

National GreenCheck GPS Certification Course

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The National Green Check GPS Certification Program specializes in GPS and GIS training. It was one of the first programs to promote “widely recognized” standards and conventions for GPS certification. Green Check is a program of The Canadian Ecology Centre and its Foundation, a national, non-profit with charitable, educational status www.canadianecology.ca.

The most important aspect of all training and certification is the understanding of the relationship between the map, the compass and the GPS unit.

The National Green Check GPS Certification Program will certify participants through a competency-based evaluation. Successful participants will be registered in an international database, valid for three years. Many organizations – emergency services, health units, educational institutions, First Nations, municipalities and companies recommend and have endorsed the Green Check Program.

The Green Check Program is a member of the Canadian Institute of Geomatics and an approved ESRI (ArcView) site provider of GIS training (through the CEC’s Forestry Research Partnership). Green Check’s GPS Program content has been included in secondary school, college and university courses.

Our national network of instructors are available to deliver a standard, certified course. Modifications to meet your specific training needs can be made.

“Green technology” has been loosely defined as “any technology that has environmental benefits.” To properly assess the benefits we would have to examine the environmental, economic and social costs of utilizing Global Positioning System (GPS) technology.

The Canadian Ecology Centre has applied its Green Check logo to GPS certification. Why? We could talk about how GPS technology can reduce the “ecological footprint” on the landscape. But for the person who has completed a certified GPS course we believe the real value of GPS technology is the promotion of “being outside with nature.” One benefit of understanding and applying the technology is that it promotes safe and efficient navigation and this includes the wise use of land and water trails. Trails provide social, heritage, economic, health and environmental benefits. Understanding where you are also allows the user to understand where you shouldn’t go.



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Expectations

As an overall expectation, by the end of the course or program, the participant will:

- Explain or define a location (using the map datum, coordinate system (UTM or lat/long), direction in relation to a defined point on a map, details (anecdotal) related to the location

For the map

Skills and Content

As a general expectation, by the end of the course or program, a participant will be able to examine a map to utilize the following basic map skills:

- Identify either a standard Canadian Topographic map at the 1:50,000 or 1:250,000 scale
- Explain the use of the scale on the map to determine distances from two points, A to B
- Identify the map datum source on the map (required for the GPS setting)
- Identify the UTM and latitude / longitude grid "tick" or indicator marks in the corners and margins of the map
- Demonstrate and identify a location(s) on the map "rounded off" to the nearest 100 m for the UTM system (i.e. E 5129400) or to the nearest "tenth" of a decimal minute for latitude / longitude (i.e. N 55 17.700")

For the compass

Skills and Content

As a general expectation, by the end of the course or program, a participant will be able to utilize the compass to accomplish the following:

- Identify (and demonstrate where) Magnetic North is located, as related to present location (surroundings)
- Recognize and express the identified location in relation to a north, east, south or west direction as related to surroundings, for example, the east side of the road, the north side of the lake, the west fork of the trail etc.
- Describe a location (with coordinates) on a map and give directional details or physical features to help with location
- Identify component parts of a compass with adjustment to find Magnetic North

For the GPS unit

Skills and Content

As a general expectation, by the end of the course or program, a participant will be able to utilize the GPS unit to accomplish the following for the setup and operation of the unit:

- Find the Navigation setting on the GPS Setup menu
- Enter the map datum setting - WGS 84 (NAD 83) or NAD 27 according to map datum source on topographic maps
- Enter either UTM and latitude / longitude coordinate system as a setting
- Read the Position or Navigation page of the GPS unit (UTM or latitude / longitude) in relation to the topo map
- Mark a waypoint (GPS location) and identify the easting and north and the latitude and longitude coordinates
- Save a waypoint (as above, with coordinates)
- Retrieve a waypoint (as above, with coordinates)
- Demonstrate the function Go To (a destination, as above, with coordinates)