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## NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

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# eRegions

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### EXECUTIVE BRIEF

Colleagues,

It's been such a pleasure being on the road and visiting many of our regional members. This week I'm off to West Virginia to attend and present at their statewide association. I look forward to hearing from

[PROGRAM UPDATE](#) [POLICY UPDATE](#)  
[GRANT OPPORTUNITIES](#) [UPCOMING EVENTS](#)



## 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.*

their other speakers and seeing our WV members.

Our Annual Conference is really shaping up. If you haven't reserved your hotel room please do so quickly; we are in an overflow hotel. Our sessions are filling out and everything from "Building the Economy, One Region at a Time" to "Understanding and Engaging the Philanthropy World" will prove to be great learning and sharing opportunities.

And never last, but our thoughts are with those people and communities effected by severe flooding. The cost of lives and property this year from weather has been enormous and we will all offer continued support to those at risk.

Best,  
Fred

### **NARCSTAFF**

#### **Fred Abousleman**

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#### **Mia Colson**

## **PROGRAMUPDATE**

**EPA Offers Free Webcast on Saving Water & Energy:** The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Watershed Academy will host a free webcast on "Saving Water & Energy -- Reducing Greenhouse Gases by Improving Efficiency" on Tuesday, May 17, 2011 at 1:00-3:00 pm ET. This webcast will address several programs in the water sector that can help communities make small changes that can lead to big reductions in greenhouse gases, including information from EPA's WaterSense program and highlight actions that water and wastewater utilities can take to save water and energy, as well as how grassroots organizations are getting involved to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in their communities. Click [HERE](#) to access information on the webcast.

**NLC to Host Webinar on Japanese Nuclear Crisis and U.S. Reaction:** In response to requests for additional information from city leaders, on Tuesday, May 17 from 3:00-4:00 pm ET, the National League of Cities (NLC) and the Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI) will host a free webinar examining the current status of the nuclear reactors in Japan, activities to stabilize the complex, and efforts to prevent the spread of radiation following the country's recent earthquake and subsequent tsunami. It will also examine the important implications for the U.S. nuclear energy industry, steps U.S. nuclear facilities are taking to respond to safety concerns, and the role of local communities in ensuring the safety of citizens. Click [HERE](#) to register.

**NARC Survey on Regional Experiences in Federal Emergency Grants:** The National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) is working on a report for Congress with recommendations on the effectiveness of grants administered by the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), namely the State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSG) and the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI). To best assist NAPA in their assessment and provide the regional perspective, NARC respectfully requests members fill out a brief online survey that poses questions important to NAPA's effort. Click [HERE](#) to access the survey.

**NARC Collecting Regional Livability Information:** NARC has recently begun a project to develop strategies by which local governments and their regional planning counterparts may implement livability strategies in their regions. The project will result in policy and practical changes that your organizations can use to grow your region in new ways. The initial phases of this project require a large amount of documentation review. As Regional

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Councils and Metropolitan Planning Organizations are on the forefront of this type of activity, NARC is looking for any information you have that pertains to how your region understands the livability concept (the regional vision) and how it is, or is considering, implementing your regional livability visions (the practical tools). Any supporting materials your region may be using to inform your understanding of livability would also be helpful in this endeavor. Please forward any documentation regarding your region's livability concept and vision to NARC's Research Fellow, Valerie Hermanson, at [valerie@narc.org](mailto:valerie@narc.org) by Friday, May 22, 2011.

**NARC Regional Air Quality User Group:** NARC has launched a new Regional Air Quality User Group, providing a forum for regional air quality planners and local elected officials to discuss changes to federal air quality standards, establish a community of practice and exchange best practices in the field. This group builds off work NARC has done previously on the topic and is open to regional planners and local elected officials with an interest in air quality. Click [HERE](#) to become a member of this group.

**EDA Launches Regional Innovation Acceleration Network:** Last week, U.S. Assistance Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development John Fernandez announced the release of a web portal for the Regional Innovation Acceleration Network (RIAN), which promotes growing regional economies through innovation. RIAN supports venture development organizations that provide access to capital and investment in new ideas and companies by promoting peer to peer sharing, tools and opportunities to identify funding. Visit the new web portal [HERE](#).

**Healthy Food Financing Initiative Funding Opportunity Announced.**  
*Deadline: July 11, 2011.* The Healthy Food Financing Initiative (HFFI), funded at up to \$10 million for FY2011, will support projects located in food deserts and designed to improve access to healthy foods by developing grocery stores and other retailers. HFFI awards will be funded through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) via its Community Economic Development program to provide resources from HHS, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Department of the Treasury. Awards will be made to community development corporations (CDCs) for up to \$800,000 each. Additional information and application instructions are available [HERE](#).

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## **POLICY**UPDATE

*The Senate is in session; the House is out of session all week.*

**House Appropriations Committee Announces Schedule and Levels for FY12 Spending Bills:**

Last week, the House Appropriations Chairman Rogers (R-KY) announced the work schedule for the 12 FY12 appropriations bills. The plan intends to get at least nine of the 12 bills the House floor before August 5th, with the consideration of the remaining bills in September before the end of the fiscal year on September 30th. Spending levels are based on the House-approved FY12 Budget Resolution, which looks to reduce funding by nearly \$46 billion from FY11 for non-security programs. Click [HERE](#) for the levels and [HERE](#) for the schedule.

**House Appropriations Subcommittee Approves Cuts to FEMA**

**Programs for FY12:** Last week the House Appropriations Homeland Security Subcommittee approved a FY12 homeland security appropriations bill that would provide \$40.6 billion in discretionary funds, a 2.6 percent decrease from FY11 and 6.8 percent less than requested by President Obama for FY12. FEMA would be allocated \$5.4 billion, a decrease of \$1.9 billion or 26% from FY11, which includes \$1 billion for state and local grants, a reduction of \$2.1 billion or 55% from FY11. The bill would also combine funding for nine programs that have historically been separately funded at \$1 billion for FY12 (a \$1.043 billion reduction) with levels at the Secretary's discretion. The nine programs are State Homeland Security Grants, Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI), Metropolitan Medical Response Systems, Citizen Corps, Rail & Transit Security Grants, Bus Security Grants, Port Security Grants, Driver's License Security Grants and Interoperable Emergency Communications Grants. The bill also includes language that would restrict UASI funding to the top ten highest risk urban areas.

**House Financial Services Committee Reauthorizes the National Flood Insurance Program:**

With a unanimous vote, the House Financial Services Committee approved [HR 1309](#), the Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2011, which would reauthorize the federal flood insurance program through Sept. 30, 2016. The bill includes provisions to temporarily suspend mandatory purchase requirements for special flood hazard areas, phase in new flood insurance rates for newly mapped areas and stipulate that private flood insurance would satisfy the mandatory flood insurance purchase requirement for properties in flood hazard areas.

**House Livable Communities Task Force Request for Information:**

The U.S. House of Representatives Livable Communities Task Force is writing a report on the policy proposals that Members of Congress and others have

supported through the years, some of which are already helping some communities adapt flexibly to higher gasoline prices. As part of this report, they would like to include a review of current literature on how alternative transportation investments, smart growth, transit oriented development, and other livability policies can help reduce oil demand and provide relief from high gas prices. To assist the Task Force, please send Shannon Baxevanis, [shannon@narc.org](mailto:shannon@narc.org), any literature that your organization has published or is aware of, including reports, one-pagers, fact sheets, or white papers, that might be relevant to this discussion by tomorrow, Tuesday, May 17 by noon ET.

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## GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

### **EPA Siting Renewable Energy on Potentially Contaminated Land and Mine Sites**

*Deadline: May 20, 2011*

Through its RE-Powering America's Land: Siting Renewable Energy on Potentially Contaminated Land and Mine Sites initiative, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is soliciting applications from states, tribes, regional governments, and communities that want to evaluate the potential development of renewable energy on potentially or formerly contaminated properties. This evaluation will be in the form of a feasibility study conducted by the Department of Energy National Renewable Energy Laboratory that will determine the best renewable energy technology for the site, the optimal location for placement of the renewable energy technology, potential energy generating capacity, the return on the investment, and the economic feasibility of the renewable energy projects. The purpose of the technical assistance is to reuse sites, improve communities, create jobs, develop partnerships, decrease the use of greenspace for siting renewable energy and increase the amount of renewable energy generated. Proposals are due to EPA Friday May 20 and may be submitted to [matthews.lura@epa.gov](mailto:matthews.lura@epa.gov). More information on the RE-Powering initiative and the request for applications can be found [HERE](#).

### **Health Impact Project**

*Deadline: June 1, 2011*

The Health Impact Project, a collaboration of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and The Pew Charitable Trusts, is accepting brief proposals through June 1, 2011 for grants to conduct health impact assessments (HIAs). The funding will enable awardees to develop an HIA, which is a study

that can help policy makers and community members identify and address the potential, and often-overlooked, health implications of proposed policies and projects in a broad range of sectors, such as agriculture, energy, transportation and development. The Health Impact Project will fund up to eight HIAs to identify how policy proposals will impact health at the local, tribal or state levels. Grants will range from \$25,000 to \$125,000 and will support government agencies, educational institutions and nonprofit organizations. Click [HERE](#) for more information.

#### **ClimateWise Project**

*Deadline: June 10, 2011*

The Geos Institute has pioneered a process called ClimateWise that offers community-based climate change planning services to communities across the nation. Working with local governments and regional planning organizations, the Geos Institute is seeking new partners for the next focal region where the process will be implemented. If you are interested in partnering with the Geos Institute, click [HERE](#) to review the Request for Partnerships or [HERE](#) for additional information about the Geos Institute.

#### **Clean Cities Community Readiness and Planning for Plug-in Electric Vehicles and Charging Infrastructure**

*Deadline: June 13, 2011*

The U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) National Energy Technology Laboratory is soliciting projects emphasizing the development of local and regional plug-in electric vehicle and charging infrastructure for their Clean Cities Community Readiness and Planning for Plug-in Electric Vehicles and Charging Infrastructure project. The U.S. DOE is interested in exploring ways that will prepare communities for successful deployment and implementation of plug-in electric drive vehicles. Projects should include policy implementation and planning elements that support the deployment of plug-in electric vehicles and charging infrastructure on the local and regional level. Plans must also address infrastructure deployment for light, medium and/or heavy duty plug-in electric vehicles (including extended range electric vehicles). Overall, the U.S. DOE hopes this effort will help to decrease the nation's dependence on petroleum and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by accelerating the deployment of plug-in electric drive vehicles and electric vehicle supply equipment (EVSE). The U.S. DOE will award 10-15 awards ranging from \$250,000-\$500,000. More information is available [HERE](#).

#### **The Kodak American Greenways Grant Program**

*Deadline: June 15, 2011*

The Eastman Kodak Company, The Conservation Fund and the National

Geographic Society have announced the release of their 2011 Greenways Awards. Each year a Greenway Award is presented to land trusts, local governments, and other organizations that are growing our nation's networks of greenways, blueways, trails and natural areas. These projects connect Americans to the outdoors and their heritage. Funded projects typically advance one or more of the program goals, including catalyzing new greenway projects; assisting grassroots greenway organizations; leveraging additional money for conservation and greenway development; and promoting use and enjoyment of greenways. Award amounts range from \$500 to \$2,500. The full grant announcement is available [HERE](#).

#### **EDA University Center Competition**

*Deadline: June 30, 2011*

The U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA) announced its FY 2011 University Center Economic Development Program competition to promote bottom-up regional strategies that help foster business expansion and job creation in EDA's Chicago and Philadelphia regions. Accredited institutions or consortium of higher education, including community colleges, are eligible to apply for funding. The U.S. EDA will award \$1.1 million in the Chicago region and \$1.4 million in the Philadelphia region. Additional information is available [HERE](#).

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## **UPCOMINGEVENTS**

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

**May 17-21, 2011, Raleigh, NC:** Register now for a FREE Solar America Communities workshop "Getting Started with Solar in Your Community" from 8:00am - 4:00pm on Tuesday, May 17; held in conjunction with this event. Go to [www.icma.org/solar2011](http://www.icma.org/solar2011) for more details, or email Anna Read at [solar@icma.org](mailto:solar@icma.org) to register.

#### ***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.

***Freight Community to Share Best Practices on Advocating for Infrastructure Investment***

**June 21-23, 2011, Savannah, GA:** Members of various freight-related organizations will gather to share information and best practices on how to effectively communicate the value of transportation infrastructure investment to policymakers, influencers and the public. The American Association of Port Authorities is sponsoring this seminar on *Communicating the Importance of Infrastructure Investment*. Featured key note speakers will include Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed, representing the Building America's Future coalition, who will address the topic of *Successfully Promoting the Infrastructure Investment Agenda*; as well as Former U.S. Senator Mack Francis Mattingly (R-GA 1981-87) who will address *Effectively Communicating with Key Legislators*. More information is available by clicking [HERE](#).

***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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