



2015 NATIONAL
CONFERENCE OF REGIONS

FEBRUARY 8-10, 2015
WASHINGTON, DC

EXECUTIVE BRIEF

Dear NARC Members,

Wishing you all the happiest of new years as we begin 2015!

The 114th Congress will be sworn in on Tuesday, with a stronger Republican majority in the U.S. House of Representatives and a new Republican majority in the U.S. Senate. This week will be largely ceremonial, culminating in the election of the Speaker of the House and the selection of other chamber and party leadership.

Next week, Congress will begin to face a number of looming issues, including how to fund the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and how to address the nation's energy needs. Other major issues Congress will need to grapple with in its first six months are funding the highway trust fund (which will become insolvent in May), and extending the debt ceiling.

We will discuss these issues and more at NARC's 2015 National Conference of Regions – our annual legislative conference. Click [HERE](#) for the draft agenda and to register!

Thanks,
Joanna Turner

PROGRAM UPDATE

Revised Draft NEPA Guidance Concerning Greenhouse Gas Emissions: The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) published revised draft guidance on how *National Environmental Policy Act* (NEPA) analysis and documentation should address greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Among other things, the revised draft guidance:

- Discusses direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts analysis of a proposed action's reasonably foreseeable emissions and effects;
- Highlights the consideration of reasonable alternatives and points to the need to consider the short-term and long-term effects and benefits in the alternatives analysis and mitigation to lower emissions;
- Counsels agencies to use the information developed during the NEPA review to consider alternatives that are more resilient to the effects of a changing climate; and
- Advises agencies to use existing information and tools when assessing future proposed action, and provides examples of some existing sources of scientific information.

Click [HERE](#) for more information.

New Disaster Recovery Staffing Guide: The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) released its *National Disaster Recovery Framework* (NDRF) to address the need for guidance, structure, and support for long-term recovery after a disaster. A new *Disaster Recovery Staffing Guide*, released by the LMI Research Institute, outlines the process and practices required to effectively staff community disaster recovery activities. The guide addresses critical recovery-related concerns, including coordination techniques, organizational setup, and the staffing process. It is paired with the *Disaster Recovery Positions Library* (DRPL), which describes more than 50 positions that may be used to conduct the full range of local recovery activities. The guide and position descriptions are scalable (for the size of community and recovery effort) and designed for communities to use during proactive planning or post-disaster. The DRPL describes the job duties, experience, and educational requirements, as well as related positions for key recovery positions. The DRPL focuses on 10 local recovery activities and their associated positions at three organizational levels: management, coordination, and implementation. Click [HERE](#) for the guide, and [HERE](#) for the DRPL.

REGIONS360

Past President Oscar Soliz Passes: Oscar Soliz, Past President of NARC; former Nueces County, Texas District Clerk; National Association of Counties Board Member; and National Association of County Recorders, Election Officials, and Clerks Board Member died on December 15 at age 80. Oscar Soliz was elected in the 1970s to Nueces County District Clerk — a position he maintained for 32 years. "Oscar Soliz was the very embodiment of public service," former city and district attorney and friend, Carlos Valdez said. "He was one of the first Latinos elected in a countywide race, a door he opened for many of us to go through," he said. Soliz served as chairman of the Coastal Bend Council of Government and as president of the National Association of County Recorders and Clerks and was elected by the association as Outstanding Clerk of the United States. He was a board member of the National Association of County Officials for 26 years — the longest-serving member.

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

Click [HERE](#) to view the list of grants still open!

2015 Five Star/Urban Waters Restoration Program

Application Deadline: February 3

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) is offering grants through the *Five Star and Urban Waters Restoration Grant Program*, which provides financial assistance to local partnerships for wetland, riparian, forest, and coastal habitat restoration, urban wildlife conservation, stormwater management as well as outreach, education, and stewardship. Projects should focus on water quality, watersheds, and the habitats they support. NFWF anticipates that approximately \$2,100,000 in combined total funding will be available for this round of grants. Click [HERE](#) for details.

2015 Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program

Application Deadline: March 5

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is offering grants to nonprofit and public agencies through its *Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program*, which aims to improve medical knowledge about geriatric care through operation of geriatric education centers that help develop a health care workforce to maximize patient and family engagement and improve health outcomes for older adults by integrating geriatrics with primary care. Funding may be used to support training for those who provide health care to older adults. Click [HERE](#) for details.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Click [HERE](#) to view the list of events still open!

WEBINAR: FHWA Pavement and Bridge Condition NPRM

January 8, 3:00 - 5:00 PM ET

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) published a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) in the Federal Register to propose performance management regulations related to assessing the condition of pavement and bridges on the National Highway System (NHS), and pavements on the non-Interstate NHS (as required by the *Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act* (MAP-21)). This NPRM is focused on implementing some of these MAP-21 requirements and proposes regulations that would:

- Provide for greater consistency in pavement and bridge condition reporting;
- Require the establishment of targets that can be aggregated at the national level;
- Require reporting in a consistent manner on progress achievement;
- Establish the minimum level for condition of pavements on the Interstate System as required by MAP-21; and
- Incorporate the minimum level for condition of NHS bridges as required by MAP-21.

Click [HERE](#) to register.

WEBCAST: U.S. DOT Rolls Out Climate Change Risk Management Tools

January 22, 2:00 - 3:30 PM ET

The U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT) is hosting the *Climate/Weather Risk Management Tools— Learning from the Gulf Coast* webcast event. Over the past five years, U.S. DOT has been conducting a groundbreaking climate change vulnerability assessment pilot in Mobile, Alabama. Commonly known as Phase 2 of the Gulf Coast Study, this project's mission was to develop methods, resources, and tools that will assist transportation agencies with conducting climate change vulnerability assessments and evaluating facility-level adaptation options. Explore the resources, tools, and lessons learned from a five-year U.S. Department of Transportation climate change vulnerability study. Click [HERE](#) to register.

NARC CONFERENCE: NARC's 2015 National Conference of Regions

February 8-10, 2015 – Washington, DC

Registration is open for the National Conference of Regions. This conference is a forum for locally-elected officials and their Regional Councils to explore federal policy issues, and discuss NARC's legislative priorities for the 114th Congress. Click [HERE](#) for the conference webpage.