

NEFRC Highlights

Monthly Report of the Northeast Florida Regional Council

January 2010

NEFRC Staff Coordinates First Statewide Interoperable Communications Drill: "Operation Radar"



NEFRC staff conducted the first statewide interoperable communications drill January 25 – 29 at Camp Blanding. This exercise, dubbed "Operation Radar", included more than 400 participants, representing Local, State, Military and Federal agencies, as well as American Red Cross.

The purpose of this exercise was threefold:

- 1) Evaluate the interoperability of mobile communications equipment within and between units, regions and multijurisdictional disciplines;
- 2) Identify modification needs for regional tactical inter-operation's communications plans; and
- 3) Identify interoperable communications needs.

"Operation Radar" has received rave reviews and could serve as a model exercise for future interoperable communications exercises. For more information on this exercise, please contact Jeff Alexander at (904)279-0885 x134, or jalexander@nefrc.org.



(l-r) Cherie Trainor of the Florida Department of Emergency Management discusses Operation Radar with NEFRC staff Jeff Alexander and Traci Hochhalter.

Generation Check: The Region's Youth Have Their Say

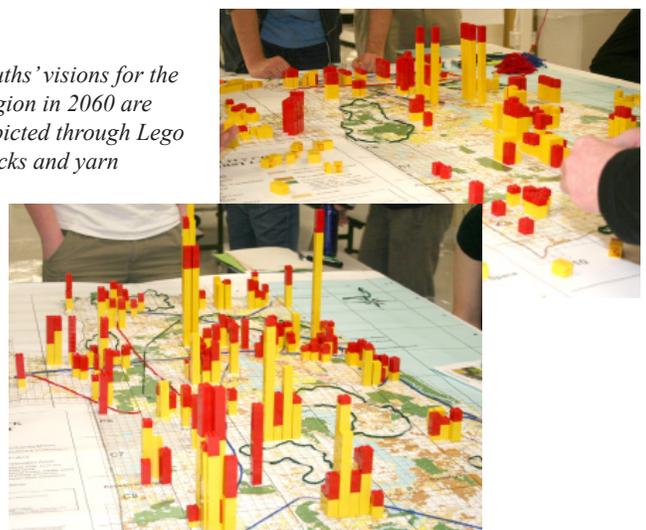


The series of Regional visioning exercises that began with Reality Check First Coast culminated with Generation Check on Saturday, January 30th. Forty-eight youth ranging in age from 13 to 19 from

throughout the Region gathered at St. Augustine High School to tell us what they wanted the Region to be in 2060. They gathered to work with Lego bricks and yarn to depict the preferred locations for new population, jobs, transit lines, regional roadways and conservation areas. Parents and chaperones were invited to play the game as well at a separately facilitated table. Generation Check concluded with participants taking a survey in which they were asked about preferred development types, access to parks and preferred transportation modes, among other items.

The results of this survey will be posted on February 15, 2010 at www.realitycheckfirstcoast.com. Thank you to all of the volunteers, sponsors and participants who made Generation Check a success! For more information on Generation Check, please contact Guy Parola at (904)279-0885 x135, or gparola@nefrc.org.

Youths' visions for the Region in 2060 are depicted through Lego bricks and yarn



North Florida Clean Cities Coalition

The North Florida Clean Cities Coalition is a government-industry partnership designed to reduce petroleum consumption in the transportation sector by advancing the use of alternative fuels and vehicles. The program is voluntary. The Coalition will provide a forum for members to leverage their resources to develop projects and collaborate on policy issues to promote clean air technologies. According to the North Florida TPO, the Coalition's goal is "to improve the environmental performance of business and government vehicle fleets". The first meeting of the year was hosted by the North Florida TPO Clean Cities Coordinator on January 22. Several local business representatives, private sector firms and the general public attended, as well as NEFRC staff. The next meeting is February 26, 2010. For additional information, please contact Ameera F. Sayeed at (904) 279-0885 ext 151 or asayeed@nefrc.org.

Regional Community Institute Kicks Off First Coast Vision

The Regional Community Institute kicked off First Coast Vision in January with kick-off meetings for five of the policy area committees. The committees will meet monthly throughout 2010 to develop a vision for the Northeast Florida Region that will form the update of the Strategic Regional Policy Plan in 2011. Additional information on First Coast Vision and the policy area committees can be found at www.firstcoastvision.com.

North Central Florida Rural Planners Network

On January 22nd, staff attended the first 2010 meeting of the North Central Florida Rural Planning Network, which is a loosely held group of land planners from over a dozen rural counties in North Central and Northeast Florida. The Rural Planning Network was assembled so that rural planners could come together in an informal setting and discuss issues affecting their communities. The quarterly meetings of the Rural Planning Network, although they remain informal, have matured to now include guest speakers. At the January 22nd meeting, there were three presentations: wood as a fuel to produce electricity, the State's post disaster redevelopment plan, and House Bill 697's requirements for Comprehensive Plans to address climate change.

While the second and third presentations were more oriented towards statutory requirements and not specific to rural counties, the presentation on wood as a fuel for power plants was oriented to rural communities. The central points to the presentation were (1) that wood is a viable, clean option for smaller power generating facilities; (2) between fallow silviculture operations and scrap (waste) wood there is plenty of fuel available; and (3) rural counties are positioned to take advantage of wood-burning technology. The next meetings of the North Central Florida Rural Planning Network are April 23rd, July 23rd, and October 22nd, locations to be determined.

Regional Leadership Series Update

The 2010 Regional Leadership Series kicked off on January 13th, with "Tools for Regional Leadership", which provided participants with an overview of the Region and concluded with noted diversity trainer Cal Jackson. The 2010 Regional Leadership Series has 25 participants who represent four of the Region's seven counties and include elected officials, government agencies, legal, banking, non-profit and development sectors. The next class in the series, "Managing Crisis in the Region", will be held at the Northeast Florida Regional Council on Wednesday, February 17th from 10:00am to 3:00pm.

The Annual Northeast Florida Elected Officials Reception and Regional Awards

The Annual Elected Officials Reception and Regional Awards Ceremony will be held at the University Center at the University of North Florida on Wednesday, February 24, 2010, beginning at 6:00pm. The following recipients are being recognized this year for their outstanding achievements:

- Harry Waldron Award: Peter Rummell
- Regional Quality of Life Award: Barnabas Center, Inc. (Nassau County)
- Regional Award for Excellence in Transportation: Palatka Municipal Airport Terminal Area Improvements
- Regional Award for Excellence in Public Safety: City of Green Cove Springs Police Department Teen Summit
- Regional Award for Excellence in Economic Development and Tourism: St. Johns County Cultural Events Division
- Regional Award for Excellence in Environmental Stewardship: (Two Awards) St. Mary's Shoals Park (Baker County) and St. Johns County Fleet Management Biodiesel Project
- Regional Award for Excellence in Affordable Housing: Dana Moore, St. Johns County Homeownership Programs Coordinator
- Regional Award for Excellence in Education: Northeast Florida Community Action Agency Family Self Sufficiency Program
- Regional Award for Excellence in Planning and Growth Management: Reality Check First Coast
- The Northeast Florida Regional Council Special Achievement Award: Wayne and Delores Weaver and the Jacksonville Jaguars

Please contact Jennifer Hewett-Apperson at (904)279-0885 x104, or jhewettapperson@nefrc.org, to RSVP for this event. If you are interested in being an event sponsor, please contact Brian Teeple at (904)279-0880, or bteeple@nefrc.org.