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NACo/WIR conference to address federal issues affecting western counties

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The National Association of Counties’ (NACo) 2012 Western Interstate Region (WIR) Conference will be held May 16-18 in Santa Fe County, N.M. to discuss public lands, rural development and other issues important to western counties and communities.

The conference provides county officials with the opportunity to hear national speakers, discuss federal legislation and network with other county officials from across the country.

Featured speakers will include New Mexico Lieutenant Governor John Sanchez; Dr. Lowell Catlett, Professor Economics and Dean of the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences, New Mexico State University; Marciyynn A. Burke, Acting Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management U.S. Department of the Interior; Butch Blazer, Deputy Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment, U.S. Department of Agriculture; and Republican Utah State Representative Ken Ivory.

Discussion topics will include advancing economic development in western counties, state-level health care transformation and Medicaid, managing the risk of wildland fire, and the western perspective on highways and bridges.

WIR President Ron Walter, Commission Chair, Chelan County, Wash., said the WIR Conference is one of the most important meetings of the year for county officials interested in economic and rural development, land use, and other western issues.

“The conference brings NACo and WIR leadership together with county officials from across the country in one place,” Walter said. “Together, we seek pragmatic solutions for the unique challenges facing our western communities.”

WIR is affiliated with NACo and is dedicated to the promotion of western interests within NACo. Its membership consists of fifteen western states with membership funded through the individual state associations.

Click here for more information or contact Ryan Yates at 202.942.4207 or visit www.naco.org.

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The National Association of Counties (NACo) is the only national organization that represents county governments in the United States. Founded in 1935, NACo provides essential services to the nation’s 3,068 counties. NACo advances issues with a unified voice before the federal government, improves the public’s understanding of county government, assists counties in finding and sharing innovative solutions through education and research, and provides value-added services to save counties and taxpayers money. For more information about NACo, visit www.naco.org.