

# Community Gardens: A Model for Natural Resource Awareness

A Practicum for NRLI Class X

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# Problem

- Childhood obesity
- Poverty
- Poor diets
- Food insecurity
- Decaying urban neighborhoods
- Environmental degradation
- Lack of Ecological Understanding

# Urban vs. Rural Population

- Population living in Urban Areas <sup>2</sup> 79.21 %
- Population living in Rural Areas 20.78 %
- Urbanized Areas over 200,000 pop. 58.27 %
- Urbanized Areas 50,000 - 199,999 pop. 10.37 %
- (2000 census)

# Urban vs. Rural Population

- 50% of worlds population live in cities.
- By 2015 approximately 26 cities will have populations of 10 million.

About 6000 ton of food per day is required to feed this population

# Need for Urban Green Areas

- Humans are part of the natural world - not separate
- Children and adults are increasingly isolated from nature.
- Access to meaningful outdoor experience is becoming less available to many.
- Wild areas = ~10% of our land
- Urban green areas offer “close to home” opportunities

# Urban Land Conservation

- Recycles and reuses what is already there.
- Creates green space and gardens.
- Provides easy access to positive outdoor activities.
- Helps tie communities together.

# Agroecology

- Ecosystems agroecology  
based on the belief that large-scale agriculture is inappropriate
- Agronomic ecology  
uses social sciences to understand the processes by which agriculture became unsustainable
- Ecological political economy  
is a political-economical critique of modern agriculture
- Agro-population ecology  
based on population ecology
- Integrated assessment of multifunctional agricultural systems  
focuses on the multifunctionality of the landscape
- Holon agroecology  
unfinished accomplishment

# Agroecologist

- Includes cultural, social, economic and agronomic aspects of the relationship between plants, animals and humans.



# Poverty

- Family of 4                      \$22,350 (HHS 2011)
- Poverty rate in 2009 was    14.3 percent
- In 2009, 43.6 million people were in poverty
- Low income urban dwellers spend 40-60 % of their income on food.

# Community Garden

- Collaborative effort to create green space in urban areas.
- Enhance awareness of natural resources and their value.
- Provide positive outdoor experiences.
- Designed by participants for participants.
- Reflect the community in which they are located

# Benefits of Community Gardens

- Provides a catalyst for neighborhood and community development – positive feedback loops
- Conserves Resources
- Creates opportunity for recreation, exercise, therapy, and education
- Preserves Green Space
- Reduces city heat from streets and parking lots

# Types of Community Gardens

- Food production

USDA estimates 15% worlds food produced in urban areas

- Aesthetics

Provide environmental service

- Education

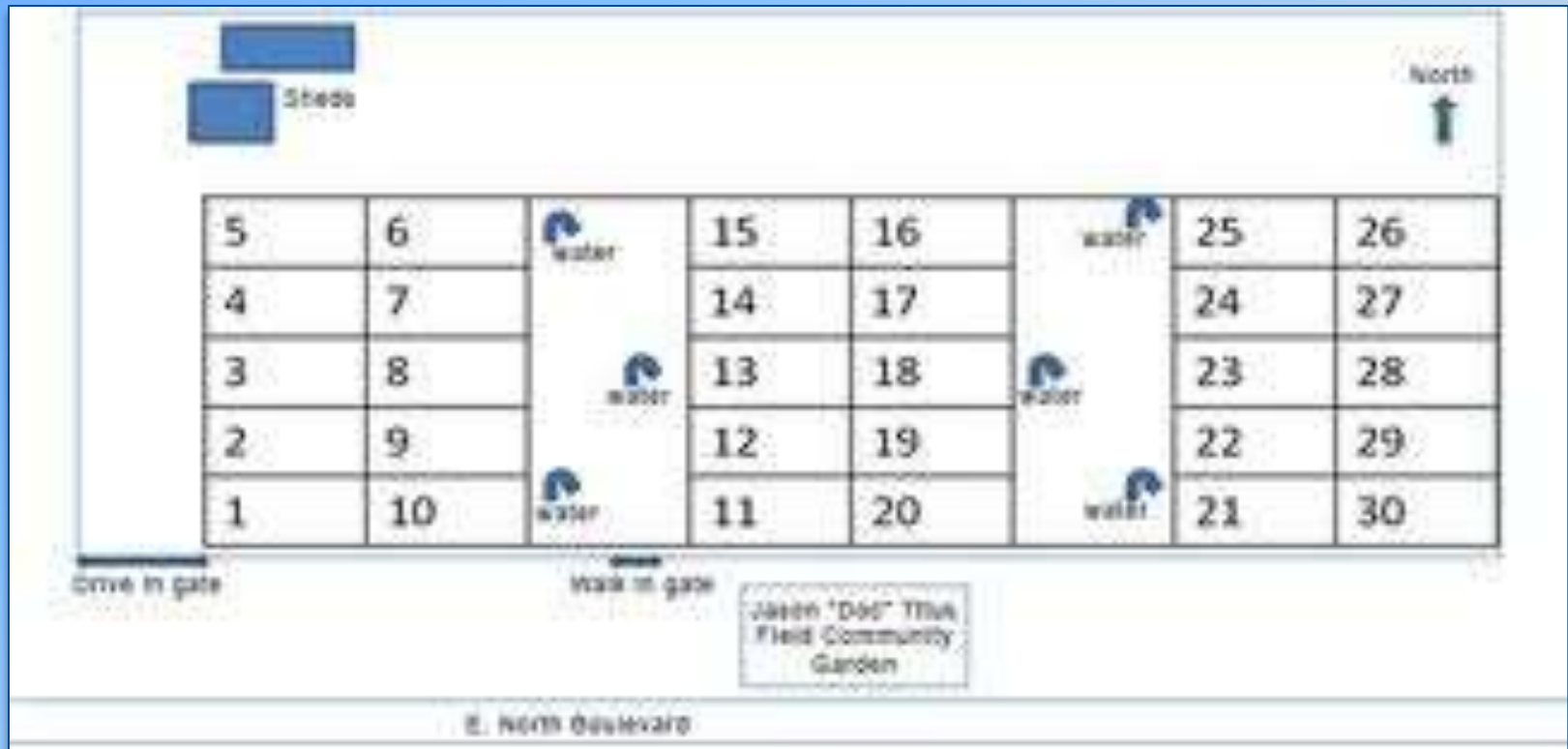
Gardens are proven educational tools

- Combination of all

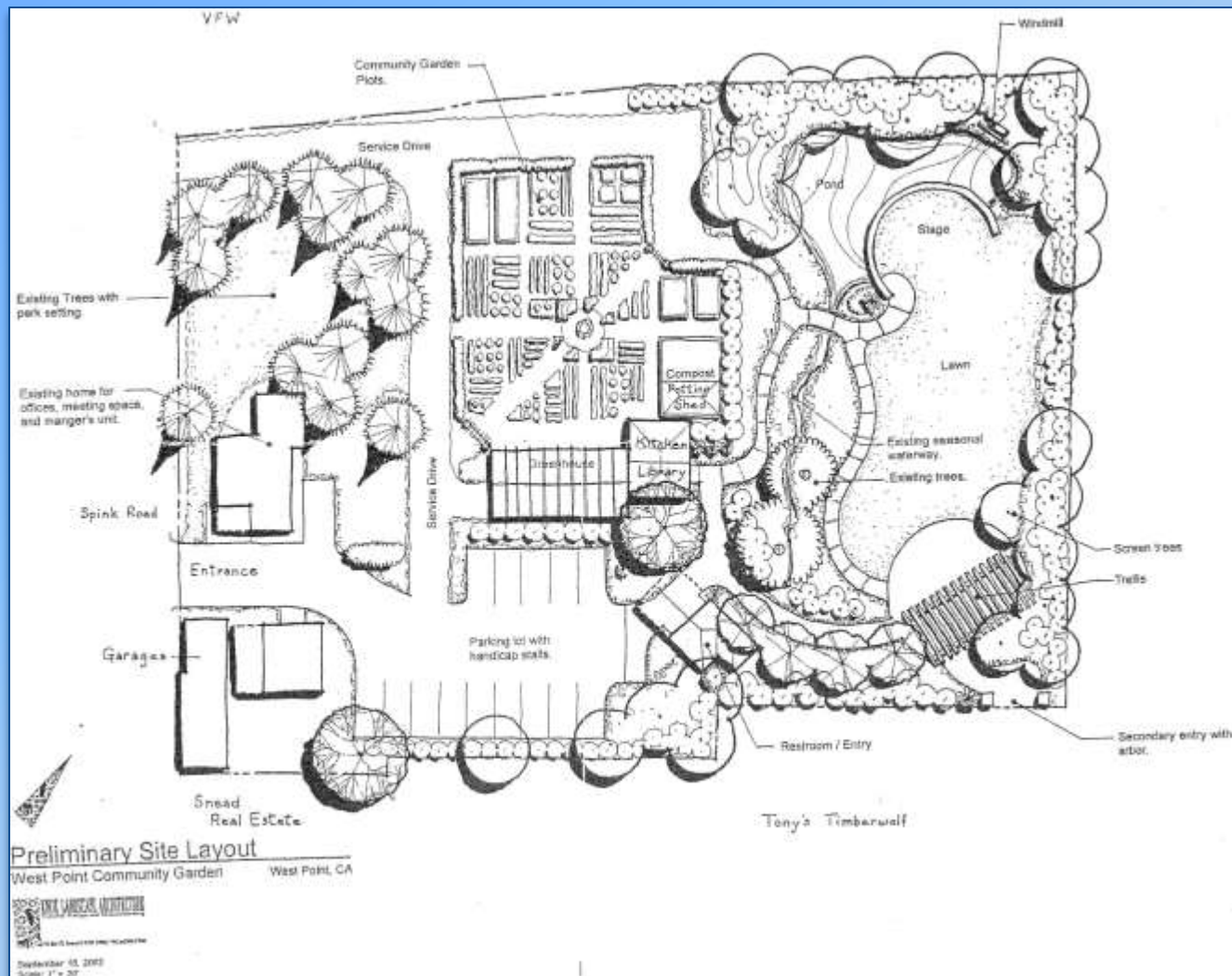
# Types of Community Gardens

- Four Common Elements of Community Gardens
  - Land
  - Plantings
  - Gardens
  - Organizing Arrangement

# Garden Layouts

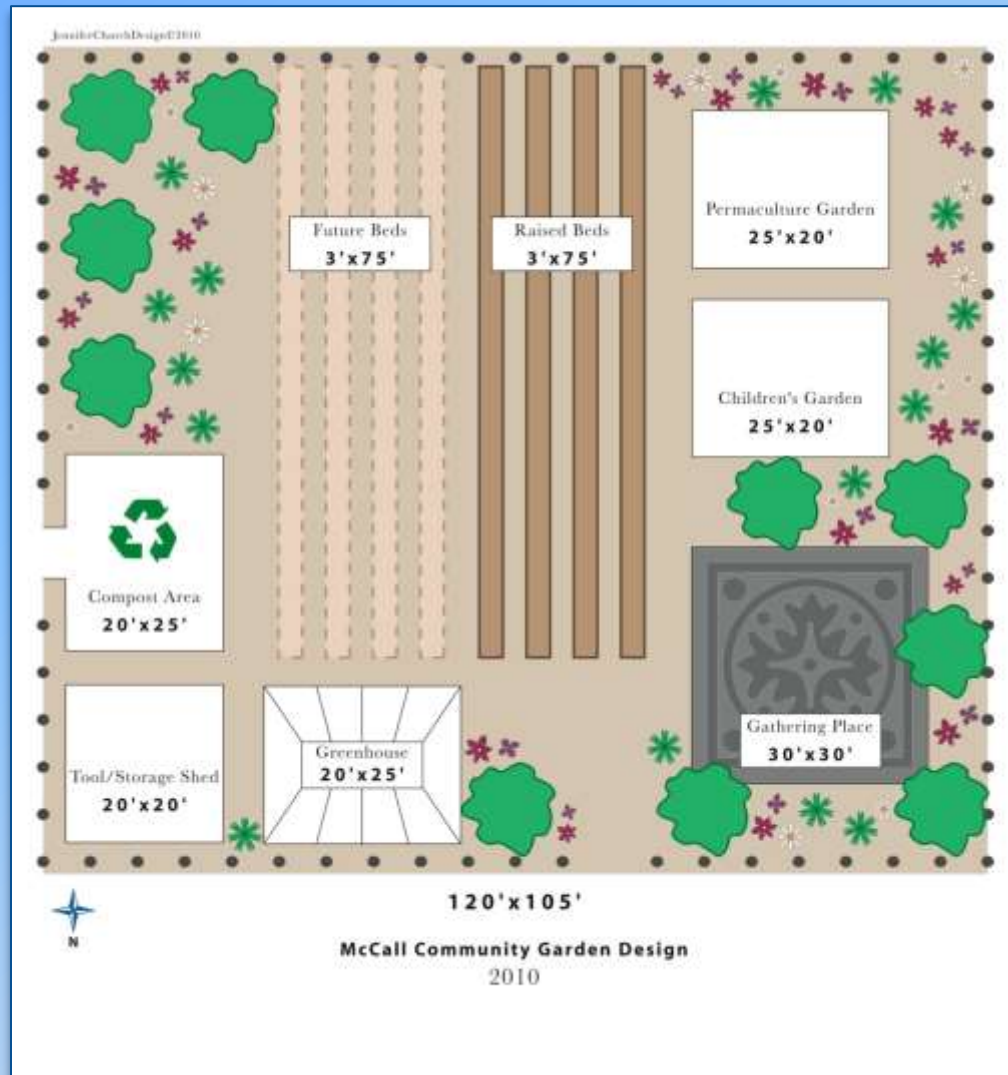


# Garden Layouts





# Garden Layouts





# Garden Layouts



# Stakeholders

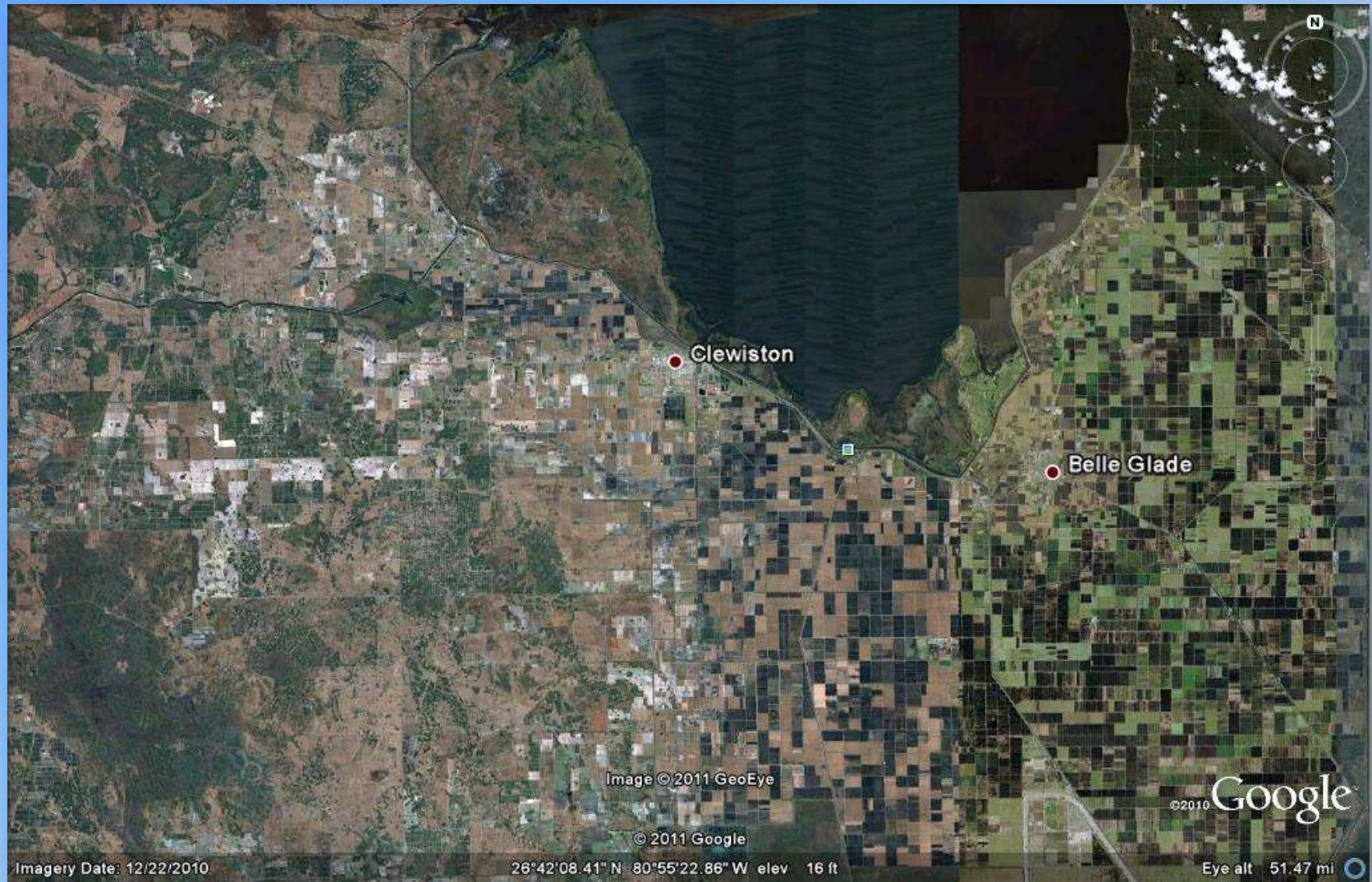
- Schools
- Homeowner Associations
- Church Groups
- Garden Clubs
- Planning Boards
- City & County Boards
- Private Land Owners
- Seasonal Residents

# Location



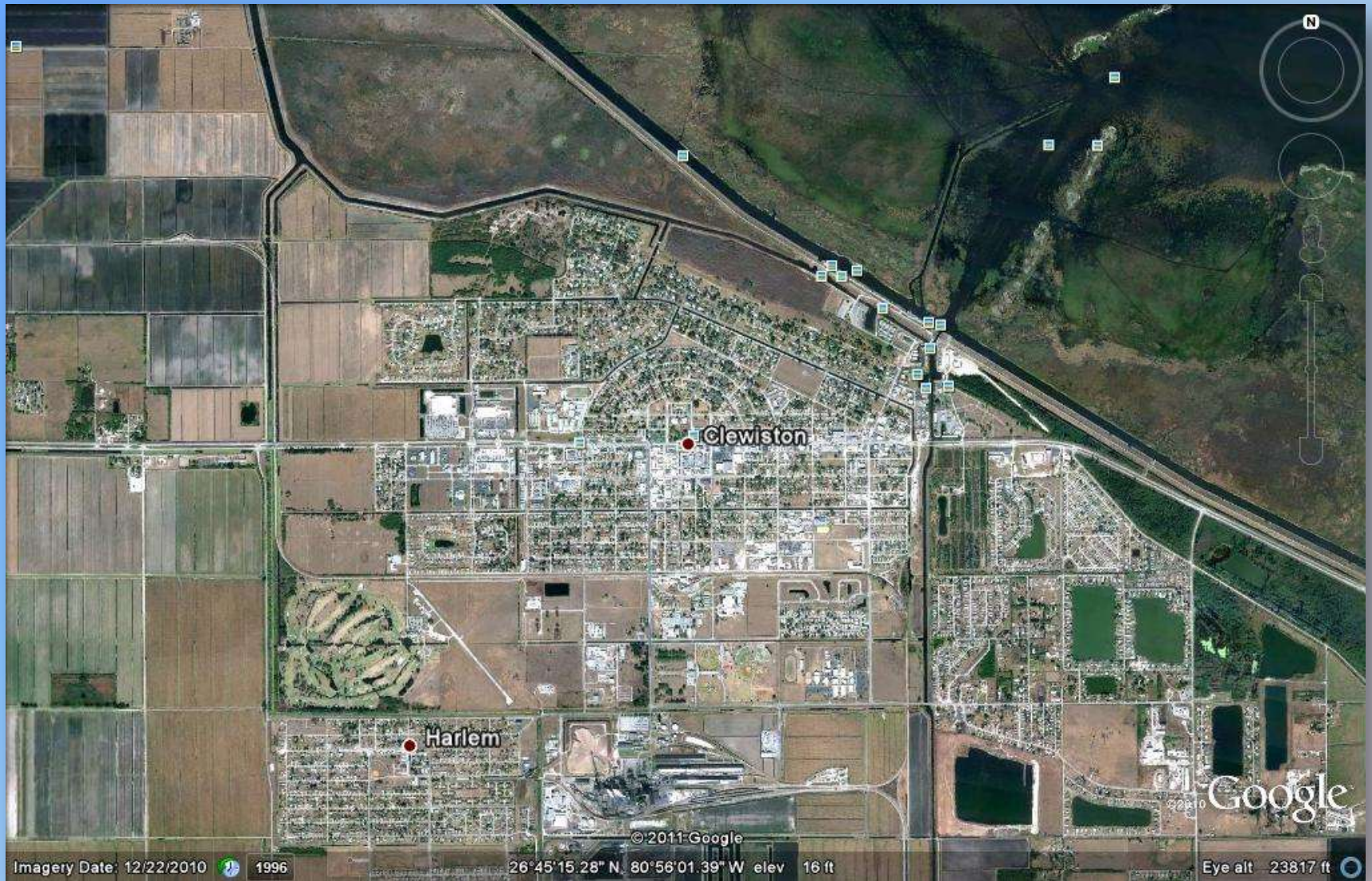


# South Florida EAA





# Clewiston





# Potential Plots





# Potential Plots





# Potential Plots





# Clewiston

- Unemployment Rate 15.70%
- Population, estimate 7,290
- Household income \$38,866 (US \$51,660)
- Per capita income \$16,566 (US \$26,372)
- Persons below poverty level (2008) 23.8%

# Challenges

- Political – is this important
  - Local government leaders are key to building support
- Limited income
- Motivation
- Perceptions about community gardens

# Steps

- Survey communities within local area.
- Identify interested stakeholders.
- Meet for initial assessment of needs, sites and purpose of the garden.
- Schedule subsequent meeting for detailed planning.

# Steps

- Statement of purpose
- Aims and objectives, including the long term vision for the garden
- Proposed management structure
- Proposed induction process for volunteers
- Proposed risk management framework and completed risk assessment
- Provision for public liability insurance
- Proposed decision-making framework and conflict resolution processes
- Proposed policy regarding sustainable land management including management of soil, water, energy, organic and non-organic waste, biodiversity and building materials;