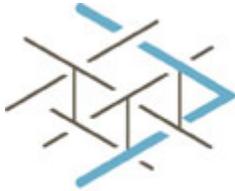


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# NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

VOL. XI, No. 13, April 4, 2011

## eRegions

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### **EXECUTIVE**BRIEF

Colleagues,

I am currently in Oregon meeting with Washington, Idaho and Oregon Directors discussing the policy and program obstacles both in the Northwest and from Washington, DC. As we move closer to the next iteration of

## **Register Today!**

Join your colleagues from around the country at the largest event focused on promoting effective regional cooperation and solutions through interaction and education - NARC's 45th Annual Conference and Exhibition. Click [HERE](#) to register or access the current draft agenda. Contact Lindsey Riley at [lindsey@narc.org](mailto:lindsey@narc.org) or 202.986.1032 x220 for more information. *If you are making travel arrangements, we recommend traveling on Sunday, June 12th and Thursday, June 16th.*

the continuing resolution (CR) and possible government shutdown, we will keep you posted on action necessary to keep our local governments whole. Please refer to our budget and CR talking points, and also take the time to participate in our regulatory review survey process. Both of these information initiatives are informing members of Congress on what's important to local governments.

Best,  
Fred

## **NARCSTAFF**

### **Fred Abousleman**

Executive Director

### **Shannon Baxevanis**

Deputy Director

### **Sylvia Bryant**

Office Manager

### **Naomi Friedman**

Project Director

### **Jenee Kresge**

Economic and

Community

Development Manager

### **Lindsey Riley**

Deputy of

Communications

### **Erika Young**

Transportation Director

To access past issues of *eRegions*, [visit our](#)

# PROGRAMUPDATE

**EPA Releases Clean Water Strategy:** Last week, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released “Coming Together for Clean Water: EPA’s Strategy to Protect America’s Waters,” which charts a path for meeting the nation’s clean water strategic plan goals over the next several years. The strategy focuses on the following key areas: ensuring transparency and effectively reporting on the status of the health of all waters; increasing protection of source waters and healthy watersheds; restoring degraded waters and ecosystems; reducing the amount of pollution entering our waters that impact our health and our economy; and tackling new and emerging threats to our waters in a way that will ensure healthier, more livable communities. Click [HERE](#) to access the document.

**USDA Releases Atlas of Rural and Small-Town America:** The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) recently released an online, interactive *Atlas of Rural and Small-Town America*. Included are maps of unemployment data, population data, homeownership and more. Specific data can be accessed by clicking on the map. To see the Atlas, click [HERE](#).

**Transportation Committee Webinar:** NARC’s next Transportation Committee webinar is scheduled for April 12, 2011, 12:00-2:00 pm ET. This webinar will be hosted by NARC’s Goods Movement Subcommittee and will address *Goods Movement along the U.S. Border: An Update of Current Trends*. This webinar will address developments with border freight, how changes will affect the flow of goods nationally and what metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) and localities are doing to prepare. Click [HERE](#) to register.

**EPA Accepting Comment on Stormwater TMDL:** The U.S. EPA is soliciting comments on a [memo](#) released on November 12, 2010 in response to stakeholder concern that input was not obtained prior to establishing Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Wasteload Allocations (WLAs) for stormwater sources and NPDES permit requirements based on those WLAs. EPA is accepting comments through May 16, 2011 in order to make a decision by August 15, 2011 to either retain the memorandum without change, to reissue it with revisions, or to withdraw it. Please share with NARC any comments you submit.

**White House Requesting Projects that Improve NEPA:** The White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) is accepting nominations from the

[website.](#)

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[how.](#)

public and federal agencies for projects that will increase the efficiency of environmental reviews conducted under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The top projects will have the chance to be replicated across the government and become part of new or revised NEPA procedures. A panel of NEPA experts from various federal agencies will select up to five nominees, and those projects will have their progress tracked and publicized as they are implemented in CEQ's pilot program. Nominations will be accepted [HERE](#) until June 15, 2011.

**Opportunity to Comment on EDA Regulations:** The U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) is requesting comments from stakeholders to help the agency update its regulations to more effectively partner with communities and organizations to create jobs and economic growth. Details are available in a Federal Register Notice (available [HERE](#)) and comments can be posted directly on [EDA's website](#) through April 11, 2011. Please share any submitted comments with Jenee Kresge, [jenee@narc.org](mailto:jenee@narc.org).

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## POLICYUPDATE

*The House and Senate are in session.*

**Congress Continues to Work on FY11 Spending:** The House and the Senate are back negotiating next steps to fund the government throughout the remainder of FY11. Currently, the government is operating on a continuing resolution, which is set to expire on Friday, April 8. House Republicans and Senate Democrats are working from a tentative agreement to cut \$33 billion in spending from levels used early this year; this represents a compromise between the original House and Senate cuts. Last week, the Republicans moved forward HR 1255, which would put into law the House-passed fiscal 2011 spending bill (HR 1) if the Senate does not pass its own funding bill by April 6. It is unlikely that HR 1255 will move forward as introduced.

**House to Release FY12 Budget Resolution:** This week the House GOP will release their fiscal year 2012 budget resolution, which is anticipated to include the Republican agenda for the FY, as well as changes such as new caps on spending and reductions in entitlement programs. There are discussions that the budget resolution will rollback domestic spending to FY06 levels with cuts and/or spending changes to Defense and Medicaid

and Medicare.

**House Passes FAA Reauthorization:** On Friday, April 1, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 658, the FAA Reauthorization and Reform Act of 2011, which sets spending levels through fiscal 2014; however, program authorization in the two-year Senate bill (S. 223) would expire at the end of the current fiscal year. The House bill eliminates the Essential Air Service (EAS) program in 2013 whereas the Senate bill increases the authorization for the program. The Senate passed their FAA reauthorization on February 17, 2011 and a House-Senate Conference committee must now resolve differences between the two bills. Click [HERE](#) for additional information from *CQToday*.

**NRDC Petition Contesting EPA's Report Rejected:** The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals rejected the Natural Resource Defense Coalition's (NRDC) petition contesting the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) report on California's state implementation plan for smog and soot. In the suit, NRDC said that the EPA did not establish stringent enough target emissions levels for transportation in the Southern California Air Basin. But the court maintained that the EPA acted calculated target emissions levels reasonably. Click [HERE](#) to read the ruling.

**Send NARC Your Regulation Recommendations:** NARC requests members submit ideas for streamlining federal regulations – either broad concepts or agency specific – that look to promote innovation, cost efficiencies and effectiveness, flexibility, and the reduction of barriers. Click [HERE](#) to access NARC's submission form. Please send all submissions by **Friday, April 8, 2011** to Joe Patterson at [intern3@narc.org](mailto:intern3@narc.org).

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## PARTNERUPDATE

**NACo's 2011 Rail Conference:** April 27-29, 2011. Sponsored by the National Association of Counties (NACo), National League of Cities (NLC) and NARC, this conference will focus on the impact of freight and passenger rail on county, city and state governments and their citizens and businesses. Click [HERE](#) to access the tentative agenda and registration information.

**Call for Speakers for the 97th ICMA Annual Conference:** ICMA 's 97th Annual Conference, being held September 18-21, 2011 at the Frontier Airlines Convention Center in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, is now accepting

applications from speakers wishing to be part of the conference program. ICMA is looking for the best combination of panelists to share their experiences for each session within these educational tracks: Excellence in the New Normal; Changing Demographics and Employee Relations; Lessons in Leadership; Personal Issues Facing Local Government Managers and Their Families; and Career Tracks: Assistant Managers, Senior Managers/ICMA Credential Managers and Small Community Managers. We encourage you to download and submit an application by Friday, May 6 to be considered for this event. All Session Speaker Application Forms must be completed electronically and submitted to [callforspeakers@icma.org](mailto:callforspeakers@icma.org). Full details and application form are available online at [icma.org/callforspeakers](http://icma.org/callforspeakers).

**NEI Update:** The Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI) has developed a webpage with news and information following the earthquake in Japan. Click [HERE](#) to access this webpage. NEI has made themselves available to anyone who has questions; contact Christine Czimedia or Marshall Cohen at 202.739.8000 or [NEIResponseCenter@nei.org](mailto:NEIResponseCenter@nei.org).

**NLC Column:** NLC released its latest *Emerging Issues* column, "Big Think Books See Big Roles for Cities in Blig Global Changes, Part Two: Cities and Destiny." Click [HERE](#) to read the column.

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## GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

### **EPA Requests Applications for National Award for Smart Growth Achievement**

*Deadline: April 6, 2011*

The U.S. EPA announced that the application period for the 10th annual National Award for Smart Growth Achievement is open. Through this award, EPA recognizes and supports communities that have successfully used smart growth principles to improve communities environmentally, socially and economically. Open to public- and private-sector entities (although all applications must include a public-sector partner), winners will be recognized in December 2011. Awards will be given in the categories of Programs, Policies and Regulations; Smart Growth and Green Building; Civic Places; and Rural Smart Growth. An "Overall Excellence" winner will be chosen from the four categories by the review panels. To view the application and complete entry guidelines, click [HERE](#).

### **Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training Program**

*Deadline: April 21, 2011*

The U.S. DOL Employment and Training Administration (ETA) announced the release of \$500 million in grant funds for the Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) program. While applicants must be institutions of higher education eligible for training under the Trade Adjustment Assistance program, Regional Councils and Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) have proven to be key partners for similar work undertaken through NARC's *Pathways Out of Poverty* project, also funded by the U.S. DOL ETA. The full grant announcement is available [HERE](#), and a toolkit for potential applicants is available [HERE](#).

### **USDA RUS Distance Learning and Telemedicine Program**

*Deadline: April 25, 2011*

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Rural Utility Service (RUS) recently announced the FY2011 Distance Learning and Telemedicine (DLT) call for applications. DLT supports corporations or partnerships, state or local units of government, consortia and Tribes to provide telecommunications technologies that enhance learning and healthcare opportunities for rural populations through loans, grants or loan/grant combinations. Additional information on the funding opportunity is available [HERE](#).

### **EDA Announces i6 Green Challenge Competition**

*Letter of Intent Due: May 2, 2011*

The i6 Green Challenge Competition provides \$12 million in funding focused on the nexus between economic development and environmental quality. At least six applicants will be selected for up to \$1 million for a two-year project, with the potential for supplemental awards from several participating federal agencies. Economic Development Districts, Tribes, nonprofits, state and local governments are all qualified applicants. Additional information on the competition is available at [www.eda.gov/i6](http://www.eda.gov/i6).

### **EPA Accepting Applications for Environmental Education Grant Funding**

*Deadline: May 2, 2011*

The U.S. EPA is accepting [grant applications](#) for \$1.9 million in funding for the Environmental Education Grant Program to promote environmental stewardship and help develop knowledgeable and responsible students, teachers and citizens. EPA expects to award at least 20 grants nationwide ranging from a minimum of \$15,000 to a maximum of \$100,000 and will accept applications until May 2, 2011. Eligible entities include: local

education agencies, state education or environmental agencies, colleges or universities, not-for-profit organizations, noncommercial educational broadcasting entities, and tribal education agencies. EPA will be hosting two conference calls for potential applicants interested in additional information about the application process. The conference calls will take place on March 21, 2011 at 11:00 am ET and April 6 at 2:00 pm ET. To participate in the conference calls, dial: 1-866-379-5082, and use conference ID number: 48699133 for the call on March 21. Use conference ID number: 48696117 for the call on April 6.

**USDA Community Connect Grant Program:**

*Deadline: May 3, 2011*

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced the availability of Community-Oriented Connectivity Broadband Grant Program (Community Connect), for projects that (1) deploy broadband transmission service to critical community facilities, rural residents and businesses, (2) construct, acquire or expand a community center, or (3) equip and operate a community center providing free access to broadband services for communities with populations of 20,000 or fewer. Application instructions are available [HERE](#), and additional program information can be found [HERE](#).

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## UPCOMINGEVENTS

***Intersections Between Eco-Logical and PEL: FHWA Programs to Improve Environmental Outcomes Webinar***

**April 6, 2011, 2:00-3:00 pm ET:** The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) will host a webinar on April 6, 2011 entitled, *Intersections Between Eco-Logical and PEL: FHWA Programs to Improve Environmental Outcomes*. The next installment of the Eco-Logical webinar series will highlight two FHWA programs that integrate planning and environmental review processes to achieve better transportation and environmental outcomes. The webinar will include overviews of the Eco-Logical and Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) programs, guidance for practitioners on integrating Eco-Logical and PEL into practice and case studies from both programs from the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) perspective. No pre-registration is required to attend the webinar. Click [HERE](#) to join the web conference.

***APA's National Planning Conference***

**April 9-12, 2011, Boston, MA:** For more information on this event, please

click [HERE](#).

#### ***Transportation Committee Webinar***

**April 12, 2011, 12:00-2:00 pm ET:** NARC's next Transportation Committee webinar is scheduled. This webinar will be hosted by NARC's Goods Movement Subcommittee and will address *Goods Movement along the U.S. Border: An Update of Current Trends*. This webinar will address developments with border freight, how changes will affect the flow of goods nationally and what metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) and localities are doing to prepare. Click [HERE](#) to register.

#### ***GPS 101 Webinar***

**April 12, 2011, 3:00-4:00 pm ET:** Global Positioning Systems (GPS) technology is performing better than ever and will continue to improve. Led by the Senior Policy Advisory for the Department of Interior and U.S. Geological Services, this webinar will provide an update on the GPS constellation, modernization plans and national policy. You'll learn about new improvements and how your region can take advantage of this technology. Click [HERE](#) to register; NARC members can attend at no cost.

#### ***2011 Rail Conference: Moving Freight and Passengers in the 21st Century***

**April 27-29, 2011, Naperville, IL:** Sponsored by NACo, NLC and NARC, this conference will focus on the impact of freight and passenger rail on county, city, and state governments and their citizens and businesses. It will look at the movement of freight in the urban, suburban and rural communities of the U.S. and discuss who will pay to modernize and expand passenger and freight rail systems. This conference is for you if you have ever asked why the freight industry operates the way it does, had questions about economic growth and the availability and affordability of freight rail, wanted to have commuter rail in your region or wondered about the future of high-speed rail. Participants will get to meet and hear from experts in the field, including representatives of the rail industry, the U.S. Department of Transportation, the shippers who use the system, commuter rail experts, Amtrak and proponents of high-speed rail. The conference will conclude with a half-day discussion on where we go from here; how city, county, regional, and state governments can work together with the freight and passenger industry to influence federal legislation and policy; and both reduce the negative impacts from freight rail movement and improve passenger rail service in America. Click [HERE](#) to access the tentative agenda and registration information.

#### ***National Solar Conference***

**May 17-21, 2011, Raleigh, NC:** Save the date. More information will be released as it becomes available.

***Transforming Local Government Conference***

**June 1-3, 2011, Clearwater, FL:** Making Magic: How BOLD Can Local Government Be? The Alliance for Innovation's Transforming Local Government (TLG) Conference is different from any other conference you'll attend. At TLG, you'll learn about some of the most innovative programs in the country directly from the teams that created them. This year, TLG takes place in conjunction with the Florida City/County Management Association Annual Conference. The joint event will attract participation from local governments that seek new and innovative ways to connect people, information, and ideas to become some of the best places to live, grow, work, play, and prosper. Recognized for its dynamic content, the TLG format encourages team building and free thinking and fosters the generation of unprecedented ideas, all within a relaxed and professional networking and learning environment. Visit the conference website by clicking [HERE](#); a full program, registration and hotel information is available.

***NARC's 45th Annual Conference and Exhibition***

**June 13-15, 2011, San Diego, CA:** Join us for the the largest national event focused on promoting effective regional cooperation and solutions through interaction and education. NARC's annual conference is the premier place to learn how to engage in effective regional collaboration. Click [HERE](#) for additional information.

***NLC's 19th Annual Leadership Summit***

**September 15 - 17, 2011, Minneapolis, MN:** Join renowned leadership scholars and authors Dan Buettner, Lindsay Strand, John M. Bryson, Barbara C. Crosby, and John Luthy as you engage in a unique, reflective program that will help guide your work and leadership in local government. Insightful learning experiences will provide you the opportunity to reflect, recognize and discover what you can do to enhance your success as a local leader. Click [HERE](#) for additional information.

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