



Conserving our natural resources through education, demonstration, and collaboration.

## **Sustainable Sandhills' Green Growth Program Provides Information for Policy Update**

Sustainable Sandhills' Green Growth Program works with local planners and policy makers for more sustainable land use and community development.

One way we do this is through the Green Growth Toolbox – a state-wide initiative that is being carried out by the NC Wildlife Resources Commission and partners in all four ecoregions of the state. The Green Growth Toolbox was developed to bridge this gap between scientists and decision makers and help communicate important wildlife conservation principles to local government planners by providing them with the data they need to make well-informed land-use decisions.



Statewide, 45 local governments (counties and municipalities) have received Green Growth Toolbox training at 11 workshops which targeted jurisdictions that are experiencing significant habitat conversion to development. Twenty-one local governments have received technical guidance on 31 land use planning projects. Locally, Sustainable Sandhills has held Green Growth Toolbox workshops for both Moore and Harnett County planning staffs and both counties have received follow-up technical guidance from Sustainable Sandhills Green Growth Planner.

In Moore County, Sustainable Sandhills has used the Green Growth Toolbox information to provide recommendations to the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) that is currently under revision by the planning board.

UDOs are the rulebooks for how building and development occur in a community, and thus can have heavy impacts on wildlife habitat. Most green growth recommendations to the Moore County UDO were made to the Planned Unit Development and Subdivision Ordinances, since these usually impact large tracts of land at a time. The UDO process is currently ongoing, and work continues to see our green growth recommendations adopted. For more information on the Moore County UDO, contact the Moore County Planning and Community Development at (910) 947-5010 or [www.co.moore.nc.us](http://www.co.moore.nc.us).

***Did you know?***

*While many Green Growth principles focus on large tracts of land or conserving native wildlife and plant species, green spaces in our urban areas also provide economic and social benefits to citizens. Trees improve our air quality by removing dust and other pollutants from the air. In fact, a single large healthy tree can remove up to 300 pounds of carbon dioxide each year. The shading and evaporative cooling provided by trees in urban areas also reduces the heat island effect – making our cities cooler. Tree lined streets and neighborhood parks also increase property values and positively impact the tax base.*



To learn more about Sustainable Sandhills' Green Growth Program, contact Brenda Johnson at [brendaj@sustainablesandhills.org](mailto:brendaj@sustainablesandhills.org) or 910.484.9098.

Brenda will be speaking about the Green Growth Toolbox and Sustainable Sandhills' efforts in Moore County at the January meeting of Save Our Sandhills on Thursday, Jan. 26 at 7 p.m. at the Southern Pines Civic Club.