



**American
Red Cross**

SOUTH CAROLINA COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION

GIS For Volunteer Engagement

A beginner's field guide to getting access, reading a map, finding volunteer groups, and planning better local conversations.

Start with one question and one familiar place.
Use the map to guide the conversation.
Confirm the next step with the people who know the community.

Prepared For	South Carolina Community Mobilization
Presented By	Jeff Franzen
Session	September 14, 2026 · 11:00 a.m.–noon · Teams
Companion Page	GISprimer.jbf.com
Edition	Beginner Guide · Version 3

02 / START HERE

Your First Successful Map Session

A geographic information system, or GIS, connects information to places. For this team, its value is practical: seeing where volunteers and community needs may come together.

One good first question: “Where are the volunteers in our group, and what should we learn about the communities around them?”

1. **Open the right map.** Ask the meeting host or your team’s map owner for the exact Chapter View link. A portal is the doorway to many maps; it is not the same thing as your team’s app.
2. **Find a place you know.** Start with your chapter, county, or town. Familiar geography makes unfamiliar controls easier to understand.
3. **Turn on one useful layer.** Begin with Volunteers. Leave unrelated layers off until you need them.
4. **Read the legend.** Check what the colors and symbols actually mean before drawing a conclusion.
5. **Try one available filter.** Choose a group or area, notice what changed, then clear the filter.
6. **Write down one next question.** For example: “Do these volunteers have the skills and availability needed for our outreach event?”

Four Words You Will Hear

WORD	PLAIN MEANING
Layer	A set of information you can show, such as volunteers.
Legend	The key that explains colors and symbols.
Filter	A rule that shows a smaller set of records.
Feature	One mapped point, line, or area and its information.

03 / SIGN-IN AND LICENSES

Get The Access Your Work Requires

How To Sign In

1. Open [ARC NHQ GIS](#) in your normal browser. Check that you are at the Red Cross organization.
2. Choose **Sign In**, then the **Red Cross organization sign-in** option. Complete the normal Red Cross sign-in prompts yourself.
3. Return to the exact app link your team uses. Confirm that both the app and the required layers load.

Login does not unlock every map. Your organization membership, assigned privileges, and access to the app and its layers all matter.

How To Request Access Or A License

Ask your team lead or map owner to identify the Red Cross GIS administrator and the current internal request route. Request the access needed for your actual work. The administrator assigns the appropriate user type, role, and group membership.

YOUR NEED	WHAT TO ASK FOR
Explore an existing map	Access to the named app and its underlying layers. Viewer-type access may be sufficient.
Create and save maps, change symbols, or configure content	An appropriate authoring user type, such as Creator, plus the required role privileges and approval.
Change volunteer records	Separate authorization from the data owner. Map viewing access alone does not grant it.

Include These Details In Your Request

Your name and Red Cross email; chapter and team; the exact app link; what you need to do; whether you only need to view or also create maps; and a description of the error. Send error screenshots only through approved internal channels, with private information removed.

Still to confirm: the official Red Cross request form, named contact, eligibility, and turnaround time. Do not buy a personal license or create an unrelated public account to work around missing access.

General licensing basis: [Esri user types](#) and [member roles](#). Red Cross administrators determine local assignments.

04 / THE CONTROLS

What To Click, And What To Expect

These labels come from the Chapter View screenshot supplied for the session. The exact choices depend on the version of the app and the access assigned to you.

CLICK OR OPEN	WHAT IT DOES	BEGINNER CHECK
+ / -	Zoom in or out.	Start at your chapter, then move closer.
Home	Returns to the configured starting view.	Use it when you lose your place. It may not clear filters.
Layers	Controls which information is visible.	A checked box means that layer is on.
Arrow Beside A Group	Expands the group to reveal sublayers.	Expand Volunteers to see what is available.
Legend	Explains the visible symbols.	Read the meaning of a color before using it.
A Point On The Map	Selects a record for inspection.	Check the selected record's type and date.
Feature Info	Shows details for the selection.	A blank value means missing information, not "none."
Filters	Offers the conditions configured by the app owner.	Try one filter, then clear it.
Bookmarks	Offers saved views, if configured.	A view helps you return to a place; it may not restore every setting.
Near Me	Opens the app's proximity tool, if configured.	Read its units and method. Nearby does not mean available.

If The Map Looks Empty

Check the layer box, zoom level, active filters, sign-in, and loading state. Ask the owner whether the layer is current and shared with you. An empty screen alone cannot establish that an area has no volunteers.

A comfortable pace: click once, pause, explain what changed, and show how to return.

05 / GROUPS AND SYMBOLS

Different Groups, Clearer Symbols

Different colors can distinguish volunteer groups when the approved data contains a suitable category. First agree what the group means.

Before Choosing Colors

1. **Identify the category.** Department, position, primary assignment, and service may describe different things. Use a field that actually exists in the approved layer.
2. **Check the values.** Inconsistent labels and missing entries can split one group into several categories. Ask the data owner to resolve the issue in the approved source.
3. **Handle multiple roles.** Decide whether the question concerns a primary department or anyone serving in a department. A person with multiple assignments can otherwise be counted more than once.

If You Are Exploring Chapter View

Use the sublayers and filters provided by the app. Read the existing legend. If the department view you need is unavailable, ask the map owner to configure it. An app user may not have a symbol-editing control.

If You Are An Authorized Map Author

1. In ArcGIS Online Map Viewer, select the approved volunteer layer.
2. Open **Styles**, select the categorical field, and choose **Types (unique symbols)** where available.
3. Assign distinct colors and, where supported, shapes. Give the legend clear group names. Keep missing or unclassified values visible.
4. Review the result with the team. Save only within the scope approved by the map and data owners. Do not overwrite a shared operational map during a demonstration.

Color means category. It should not imply that one department is better than another. Shape plus color helps people distinguish groups on a shared screen.

The presentation's volunteer-location exercise uses fictional display positions. It shows how filtering works without exposing real volunteer locations, names, or addresses.

Authoring reference: [Esri: Style categories](#). Menu availability depends on the data, app, and privileges.

06 / FILTERS

Show Fewer Things, Then Reset

A filter narrows the view to records that match a condition. It does not, by itself, delete the hidden records.

Try it safely: open [the presentation's filter exercise](#), choose Volunteer Services, watch the other symbols disappear, then choose Show All Groups.

In Your Team's App

- Open Filters.** Look at the choices the app actually offers.
- Select one group.** Use a real value from its list. Do not assume the example category names are present in your map.
- Apply the filter if prompted.** Observe the visible result and the legend. If a count is shown, check whether it counts people, records, or assignments.
- Add an area only when useful.** Select a county or chapter if that control exists. Notice whether the map automatically zooms.
- Clear the filter.** Confirm the broader set reappears before asking a different question.

"And" Versus "Or"

RULE	MEANING
Department = Volunteer Services AND County = Anderson	Only records that satisfy both conditions.
Department = Volunteer Services OR Department = Disaster Services	Records that satisfy either department condition.

Conceptual examples only; confirm the available fields and values.

For Authorized Map Authors

In Map Viewer, select the layer and open Filter. Add a condition using a field, operator, and value. Use the "all" matching option for AND or "any" for OR. Apply the filter and inspect the result. Saving the map requires suitable privileges and owner approval.

Zero results? Check the question first. Clear all conditions, confirm the layer is visible, and try a broader category.

07 / COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION

A Small Toolkit For Real Questions

Use one tool at a time. Begin with the service area, explore one community question, and agree on a practical follow-up.

TOOL	A USEFUL FIRST TASK
Chapter Reports	Choose the division, South Carolina region, and chapter. Open its report. Review one relevant page, its date, and its sources. The site labels this a pilot.
Community Risk & Context Explorer	Choose a chapter and inspect a familiar area. Use the available context to prepare a local conversation. This is a separate tool from the volunteer map.
Print Maps	Find the chapter or area and bring a printable reference map to an in-person partner meeting.
Home Fire Intelligence	With authorized Red Cross sign-in, explore fire and outreach context. A useful follow-up for a team planning home-fire prevention work.

Before Calling An Area A Volunteer Gap

Confirm the records are current, the locations are complete, and the filter includes the intended group. Check skills, willingness, availability, travel barriers, community demand, and existing partners. A home location is not a promise of service capacity.

Few dots are a prompt to ask more. They are not proof that an area is underserved. Dense dots do not prove that needs are met.

A Simple Community Conversation

- Choose one familiar place.** Ask what local partners already know.
- Compare the map with that knowledge.** Identify what is useful, missing, or surprising.
- Name one possible action.** An outreach conversation, recruitment event, partner visit, or data-quality check.
- Assign a follow-up.** Record the person responsible and a date to revisit the question.

08 / TAKEAWAY

Your Next Session Checklist

☐ I have the exact link to the map my team uses.	☐ I can sign in to ARC NHQ GIS using the Red Cross option.
☐ I know who to contact if the app or a layer is unavailable.	☐ I can turn a layer on and read its legend.
☐ I can select a record without sharing private details.	☐ I can apply one available filter and clear it.
☐ I can explain what a dot represents and what it does not.	☐ I have one community question and one follow-up action.

Sharing And Privacy

Keep real volunteer addresses, contact details, and individual records inside authorized Red Cross systems. Use only approved aggregates for wider sharing. During Teams demonstrations, confirm the audience before displaying record details. Never send passwords, sign-in codes, or access tokens to another person.

Sources And Boundaries

- [1] **Session inputs:** Jeff Franzen's supplied GIS.pptx and the supplied Chapter View screenshot. They establish the presentation theme and visible control labels, not every available field or permission.
- [2] ARC NHQ GIS: the Red Cross organization doorway. The internal license request contact and process remain to be confirmed.
- [3] Esri user types and member roles: general access and authoring distinctions.
- [4] Esri category styles and filters: Map Viewer authoring guidance. Chapter View controls may differ.
- [5] The linked tool pages on page 7 provide their own current scope and source information. This guide does not certify their data freshness or replace local review.

Keep the starting point: [GISprimer.jbf.com](https://gisprimer.jbf.com)

The presentation, practice exercise, and downloadable guide are together.