

# NEFRC

## Highlights

Monthly Report of the Northeast Florida Regional Council

October 2013

### Northeast Florida Regional Council Elects New Board Officers

The NEFRC serving Baker, Clay, Duval, Flagler, Putnam, Nassau, and St. Johns Counties is pleased to announce the new officers for the 2012-2013 fiscal year. Officers will be installed at the October 4, 2012 meeting of the Board of Directors. They are from left to right:



**President, Hon. Wendell Davis**, Clay County Commissioner, Clay County; **First Vice President, Mr. Kenny Eubanks**, Putnam County; **Second Vice President, Hon. Vernon Myers**, Mayor, City of Palatka, Putnam County; **Secretary/Treasurer, Mr. Hugh Fish, Jr.**, Municipal Representative, City of Macclenny, Baker County. For more information, contact Brian Teeple at [bteeple@nefrc.org](mailto:bteeple@nefrc.org).

### Sea Level Rise Forum

The Northeast Florida Regional Council co-sponsored a forum entitled, Local Government Challenges in Dealing with Rising Seas, on October 28th at the FSCJ Campus in Yulee. This day-long conference featured speakers from both Northeast Florida and Southeast Georgia discussing issues related to sea level rise. Issues covered were: the science of sea level rise; the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012; the Community Rating System; sea level rise adaption options for local communities; how regional councils can help in regards to sea level rise; and a specific legal case in St. Johns County and the implications of the case for financial liability and health of local governments. Representatives from St. Mary's, Georgia, Satellite Beach, Florida and Atlantic Beach, Florida outlined how they are currently dealing with the issue of sea level rise. For more information contact Margo Moehring at [mmoehring@nefrc.org](mailto:mmoehring@nefrc.org).

### Inaugural Regional Transportation Commission Meeting

Following the work of the Regional Transportation Study Commission, the Florida Legislature created the Northeast Florida Regional Transportation Commission (RTC). The RTC held its organizational meeting on October 30<sup>th</sup>. The Commission elected officers which are: Jacksonville City Councilmember Bill Bishop – Chair; Clay County Commissioner Doug Conkey – Vice Chair; Duval County member Mr. Michael Blaylock – Secretary; and Putnam County Commissioner Chip Laibl – Treasurer. The Jacksonville Transportation Authority, the North Florida TPO and the Northeast Florida Regional Council are providing in-kind staff support to get the RTC up and running. The next meeting of the RTC is scheduled for November 20th at 1:30 pm at the Northeast Florida Regional Airport in St. Augustine. For more information contact Brian Teeple at [bteeple@nefrc.org](mailto:bteeple@nefrc.org).



**The Northeast Florida Regional Council is on Facebook**



*Bringing Communities Together to Advance the Regional Agenda*

## Economic Development Academy

The North Florida Economic Development Partnership and the John Scott Dailey Florida Institute of Government at Florida State University held their second North Florida Economic Development Academy over four days in October. The training included a broad range of enthusiastic students, including elected officials, all in positions where economic development is key to the success of their governments or organizations. Alex McCoy, RCI member and Vice President of the Putnam County Chamber of Commerce, was a program leader. The meetings were held at the riverfront Crystal Cove Resort in Palatka. The Academy provided a great opportunity to showcase this beautiful part of the Region while learning from experts and each other. For more information contact Margo Moehring at [mmoehring@nefrc.org](mailto:mmoehring@nefrc.org).

## Health in All Policies

Dr. Dawn Emerick, RCI Board Secretary/Treasurer and Executive Director of the Health Planning Council of Northeast Florida, Inc. presented a new initiative, Health in All Policies: The New Economic Imperative, at the October 31, 2013 Health Care Heroes Awards Breakfast. She noted that health is a topic covered in the Strategic Regional Policy Plan, as she highlighted the collaboration that will be required to integrate health into all policies in the Region. In accordance with the NEFRC partnership with the Health Planning Council, many opportunities for cooperation are anticipated as NEFRC works to implement the regional plan and regional programs. For more information, contact Margo Moehring at [mmoehring@nefrc.org](mailto:mmoehring@nefrc.org).

## Train Disaster Exercise Planned

The Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) Exercise Subcommittee recently met to plan their annual exercise. The Subcommittee has decided to complete a Tabletop Exercise with a scenario related to a train derailment in the City of St. Augustine. The exercise is scheduled to take place in early 2014.

There is a growing concern among responders and emergency managers of the risk of a train derailment in populated areas, especially since the Lac-Megantic, Quebec train disaster which demolished 30+ buildings and killed 42 people (many more remain missing). The FEC rail that operates through St. Augustine is the busiest within the state. Traffic on this line has significantly increased with an average of 22 trains per day traversing through the City. These trains carry several hazardous chemicals that if released in a derailment could have a catastrophic impact on human life, the environment, and economy of the city. Once train car full of Chlorine would have an impact of 4.3 miles, which fully encompasses the City of St. Augustine and surrounding county lands. For more information contact Eric Anderson at [eanderson@nefrc.org](mailto:eanderson@nefrc.org).

## Agribusiness Farm Tour

The local chapters of the Florida Planning and Zoning Association and the American Planning Association organized a tour of three farms in the Region on October 12. Planners met the farmers at Wells Brothers Farm in St. Augustine, Blue Sky Farm in Elkton and Barnes Farms in Hastings. At each location, the farmers were joined by David Dinkins, University of Florida/IFAS Multi-County Agricultural Sustainability Extension Agent who was able to put a regional perspective on their efforts. These farms and others in our Region have joined to create First Coast Fresh, a growers cooperative that strives to provide local growers with the competitive edge they deserve in Northeast Florida, by pooling their resources and buying power so they may market and sell their food to local, regional and national buyers, eliminating the cost of contracting with a third party to sell their food. For more information contact Margo Moehring at [mmoehring@nefrc.org](mailto:mmoehring@nefrc.org).



### Did you know

The Northeast Florida Regional Council has received 17 major awards for excellence, including six National awards, four State awards and seven Regional awards. Most recently the Council received the 2013 Innovation Award from the National Association of Development Organizations for the Florida Energy Assurance Study.