

NEFRC

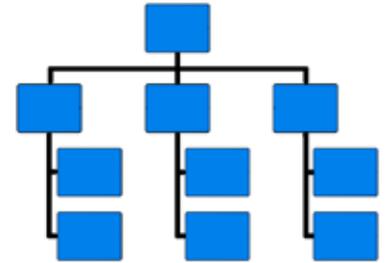
Highlights

Monthly Report of the Northeast Florida Regional Council

August 2014

Council Reorganizes to Enhance Member Services

The Board of Directors approved a reorganization plan, re-aligning the core functions of the Council to better reach our mission and more effectively serve our member governments and partners. The changes are supported by the adopted FY14/15 budget and elevate programmatic areas of importance. These areas include: regional partnerships, community technical assistance and housing, growth leadership & infrastructure, and emergency/resiliency planning. For more information, contact Brian Teeple, at bteeple@nefrc.org.



Taken in Nassau County, Florida State College, Betty Cook Campus, Red Bean Center. Graduating class, from left to right:

Eric Anderson, NEFRC; Michelle Crownover, Galaxy Aviation; Brian Lee, St. Johns County Sheriff's Office; Shauna Allen, Timucuan Preserve; Jason Sheffield, St. Johns County Sheriff's Office; Lindsay Haga, NEFRC; Benjie Bates, Bates, Hewitt and Floyd Insurance; Susan Cohn, JCCI; Jackie Wright, Baker County Council on Aging; Tracy Nazzaro, FSBDC at UNF and Fred Atwill, Atwill, LLC

Regional Leadership Academy c/o 2014 Graduates New Group of Influential Regionalists

During the August 18th program day, the 2014 Regional Leadership Academy met to complete the final education topic in the seven month series. The group ended with the topic of transportation hosted by Nassau County. The Regional Leadership Academy series includes a group project where graduates are matched up to define the most pressing regional issue and create doable recommendations that they themselves would take part in implementing. Each group attempts to persuade the audience of their concepts with the entire class voting, subject to the advisory board for tie breakers. This year, the selected issue and doable recommendation was Water Supply & Conservation with a strategy to replicate a California based kids conference held at Disneyland. The graduates now become part of the 292 alumni of regionalists since the first academy was launched in 2006.

The next Leadership Academy starts January 2015. Look for opportunities to participate as a candidate, speaker or mentor through social media, email, web and the highlights publications. For more information, contact Ed Lehman, at elehman@nefrc.org.

Clean, Upward Mobility Grant Application Achieves Regional Goals

The Council encouraged the U.S. Department of Transportation to award the Jacksonville Transportation Authority (JTA) the *Ladders of Opportunity* grant – a request for \$3.6 million dollars – in a letter of support outlining alignment with regional priorities and strategies. The JTA proposes to match the request with \$1.3 million to achieve a "Clean Fleet" Bus Replacement and Passenger Access, Safety and Convenience Corridor Stop Improvements Project for the Northwest Quadrant, adjacent to Downtown Jacksonville. Long targeted as a priority area for revitalization and stabilization programs, the area exhibits indicators that prevent upward mobility and access to quality of life issues like improvements in air quality. This project blends standard safety improvements with energy efficiency efforts and compliments JTA's Route Optimization Initiative by replacing eight diesel buses with Compressed Natural Gas and improving 30 bus stops in the Northwest Quadrant area. For more information, contact Brian Teeple, at bteeple@nefrc.org.



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Bringing Communities Together to Advance the Regional Agenda

Regional Priorities: Council Influences Transportation Project List

The Council is a member of the North Florida Transportation Planning Organization (NFTPO), represented by Ed Lehman to attend monthly board and committee meetings of the Technical Coordinating Committee. During the year, the committee works on the transportation planning for the Region and that includes identifying priority projects, cost estimates and funding sources of the improvements to improve the transportation network in the Region. This month, the Technical Coordinating Committee approved the 2014 List of Priority Projects, selecting projects to receive federal funding in the four county area of the NFTPO. In addition to approving the priority projects, the committee began the first steps for the preparation of the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan – a strategy to identify the current needs and revenues for transportation improvements. The committee work will continue through the fall with expected adoption by the NFTPO Board in early winter. For more information, contact Ed Lehman, at elehman@nefrc.org.

Regional Expert Participates in the 2014 Environmental Symposium at the University of North Florida

Margo Moehring, Director of Policy Programs, participated as a subject area practitioner during the 2014 Environmental Symposium at the University of North Florida. The symposium is an annual event created to provide regional citizens with an opportunity to interact with the federal, state, and regional regulatory agencies responsible for implementing environmental policy. The City of Jacksonville hosts this event through the Environmental Protection Board and the University of North Florida. This year, "Moving Toward a Clean, Green City" explored session areas of the St. Johns River, Tactical Urbanism, Sustainability, Transportation/Alternative Fuels and Water Quantity. The Council's Policy Director, Margo Moehring, covered the topics of a regional alternative fuels plan. For more information, contact Margo Moehring, at mmoehring@nefrc.org.

Regional Partnerships for River to Sea Transportation Planning

The Council approved a joint participation agreement with six entities representing 15 cities, counties, districts and regions to influence regional transportation planning. The partnership extends into the East Central Region to the south, aligning roles and responsibilities along the edges of our Region, including multi-modal endeavors like the River to Sea bicycle network. For more information, contact Ed Lehman, at elehman@nefrc.org

New Membership for the Local Emergency Planning Committee District 4

The Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) District 4, created to address (through planning, education, and outreach) the production, use, and transport of hazardous materials within the Region, welcomes five (5) new members. The new members will begin two year terms. Generally, membership consists of local professionals in firefighting, law enforcement, emergency management, health, environmental, transportation, local officials, and facility owners/operators. The new members provide representation for the hospital, facility operation, law enforcement/public safety, and emergency management occupations. For more information regarding planning exercises and upcoming outreach programs by the LEPC District 4, please contact Eric Anderson, at eanderson@nefrc.org.

Partner Investment in St. Johns and Putnam Agriculture Industry Meets Regional Objectives

The St. Johns River Water Management District's (WMD) Governing Board on Aug. 12 approved entering into cost-share agreements under the Tri-County Agricultural Area (TCAA) Water Management Partnership (WMP) that will fund best management practices and projects to control runoff from farms and reduce pollutant loads to the St. Johns River. This action represents a concrete step toward achieving regional policy goals in the Strategic Regional Policy Plan under the objectives of Water Quantity and Water Quality.

The projects are anticipated to begin by Sept. 30 and will contribute to the improved health of the river through on-farm and regional water management projects and practices that reduce the movement of nutrients to the river, improve water conservation, and result in more efficient farm management while maintaining the long-term viability of agriculture in the TCAA. The selected projects apply to seven farms in the Region and include two enhanced seepage irrigation (subsurface drip irrigation), one high tunnel growing shelter with drip irrigation and stormwater harvesting, and four fertilizer banders. The projects will be achieved through cost share funding with the District funding \$639,220 and the growers contributing a combined total of \$441,000. Visit http://webapub.sjrwmd.com/agws10/news_release/ for more information or contact Margo Moehring, at mmoehring@nefrc.org.

Did you know

The Council averaged a Region-wide \$6/1 return on the county investment contributions over the last 5 years? Individual returns vary by county due to population based county contributions.

Source: NEFRC Annual Reports (2009-2013).