

NORTHEAST FLORIDA REGIONAL COUNCIL HighLights

Bimonthly Report of the Northeast Florida Regional Council

April / May 2018

Regional Community Institute of Northeast Florida - Regional Tourism Committee

The Regional Tourism Committee (RTC) of the Regional Community Institute (RCI) of Northeast Florida met April 11, 2018 at Heritage Park Village in the City of Macclenny. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss regional tourism in Northeast Florida related to regional lodging supply and demand issues and explored existing regional tourism models that could be adopted in Northeast Florida. The Committee also met in Ravine Gardens State Park in Palatka in Putnam County on May 22, 2018. This inspiring park was a logical venue in which to discuss Northeast Florida's regional assets that would be of interest to tourists and locals alike. For more information about the RCI Regional Tourism Committee, contact Margo Moehring at mmoehring@nefrc.org.



NEFRC Staff Prepares Families for Hurricane Season



NEFRC staff participated in WJCT's 'Be My Neighbor Event'. Staff shared hurricane preparedness information with families to help them better prepare for hurricane season. NEFRC staff provided touchscreen computers allowing the children to access the State of Florida Kids Get A Plan website <http://kidsgetaplan.com/>. This website allows children to learn about the importance of planning for emergencies while reading books and playing video games. Staff shared the most current evacuation zones for each of our member counties and also provided the City of Jacksonville Preparedness Guides and information about the JAX Ready app for smartphones. <http://www.coj.net/mobile-apps/mobile-apps-list/jaxready.aspx>.

NEFRC staff hosted a Stop the Bleed Training

On Wednesday, May 30, 2018, the Northeast Florida Healthcare Coalition, staffed by NEFRC, held training to kick-off a Stop the Bleed initiative. Congressman John Rutherford attended the training to show support and raise awareness of the program. When addressing the group, he stated, "This training is so vitally important, what you are doing is going to save lives, there is absolutely no doubt about it." The Coalition purchased bleeding control kits for public schools in North Florida in an effort to provide the tools necessary to save a life when one suffers a traumatic bleeding event. Congressman Rutherford noted the importance of a bystander's actions in response to a traumatic incident. "The immediate - not the First Responder - but the immediate care is provided by those around you. And if they are outfitted with a Stop The Bleed kit, your chances of survival have just gone up significantly," stated Rutherford. The Coalition is partnering with county school districts, county EMS, and local trauma centers to provide training for staff as the kits are placed in the schools. For more information, contact Leigh Wilsey at lwilsey@nefrc.org.



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Bringing Communities Together to Advance the Regional Agenda

Regional Leadership Academy Class of 2018

St. Johns County

The Northeast Florida Regional Leadership Academy (RLA) of the Northeast Florida Regional Council (NEFRC) met for its regular committee meeting on April 25, 2018 at the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agriculture (IFAS) Hastings Agriculture Extension Center in St. Johns County. The topic of discussion was "Growing Assets – Housing and Agriculture." Members of the RLA were educated by Teresa Bishop regarding growth trends in St. Johns County, and Bill Lazar about affordable housing options and programs, and David Dinkins about agriculture as vital infrastructure. RLA members then went on a tour of the Cowpen Branch Demonstration and Research Center. This Facility has been operated by IFAS since the late 1950s and has a long track record of excellency. Currently, 36 acres are used for crop production research. There, members learned about crop production, selective breeding, post harvest management, and water management research. RLA members then toured Blue Sky Farms, an active potato farm in Hastings. There, owner Danny Johns (a third generation farmer) gave members an overview of farming in Northeast Florida, what his farm does, and then took the members on a tour of the production warehouse.

Flagler County

The May 30, 2018 meeting of the Regional Leadership Academy was hosted by Flagler County at Princess Place Preserve, last year's winner of the regional award for excellence in Culture, Historic Preservation or Adaptive Reuse. This stunning location provided the opportunity to discuss the County and its history in a very special place. There was also a focus on resiliency. Emergency Management Chief Jonathan Lord got the day started, and Tourism Director Matthew Dunn gave an overview of the approach to tourism in Flagler County and its importance to the region. Then the class focused on resiliency, from the efforts of the Public/Private Regional Resiliency (P2R2) Committee to emergency preparedness at the County and regional level, the community rating system (CRS) associated with the National Flood Insurance Program, and the concept of carrying capacity. Candidate for the RLA Class of 2018 Adam Mengel presented, along with Denise Bevan, RLA Class of 2013, who gave the City of Palm Coast perspective on CRS. For more information on RLA, please contact Margo Moehring at mmoehring@nefrc.org.

St. Augustine Resiliency Workshop May 8, 2018



Staff attended the City of St. Augustine's Resiliency Strategy Workshop, where regional stakeholders, officials, and citizens were convened in order to prioritize critical infrastructure that could better address acute shocks and chronic stresses caused by disaster events, sea level rise, and flooding. The workshop was an interactive meeting with the purpose of identifying solutions and consolidating ideas and opportunities to build resilience and allow St. Augustine to adapt and thrive in the face of impacts. Out of this workshop will come a resilience strategy that will be documented in the City's resilience plan, and policy tools that can be used to grade future infrastructure

projects. The City of St. Augustine continues to be a leader in the region on tackling issues of resiliency head-on. For more info, contact Aaron Glick at aglick@nefrc.org.

Jax Aquafest May 5, 2018

NEFRC represented the Natural Resources Committee of the Regional Community Institute of Northeast Florida during Jax Aquafest at MOSH. Staff were available to answer questions and collect names of interested individuals on the three Action Items in the Water Beyond Borders report. The Council shared an exhibit space with Dr. Gerry Pinto, a research scientist with Jacksonville University's Marine Science Research Institute, and a regional leader and partner. For more info, contact Aaron Glick at aglick@nefrc.org.



First Coast Fresh Food Innovation Center May 10, 2018

As a mostly rural county, Putnam County is a key producer of many local agricultural products including potatoes, cabbage, broccoli, and Asian vegetables, and is a central hub to a developing agri-tourism corridor. NEFRC has begun working with David Dinkins, a sustainable agriculture Extension agent with the UF/IFAS Extension Office in Putnam County to seek grant funding for a food incubator located in the State Farmer's Market facility in Palatka. The project will focus on job creation, product development, workforce training, and increasing the economic well-being of the tri-county area by fostering entrepreneurship and innovation. For more info, contact Aaron Glick at aglick@nefrc.org.

Northeast Florida VOAD/COAD May 22, 2018

The Northeast Florida VOAD/COAD (Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster/Community Organizations Active in Disaster) has been reorganized in order to increase the non-profit and public sector's coordination and collaboration in the immediate aftermath of future disaster events. NEFRC will host meetings at WJCT and help facilitate the convening of the group. Additional regional partners will be sought out as needs and gaps are identified. For more info, contact Aaron Glick at aglick@nefrc.org.