



## NEWS FROM WASHINGTON

*Congress is not in session. House and Senate will return on September 8.*

### Overview

Congress returns to Washington after Labor Day. Their number one priority will be to determine how to keep the federal government open after September 30, when current authorized funding expires. The most likely scenario is a Continuing Resolution (CR), which will keep funding levels for all programs steady at FY 2015 levels through some or all of the 2016 fiscal year. Indeed, the White House clearly thinks this is the option Congress is most likely to pursue, as the Administration sent its list of special funding requests (known as “anomalies”) for inclusion in the CR to Congress last week. That list includes a request for \$450 million in emergency funds to fight Western wildfires, an extension of the Export-Import Bank’s charter, and increased flexibility to support disability claims processing at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Typically, both the White House and the appropriations committees aim to keep the number of anomalies down to increase the CR’s likelihood of passage.

### Court Blocks WOTUS Rule in Thirteen States

Thirteen states won a preliminary injunction in a North Dakota federal court last week blocking implementation of the **Waters of the United States rule**. Those states will be covered by *Clean Water Act* (PL 95-217) regulations already on the books before the WOTUS rule was added in May. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) says only industries in the 13 states are affected by the injunction and that the new rule took effect for the rest of the nation, as planned, on August 28. EPA also said that it would enforce the rule in the rest of the nation. The controversial rule faces a dozen challenges filed in 10 federal district courts. The injunction against implementation responded to a petition by Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Idaho, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming, and New Mexico. The states sought the injunction while pursuing their lawsuit to throw out the rule. NARC, along with the U.S. Conference of Mayors (USCM), National Association of Counties (NACo), National League of Cities (NLC), and others, sent **comments to the docket** before the WOTUS rule was finalized. Click **HERE** for NARC’s summary of a February bicameral congressional hearing on the rule and **HERE** for NACO’s comparison chart.

### Coalition Letter Outlines Local Issues with DRIVE Act

NARC and other members of the Local Officials for Transportation (LOT) Coalition (NACo, NLC, USCM, Association of MPOs, and National Association of Development Organizations) sent a letter to House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee leadership last week outlining the local perspective on the Senate’s DRIVE Act reauthorization bill. In particular, the letter explains that the Senate bill actually reduces STP funding for local decision-makers. We would like to get this in the hands of as many members as possible, so please send **this letter** to your member of Congress (especially if they are on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee).

## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Want your organization featured here? Send details to [anna@narc.org](mailto:anna@narc.org).

### **Sarasota-Manatee MPO has a New Executive Director**

The Sarasota-Manatee Metropolitan Planning Organization's planning manager, David Hutchinson, is being promoted to Executive Director tomorrow. He replaces Michael Howe, who retires after 13 years with the organization. Hutchinson already has some transportation priorities and challenges in his sites, seeing more roundabouts and possibly diverging diamond interchanges, new/rebuilt bridges, and other projects that will modify how Sarasota and Manatee counties' residents will get around. Hutchinson expects some challenges in replacing or updating aging bridges, and the agency foresees the topic generating a lot of public discussion as they explore the idea of building an additional bridge across the Manatee River. He also expressed the need for safer and more complete streets for alternative travel. Congratulations to both Dave and Michael!

### **Transportation Plan Spurs Citizens Involvement in Florida**

On August 11, hundreds of citizens turned out to voice their opinions on Transportation Improvement Plans in Tampa, Florida. Overwhelmingly, residents expressed their desire for mass transit. The Hillsborough Metropolitan Planning Organization cast a vote that pushed a toll lane project closer to receiving federal funding. Accompanying the toll road is a possibility of a two-way "complete street" project, expanded mass transit, express bus service, more frequent headways for local bus service, and a modern streetcar line. Community participation will continue to play an important role in helping Tampa alleviate gridlock and maintain its historic fabric.

## MEMBER REQUESTS

Email responses to [anna@narc.org](mailto:anna@narc.org)

### **Central Yavapai Metropolitan Planning Organization**

Does your MPO/COG contract out transit service using Section 5307 funds from the Federal Transit Administration? And how much of your service is contracted out? If your MPO/COG does contract out the service, how do you handle matching requirements (e.g. does the contracted transit company provide the matching funds? Does the contractor partner with others to pay for the matching funds)?

### **Sacramento Area Council of Governments**

Has your Metropolitan Planning Organization set up a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or other form of agreement with a neighboring MPO to provide common services? Is your MPO working with nearby MPOs on common activities? What types of activities and services are you working on together?

### **CDBG-funded Project to Share**

NARC is working with the CDBG Coalition to highlight the value of the program to individual communities for lawmakers. If you have a best practice example to share, please send a brief description to [anna@narc.org](mailto:anna@narc.org) by August 31.

## FEATURED JOBS

*View full list of jobs!*

### **Senior / Principal Traffic Engineer**

Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments, Waterbury, CT

### **Transportation Planner I**

Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments, Waterbury, CT

### **Projects Manager/Engineer**

Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments, Waterbury, CT

## **Planning Director**

West Florida Regional Planning Council, Pensacola, FL

## **Senior Planner – Land Use Modeler**

Puget Sound Regional Council, Seattle, WA

## **FUNDING**

*[View full list of grants!](#)*

## **EVENTS**

*[View full list of events!](#)*

### **Clean Power Plan Webinar**

September 9, 1:00 – 2:30 PM ET

On August 3, **EPA issued** the *Clean Power Plan* to help reduce carbon pollution from power plants while maintaining energy reliability and affordability. EPA also issued final *Carbon Pollution Standards* for new, modified, and reconstructed power plants, and proposed a federal plan and model rules to assist states in implementing the ***Clean Power Plan***. In this webinar, EPA will discuss the plan and the first-ever national standards that address carbon pollution from power plants, in addition to what communities need to know about the plan.

## **CONTACT US**

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