



SC ROSENWALD SCHOOLS TRAIL STUDY

SCDAH Historic Preservation Conference 2024

Apr 26, 2024



Pride • Future • Courage • Purpose • Culture



Agenda

Introductions – WeGOJA Foundation

Rosenwald Schools Day – CVSC

Rosenwald Schools &
Preserving our Stories – Oral Historian

Master Plan Update - Earth Design, Inc.

Contact, Events – WeGOJA

Q&A

SC Rosenwald Schools Trail Study Steering Committee

St. George	Ralph James
Pine Grove	Sunshine Eskew
Pine Grove	Brenda McGriff
Lincolnvilleville	Dr. Pernessa Seele
Orangeburg	Rosa Kennerly
Hope School	Tenetha Hall
Mt. Zion	Terry James

CVSC

PRT

PRT

PRT

SCDAH

Historian

WeGOJA

WeGOJA

WeGOJA

***WeGOJA**

***Oral Historian**

***Arnett Muldrow**

***Earth Design**

***Earth Design**

Zach Bjur

Al Hester

Rachel Snuggs

Nate Johnson

Brad Sauls

Dr. Tom Crosby

Dr. Larry Watson

Marc Rapport

Dawn Dawson-House

Timika M. Wilson

Dr. Val Littlefield

Tripp Muldrow

Rick Huffman

Holley Owings



We

is from the Gullah language and means "Our".

G

"Gem sa bop" (pron. THEM suh bop) is from the Wolof language and means "Believe in yourself". Wolof is spoken widely in Senegal and The Gambia. Wolof heavily influenced the shaping of the Gullah language.

O

"Ojo Iwantu" (pron. o-joe e-WAHM-to) is from the Yoruba language and means "Future". Yoruba people primarily inhabit southwestern Nigeria, and similarly to the Wolofs, Yoruba heavily influenced the shaping of the Gullah language.

J

"Jom" (pron. jome) is Wolof and means "Purpose", and it also means "Courage".

A

"Asa" (pron. AH-suh) is Yoruba and means "Culture".

Many thanks to Dr. Dior Konate for West African languages assistance. She is Associate Professor & Coordinator of History at South Carolina State University, Orangeburg, S.C.

Pride • Future • Courage • Purpose • Culture

Bridging Past and Future

The WeGOJA Foundation works to document and promote African American heritage sites in South Carolina and is undertaking the Rosenwald Schools Trail Study (RSTS) to determine which Rosenwald School sites could become South Carolina's first state park focused on African American and Jewish history. The study is a collaborative effort of the Conservation Voters of South Carolina, the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism, the South Carolina Department of Archives and History, and Rosenwald preservation organizations across the state.

An oral historian and master planner team will initially focus on six sites, engaging with alumni and community stakeholders, assessing site integrity, and designing a plan that shares this important history with the public. The study will produce a Rosenwald School Master Plan, with recommendations on implementation, including a branding package and detailed report.



Collaboration

Meet the organizations behind the RSTS.

This project is made possible through a powerful collaboration with partners dedicated to conservation and historical preservation:

The WeGOJA Foundation

Conservation Voters of South Carolina

Earth Design, Inc.

Mount Zion Rosenwald School

Pine Grove Rosenwald School

SC Department of Archives and History

SC Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism

St. George Rosenwald School

The Great Branch Teacherage

The Hope School

The Lincolville Preservation and Historical Society

RSTS Bulletin & Rosenwald Schools Day Feb 28, 2024.





Preserving the Legacy of Rosenwald Schools in South Carolina

Historic places help us
make meaningful
connections with the past.
The Rosenwald Schools of
South Carolina serve as
tangible links to our
history and are necessary
to understand the present.

Preserving History, Protecting Land

In the early twentieth century, many African American schools in the South were in poor condition and barely habitable. Inspired by the time he spent with Booker T. Washington in Alabama, Julius Rosenwald, a Jewish philanthropist from Chicago, contributed funds to the construction of thousands of new African American schools across the south, including hundreds in South Carolina. Rosenwald Schools improved educational opportunities for African Americans within the restrictive context of Jim Crow laws. A few dozen remain today in the Palmetto State, and they stand as tangible reminders of our past and continue to serve as places of pride, education, and service in their communities.

Many Rosenwald School communities in South Carolina have worked hard to repair and rehabilitate their Rosenwald Schools. The renovation of the Hope (Pomaria), Pine Grove (Richland County), and St. George schools are preservation success stories. Others in Lincolville, Ruffin, and Seneca have served their communities continuously in other ways long after their time as schools ended.

Today, the legacy of Rosenwald schools is at risk. With fewer than 100 still standing, these structures, once symbols of community pride and educational resilience, face neglect and potential ruin. The state's rapid population growth puts them in the crosshairs of suburban development, demanding urgent action for preservation.

Protecting Rosenwald Schools and the land they occupy broadens the impact of conservation efforts by protecting cultural and historical landmarks that have been overlooked and under-invested in by traditional land protection efforts.

All land tells a story, and the story of Rosenwald Schools is one that deserves to be told and protected.



St. George Rosenwald School

[Home](#) [History](#) [About](#) [Contact](#) [Events](#) [Employment](#)



Experience the Legacy of the
St. George Rosenwald School



RSTS Oral Historian – Dr. Valinda Littlefield

"I am extremely excited about working with dynamic partners to 'capture memories of select Rosenwald School alumni' and friends. My formal education, work experience, and personal love of documenting underserved groups provide me with a knowledge base to capture those memories.

Prior to joining the University of South Carolina in 1999, I was actively engaged in interviewing educators in NC, SC, GA, and VA for my dissertation on African American women school teachers during the Jim Crow era. My major field of study is African American Education in the South. Since joining USC, I have continued collecting oral interviews and have worked with several institutions, such as Georgetown Public Library and NEH, on two three-year projects. Short-term oral history projects have included Beaufort, Lincolnton, Greenville, Eastover, and Columbia.

Rosenwald Schools are a cornerstone of U.S. History. Their histories help us understand ways in which public education in the United States is shaped by competing economic, political, and ideological interests and the ways in which schools reinforce and reshape the larger society. The stories of African American communities' efforts to secure funding and maintain these schools are at the heart of the cornerstone.

This study builds on previous work done by others, such as the SC African American Heritage Commission, SC Department of Archives and History, and the University of South Carolina Public History Program. South Carolina had the third-highest number of schools. Approximately 500 were built between 1917-1932. This project is an important next step in South Carolina, reclaiming stories that will allow for a fuller understanding of the struggle to access quality education and sharing with a larger audience the importance of the journey through the voices of those who participated."

– *Dr. Valinda W. Littlefield, Project Oral Historian*

Scctv – Harvey Elwood, Jr.

USC Public History Program and
History Department

Dr. Wright Kennedy, Elizabeth Laney

Francis Marion
Louis Venters

Bibliography
Chelsea Johnson, USC History
Department and Honors College Senior

RSTS Oral Historian – Dr. Valinda Littlefield

St. George

April 25 – Mrs. Edith Owens (USC Public History and ScCTV)
Jeanes Teacher information requested by Mr. Ralph James
Potential date for first oral interviews and documentation scanning (5/18)

Mt. Zion

Potential date for first oral interviews and documentation scanning (6/1) per conversation with Mr. Terry James

Lincolnville

Dr. Pernessa Seele conversations

Lincolnville Elementary: Founding Faith and Knowledge

The Town of Lincolnville was founded by Rev. Richard H. Cain and six other freed Black men in 1867 and became incorporated in 1889. The two primary concerns of the founders were to establish a strong foundation of faith and education as fertile soil for the growth and prosperity of the early settlers and their descendants.

In 1923, Lincolnville Elementary School, a Rosenwald School, was built. A wooden structure on four acres of land consisting of four classrooms, an office, a kitchen, and an auditorium on the corner of Board and Front Streets in Lincolnville. This school would become the center of community activities and organizing, educational excellence, and performing arts. In spite of filthy, used books from the local, white school and lower pay, the small staff of schoolteachers produced global, national, regional, and local leaders in every field—educators, physicians, attorneys, engineers, scientists, academic scholars, veterans, farmers, etc.

In 2023, former students of Lincolnville's Rosenwald School gathered from far and near to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of Lincolnville Elementary, A Rosenwald School. Inclusion in a Rosenwald State Park Network will hopefully preserve that legacy for another 100 years.



The Pine Grove School: Community-Led Learning



"I am fortunate enough to have had the opportunity and privilege of beginning my formal educational experience at the Pine Grove School, Rosenwald School.

My fondest memories of attendance are the knowledge gained, the fellowship of other students, who were mostly relatives and community members, and the love, knowledge, and compassion of the teachers, Mrs Thelma Bellinger and Ms McIver.

We were taught in a two-room building that was maintained by community members. The teachers often used the students who were a little more knowledgeable in a certain subject to assist others, as there were three grades under the direction of each teacher.

This Rosenwald trail can be used to reinforce the principles found in rural African American communities. The principles of caring for and educating each other. This Trail can also highlight the diverse and numerous communities in which the schools were located. Our forefathers saw education as a means to lead the future generation to a better life than they had endured.

Because of the foundation offered by the Pine Grove School, and our mother, my sisters and I later attended Allen University and became Educators in the public schools of South Carolina and Florida. We are the legacy of Rosenwald Schools."

– Ms. Iris Taylor Simpkins

Page from RSTS Bulletin



The Master Plan Process

Initially, none of these sites were selected to be included in the National Park Service Program, so it was determined a master plan and trail study was needed to provide a path forward for the state to promote and protect these valuable assets.

The design team selected for the RSTS is led by Earth Design, Inc., an environmentally focused landscape architecture firm located in Greenville, South Carolina. Their firm takes a progressive approach to Master Planning, with a focus on environmental stewardship through ecological design. For this project, they partnered with Arnett Muldrow & Associates, a planning firm committed to making better communities, with work over 450 communities in 40 states and four countries.

Their team has worked on similar projects, including the Black River Water Trail and Park Network, which was a similar regional planning project where we collaborated with state parks to create an innovative master plan for a new state park with a 70-mile water trail and multiple park parcels.



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LEADERSHIP TEAM



HOLLEY OWINGS

- Client Liason
- Corridor & Site Planning



RICK HUFFMAN

- Client Liaison
- Corridor & Site Planning



TRIPP MULDROW

- Public Engagement
- Strategic Planning



Dawn Dawson-House
WeGOJA Foundation
Executive Director



Timika M. Wilson
WeGOJA Foundation
RSTS Project Leader



SUPPORT TEAM



MARY CAROLE BOUREY

- Conceptual & Master Plans
- Presentation Graphics
- Document Production



HANNAH SLYCE

- GIS Production



SHAWN TERPACK

- Art Director

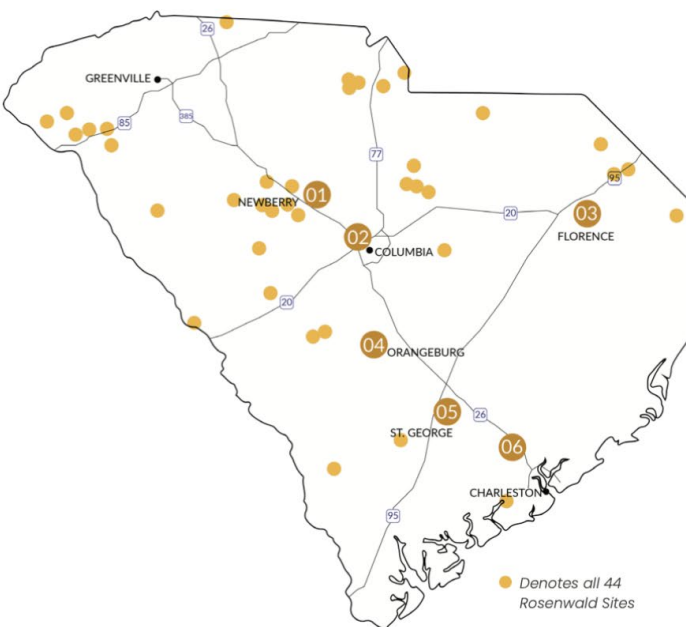


Dr. Valinda Littlefield
Associate Professor of
History, USC
RSTS Oral Historian



Zach Bjur
Conservation Voters of SC
Land, Water, & Ocean
Project Manager





The Earth Design team will aim to create a trail network that can be expanded upon, as there are a total of 44 Rosenwald School sites in South Carolina with buildings, and there were close to 500 South Carolina projects that received funding from this program.

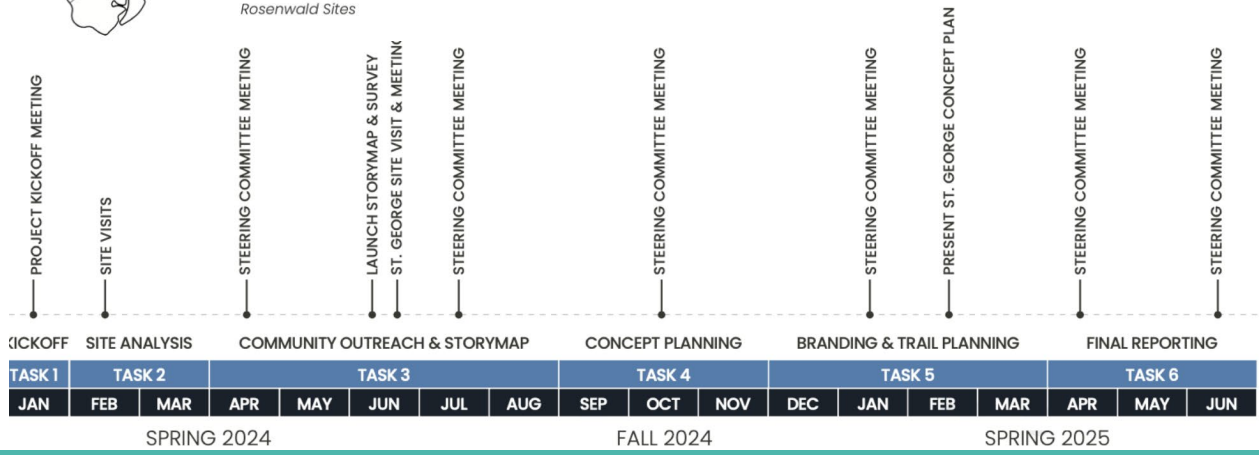
The sites included in the RSTS are the St. George Rosenwald School in Dorchester County, Pine Grove Rosenwald School in Richland County, Lincolville Rosenwald School in Charleston County, Orangeburg Teacherage in Orangeburg County, Pomaria Hope School in Newberry County, and Mt. Zion Rosenwald School in Florence County. Community engagement, research, and interviews will be conducted during visits to the sites and will be documented in this study.

The Earth Design team will work with a steering committee that is composed of community stakeholders, historians, The WeGOJA Foundation, Conservation Voters of South Carolina, and South Carolina Parks, Recreation & Tourism.

- 01 Pomaria Hope School in Newberry County**
- 02 Pine Grove Rosenwald School in Richland County**
- 03 Mt. Zion Rosenwald School in Florence County**
- 04 Orangeburg Teacherage in Orangeburg County**
- 05 St. George Rosenwald School in Dorchester County**
- 06 Lincolville Rosenwald School in Charleston County**

Timeline

The planning for this project will occur over the next 18 months, with the target completion date of June 2025. At the time of completion, the study will deliver a proposal that South Carolina State Parks can use to develop an initial trail that highlights the rich history of our state's Rosenwald Schools.

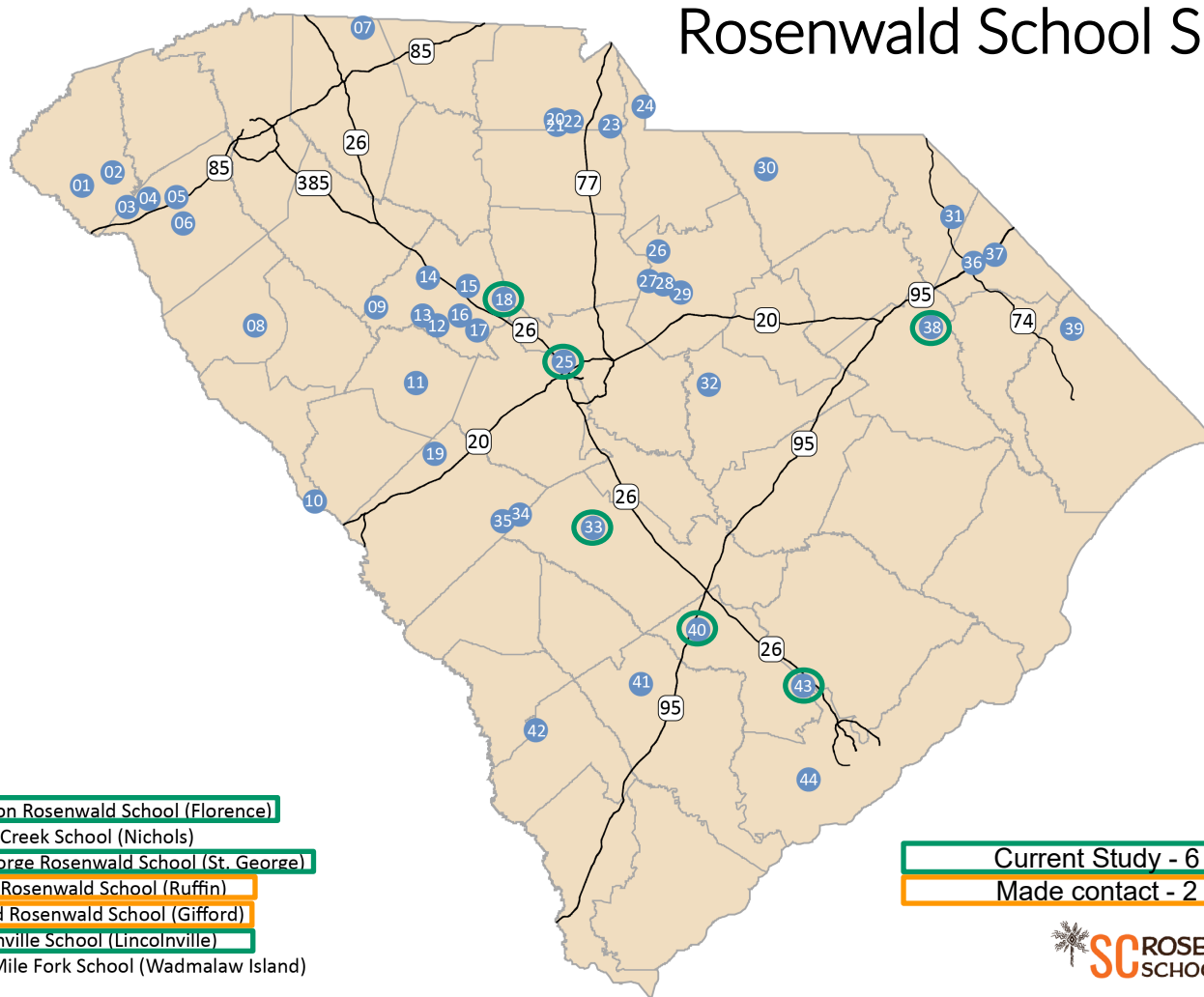


KEY:

- 01 - Retreat Rosenwald School (Westminister)
- 02 - Seneca School (Seneca)
- 03 - Shiloh School (Townville)
- 04 - New Light School (Anderson)
- 05 - Mountain Springs School (Pendleton)
- 06 - North Side School (Anderson)
- 07 - Brooklyn Rosenwald School (Chesnee)
- 08 - Abbeville County Training School (Abbeville)
- 09 - Vaughanville School (Chappells)
- 10 - Hopewell Rosenwald School (Clarks Hill)
- 11 - Canebrake School (Saluda)
- 12 - Hannah Rosenwald School (Newberry)
- 13 - Elisha School (Silverstreet)
- 14 - Jalapa School (Newberry)
- 15 - Leitzsey School (Newberry)
- 16 - Howard Junior High (Prosperity)
- 17 - Mt. Olive School (Prosperity)
- 18 - Hope Rosenwald School (Pomaria)
- 19 - Jerusalem School (Ridge School)
- 20 - Carroll Rosenwald School (Rock Hill)
- 21 - New Home School (Rock Hill)
- 22 - Crawford Rosenwald School (Rock Hill)
- 23 - Catawba Rosenwald School (Catawba)
- 24 - Steele Hill School (Lancaster)
- 25 - Pine Grove Rosenwald (Columbia)
- 26 - Red Hill School (Camden)
- 27 - Mount Joshua School (Lugoff)
- 28 - Mickle School (Lugoff)
- 29 - Knights Hill School (Camden)
- 30 - Black Creek School (Mount Croghan)
- 31 - Dunbar Rosenwald School (Clio)
- 32 - High Hill Rosenwald School (Sumter)
- 33 - Great Branch Teacherage (Orangeburg)
- 34 - Salley School (Salley)
- 35 - Union Academy (Salley)
- 36 - Pleasant Hill School (Latta)
- 37 - Dillon School (Dillon)

- 38 - Mt. Zion Rosenwald School (Florence)
- 39 - Cedar Creek School (Nichols)
- 40 - St. George Rosenwald School (St. George)
- 41 - Ruffin Rosenwald School (Ruffin)
- 42 - Gifford Rosenwald School (Gifford)
- 43 - Lincolnville School (Lincolnville)
- 44 - Nine Mile Fork School (Wadmalaw Island)

Rosenwald School Sites

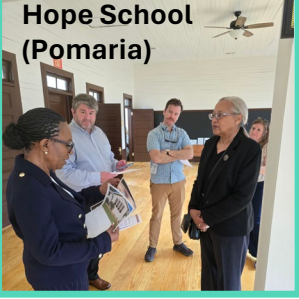


Current Study - 6
Made contact - 2

Great Branch
Rosenwald School &
Teachage
(Orangeburg)



Site Visits



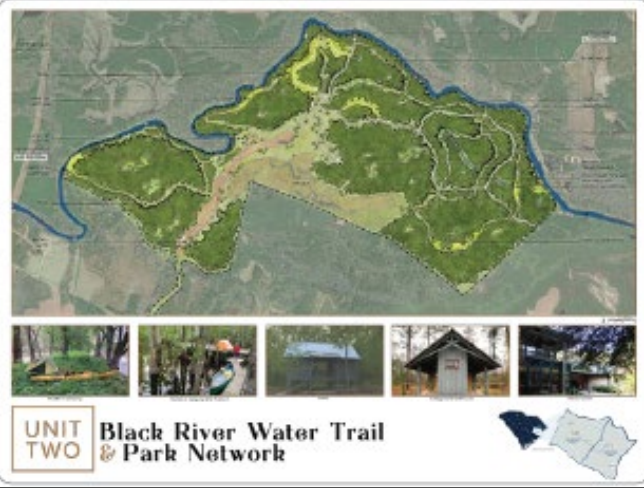
Hope School
(Pomaria)



Lincolnville
Rosenwald School
(Lincolville)

Community Outreach

Project Deliverable Examples



UNIT TWO Black River Water Trail & Park Network

Conceptual Master Plan



NPS/ASLA-SC
DESIGN
CHARETTE



SOUTH CAROLINA'S
**BLACK RIVER
WATER TRAIL &
PARK NETWORK**
MASTER PLAN

FINAL REPORT | MAY 6, 2022

Branding



Report



Dr. Valinda Littlefield,
Oral Historian



Task 1: Project Kickoff & Quarterly Project Meetings

- Meet with Steering community

Task 2: Site Reconnaissance & Initial Community Outreach

- See the sites and surrounding communities. Meet with local stakeholders.

Task 3: Public Outreach & Engagement

- Survey, Focus Group Meetings, Interviews, StoryMap, work alongside Oral Historian

Task 4: Conceptual Plans

- Conceptual Master Plan for the school including community connections

Task 5: Trail Network Plan & Branding

- Trail Master Plan, branding for the trail, develop an expandable network

Task 6: Project Wrap Up & Report

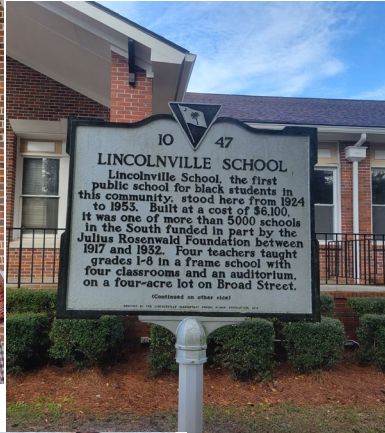
- Finalize Trail and Master Plans, document project in a Report, budgets for implementation and future design phases

RSTS Site Visits Feb 16 - 20

- The Team did Initial Site Visits in February of all 6 School Sites.



Lincolnville



St. George

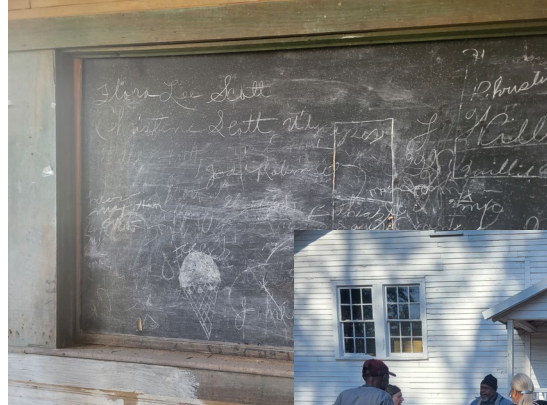


RSTS Site Visits Feb 16 - 20

Mt. Zion



Great Branch



RSTS Site Visits Feb 16 - 20

Pine Grove



RSTS Community Meetings

- St. George Rotary Meeting March 20th - breakfast
- Lincolnville March 20th 11 am – 1 pm
- St. George March 20th 4 – 6 pm
- Great Branch March 21st 4 – 6 pm
- Pine Grove, Thursday April 25th, 12 – 3 pm



RSTS Upcoming Community Meetings

- Hope School, May 1st 5 – 6:30 pm
- Mt. Zion, May TBD



Hope Rosenwald School (Pomaria)



Mt. Zion Rosenwald School

Events

Event	2023
Master Planner contracted – Earth Design, Inc.	Dec 19, 2023
Master Calendar Input/Schedule – WeGOJA and Earth Design, Inc.	Dec
	2024
Oral Historian Selection Panel	Jan 12
RSTS Kickoff Meeting (All meetings are on Zoom or Virtual)	Jan 17
RSTS Steering Committee Quarterly Meetings	Apr 17, Jul 17, Oct 16
RSTS Site Visits (Lincolntown & St. George – Feb 23)	Feb 23 - 28
RSTS Site Visits (Great Branch RS & Teacherage & Mt. Zion – Feb 26)	
RSTS Site Visits (Pine Grove – Feb 27)	
RSTS Site Visits (Hope – Feb 28)	
RSTS Bulletin – presented to Legislators on Rosenwald Schools Day	Feb 28
RSTS Open House Community Engagement (Lincolntown & St. George – Mar 20)	Mar & Apr
RSTS Open House Community Engagement (Great Branch – Mar 21)	
RSTS Open House Community Engagement (Pine Grove – Apr 25)	
RSTS Presentation Session at SCDAH HPC 2024	Apr 26, 2024
RSTS Open House Community Engagement (Hope – May 1)	May
RSTS Open House Community Engagement (Mt. Zion – May TBD)	
RSTS Public Meeting at St. George Rosenwald School	Jun 18
RSTS Story Map Launch – digital map of sites with background information on each location depicting a virtual “trail”	Jun 19
	2025
RSTS Steering Committee Quarterly Meetings	Jan 14, Apr 16, Jun 18
Final Report - Final deliverables - report with Steering Committee & Oral Historian	Jun 18

RSTS Project Updates

To view RSTS Team Project updates, go to <https://scrosenwaldtrail.org/blog/>. Once on the site, click on the image or **READ MORE** to expand for more photos and the entire update.



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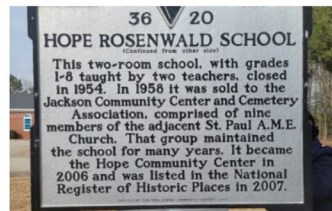


RSTS Presents at the Landmark Conference 2024

Mar 22, 2024

by Timika M. Wilson From Vision to State Park: A study of Rosenwald Schools will help determine the viability of a new historic trail. Speakers, Timika Wilson, Dr. Larry Watson, Dr. Valinda Littlefield, Tripp Muldrow, Holley Springs, and Zach Bjur presented the rich...

[READ MORE](#)



Team Site Visit to The Hope Rosenwald School

Feb 28, 2024

by Holley Owings & Tripp Muldrow The Earth Design team traveled to the rural community of Pomaria in Newberry County, SC on its initial site visit to The Hope Rosenwald School. Built in 1925-26 at a cost of \$2,900, this restored educational institution symbolizes...

[READ MORE](#)



Team Site Visit to the Mt. Zion Rosenwald School

Feb 26, 2024

by Holley Owings and Tripp Muldrow Earth Design, alongside Dr. Val Littlefield and the WeGOJA Foundation recently conducted a visit to the historic Mt. Zion Rosenwald School in Florence, SC, located within the Mars Bluff Community. The team was met by Mr. Terry James...

[READ MORE](#)

Contact Us

Are you part of a Rosenwald School organization? Did you attend a Rosenwald School? The Rosenwald Schools Trail Study would like to engage with you to tell the story of your school and your educational experience. Complete the form below for more information and check the box to receive the WeGOJA Foundation Newsletter.

Name *

First

Last

Email *

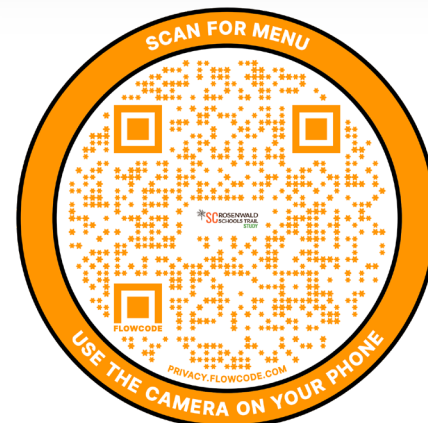
Comment or Message

Subscribe me to the WeGOJA Foundation Newsletter

Submit

“This is an important story that should be told to future generations. Rosenwald history is South Carolina history, and the schools have shaped and influenced so much of the South Carolina we know and love today.”

– Charlotte Holt, Former Teacher of the New Hope Rosenwald School



<https://scrosenwaldtrail.org/>