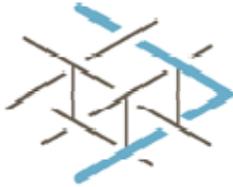


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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

VOL. XI, No. 45, December 19, 2011

eRegions

NARC LEADERSHIP

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Executive Director,
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Regional Council of
Governments

EXECUTIVE BRIEF

Colleagues,

Thank you for your continued support of and engagement with NARC. On behalf of your association staff, we want to wish you all the best, happy holidays, and happy New Year! We look forward to seeing you in

**Happy Holidays and
Best Wishes for the New Year!**

[PROGRAM UPDATE](#) [POLICY UPDATE](#)
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2012 NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF REGIONS

FEBRUARY 12-14, 2012

THE RITZ-CARLTON HOTEL
WASHINGTON, DC

REGISTER TODAY!

Draft Agenda Available: click [HERE](#) to access the draft agenda.

Registration: click [HERE](#) to register.

Interested in Congressional Guides?: If you are interested in ordering copies of the Congressional Guides for your organization, contact [Lindsey Riley](#). As in past conferences, one copy of the Guide will be provided to each registered conference attendee. *Additional copies are available at \$7.75/copy.*

Orders must be received no later than December 31, 2011.

2012.

eRegions won't be published again until next year and until then - cheers!

Best,
Fred

NARCSTAFF

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

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PROGRAMUPDATE

EPA Briefs Water Stakeholders on Proposed Integrated Planning

Framework: On December 13, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) briefed water stakeholders on EPA's current thinking as they develop their framework to implement the October 27 [memo](#) "Achieving Water Quality Through Integrated Municipal Stormwater and Wastewater Plans," which included key elements of an integrated municipal stormwater/wastewater plan. Click [HERE](#) to access the PowerPoint presentation used, which will serve as the basis for upcoming stakeholder meetings early next year. The principles and elements laid out in the presentation will be revised based on the comments EPA receives over the coming months. EPA indicated this schedule, which will be posted in the Federal Register, for their series of public workshops starting in January 2012 across the U.S. in various EPA Regional Offices: Atlanta - week of January 31; New York City - February 6; Seattle -February 13; Kansas City - February 15; and, Chicago - February 17.

ASCE Releases Water Infrastructure Report: The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) released a new report, "Failure to Act: The Economic Impact of Current Investment Trends in Water and Wastewater Treatment Infrastructure," that links water infrastructure spending with the economy. The report projects that if additional water and wastewater infrastructure investments are not made, the U.S. economy could lose up to 700,000 jobs and suffer a gross domestic product (GDP) loss of \$416 billion. Click [HERE](#) to access the report.

New Solar Energy Information and Links: Check out NARC's [solar energy webpage](#) for updated information including upcoming workshops, and new resource links. In particular, there is a new link to [DSIRE, the Database of State Incentives for Renewables & Efficiency](#). This excellent and constantly-updated resource allows users to search for policies, regulations, and incentives relevant to your state. It is a helpful "one-stop-shop" for understanding the renewable energy policies that apply to your region.

Solar America Cities Podcast, *Solar in Tucson*: Check out this podcast highlighting the City of Tucson's work as one of the Department of Energy's 25 Solar America Cities. Featuring Bruce Plenk, the City of Tucson's Solar Energy Coordinator, this podcast explores the city's successes, challenges, and lessons learned. To access the podcast, click [HERE](#).

Sustainable Communities and Rural America: Click [HERE](#) to read the

Natural Resources Defense Council staff blog posting answering the question: Does the sustainable communities agenda have something to offer rural America?

Open Comment Period for Proposed EDA Regulations: *Comment Period Closes February 6, 2012.* Last week, the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA) published its **proposed revised regulations** based on external and internal feedback gathered through a public comment period earlier this year. Stakeholders may now provide comments on the proposed revised EDA regulations. Please click **HERE** to learn more or provide comments, and please provide copies of any comments you plan to submit to **Jenee Kresge**.

POLICYUPDATE

House is in session on Monday; the Senate is out of session.

Federal Budget Update: Over the weekend, Congress sent President Obama a nearly \$1 trillion FY12 omnibus appropriations bill into law for his signature. The bill (HR 2055) contained nine FY12 appropriations bills – Defense (\$518.3B), Energy-Water (\$32.1B), Financial Services (\$21.5), Homeland Security (\$39.4B), Interior-Environment (\$29.2B), Labor-HHS-Education (\$156.3B), Legislative Branch (\$4.3B), Military Construction-VA (\$73.7B) and State-Foreign Operations (\$42.3B). NARC is working on a summary that will provide details on areas important to regional planning organizations and local governments.

Senate Clears Disaster Relief Bill: On Friday, the Senate cleared HR 3672, the Disaster Relief Appropriations Act of 2012, a stand-alone appropriations bill that would allocate \$8.12 billion in disaster aid (\$6.4B for FEMA's Disaster Relief Fund and \$1.7B for the Army Corps of Engineers) and \$483 million in an initiative to combat waste, fraud and abuse in Social Security. The bill, which is not offset by other spending cuts, now awaits presidential signature.

Senate Subcommittee Holds Hearing on Water Infrastructure Needs and Investment: Last week, the Senate Environment and Public Works Subcommittee on Water and Wildlife held a hearing focusing on the status of the nation's water infrastructure. Issues such as the funding gap for the water sector to address aging and failing waste and drinking water systems were discussed along with other issues including asset management, sustainable funding, water efficiency, and innovative approaches to water infrastructure

financing. EPA's testimony included information on the benefits of green infrastructure techniques to address stormwater runoff and combined sewer overflows. Other panelists focused on innovative financing for water infrastructure, such as the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Authority (WIFIA), lifting the cap on private activity bonds, and public private partnerships. Click [HERE](#) for more information.

HouseHolds Hearing on EPA's Integrated Planning and Permitting: On December 14, the House Transportation & Infrastructure Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment held a hearing on EPA's recently announced initiative on integrating municipal stormwater and wastewater planning and permitting. The first panel was comprised of State and local officials, utility managers, and an environmental representative who all stressed the environmental and financial challenges faced at the local level in addressing the wide range of stormwater, wet weather, municipal treatment and aging infrastructure needs under current Clean Water Act requirements. One of the witnesses was Commissioner Todd Portune, Hamilton County, OH, Board Member of the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Planning Council in the Greater Cincinnati, OH region. Click [HERE](#) for more information.

ASSISTANCEREQUEST

Grant Management: The Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) is looking for assistance with the following questions regarding grants. 1) Does your organization use the services of a grant writer or have an FTE that handles grant management? Can you provide a copy of the scope if you work with a contractor or a job description if it's an employee? 2) If your organization doesn't have a dedicated person responsible for grants, who handles the close-out of grants, the management of your grant(s), etc.? Please contact Roxie Ronsen, DRCOG, directly at rrosen@drco.org.

Performance Audit Scope of Work: The Rogue Valley Council of Governments (RVCOG) is looking for an example of scope of work (SOW) for a Council of Government performance audit. Specifically, they are looking for a performance audit SOW for the organization itself, rather than for a specific program. Has your organization completed a performance audit and could share your SOW? Please contact Michael Cavallaro, RVCOG Executive Director, at mcavallaro@rvco.org.

SOLAR CASE STUDIES: As part of NARC's work with the [SunShot Initiative](#), NARC is developing case studies of regional councils who have done work in the field of solar energy. The goal is to include a variety of examples to be highlighted in a publication. We would love to hear about your experience working to promote solar energy in your region. CONTACT: Kristin Heery, kristin@narc.org or 202.986.1032 x225

PARTNERUPDATE

EcoSummit 2012: The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission will host EcoSummit 2012, September 30-October 5, 2012 in Columbus, Ohio. The Call for Abstracts has been released. Click [HERE](#) for additional information.

Regional Excellence: *Thai Style*. Former NARC Executive Director Bill Dodge authors this column and can be reached at WilliamRDodge@aol.com. Click [HERE](#) to access the column.

Confessions of a Messy Regionalist. Bill Barnes, Director of *Emerging Issues* at the National League of Cities (NLC), publishes his latest column on Citiwire.net. Click [HERE](#) to access the article.

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

2012 NSDI Cooperative Agreements Program

January 2012

Preliminary information regarding the 2012 National Spatial Data Information (NSDI) Cooperative Agreements Program has been released. A full grant announcement will be posted by the end of October. Click [HERE](#) to access the information that is available now.

FHWA Transportation, Community and System Preservation Program

Deadline: January 6, 2012

The Transportation, Community, and System Preservation Program provides funding for a comprehensive initiative including planning grants, implementation grants, and research to investigate and address the relationships among transportation, community, and system preservation plans and practices and identify private-sector-based initiatives to improve those relationships. Grants may be used to plan and implement strategies that improve the efficiency of the transportation system; reduce environmental impacts of transportation; reduce the need for costly future public

infrastructure investments; ensure efficient access to jobs, services, and centers of trade; and examine development patterns and identify strategies to encourage private sector development patterns that achieve these goals. For more information, click [HERE](#).

Siemens Sustainable Community Awards

Deadline: January 13, 2012

For the fifth year, Siemens, a National League of Cities (NLC) Corporate Partner, is sponsoring The Siemens Sustainable Community Awards in partnership with the U.S.

Chamber of Commerce Business Civic Leadership Center (BCLC). Nominations for the 2012 awards will include three categories: small communities (less than 50,000 residents), midsize cities (50,000-500,000 residents) and large communities (more than 500,000 residents). Each winning city will be announced during an awards reception in April 2012 and will receive a donation of \$20,000 worth of trees through the Alliance for Community Trees. Strong candidates for the award are able to demonstrate that their community has forged relationships with residents and the local private sector to set and achieve complementary economic, environmental and social goals. Together, these goals have helped the community realize long-term competitiveness and success. Communities will be judged by a panel of experts in three categories — environmental sustainability, economic sustainability and overarching sustainability. For more information, or to apply, click [HERE](#).

EPA Requests Proposals for Urban Waters Small Grants

Deadline: January 16, 2012

The U.S. EPA will award at least \$1.8 million in funding for projects across the country to help restore [urban waters](#) by improving water quality and supporting community revitalization. The goal of the urban waters small grants are to fund research, studies, training, and demonstration projects that will advance the restoration of urban waters by improving water quality through activities that also support community revitalization and other local priorities such as public health, social and economic opportunities, general livability and environmental justice for residents. Examples of projects eligible for funding include:

- Education and training for water quality improvement or green infrastructure jobs
- Public education about ways to reduce water pollution
- Local water quality monitoring programs

- Engaging diverse stakeholders to develop local watershed plans
- Innovative projects that promote local water quality and community revitalization goals

Information about urban waters small grants including the Request for Proposal and registration links for the webinars is available [HERE](#). Questions can be submitted in writing via e-mail by clicking [HERE](#) and addressed to Ji-Sun Yi. EPA expects to award the grants in Summer 2012.

DOI WaterSMART: Water and Energy Efficiency Grants for FY 2012

Application Due: January 19, 2012

The Department of Interior (DOI) WaterSMART (Sustain and Manage America's Resources for Tomorrow) Program establishes a framework to provide federal leadership and assistance on the efficient use of water, integrating water and energy policies to support the sustainable use of all natural resources, and coordinating the water conservation activities of various DOI bureaus and offices. DOI invites eligible entities to leverage their money and resources by cost sharing with the Bureau of Reclamation on projects that seek to conserve and use water more efficiently, increase the use of renewable energy and improve energy efficiency, benefit endangered and threatened species, facilitate water markets, or carry out other activities to address climate-related impacts on water or prevent any water-related crisis or conflict. More information is available [HERE](#).

U.S. DOE Smart Grid Data Access Funding Opportunity – \$8 million

Application Due: March 1, 2012

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) National Energy Technology Laboratory is seeking applications aimed at empowering consumers to better manage their electricity use by enabling access to electricity consumption data by customers and their authorized third parties, and providing or supporting the use of third party tools and software products that use the available data to deliver a value-added service to the customer.

Click [HERE](#) for more information.

UPCOMINGEVENTS

New Partners For Smart Growth Conference

February 2-4, 2012, San Diego, CA: Register today for this 11th annual event. Additional conference details are available [HERE](#).

Planning for Solar Energy in Your Community: Workshop

February 4, 2012, San Diego, CA: This workshop will be held during the New Partners for Smart Growth Conference and will focus on overcoming planning and zoning barriers to adoption of solar energy technologies—primarily rooftop PV—at the local level. Increased solar adoption supports smart growth goals. Throughout the workshop, speakers will present zoning tools and innovative financing options that can make communities more "solar-friendly" and case study examples of what communities across the country are doing to address solar in their planning, zoning, and development decisions. Click [HERE](#) for additional information.

2012 National Conference of Regions

February 12-14, 2012, Washington, DC: Register Today! NARC will host its 2012 National Conference of Regions, which will focus on Obama Administration's priorities, Congressional activities, and critical policy issues and pending federal legislation that will impact regions. Click [HERE](#) to access registration and additional information.

Green Infrastructure Workshop

March 5-9, 2012, Shepherdstown, WV: The Conservation Fund's National Conservation Training Center in Shepherdstown, WV is hosting *Strategic Conservation Planning Using a Green Infrastructure Approach* on March 5-9, 2012. This workshop provides participants with a strategic approach for prioritizing conservation opportunities and a planning framework for conservation and development- integrating the green and the grey. For more information, click [HERE](#).

46th Annual Conference and Exhibition

June 10-14, 2012, St. Petersburg, FL: Save the Date! Join us for the the largest national event focused on promoting effective regional cooperation and solutions through interaction and education. NARC's Annual Conference and Exhibition is the premier place to learn how to engage in effective regional collaboration. Registration and additional information will be available in early 2012.

2012 Executive Directors' Conference

September 24-26, 2012, Boise, ID: Save the Date! Join Executive Directors and senior staff of regional councils and metropolitan planning organizations at this premier regional training event. Registration information and a draft agenda will be available in mid 2012.

2012 EcoSummit

September 30-October 5, 2012, Columbus, OH: EcoSummit 2012 will bring

together the world's most respected minds in ecological science to discuss restoring the planet's ecosystems. Click [HERE](#) for additional information - now accepting Call for Abstracts!

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