

# NEFRC Highlights

Monthly Report of the Northeast Florida Regional Council

April 2010

## NEFRC Staff Conducts Earth Day Outreach

On Sunday, April 25th, the Northeast Florida Regional Council participated in the Girl Scouts' 2010 Earth Day celebration and grand opening of their North Fork outdoor education and camp facility in Clay County. The event attracted hundreds of Girl Scouts and their families, as well as non-profit organizations and "green" businesses from around Northeast and North Central Florida.

The North Fork center is a "green" facility that was designed and constructed using environmentally friendly and energy efficient techniques such as a centralized, performance based septic system, as well as energy efficient building materials. In addition to highlighting the opening of their new "green" camp facility, the Girl Scouts invited a wide variety of government, conservation, and "green" organizations to participate in the event.

The Northeast Florida Regional Council staff educated attendees of the event to the ongoing regional visioning efforts of the Council through an interactive display. First, through the placement of Lego® bricks on a map of Clay County, attendees were able to locate new job and population growth. Then, using Geographical Information Systems software, Council staff provided real-time feedback as to the impacts on wetlands, agriculture lands, and conservation lands.

In addition to the interactive Lego® exercise, Council staff engaged attendees through the use of a First Coast Vision Pattern Comparison Survey. This public outreach provided attendees with an opportunity to provide valuable input as to their priorities and concerns, as well as to how they would prefer the Region grow over the next 50 years. The results of the surveys will be used by the Northeast Florida Regional Council and the Regional Community Institute of Northeast Florida, Inc. as we continue to develop a Vision for the future. For more information on First Coast Vision, please contact Margo Moehring at [mmoehring@nefrc.org](mailto:mmoehring@nefrc.org) or (904) 279-0885 x161.



*NEFRC staff member Margo Moehring demonstrates to Girl Scouts how Lego bricks can be used as a planning tool*



*RCI Committee Member Bonnie Barnes at the North Florida Land Trust booth*



*RCI Committee Member Shari Schurr demonstrates vermiculture at the Clary and Associates booth*

## Vice Mayor Lawson-Brown Leads NEFRC Staff on Tour of Palatka

On April 5th, City of Palatka Vice-Mayor and NEFRC Board Member Mary Lawson-Brown led members of the NEFRC staff on a tour of Palatka. Highlights of this tour included Ravines State Park, the new water treatment and wastewater treatment facilities, Kay Larkin Airport, Ride Solutions, the Municipal Golf Course and Palatka's Historic Districts.

*l - r: A bus being retrofitted at Ride Solutions; NEFRC staff with Vice Mayor Lawson-Brown and Kay Larkin Airport Director John Youell; and the Ravines State Park in Palatka*



## Amtrak/FEC Railway Corridor (Jacksonville to Miami)

On May 1st, NEFRC Deputy CEO Mario Taylor participated in a special inspection train test run of the proposed Amtrak/FEC Corridor route offering service between Jacksonville and Miami. The proposed route would run on the existing Florida East Coast (FEC) Railroad tracks and would offer rail service between Jacksonville and Miami for the first time since 1968. This test run was conducted as part of the process of determining the feasibility of re-establishing passenger rail service on the FEC line. While a definite schedule for the re-establishment of this route has not been established, local transportation officials have indicated that it could happen in the next few years.

Re-establishment of this passenger rail route would likely result in a significant increase in the number of rail passengers traveling through Jacksonville. This increase would support efforts to move the Jacksonville Amtrak station from Northwest Jacksonville to a proposed multi-modal transportation center at the Prime Osborn Convention Center downtown. An additional stop along this line would be in the city of St. Augustine, which has plans to build a downtown station. For more information on this test run, please contact Mario Taylor at [mtaylor@nefrc.org](mailto:mtaylor@nefrc.org), or (904) 279-0880.

### Trains to Miami

The two current Amtrak routes from Jacksonville to Miami take 8-10 hours. Amtrak hopes that starting a new route on the Florida East Coast railway will allow people to travel from Jacksonville to Miami in about six hours.

- Potential Florida East Coast railway route
- Stop on both Silver Star and Silver Meteor
- Stop on Silver Star only

	SILVER STAR	SILVER METEOR
Jacksonville	7:35 a.m.	9:40 a.m.
Palatka	8:38 a.m.	10:54 a.m.
DeLand	9:07 a.m.	11:44 a.m.
Winter Park	9:54 a.m.	12:27 p.m.
Deland	10:17 a.m.	12:55 p.m.
Kissimmee	10:55 a.m.	1:32 p.m.
Lakeland	11:40 a.m.	(no stop)
Tampa	12:34 p.m.	(no stop)
Winter Haven	1:43 p.m.	2:24 p.m.
Sebring	2:24 p.m.	3:05 p.m.
Orlando	3:04 p.m.	(no stop)
West Palm Beach	4:13 p.m.	4:54 p.m.
Delray Beach	4:37 p.m.	5:23 p.m.
Deerfield Beach	4:53 p.m.	5:39 p.m.
Fort Lauderdale	5:12 p.m.	6:02 p.m.
Hollywood	5:28 p.m.	6:18 p.m.
Miami	6:05 p.m.	6:55 p.m.

Source: Amtrak, Florida East Coast railway

TOWNS ON POTENTIAL FEC ROUTE	
Jacksonville	
St. Augustine	* No existing Amtrak Service
Daytona Beach	
Titusville	
Cocoa	
Melbourne	
Vero Beach	
Fort Pierce	
Stuart	
West Palm Beach	
Miami	



## EPA Proposes Numeric Nutrient Standards

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is proposing Numerical Nutrient Standards for Florida waters. EPA recently held a series of public hearings throughout Florida. The Jacksonville hearing was held on April 15, 2010. Council staff attended the evening hearing and heard testimony from a number of speakers, including NEFRC Board Member Darryl Register. Mr. Register, a Baker County dairy farmer, was representing the Florida Farm Bureau. Mr. Register and other speakers addressed the potential impacts of the proposed standards on agriculture in Florida. For more information on this hearing, please contact Brian Teeple at [bteeple@nefrc.org](mailto:bteeple@nefrc.org), or (904)279-0880.

## Quarterly Planning Directors Meeting

The Quarterly Planning Directors' Meeting was held on April 22, 2010, in the NEFRC Soforenko Boardroom. Items addressed included the creation of a Planning Directors ListSERVE, updates on the Florida Transportation Plan 2060 (FTP 2060) and HUD Sustainable Community Grant, Mobility Plans and Energy Efficiency. Updates were also provided on the Legislative Session and Regional Visioning. City of Jacksonville Director of Planning and Development Bill Killingsworth provided an update on the City of Jacksonville's Mobility Planning efforts. Jeff Sheffield has been named Executive Director of the North Florida Transportation Planning Organization. Former Director Denise Bunnewith is staying on with the TPO as Planning Director. The next Quarterly Planning Directors' Meeting will be held on July 22, 2010.

## The St. Johns River Alliance

The quarterly Board of Director's meeting of the St. Johns River Alliance (SJRA) was held on April 19, 2010 at Stetson University in DeLand. The Board heard of plans for the upcoming River Summit which is scheduled for September 15-16, 2010 at the Prime F. Osborn Convention Center in Jacksonville. Additionally, a report was provided on the St. Johns River specialty license plate, which looked to be headed for approval by the Legislature (Note – the St. Johns River specialty plate was subsequently approved by the Legislature). Proceeds from sale of the plate will, in part, go to funding the activities of the SJRA. NEFRC Board Member, Commissioner Cyndi Stephenson, a SJRA Board Member, also participated in the meeting. For more information, please contact Brian Teeple at [bteeple@nefrc.org](mailto:bteeple@nefrc.org), or (904)279-0880.

## The Regional Brief

NEFRC CEO Brian Teeple was interviewed by COX Radio's by Scott Thomas for a piece that aired on WOKV News Radio on Sunday, April 25th. Subjects addressed included Regional Visioning, population growth and infrastructure needs.

The City of Jacksonville Planning and Development Department has moved to the second and third floors of the Ed Ball Building located at 214 North Hogan Street. The new phone number is (904) 255-7800.

The City of Atlantic Beach Adopt-A-Tree program planted more than 150 trees earlier this year. Through this program, trees are planted in the right-of-ways and cared for through agreements with private citizens.