycled materials as well as city program information contacts. Can include good examples of places where recycled materials are in use.

o **Cleaned-up/ rebuilt site:** Areas which are well-located to be candidates for redesigned for a new ecologically-sound use. Might currently be a blight site, be paved over or already in use, but has the potential to be a wonderful addition to the community and to the health of the environment.

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S Future Redevelopment: These sites have been cleaned up and are now ready for natural systems to take over, or to be re-developed. In the US, Brownfields (land either contaminated by toxics, or perceived to be) programs are putting remediated industrial lands back to work, often in economic re-development zones (where people need jobs). This designation can also include sites where cleanup is in progress. The text that accompanies the Icon could include action taken, intended results, health issues and scheduling details.

I Senior Friendly Site: An area where people with walking difficulties can enjoy being with nature. May include safe and accessible areas where one can rest as well.

J Significant Organization/Agency: Socially responsible non-profit organization, NGO or educational group, government office, club or advocacy group that contributes to sustainability in important ways. Note: To save time, if reference information is on a website, putting the URL on the map may be preferable to including the organization's street address.

G Solar Energy Sites: Places where you can see solar panels, passive solar examples or wind generators in use, and perhaps get information about them. Includes solar energy shops and contractors, government and utility company sites.

f Special tree: trees that have historical importance, or are especially beautiful, large, old or rare. May be old growth, virgin trees (never cut by humans), ancient, sacred or medicinal trees or native plants. Could be indoors.

μ Spring blossoms: are especially beautiful and bountiful in this area.

^ Wastewater Treatment Facility: Generally designates municipal systems for treating wastewater and sewage, some with public information centers or tours. Can be noted with water treatment statistics in the text.

‡ Waste Dump: Illegal, improperly constructed and maintained place where garbage has been dumped. Rats and other vermin, hazardous drainage impacting waterways and health, and air pollution, including methane (a powerful greenhouse gas) are among the impacts.

{ Wheelchair accessible: there are ramps and rails and other facilities provided for those in wheelchairs. Use this icon to encourage exploration of nature trails and park areas.

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Community Gardens
with 20 Icons for students to decode

There was once a **t** _____ with lots of old trash and rubble. Students at an **S** _____ decided that the abandoned lot was actually a **S** _____.

With some hard work **j** _____ grew, and a **f** _____ was planted so people could later enjoy **¶** _____. There was a **p** _____ source that made the **v** _____, and **µ** _____ happy, and allowed **3** _____ (like tomatoes and lettuce) to grow.

In the garden **Â** _____ became popular. The **j** _____ was **U** _____, **I** _____ and { _____. People would go there as part of a **q** _____, because there was a **9** _____ stop or to _____ or **5** _____. Students at the **S** _____ painted a mural creating an **E** _____.

Everyone in the neighborhood loved the **j** _____ and worked hard to take care of it and keep it growing and producing healthy **3** _____ for all to share and appreciate.

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Stopping Air Pollution and Building Communities

There once was an ... _____, and a
‡ _____ in a neighborhood that was very worried about the
health of the people. Rates of child asthma were very high along with stress caused by
i _____.

Students at an S _____ researched their community for J
_____ and found that they had the power to close down the t
_____. The S _____ worked hard to educate
the community and mayor about the health and environmental effects of the
‡ _____, and ... _____. Finally
the S _____ and community activists were able to shut it
down.

The area became a ° _____ and the
S _____ along with community members helped to create a Y
_____ with j _____ and 6
_____. The Y _____ created a much needed space
for people to gather, see performances, and visit the j _____. The lights were
powered with solar panels that turn the sun's rays into electricity. The
j _____ helped make the air cleaner and everyone was happy to have a Y
_____ for all to share in their cleaner and healthier neighborhood.

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