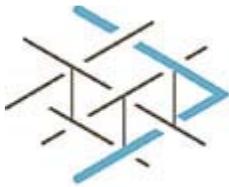


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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

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eRegions

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PROGRAM UPDATE POLICY UPDATE REGIONS 360 GRANT OPPORTUNITIES UPCOMING EVENTS

New Funding Amount! Regional Centers of Excellence: NARC, with support from the U.S. Forest Service, is seeking applications for the distribution of grants to regional organizations promoting the use of green infrastructure. Application deadline is February 28. Click [HERE](#) for details.

National Conference of Regions: NARC's 2014 National Conference of Regions was held last week in Washington, DC. *Thank you to our keynotes, speakers and attendees for making the event a success.* Follow up materials will be posted and distributed shortly.

PROGRAM UPDATE

SunShot Announces 60% Progress to 2020 Affordability Goal:

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) announced last week that the U.S. solar industry is more than 60% of the way to reaching its goal of cost-competitive utility-scale solar photovoltaic (PV) electricity, \$0.06 per kilowatt-hour (kWh) by 2020. 2013 was an overall impressive year for solar in the U.S. and this news is very promising for the continued adaptation and success of solar in the U.S. in 2014 and beyond. To learn more about the SunShot Initiative and what NARC is doing to promote solar energy

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2013 Solar State Job Census Report: Did you know that Louisiana, Utah, South Carolina, and Arkansas doubled their solar jobs from 2012-2013? Or that New Jersey is the #3 state for solar employment? Find out your state's solar jobs numbers through The Solar Foundation's easy-to-use map. Each state's profile can be printed, emailed, or shared over social media. Click [HERE](#) to find out your state's solar jobs report.

Street Trees Photo Contest: Want to win \$1,000 for your street trees? Grab your camera and enter the Street Trees Photo Contest. Send in your most dramatic and compelling photographs that capture the beauty and impact of street trees in your city by March 1. Click [HERE](#) for more information.

POLICYUPDATE

Congress is in session.

House Committee Considers Older Americans Act (OAA)

Reauthorization: Last week the House Education and Workforce Committee held a hearing on reauthorizing the OAA. In January, the House introduced a straight reauthorization proposal, which is intended to serve as a starting point for the conversation. At the hearing, Chairwoman Virginia Foxx recognized that the number of Americans 65+ will increase from 40 million in 2010 to 72 million in 2030, and expressed concern that the OAA "cannot effectively meet the needs of the rapidly growing senior population – especially amid current fiscal constraints." The Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee passed its version of OAA, making conservative changes to this expired bill. A live webcast of the House hearing is available [HERE](#).

President Signs Farm Bill into Law: On February 7, President Obama signed the Farm Bill into law, ending a two-year struggle to reauthorize the nation's agriculture and nutrition policy through 2018. While the journey toward the President's desk was long and contentious, the final bill contained a number of important NARC member priorities. A comprehensive side-by-side of member priorities included in the compromise package is available on NARC's website [HERE](#).

Senate Committee Approves Williams to Head EDA: On February 6, Senate Environment and Public Works (EPW) Committee voted to approve former Youngstown, Ohio Mayor Jay Williams to lead the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration. His nomination as the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development Administration (EDA) at the U.S. Department of Commerce will advance to the full Senate for approval.

Vice President Biden Tapped to Review Nation's Workforce Programs: After announcing an initiative in his State of the Union Address to better align job training programs with employer needs, the President tasked Vice President Biden to conduct a full-scale review of federal workforce training programs. Additionally, the Administration signaled plans to allocate \$150 million in new support from the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) for "job-driven training partnerships" or industry sector partnerships. The White House released a fact sheet outlining anticipated efforts [HERE](#) and a report detailing the cycle of long-term unemployment [HERE](#).

President Announces Immediate Drought Relief and \$1 Billion for Climate Change Fund: Last week in Fresno, CA, President Obama and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced immediate funding for drought relief across the country and the establishment of "Regional Climate Hubs," which will provide regional networks on climate science and forecasting impacts. The President indicated that his budget will contain a \$1 billion request to establish a "climate resilience fund," to help communities prepare for climate change and fund research and technology to protect against its impact. These announcements are aligned with the President's June 2013 Climate Action Plan. More information is available [HERE](#).

REGIONS360

CMAP's GO TO 2040 Wins National Smart Growth Award: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced that Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning's (CMAP) GO TO 2040 comprehensive regional plan is the 2013 National Award for Smart Growth Achievement winner in the category of policies, programs, and plans. GO TO 2040 and other awardees are featured in an

EPA video [HERE](#), booklet [HERE](#) (page 10), and photos [HERE](#).

Check out Mid-America Regional Council's (MARC) Video on Creating Sustainable Places: This video highlights MARC's plan to expand job access, connect people to places, and improve community life in neighborhoods throughout the region. With a 2010 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Regional Planning grant, MARC united its two-state, six county region, getting ahead of local trends -- aging population, increased diversity, and shrinking household size -- to create a thriving region for citizens. Joining together a 2011 HUD Challenge grant with Kansas and Missouri state funding, MARC provided grants to 18 localities to develop neighborhood plans and programs, to implement the region's vision. Watch the video [HERE](#) and click [HERE](#) for further information.

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

Green Project Reserve Funding Available through CWSRF: In fiscal year (FY) 2014, Congress and the President provided \$1.45 billion to capitalize the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) program, and mandated that no less than ten percent of these funds be dedicated to the Green Project Reserve, approximately \$145 million nationwide. The state agencies that administer CWSRF programs have developed different methods to disperse Green Project Reserve dollars, but these projects address green infrastructure, water or energy efficiency improvements, or environmentally innovative activities. More information is available [HERE](#).

Energy for Sustainability

Deadline: February 20

This program supports fundamental research and education that will enable innovative processes for the sustainable production of electricity and transportation fuels. Processes for sustainable energy production must be environmentally benign, reduce greenhouse gas production, and utilize renewable resources. Current interest areas in sustainable energy technologies are: Biomass Conversion, Biofuels & Bioenergy, Photovoltaic Solar Energy, Wind Energy, and Advanced Batteries for Transportation. Learn more about this program [HERE](#).

USDA – Value-Added Producer Grant Program

Deadline: February 24

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced \$10.5 million in carry-over funding from 2013 to help U.S. agricultural producers enter into value-added activities. Awards may be made for either economic planning or working capital activities related to the processing and/or marketing of valued- added agricultural products. More information is available [HERE](#).

Update! Regional Centers of Excellence

Application Due: February 28

NARC, with support from the U.S. Forest Service, is seeking applications for the distribution of grants to regional organizations promoting the use of green infrastructure. One \$8,000 grant will be awarded. Click [HERE](#) for details.

New! USDA – Conservation Innovation Grants

Deadline: March 7

The USDA announced \$15 million in funding available for Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) to develop and accelerate conservation approaches and technologies on private agricultural and forest lands. Priority will be given to applications that relate to nutrient management, energy conservation, soil health, air quality, climate change, wildlife, economics, sociology, environmental markets, food safety, historically underserved groups, or assessments of past CIG projects. Click [HERE](#) for details.

EPA – Regional Pollution Prevention Program Offices

Deadline: March 11

Funding is available for Source Reduction Assistance Grants for projects that reduce or eliminate pollution at the source. Funded projects will reduce greenhouse gases; reduce hazardous materials; increase resource conservation; promote efficient business practices; and support pollution prevention integration. EPA anticipates having more than \$1 million in funding available in 2014. More information is available [HERE](#).

DOE - SunShot Incubator 9 Program

Application Deadline: March 13

As part of a new \$19 million investment in solar energy, DOE announced funding available under the SunShot Incubator 9

program. This program will focus on early-stage support for small companies, encouraging private-sector investment and seeking app and web developers from both inside and outside of the energy industry to zero in on reducing soft costs of solar adoption. More information is available [HERE](#).

EDA - Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Programs

Deadlines: March 14; June 13 for funding cycle 4

EDA is soliciting applications from applicants in rural and urban areas to provide investments that support construction, non-construction, technical assistance, and revolving loan fund projects under EDA's Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance programs. Grants and cooperative agreements made under these programs are designed to leverage existing regional assets and support the implementation of economic development strategies that advance new ideas and creative approaches to advance economic prosperity in distressed communities. EDA provides competitive, merit-based investments that support economic development, foster job creation, and attract private investment in economically distressed areas of the United States. The full announcement is available [HERE](#).

National Science Foundation - Environmental Sustainability

Deadline: March 20

The Environmental Sustainability program supports engineering research that seeks to balance society's need to provide ecological protection and maintain stable economic conditions. Research in Environmental Sustainability typically considers long time horizons and may incorporate contributions from the social sciences and ethics. There are four principal general research areas which are supported: Industrial Ecology, Green Engineering, Ecological Engineering, Earth Systems Engineering. Click [HERE](#) to learn more.

New! Health Impact Assessment (HIA) Funding Opportunity

Proposal Deadline: April 2

The Health Impact Project, a collaboration of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and The Pew Charitable Trusts, has launched a call for proposals. HIA help to identify and address likely benefits and risks of a decision made in a field outside of the health sector. Eligible organizations include nonprofits, state, local and tribal

agencies, and educational institutions. Click [HERE](#) to read the proposal letter and [HERE](#) for application details.

New! Solar Manufacturing Technology 2 (SolarMat 2)

Application Due: March 14, 2015

The U.S. DOE SunShot Initiative is providing funding to spur solar energy manufacturing and supply chain companies in the U.S., by aiding the development of innovative cost reducing and/or efficiency increasing technology into useable manufacturing equipment and processes. Click [HERE](#) for more information about available funding.

Climate Solutions University Accepting Applications

Application Deadline: Rolling

The Model Forest Policy Program is offering a special funding opportunity for qualifying U.S. urban and rural communities working together addressing ecosystem services. Urban decision makers need to plan for climate impacts that result from land changes beyond their jurisdictional boundaries. To find out more about the Climate Solutions University, click [HERE](#).

UPCOMINGEVENTS

New! WEBINAR: EDA and International Economic Development Council - Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership

February 19, 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM EST

In December, the Obama Administration launched a national competition to designate up to 12 communities as “manufacturing communities” in the U.S. The Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership (IMCP) will help accelerate the resurgence of manufacturing in regions across the country. The IMCP will reward communities that best highlight their strengths and demonstrate they can combine their efforts around workforce training, infrastructure, and research centers to implement an economic development plan that will attract, retain and expand manufacturing investment. Register [HERE](#) for an overview of the IMCP program, updates about the application process, and answers regarding IMCP and the application process.

New! TWITTER: HUD-DOE-EPA Green Energy Twitter Town Hall

February 21, 2:00 PM EST

Participate in Green Energy Twitter Town Hall, a virtual discussion about the green energy policies adopted by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), DOE, and EPA to help improve energy efficiency in commercial buildings, multifamily complexes, and individual homes. You can tweet questions and comments to #GreenEnergyQs up until the event. DOE Deputy Assistant Secretary for Energy Efficiency, Kathleen Hogan; HUD Senior Advisor for the Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities, Trisha Miller; and EPA Director of Climate Protection Partnerships, Elizabeth Craig, will respond to your comments and questions live. Topics may include: the economic, environmental and community impacts of energy efficiency efforts of each agency; how public/private partnerships are producing long lasting energy efficiency programs; and your ideas for HUD, DOE, and EPA as they continue to implement the policies of the President's Climate Action Plan. Twitter Town Hall will be streamed live [HERE](#).

New! WEBINAR: Stormwater Management Incentives and Public Private Partnerships in Philadelphia

February 25, 1:00-3:00 PM EST

Learn more about the approaches the City of Philadelphia is taking to encourage green stormwater infrastructure on private property including stormwater billing credits, grant programs, and public private partnerships. There will be 2 Professional Development Hours offered for this webcast. Register [HERE](#).

New! WEBINAR: Urban Forestry - Toward an Ecosystem Services Research Agenda

February 25, 1:00-2:00 PM EST

Last year the National Academy of Sciences convened a workshop to bring a diverse scientific community together with urban forestry and green infrastructure practitioners. This webinar will provide an overview of that workshop, focusing on an assessment of how we currently quantify ecosystem services associated with the urban forest. Click [HERE](#) to register.

WEBINAR: DOE Tribal Renewable Energy Series - Strategic Energy Planning

February 26, 2014, 1:00-2:30 PM EST

Attendees will learn about developing a strategic energy plan, identifying key aspects of successful energy planning, and using

available information and resources. More information and registration is available [HERE](#).

New! Regional Solar Workshop: Western Kentucky

March 27, 10:00-3:00 PM CT

Local governments interested in learning about how to make their community solar ready in Western Kentucky are invited to a free workshop sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy's SunShot Solar Outreach Partnership, Green River Area Development District, and NARC. The workshop will provide actionable information on creating local –level solar policies and permitting processes. Areas of focus include: the benefits and barriers of solar development in your region; creating solar friendly planning and zoning codes and ordinances; and innovative financing options for solar projects. To register and learn more, click [HERE](#).

NARC's 48th Annual Conference and Exhibition

June 6-11, Louisville, KY

The Annual Conference and Exhibition is the largest national event focused on promoting effective regional cooperation and solutions through interaction and education. Held annually in June, NARC's Annual Conference is the premier place to learn how to engage in effective regional collaboration. Additional information will be available in early 2014.

New! CONFERENCE: Ohio Conference on Freight

September 18-19, Hyatt Regency Columbus, OH

This conference addresses the reality that economic growth will increasingly depend upon or be at the mercy of our freight infrastructure. Key goals of the conference include: building professional capacity in all aspects of freight transport by disseminating best practices in supply chain and logistics; strengthening the ability of the public and private sectors to effectively plan, build, and maintain an efficient transportation network; examining and informing state and federal policies that support freight related economic development. Also, professional engineers can claim professional development hours [PDH]. For more information contact Christine Drennen, Conference Director (419.241.9155 ext. 119 or drennen@tmacog.org) or visit www.ohiofreight.org for more info.

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