

House votes to fund government; defund ACA

By MARILINA SANZ
ASSOCIATE LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

The House passed a temporary funding measure Sept. 20 that could avert a government shut-down, at least for the time being. The \$986.3 billion Continuing Resolution (CR) funds the government at the same level through Dec. 15. It also includes language that would defund the Affordable Care Act, a provision that's likely to be stripped out before the Senate votes, forcing a second vote in the House.

The House CR maintains the FY13 sequestration funding levels and also continues entitlement programs that were authorized

under other FY13 appropriations bills, such as the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. In general, the CR does not make policy changes or provide additional funds, but there are some exceptions; the most notable exception for counties is an increase in the wildland fire funding for the U.S. Department of the Interior and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The CR also includes H.R. 807, known as the debt ceiling priority, which would require the Treasury Department to make debt and Social Security payments before other government expenditures

See RESOLUTION page 10

New NACo program provides discounts to health services

By ANDREW GOLDSCHMIDT
DIRECTOR, MEMBERSHIP-MARKETING

A new member benefit program is providing a valuable new health discount card for NACo-member

counties to offer their residents.

The NACo Health Discount Program, marketed by NACo's partner, CVS Caremark, provides discounts on a wide variety of common health services and supplies, including vision care, LASIK and PRK vision procedures, hearing aids and screenings, prepaid lab work, prepaid diagnostic imaging and diabetic supplies. Discounts on prescriptions are also available for uninsured and underinsured residents, seniors and pet owners.

Subscriptions are available on a monthly or annual basis for both individuals and families. Individuals can sign up for \$6.95 a month or \$69 annually, and families can sign up for \$8.95 a month or \$79 annually. Discounts are available immediately upon enrollment.

The new program complements NACo's longtime successful free Prescription Discount Card Program, which has saved American consumers more than \$544 million. This program still remains an option for county residents.

See HEALTH page 5



Emergency personnel move a Boulder County, Colo. resident to safety as waters race through the county in some of its worst flooding in decades. See page 10 for the County News report on the flood's impact throughout an 11-county area earlier this month.

Dissatisfaction with representation drives secession efforts

By CHARLIE BAN
STAFF WRITER

Conflict between rural outliers and the political majority has raised interest in secession in several states, and in a few, county commissioners have taken up the cause.

Those secession efforts frequently start with a movement independent of existing government, but in a few cases, county elected officials have taken up the mantle of trying to lead the first secession since West Virginia in 1836.

In mid-September, the Siskiyou County, Calif. Board of Supervisors voted to officially pursue secession.

"We're 350 miles away from San Francisco, the term 'Northern California' doesn't describe both of us," said Grace Bennett, one of the four Siskiyou supervisors who voted in favor of the resolution. "When southern California has a problem, they pass a law and we end up dealing with the consequences."

The county's grievance, the supervisors say, would be resolved by the creation of a long-sought state of Jefferson — which could also include southern Oregon counties.

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CountyNews Features

Fly-in finds broad support for PILT, no money... yet

By CHARLES TAYLOR
SENIOR STAFF WRITER



Payment in Lieu of Taxes — or PILT — isn't just a Western issue, though most of the U.S. counties with vast amounts of non-taxable federal land are west of the 100th meridian, the longitude line running from North Dakota through Texas.

That's one of the points county leaders from 15 states drove home in Washington, D.C. during NACo's PILT Fly-in earlier this month.

They were encouraged by the feedback they received from lawmakers and Administration officials, but the question remains, where would the money come from to make PILT a priority with guaranteed funding for FY 14 and beyond?

"Virtually all of them were very supportive of the idea of the federal government making payments to the counties," said Judge Alvin



Photo by Charles Taylor

Commission Chairman Danny Monette, Socorro County, N.M., shows House and Senate staffers a map of the amount of non-taxable federal land in his county (more than 1.5 million acres) during a Capitol Hill briefing on PILT.

Land and Water Conservation Fund

The federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Program provides matching grants to states and local governments for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities, and funding for shared federal land acquisition and conservation strategies.

Established by Congress in 1965, it consists of revenue generated from offshore oil and gas leasing, not taxpayer dollars. The federal portion of the LWCF is used to acquire lands, waters and interests necessary to achieve the natural, cultural, wildlife and recreation management objectives of the National Park Service and other federal land management agencies.

NACo adopted policy at its Annual Conference in July calling for LWCF to be used, with few exceptions, as a "sustainable source of funding" for PILT.

PILT Funding in the East

Montgomery County, Ark. sheriff's officers were among the first called out to respond when flash flooding inundated a campground in the Ouachita National Forest in June 2010, leaving 20 people dead.

"It was about a three- or four-day operation, long hours for the guys. There were several bodies they had to look for," Sheriff David White said.

The Forest Service and other federal agencies own approximately 70 percent of the land in the rural county about 40 miles west of Hot Springs. That's why continued Payment in Lieu of Taxes funding from Washington is so vital to the county, White and County Judge Alvin Black say.

"As a sheriff, you are the head of the search and rescue operation, and everybody else is an assisting agency whether it be the Forest Service, State Police, Game and Fish or whatever else," White said.

He estimated that his office gets 30–50 calls per year to respond on federal land. It's not always as catastrophic as the as the flooding three years ago. It can range from reports of shots fired to finding lost Boy Scouts.

PILT payments make up about 24 percent of the county's general fund budget, Black said. "We get around \$600,000 a year; if that were cut back to zero, that would be devastating."

Congress has yet to approve PILT funding for FY 14, or beyond if it's reauthorized as a mandatory program, as public lands counties would like to see happen.

White said without PILT, the county would have few options to make up for the loss: "There really is no fluff left in the budget; we've been on such a lean economy for a number of years."

"The only growth we've had in positions in recent years has been in law enforcement, our county sheriff's office; nobody wants to start talking about taking those back or cutting any other people," he said.

PILT is generally seen as a Western issue. After all, Utah received almost \$54.4 million this year, and New Mexico got \$34.7 million. But every state except Rhode Island received some money this fiscal year.

In the East, Collier County, Fla. received \$1.2 million; Coos County, N.H. — \$465,273; Rockingham County, Va. — \$391,249; Ontonagon County, Mich. — \$340,106; Rabun County, Ga. — \$265,000; and Sussex County, N.J. — \$54,506.

Black, Montgomery County, Ark., where 70 percent of county land is under federal ownership, mostly in the Ouachita National Forest. "The only reservation was when they got to talking about how we're going to pay for it," he added, referring to Congress, "because they seem to want everything to be a deficit-neutral action now."

Congress has yet to approve continued mandatory PILT funding for next fiscal year. Without it, PILT would revert to a discretionary program subject to the annual appropriations process, jeopardizing its long-term survival.

The fly-in was organized by NACo's Western Interstate Region (WIR) to urge Congress to mandate funding for the program. Fanning out across the Capitol, NACo members' appointments included meetings with Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) and Sen. Mike Crapo (R-Idaho). The county leaders stressed that PILT has always enjoyed bipartisan support, which the lawmakers confirmed.

Commissioner Mike Murray, Lewis and Clark County, Mont. and NACo Public Lands Committee chair, called the meetings "positive."

"I think we reinforced with the Congress folks why we need the funding. That we're not asking for something that is new or different," he said. "We're asking them to continue funding that we need to run our counties."

"We don't let taxpayers have tax holidays, nor do we expect the federal government to take a tax

holiday and not fund payment in lieu of taxes."

During a briefing of some 50 Senate and House staffers, Commission Chairman Danny Monette, Socorro County, N.M., said of PILT funding, "It's hard to figure out your budget from one year to the next when you don't know whether you're going to get it or not." Thirty-two of the state's 33 counties include federal land — 2.3 million acres of New Mexico's 4.4 million acres. His county receives about \$900,000 in PILT funding, which makes up 20 percent of the general fund budget.

In a meeting at the Department of the Interior, Commissioner John Martin, Garfield County, Colo. and WIR president, said NACo wants to "be a partner in finding solutions."

Pam Haze, Interior deputy assistant secretary for budget, finance, performance and acquisition, affirmed that the relationship with NACo and counties is "better than it's ever been." She said in the Administration's budget, her department has been trying to link a longer reauthorization of PILT and authorization of the Land and Water Conservation Fund. "We've tried to tie them together, so that if there can be some uplift around LWCF, it will have PILT go with it or vice versa."

NACo adopted new policy in July at its annual conference in Tarrant County, Texas that supports

designating the Land and Water Conservation Fund as a sustainable source of funding for Payment in Lieu of Taxes (see sidebar above).

Commissioner Joel Bousman, Sublette County, Wyo., explained that in his county, 206 miles of county roads are on Bureau of Land Management acreage. He said the cost to maintain those roads is \$1.8 million, while the county receives \$446,000 in PILT money. "Those roads access public lands," he said.

See **PILT** page 11

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CORRECTIONS

► Arthur Wallenstein, who was featured in Profiles in Service Sept. 9, is a subcommittee chair on the Justice and Public Safety Steering Committee. His NACo affiliation was incorrectly listed.

► Nickolas Lyell's first name was misspelled in a NACo on the Move item, Aug. 26, 2013.



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EPA ponders tighter emission limits for local landfills

By JULIE UFFNER

ASSOCIATE LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR



NACo, along with other state and local government groups, recently consulted with U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on potential changes to federal rules governing landfill emission limits.

Under an Executive Order issued in 1999, federal agencies proposing rules that may significantly impact states and localities are required — early on in the process — to consult with elected state and local government officials, or their representative national organizations, on the potential affects of the rule.

According to the EPA, there are more than 2,000 active municipal solid waste landfills in the U.S. (both privately and publicly owned). Currently, 729 landfills are subject to the federal New Source Performance Standards (NSPS) or Emissions Guidelines (EG). EPA is considering a rule that would include tighter standards for more facilities nationwide.

NSPS now applies to landfills constructed, modified or reconstructed after May 30, 1991. EG apply to landfills that accepted solid waste after Nov. 8, 1987. Current law states that landfills with a size threshold over 2.5 million megagrams (Mg) (2.7 billion tons) or 2.5

SpeedRead » » »

- » NACo consults with EPA on upcoming landfill regulations
- » Agency is considering tighter pollution standards
- » More landfills could be subject to new standards

million cubic meters must comply with annual reporting. If such landfills also emit more than 50 Mg per year of non-methane organic compounds (landfill gas) and meet certain standards, they must also comply with emission standards.

EPA produced a PowerPoint presentation that included several options under consideration. The counties potentially impacted by the proposal can be found on pages 25–32.

EPA is accepting comments from state and local governments on the proposal until Nov. 8. Comments can be sent to Hillary Ward, EPA Project Lead at ward.hillary@epa.gov and Andrew Hanson, EPA Intergovernmental Federalism Contact Andrew Hanson at hanson.andrew@epa.gov. Please cc NACo on your comments.

**To see if your county could be affected by any new rules and to learn more about the options being considered, see this story online at www.countynews.org.*

Tax reform trap: muni bonds' tax-exempt status threatened

ANALYSIS

By MIKE BELARMINO

ASSOCIATE LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

September generally marks annual milestones such as the return of professional football and back-to-school. But in the nation's capital, September marks the return of Congress and what seems to be the recurring norm: a full plate of contentious issues to deal with before the end of the fiscal and calendar years including Syria, raising the national debt limit and the annual appropriations process.

Joining that short list is one of the more prominent issues for counties this year — comprehensive tax reform. While it's uncertain whether Congress could successfully pass a comprehensive tax reform plan, counties need to remain diligent because one of the proposals involves changing the tax-exempt status of municipal bond interest.

The impact on counties could be significant.

But is comprehensive tax reform really happening? Well, the possibility was certainly kept alive over the summer months. The August congressional recess found the chairmen of the two tax-writing committees campaigning publicly to generate grassroots support for a major tax reform bill. At their most recent stop in Memphis, Tenn., Senate Finance Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.) and House Ways and Means Chairman Dave Camp (R-Mich.) both touted tax reform as an opportunity to encourage economic growth in the U.S.

Even though both chairmen say they are fairly optimistic about the chance to enact reform, many of their colleagues on Capitol Hill are not ready to share their enthusiasm. Even the Senate's "blank slate" exercise in July where Baucus sent a letter to his colleagues seeking their suggestions and arguments for possible tax code revisions indicated interest was waning. Only a few Senators submitted comments with specific suggestions.

And with the fall finding Congress with issues such as the debt limit and federal spending levels still unresolved, there are indications of declining interest

among lawmakers to add another controversial topic to their plates.

Despite that, there are some indications that Camp intends to circulate a draft tax reform bill, even though support from GOP leadership seems unclear. Additionally, there clearly remains a divide between Republicans and Democrats on the question of whether changes to the tax code should generate revenue or not. Whether the two parties can come to an agreement on that primary point will gauge how quickly comprehensive tax reform can be accomplished.

Nonetheless, the battle to protect county interests within tax reform remains and a few things are certain:

- many key lawmakers are convinced at least tax reform is necessary

- the actions of the two tax-writing committees have clearly demonstrated that the federal tax code is too complex and filled with provisions that could be eliminated

- until the economy fully recovers and a clear path to address the federal deficit is agreed upon, hot topics like reforming the tax code which could include the exemption for municipal bond interest will remain front and center into the near future, and

- counties must remain engaged, in particular, by helping to

See TAX REFORM page 8

Profiles in Service



» Sally A. Heyman

NACo Board of Directors
LUCC Steering Committee
Justice and Public Safety Committee

Commissioner
Miami-Dade County, Fla.

Number of years active in NACo: 11

Years in public service: 34 – 26 elected and eight law enforcement

Occupation: crime and loss prevention specialist, attorney

Education: B.A., Criminal Justice, University of Florida; M.S., Criminal Justice, Nova University; Juris Doctorate, University of Miami

The hardest thing I've ever done: pass the Florida bar exam; deal with loss of family members

Three people (living or dead) I'd invite to dinner: Eleanor Roosevelt, Abraham Lincoln and John F. Kennedy.

A dream I have is to: travel through U.S. Parks and Forests in a van and day hike.

You'd be surprised to learn that I: created my own coffee truck business: Coffee Brake.

The most adventurous thing I've ever done is: hovered over an active volcano; hiked and camped the Grand Canyon by myself.

My favorite way to relax is: hanging out in a park, especially near water; meals with friends.

I'm most proud of: helping others.

Every morning I read: *Miami Herald*, *Breaking News*, *Politico*.

My favorite meal is: Italian and chocolate.

My pet peeve is: liars.

My motto is: "Don't ask someone to do something I wouldn't do."

The last few books I've read were: *Steve Jobs* by Walter Isaacson and *Inferno* by Dan Brown

My favorite movie is: *Big*.

My favorite music is: '60s and '70s

My favorite president is: Abraham Lincoln.

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NACo introduces new Grants Clearinghouse website

By COLEMAN DAVIS

COUNTY SOLUTIONS AND INNOVATION INTERN

NACo launched a significant upgrade to the NACo Grants Clearinghouse Sept. 23. The new clearinghouse now boasts enhanced search features and up-to-date listings of federal, state, corporate and foundation

grants available to counties and community-based organizations.

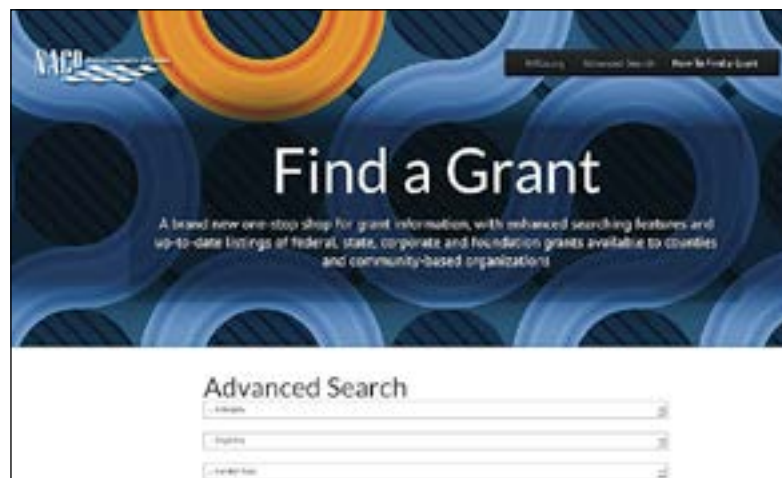
Perhaps most importantly, though, the new Grants Clearinghouse offers almost 10 times as many grant opportunities for counties — updated daily in real-time. The original NACo Grants Clearinghouse had up to 100 grant opportunities at any one time; the

new tool has nearly 1,000 grant opportunities for counties.

NACo is joining with Grants Office LLC, a national grants development services firm, to provide the grants content for the tool through its Gostream application programming interface. Grants Office LLC has been providing grants information and support to counties for more than 13 years.

With the substantial increase in the number of grants available, robust searching ability is an important feature. With the original, users were able to search only using a pre-set list of categories. Conversely, the new clearinghouse is highly customizable, as the user can now search by any word or term.

The tool also has a series of filters to help county users refine their search results. Users can filter results by category, organization eligibility, funder type and state eligibility. The category field represents important areas — such as economic development, emergency preparedness and response, and health care services — in which counties serve their residents. The eligibility field allows searching



Visit www.nacogrants.org and use the comprehensive search engine to find a grant for your county.

NACo members can now save on health care services

HEALTH from page 1

“NACo is excited to offer this new benefit to enable our member counties to offer their residents an affordable alternative to paying full price for health care services,” said NACo President Linda Langston, supervisor, Linn County, Iowa. “As with the NACo Prescription Discount Card Program, NACo and our partner, CVS Caremark, are providing unparalleled marketing, media and customer service assist to counties implementing the program.”

Participating counties may

“brand” the program with their county logo or seal on the front of the membership card as well as on the member guide, which explains how to take full advantage of the available discounts.

There are no annual savings limits, no forms to fill out, no waiting periods, no age or income requirements and no medical condition restrictions for residents in participating counties.

Counties who want to learn more may call toll-free 1.888.407.6226 and ask for membership, or on the Web at www.naco.org/health.

for grants applicable not only to local governments, but also to community-based organizations.

Lastly, users can filter by the type of funder, as well as eligible states.

In addition to enhanced searching features, the NACo Grants Clearinghouse provides more detailed descriptions of individual grants. The original provided a short summary of the grant, amount, eligibility and due date. Now, it provides a number of informative details about the grant

including a summary of the grant, a history of funding of the grant program, contact information, and additional information such as grant stipulations, as well as the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance number.

To access the clearinghouse visit www.nacogrants.org and take the new tool for a test drive. The NACo Grants Clearinghouse is a member-only feature.

To learn more about NACo membership, visit www.naco.org/membership.

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Under the leadership of President Linda Langston, the National Association of Counties is embarking on an initiative in 2013 and 2014 to strengthen the resilience of the nation's 3,069 counties.

In order to remain healthy, vibrant, safe and economically competitive, America's counties must be able to anticipate and adapt to all types of change. Through the Resilient Counties initiative, NACo will work with counties and their stakeholders to bolster their ability to thrive amid changing physical, social and economic conditions.

Within this initiative, NACo will sponsor trainings, peer networking and resource development to support county executives and other public- and private-sector partners seeking to build county resilience. Watch NACo.org for information about upcoming forums, workshops, webinars, publications and more!

Photo courtesy of Linn County, Iowa



Linn County, Iowa's Emergency Operations Center was in full swing in June of 2008 as its county seat, Cedar Rapids, underwent some of the worst flooding in the city's history. About 1,300 blocks or 10 square miles, including most of the downtown area, were inundated. Pictured here are Linn County Supervisors Linda Langston and Jim Houser (left) discussing media strategy with Sony Dagget (right), who was contracted by the county to assist with communications.

Contact

For more information and details on how to get involved, contact NACo Program Director Kathy Nothstine at knothstine@naco.org or 202.661.8807.

Visit www.naco.org/resiliency or scan the QR code for instant access on your mobile device.



'Waters of the U.S.' proposal sent to OMB for review

By JULIE UFNER

ASSOCIATE LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR



The federal government is a step closer to defining what it will consider to be a "water of the U.S." for regulatory purposes under the Clean Water Act (CWA). On Sept. 17, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) sent their proposed "Waters of the U.S." regulation to the Office of Management and Budget for review.

The regulation would replace a draft 2011 "waters of the U.S."

SpeedRead » » »

- » House and Senate proposals to reauthorize the Water Resources and Development Act (WRDA) take different tacks on the process for selecting Corps of Engineers projects
- » House bill would require congressional oversight

guidance that broadened federal CWA jurisdiction for tributaries — including ditches, culverts and channels.

The new proposal is expected to

be modeled on the 2011 guidance and could bring routine county operations such as flood-control programs, pesticide application and drainage ditch construction under federal jurisdiction.

NACo has consistently expressed concerns with the 2011 proposed guidance document, as well as with other efforts to broaden the definition of waters of the U.S.

Meanwhile, EPA also released a draft report, *Connectivity of Streams and Wetlands to Downstream Waters*, which will be used, the agency says, as "the scientific basis needed to clarify Clean Water Act jurisdiction, including a description of the factors

that influence connectivity and the mechanisms by which connected waters affect downstream waters."

Any and all regulatory jurisdictional decisions will be based on the final report.

EPA is accepting written comments on the report's conclusions until Nov. 6. Statements should be identified by Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OA-2013-0582 and submitted to the docket by one of the following methods:

- electronically at www.regulations.gov: Follow the online instructions for submitting comments
- email: Docket_OEI@epa.gov: Include the docket number in the

subject line of the message.

- fax: 202.566.9744
- mail: Office of Environmental Information (OEI) Docket (Mail Code: 28221T), Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OA-2013-0582, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20460. The phone number is 202.566.1752.

If your county submits comments on EPA's Connectivity report, please copy NACo on the comments.

**You can find a link to EPA's connectivity report in this story online at www.countynews.org.*

Some county officials have embraced new statehood movements

SECESSION from page 1

The perception of a weak voice in state or federal matters is common to secession movements and no different here. Siskiyou is part of the 1st Congressional District, which includes eight entire coun-

ties and portions of three more. It's only slightly larger than the State Assembly district, which comprises seven entire counties and parts of two others.

"We're lost in the crowd," Bennett said, "and that shows up in legislation that affects us. These

legislatures don't take our lifestyle or our conditions into consideration. We hunt, we fish, we have guns. Down south, the only people with guns are the bad guys."

Supervisor Ed Valenzuela is chairman of the board in Siskiyou County, and he voted against the secession resolution. He is sympathetic to the concerns Bennett and other supervisors expressed, but said at some point, rural areas have to make do.

A competing proposal, though, seeks to address representation by remaking the Legislature to give each county a representative.

"It's a common feeling for rural areas, but if every aggrieved rural area made its own state, we'd have 200 senators," he said. "We can't get anything done with 100."

For some secession backers in Colorado, counties in the northern part are gaining steam for a popular vote on the issue. So far 11 counties have questions on their November ballots whether to pursue formal secession from the state. That effort, originating in Weld County, centers on differences of opinion between largely Republican counties and the Democratic-led Legislature.

Seceding and forming a new state is not an easy process. According to Article IV, Section 3 of the U.S. Constitution, such an effort would need consent from the legislature of the vulnerable state and Congress.

"The way the constitution sets it up, part of a state that wants to secede is like telling his wife 'I want to divorce you, but only if Jennifer Aniston agrees to marry me,'" said Mike Trinklein, a historian who has written about statehood.

"A great thing about America is that you don't see people taking

SpeedRead » » »

Secession movements with county government involvement:

- » Colorado – 11 counties will have secession questions on the November ballot
- » California – Siskiyou County has voted to pursue secession

Wisconsin before a new state would come about," he said. "Washington, D.C. and Puerto Rico have been trying for long enough and not made much headway."

A private effort by the Western Maryland Initiative page on Facebook has pitched the goal of Garrett, Allegany, Washington, Frederick and Carroll counties seceding from Maryland. That effort has not reached official discussions among any of the boards of commissioners.

"There's been no discussion, no dialogue with anybody about this," said Lamont Pagenhardt, Garrett County's administrator. His board plans to make a public statement Sept. 24 clarifying that the movement was on behalf of private citizens and not endorsed by the county government.

"There's been the joke around for years that we should just become part of West Virginia," he said. "But we have a good relationship with the state of Maryland, we need them and understand what comes with the territory."

Trinklein said although the U.S. map has been static since 1959, that has been the exception, more than the rule throughout history.

"We have a long history of the map changing, and I don't think Alaska and Hawaii were the end of that," he said. "You could make some money as a collector hording flags with 50 stars."

What brings those 51st, 52nd or 53rd states to life might not come from a separatist movement, but that isn't to say they don't offer some promise.

"I have no idea if this withdrawal from California will ever happen, but at least it's getting us some attention," Bennett said. "Maybe this is what will get people to listen to us."

Water Resources Reform Development Act introduced in House

By JULIE UFNER

ASSOCIATE LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR



House and Senate proposals to reauthorize the Water Resources and Development Act (WRDA) are taking different tacks on the process for selecting Corps of Engineers projects in the nation's counties.

The recently unveiled House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee version, the Water Resources and Reform Development Act (WRRDA), contains no earmarks and establishes a process for project approval with congressional oversight. This language differs from the WRDA bill (S. 601) that passed the Senate in mid-May, which gives the Corps sole authority over what projects should move forward.

Other House WRRDA Provisions

The House bill, (H.R. 3080), would drop \$12 billion of old projects (any project inactive for the past five years); allow non-federal

partners to contribute funding to move studies, projects and permits forward; streamline the permitting process; preserve the Inland Waterways Trust Fund; and expand the use of the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund, among other items.

Under the measure, funding for harbor maintenance would gradually increase over a seven-year period until output equaled 80 percent of the taxes collected for the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund (HMTF). This language differs from the Senate bill which would require that 100 percent of HMTF funding be used by 2020. The HMTF was established in 1986 to fund port and harbor operation and maintenance. However, appropriations for harbor maintenance projects have fallen behind HMTF collected fees, leaving a \$7 billion surplus in the HMTF fund.

House floor debate on the bill could occur as early as October.

**A section-by-section summary of the House bill can be accessed by seeing this story online at www.countynews.org.*

More counties embrace e-recording

By CHARLES TAYLOR
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

When the Alamance County, N.C. register of deeds' office began e-recording documents in July, it became the 1,000th county in the nation to do so, according to the Property Recording Industry Association (PRIA), which recently recognized the milestone.

SpeedRead » » »

- » More than 1,000 counties e-recording nationwide
- » County recorders saving time and money
- » Maricopa County, Ariz. e-records 80 percent of land documents

"A lot of the lawyers wanted us to do it," said Hugh Webster, register of deeds. "We started with lien cancellations, and we're slowly getting more involved."

It took from the late 1990s until August 2006 to reach the 200 e-recording counties, according to PRIA's tracking system. Between June 2012 and August 2013, the number of counties increased by more than 25 percent, said Larry Burtness, Washoe County, Nev. recorder and PRIA Technology Committee co-chair. By the end of this year, the number is

expected to reach about 1,200. PRIA is a standard-setting body that promotes and monitors the adoption of electronic recording of documents throughout the United States.

An impediment to faster adoption of e-recording has been "fear," according to David Ewan, president of PRIA. "Like anything new, it's unfamiliar to certain people and they're afraid of it," he said. But with governments strapped for cash and short on money to hire new people, counties are automating some of their processes to help the staff they still have, Ewan said. In addition, new counties are coming online as their states pass laws enabling their jurisdictions to e-record.

Once documents are recorded electronically, their public availability online can vary from state to state, county to county, he added. In Florida, for example, by law, all public documents can be accessed on the Internet. Other states or jurisdictions can have their own policies on what can be retrieved on paper or online.

Ewan said that the bar to entry into e-recording is fairly low, with "little or no cost" to the counties — because many counties, even those that don't do e-recording, already have electronic land records management systems. It's easy for vendors to tag onto those. The vendors

are paid by submitters such as title companies, banks and lien filers, according to Anais Moody, public relations manager for Simplifile, an e-recording vendor.

In Washoe County, about 60 percent of the recording in Burtness' office is done electronically; nationwide the rate ranges from single digits to 80-plus percent. He said the technology saves time for his office and for document submitters.

E-recording counties honored



Four counties were recently recognized as 2013 eRecording All-Stars by Corporation Service Company (CSC). The winners are highlighted for advancements in electronic document recording and for the work of clerks and recorders who have implemented and promoted the use of e-recording technology. This year's winners are:

- **Model County Award – Butler County, Ohio:** For a recording office that has a long and established history of e-recording documents and of serving as a model for other offices.
- **Leader of the Pack Award – Maricopa County, Ariz.:** For a recording office that is recording the majority of its real estate documents electronically and is encouraging submitters to adopt e-recording processes.
- **Trailblazer Award – Greenville County, S.C.:** For a recording office that has led its state in implementing or further developing e-recording technology.
- **Rookie of the Year Award – Rockland County, N.Y.:** For a recording office that has made tremendous advancements in implementing e-recording technology within a short time frame.

*For more on the winners, see this story online at www.countynews.org.

"With electronic recording, once the document arrives and is reviewed, if it's recordable, it's going on record in a manner of minutes," he said. "If the document can't be recorded, it's electronically returned with a rejection reason, and oftentimes, at least in our county, it comes back within minutes so it still goes on record in quite a reduced time frame."

Since time is money, are there dollar savings as well? Burtness doesn't have hard data but is "very confident" that his costs are lower.

Helen Purcell, Maricopa County, Ariz. recorder, can point to some numbers. Her office e-records 7,000 to 9,000 documents per day and is doing more with less. Eighty percent of the documents processed are recorded electronically.

"I have a smaller staff than I used to have," said Purcell, who first took office more than 24 years ago. There were about 45 employees then, now she has a staff of 29.

"In that way you can say, yes, it is saving us money. Though our volume increases all the time, my budget really doesn't really increase," she added. "I still bring in close to \$15 million a year that goes into the general fund, but my budget for just recording purposes is only about \$2 million. So that's profit to the county."

Her office, which has been e-recording since 1998, was recently recognized with a Leader of the Pack Award (see sidebar) by Corporation Service Company (CSC) that honors the work of clerks and recorders "who have implemented and promoted the use of eRecording technology."

There's an app for the Constitution

The Senate Committee on Rules and Administration, the Library of Congress and the Government Printing Office (GPO) marked Constitution Day, Sept. 17, by launching a new app and Web publication that make analysis and interpretation of constitutional case law by library experts accessible for free to anyone with a computer or mobile device.

The new resources, which include analysis of Supreme Court cases through June 26, 2013, will be updated multiple times each year as new court decisions are issued.

Legal professionals, teachers, students and anyone researching the constitutional implications of a particular topic can easily locate constitutional amendments, federal and state laws that were held unconstitutional, and tables of recent cases with corresponding topics and constitutional implications.

Release of the new resources coincides with the 100th anniversary edition of a printed document, *The Constitution of the United States of America: Analysis and Interpretation*, which was published at the direction of the U.S. Senate for the first time in 1913. Popularly known as the *Constitution Annotated*, the volume has been published as a bound edition every 10 years, with updates addressing new constitutional law cases issued every two years.

The analysis is provided by the Congressional Research Service (CRS) in the Library of Congress.

The new app and improved Web publication will make the nearly 3,000-page *Constitution Annotated* more accessible to more people and enable updates of new case analysis three or four times each year.

The new Constitution Annotated app is available for the iOS platform and allows users to read the entire document; browse by section — such as by article of or amendment to the Constitution; view and navigate content from a table of cases and index; and search all text. The app can be downloaded for free from iTunes. A direct link is here: <http://beta.congress.gov/constitution-annotated>. An Android version is under development.

Muni bond fight more marathon than sprint

TAX REFORM from page 4

protect the tax-exempt status of municipal bonds.

According to NACo research, should the tax-exempt status of municipal bonds be capped at 28 percent — as proposed by the Administration's budget plan — or eliminated, as recommended by Simpson-Bowles Commission, counties and other localities would spend billions more on issuing bonds to finance much-needed infrastructure such as schools, hospitals, roads and bridges.

In May, NACo prepared cus-

tomized profiles with these costs for each state and 45 counties. If your county was not among those initially surveyed and you would like to have your county-cost profile, please send your 2012 interest payment on your tax-exempt municipal bonds to research@naco.org.

County officials can assist NACo in protecting the tax-exempt status of municipal bonds by urging their House members to co-sponsor House Resolution 112, introduced by former local elected officials Reps. Lee Terry (R-Neb.) and Richard Neal (D-Mass.). Commemorating the 100-year precedent

of the federal tax exemption of municipal bonds, the resolution reinforces the importance of these bonds to local governments across the country.

NACo also is interested in knowing about specific projects your county financed using tax-free municipal bonds such as schools, hospitals, roads, bridges, park facilities, and water and sewer systems. Send details to research@naco.org.

"The tax code provisions that benefit state and local governments were part of the first written income tax code, capturing the spirit of the partnership between the federal, state and local governments," NACo Executive Director Matt Chase said.

"Many federal lawmakers need to be reminded of that. But much like tax reform in 1986, the current efforts will resemble more a marathon rather than a sprint. Thus, a constant and even pace of engagement with congressional members will be necessary."

NACo JOBS-ONLINE

NACo provides a method for counties to find the right person to fill that key vacancy.

Visit www.naco.org/programs/jobsonline or scan the QR code to find quality staff.



First county-wide food recovery network planned

By **CHRISTOPHER JOHNSON**
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

**WEB*
CONTENT** How many hungry people could government and county programs feed if food that would otherwise be thrown away was redistributed to those in need?

That was the question raised when Montgomery County, Md. Councilmember Valerie Ervin outlined the Montgomery County Food Recovery Network, believed to be the first county-wide food recovery program in the nation. The network is expected to make it easier to collect unused food and get it to nonprofit agencies that feed the hungry.

“This network will not only help our area nonprofit organizations who fight hunger, but should also reduce the amount of food that ends up in our waste stream,” Ervin said. “In my mind, this is a win-win as those who donate food receive tax benefits and those in need receive healthy meals.”

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, more than 36 million tons of food waste is generated annually in the U.S. In Montgomery County, approximately 19 percent of waste is made up of food.

Ervin was motivated to start a food recovery effort in Montgomery County after she saw the work that student volunteers were doing at the University of Maryland (UMD). Students Ben Simon and Mia Zavalij created a model of food redistribution, now the Food Recovery Network, at the UMD-College Park campus. Since 2011, the Food Recovery Network has grown to 23 chapters in schools across the country and redistributed 135,000 meals, and is actively working with more than 70 students to start new chapters in other schools this fall.

In the fall of 2012, Ervin helped form a task force of area businesses to develop recommendations on how to recover and donate surplus food. A report released to the County Council Sept. 10, recommended hiring a \$60,000-a-year

coordinator who would reach out to area restaurants, grocery stores, caterers and other institutions with cafeterias to collect extra, unused food before it spoils and distribute to local food banks and other providers for those in need.

The County Council set aside \$200,000 for FY14 to the Department of Health and Human Services to help implement a food recovery system. This includes \$100,000 to help existing nonprofits buy new

refrigerators, freezers, coolers or refrigerated trucks and \$35,000 to be reserved to help pay for any marketing campaign or new technology, and \$5,000 for databases.

The task force also recommended the implementation of a 24-hour food recovery hotline for those who want to donate or are in need of food. The network would also include a Web-based recovery tool and window stickers, a logo or other visible signs provided to participants

in the recovery program.

“People see a need,” Ervin added. “This is a great opportunity for all counties to work with their local government and area businesses to help curb hunger.”

The Montgomery County Food Recovery Network is slated to begin operations later this year.

**For more on Food Recovery programs and how your county can get involved, see this story online at www.countynews.org.*

Cook County looks toward bold energy reduction

By **CHRISTOPHER JOHNSON**
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

**WEB*
CONTENT** Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle recently announced her commitment to an ambitious sustainability goal of reducing the county’s greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 80 percent by 2050.

“We want our county to be the greenest in the United States,” Preckwinkle said. “We want to be seen as a world-class model of sustainability, cost savings and conservation by embedding a culture of sustainability in all county operations.”

This commitment comes as a result of a report by the Cook County Sustainability Advisory Council. Created in 2012 by Preckwinkle, the council was directed to help the county become environmentally, socially and economically sustainable.

The council started off its report by focusing on energy use in county-owned buildings, its largest source of GHG emissions. Cook County buildings account for 67 percent of total county GHG emissions. They identified 11 buildings that account

SpeedRead » » »

- » Eleven Cook County buildings, including the hospital and correctional facilities, account for 90 percent of the county’s energy use
- » Council’s report suggests reducing Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions by 80 percent by 2050
- » Preckwinkle: “We want our county to be the greenest in the U.S.”

landfills with 50 percent by 2015, 60 percent by 2035 — with the ultimate goal being 80 percent by 2050.

For now, the county is avoiding expensive solutions, such as installing solar panels or buying electric cars. Instead of following Chicago’s steps in favoring landscaped roofs, the county is looking at plastic “white roof” coverings that better reflect sunlight and lower cooling costs for high-energy buildings, such as the jail and hospital.

The county is also lowering costs with the reuse of demolition debris. The Demolition Debris Diversion Ordinance, which went into effect in November 2012, requires demolition contractors to recycle 70 percent by weight of debris for all demolition projects (excluding sheds and garages) and residential properties to demonstrate that 5 percent by weight is being diverted for reuse. Cook County is the first county government in the Midwest to require reuse of demolition debris, according to county officials.

The county has also found NACo’s Green Government Initiative (GGI) particularly useful in its efforts to improve its environmental stewardship. Cook County encouraged green buildings with the adoption of a Green Building Ordinance back in 2002 and recently participated in a GGI program to test and review biobased products.

“Our next step is to organize a summit and forums across the county to get people focused on sustainability and start implementing the work that needs to be done,” Preckwinkle said.

**See this article online at www.countynews.org for more information on Cook County’s sustainability recommendations and NACo’s Green Government Initiative.*

Word Search

Union County, Ill. Facts

Learn more about this featured county in ‘What’s in a Seal?’

F W U L K A M D L Z N K O Z W U L S W O
C C Z P R W M U L Y Q I O R R A T I Q W
G A T O T Y X S R J R J A C K S O N F J
O L P H C R D L E U D J D Y T M B N E D
F R O E L I N C O L N D O U G L A S D F
W X O Y G S I S V M I L H H Y L U Z E W
Y R F B L I S Q Y Y I E U L N V L Q R I
G H Z Y S I R P Z T A P N S K S E X A I
M H P P M E C A T K Q O E L V E O Z L R
O K D H B V N L R F D T H J M N V N U E
P L X H U M E O G D D U B Z S W M B N D
N A W O R E T H J X E T W C I S T U I N
G D F J G U Z O C U T A Z O T D R M O A
T Y X Y X D D T P X R P U R S U P K N X
B S P F U H B F R G Q O Z Z T J E V P E
P T T Z U Q C V P G G M Q I O G I N C L
F L O W E G R O E G M V M N B K Z U Z A
E I Y K S Q O B J C G C E E G Q F P R P
M J Y R E V A Y B O C S H K M V E C U Z
I V C Q A Y K E L Y V T H V I E R G R O

- Alexander** (bordering county to the south)
- Cape Girardeau** (bordering Missouri County to the west)
- Corzine** (most frequent surname in the county in the 1800s)
- Federal Union** (county named after this group of northern states from the Civil War)
- George Wolf** (“dunkard preacher” in right of county seal)
- Jackson** (bordering county to the north)

- Johnson** (bordering county to the east)
- Jones** (Baptist preacher in left of county seal)
- Jonesboro** (county seat)
- Lincoln-Douglas** (famous debate that took place in 1858)
- Little Egypt** (southern Illinois area known as)
- Missouri** (state county borders)
- Rowan** (North Carolina County where most early residents came from)

Created by Christopher Johnson

Quick Takes

**Counties with the Most Job Opportunities**

Job Growth (2010-2013)

1. Columbia County, Ga. 14.1%
2. Rockwall County, Texas 13.0%
3. Guadalupe County, Texas 12.2%
4. St. Johns County, Fla. 12.1%
5. Utah County, Ala. 11.6%

CNNMoney.com, August 2013

Fix-It program challenges 'throwaway' mindset



Photo by Nancy Lo

Michael Friert, left, and Adam Flood worked on soldering a Roomba vacuum at the January 2013 Fix-It Clinic in Hennepin County, Minn.

By CHRISTOPHER JOHNSON
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT



For most people, when an item breaks it gets thrown away. Not so in Hennepin County, Minn.

Instead of throwing away broken electronics or appliances, Hennepin wants to teach residents how to repair them at Fix-It Clinics.

The county started offering monthly free Fix-It Clinics in September 2012, inspired by an article in *The New York Times* about more than 30 “repair cafes” that have sprung up in the Netherlands. The idea has

caught on in Brooklyn, San Francisco and Seattle.

Fix-it Clinics are held in various locations around the county, once a month drawing up to 70 people, according to organizer Nancy Lo with the county's Waste Reduction and Recycling Unit. “They show up with everything from broken antique typewriters to walkers, DVD players and fans,” Lo said.

Residents bring in items such as small household appliances, clothing, electronics or mobile devices and receive free guided assistance from a dozen volunteers with repair skills to disassemble, troubleshoot and fix their item.

Volunteers have skills in soldering, electronics and electrical repair, computer repair, sewing and general tinkering, and have a strong desire to teach and empower people.

“A lot of those skills have been lost,” Lo said. “Too many items are made cheaply these days.”

The clinics have a three-pronged approach: One, a repaired gadget is one less gadget tossed in the trash. Two, residents can learn to do their own troubleshooting and repair work. Three, they get to meet some really smart and generous people.

The goal is to change the mindset of the throwaway economy, where there are fewer shop classes in school, replacement items are fairly inexpensive and most things are more difficult to fix, Lo said.

“It’s not just a drop off and pick it up repair shop,” she added. “The idea is to take ownership of your stuff and learn how to take it apart, troubleshoot and then, hopefully, learn how to fix it.”

Hennepin County is marking the success of the first year of the Fix-It Clinic program. The county has hosted 13 Fix-It Clinics that attracted 638 participants who brought 932 items in for repair. The participants and volunteers worked together to repair 75 percent of the items, preventing more than two tons of waste, according to the county.

**To learn more about the Fix-It Clinics, read this article online at www.countynews.org.*

\$91 billion gap remains between House, Senate bills

RESOLUTION from page 1

if the debt ceiling is reached. Treasury Secretary Jack Lew has warned that the Treasury would run out funding around mid-October if the debt ceiling is not raised in the meantime. Failing to raise the debt ceiling could lead to default on the nation's debt, which could have severely negative effects on the U.S. economy and its credit rating.

The last time Congress passed appropriations bills on time to fund the next fiscal year was 1994. For this Congress, the challenges con-

tinue to center on overall spending levels for the FY14 appropriations bills. The House, in drafting its FY14 bills, capped discretionary spending at \$967 billion and left the sequester intact.

The Senate, on the other hand, capped discretionary spending at \$1.059 trillion, repealing the sequester. This \$91 billion gap between the proposed funding levels of the House and Senate has made efforts to negotiate a compromise between the two chambers exceedingly difficult, leading some to wonder whether such a compromise is even possible.

Major flooding leaves Colorado counties reeling

By CHARLIE BAN
STAFF WRITER



Floods that struck Colorado in mid-September, killing at least seven people and impacting 17 counties, have been called “biblical,” and more specifically — but no less ominously — hundred-year storms or even thousand-year storms.

From Sept. 9–16, parts of Boulder County saw as much as 18 inches of rain fall over one week, with 9 inches coming Sept. 12, nearly half of the annual average. Boulder County saw most of the rain, with National Weather Service maps showing nearly one-third of the county's receiving more than 12 inches of rain during that week. This is in the middle of a long-term drought throughout eastern Colorado.

Landslides have followed, aided by the erosion caused by major forest fires in Larimer and El Paso counties, plus the natural geology common to Colorado. Canyons act like funnels, so water that falls in one place quickly winds up elsewhere, sometimes miles away.

More than 12,000 people were evacuated from their homes throughout the state, thousands of which are now uninhabitable, and tens of thousands are damaged.

“Friday night it just didn’t stop,” said Boulder County Commissioner Elise Jones, who is in her first term and experiencing her first disaster. “You hear a rushing creek and realize it’s in the street right near your house.”

The flooding has been sobering. “You don’t really believe forecasts, you don’t have a sense of the power of that much water until you witness it,” she said.

“We’ve lost four lives in Boulder County, that could have been much worse, but we saw tens of millions of dollars of damage done to public infrastructure. I’m not sure when we’ll be back to normal, or what that new normal will be.”

The county's incident command team ran round-the-clock helicopter rescue operations for five days, standing down on Sept. 18.

“Our missing persons list started in the hundreds, and now we’re down to four,” she said on that date.

Jones said more than 100 miles of roads in the unincorporated parts

of the county have been damaged beyond useful condition and 35 bridges are unsafe. The damage within the city of Boulder was limited to the areas close to a few drainage systems.

“The floods knocked out virtually every road, some had multiple wash-outs,” she said. “We’re struggling to regain basic access to the mountains, and only one (major) east-west road is open.”

Several towns lost water supply and treatment, some towns are without power and the county is asking residents not to return until utilities can be restored.

“The silver lining is that we’ve seen the best of people in a time

SpeedRead » » »

- » Flooding affected 17 Colorado counties: Adams, Arapahoe, Broomfield, Boulder, Clear Creek, Denver, El Paso, Fremont, Jefferson, Larimer, Logan, Morgan, Pueblo, Otero, Washington, Weld, Sedgewick
- » Rainfall concentrated in Boulder, Adams, Jefferson and Arapahoe counties
- » FEMA individual assistance designated for Adams, Boulder, Clear Creek, El Paso, Jefferson, Larimer and Weld counties

of crisis,” Jones said. “People are resilient and willing to work together on this and they’re looking to bounce back. It’s equal parts heartbreaking and heartwarming.”

Boulder County has opened a one-stop relief center, with temporary housing services, building permit clerks, a lost pet registry and FEMA assistance services.

Recovery Manager Suzanne Bassinger said the flooding in Larimer County would have a big impact on the assessed value of property, since more than 1,500 homes and 200 businesses were destroyed. More than 4,500 homes were damaged.

The county already lost 259 homes in the High Park Fire in June 2012, a disaster from which it was still recovering when the floods hit. That experience, though, has set the groundwork for the flood recovery.

“We have relationships in place with many of the faith-based and

See COLORADO page 11

Counties' infrastructure, roads, bridges suffer extensive flood damage

COLORADO from page 10

nonprofit organizations that have helped with fire recovery," Bassinger said. "We'll have people connected with those resources in weeks instead of months, which is important because the county won't have the funding to address private losses.

"We've never handled anything of this size before," she said. "That, on top of our continuing effort to recover from the fire, has made this really difficult because we're still trying to grasp the magnitude of it all. This

recovery will be going on for a long time. Infrastructure repairs will take months, if not years."

The Larimer County Sheriff's Office has been leading the response effort, which had rescued 1,183 people as of Sept. 19, drawing the 643 unaccounted-for person list down to 139. Three are missing and presumed dead.

"It's the worst natural disaster to hit Larimer County," said sheriff's spokeswoman Jennifer Hillmann.

Almost 200 residents remained in their homes despite advice to evacu-

ate, and Sheriff Justin Smith warned them that because roads to those areas are almost nonexistent, once National Guard helicopters leave, there will be few aerial resources to help them.

"Those people are used to living in isolated areas and having little contact with people," Hillmann said. "But there will be little we can do for them if they choose to shelter in place."

In El Paso County, the burn scars of the Waldo Canyon and Black Forest fires exacerbated the effect of the rain, which fell in once-forested land but wound up damaging residential areas.

"The hydrology of the ground changes," El Paso County Commissioner Sallie Clark said. "The ground becomes a lot like cement. The water rushes right over it. Mud clogs up

culverts, storm drains. The water goes where it can find a path, and that's not where we want it to go."

Clark, who is also NACo's second vice president, said the key to preventing damage like this, Clark said, is helping prevent forest fires, and she champions the Healthy Forests Initiative, which would remove fuel from potential fires.

"If a house survives a forest fire, it then becomes very vulnerable to flooding," she said. "Reducing fuels in watershed areas will prevent forest fires in the first place."

Having been through two major fires and a flood in fewer than 18 months has made El Paso County emergency-weary, but decidedly more adept at handling disasters.

"Practice doesn't make perfect, but it makes us better in our responses," Clark said. "We've gotten better at

providing organizational support, and moral support, as our citizens endure these things."

On top of the obvious damage to lives and property, trying to get back to a routine has been difficult in Boulder County, Jones said, because the flooding changed the nature of the region's character. It's a haven for endurance athletes, with world-class triathletes and distance runners flocking to train at high altitude and the multitude of trails.

"It seems like there's no trail that hasn't been eroded away," she said. "The popular roads for bicyclists are in pieces. It seems trivial but this quality of life makes Boulder what it is."

**Read this story at www.countynews.org to see an animated map of rainfall in each of the 17 affected counties, produced by the Denver Post.*

PILT payments benefit diverse county needs

PILT from page 2

"BLM employees use those roads just like everybody else. This isn't a freebie; it's not a handout; it's not a subsidy. It is in fact payment in lieu of taxes because BLM doesn't pay taxes on that land."

Martin pointed out that in his county, PILT money, which comes with no strings attached, is being used to further goals the goals of President Obama's America's Great Outdoors Initiative, which aims to develop a 21st century conservation and recreation agenda.

"We took some of our PILT money and created a Conservation Youth Corps," he said, comprising 18-to-24 year olds who participate in an eight week program doing everything from soil stabilization to repairing roads and putting in culverts. "We actually use the federal payments to work on federal lands." Monette's county in New Mexico is using PILT dollars as matching funds to build a health center.

**See this story online at www.countynews.org for a link to NACo's slide presentation on the PILT program.*

Congress tackles Secure Rural Schools funding

Both the House and Senate have considered bills to extend Secure Rural Schools funding and avoid dramatic budgetary shortfalls for 729 rural counties eligible for SRS funds.

The House approved Restoring Healthy Forests for Healthy Communities Act (H.R. 1526) Sept. 20 on a 244-173 vote that would extend Secure Rural Schools funding in 2014 and provide for long-term funding of the vital federal payment to forested public lands counties.

In addition to a temporary fix for SRS, the House bill would

- re-establish active management of the nation's forests
- promote responsible timber production on Forest Service commercial timber land, and
- improve forest management by establishing a Good Neighbor Authority, which allows state and federal authorities to work together on fire mitigation efforts even when project areas cross ownership boundaries.

"Enacting a modern revenue sharing program, as included in H.R. 1526, to allocate revenues generated from designated federal lands to forest counties and schools would ensure that students receive essential education services and that rural communities have funding for roads, conservation projects, search and rescue missions, and fire prevention programs," NACo Public Lands Steering Chairman Mike Murray said.

Meanwhile, the Senate, Sept. 18, approved a simple one-year SRS extension for 2013 as part of its reauthorization of the Helium Stewardship Act, which maintains the nation's helium reserve. The bill heads now to the House where it must be acted upon by Oct. 1 to avoid a shutdown of the Helium Reserve.

The House passed its version of the helium reauthorization, but without SRS funding, in April.



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

Counties as Employers Health Reform Toolkit:

Making Sense of Complex Issues

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, commonly referred to as the Affordable Care Act (ACA) or the health reform law, contains a number of substantial changes to employment-based health plans. This updated toolkit outlines some of the critical issues counties should be aware of concerning the implementation of the health reform law and factors to consider as they make any benefit plan changes.

Please visit www.naco.org/healthreformtoolkit to view the Toolkit.

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NACo National Association of Counties
The Voice of America's Counties



County Innovations and Solutions

Broward County, Fla.

Replacing School Lawns Saves Money, Opens Educational Doors

By CHARLIE BAN
STAFF WRITER

Broward County, Fla. has turned hurricane-ravaged landscapes into award-winning natural habitats, and in the process saved money and expanded student horizons.

Broward County's schoolyards in the early 21st century were nothing special. They were mostly decoration, keeping students focused on what was happening inside the buildings, on their lessons, and they were expensive.

But after Hurricane Wilma made short work of the landscaping in 2005, it was hard to ignore that most of those plants that Wilma uprooted didn't belong in South Florida. So, the school district and the county's natural resources planning and management division replaced them with native plants.

"We have the ocean on one side and the Everglades on the other, but most kids aren't seeing the connection too often," said Robert Rudolph, the county's water planning program manager. "They don't recognize the connections between two great ecosystems, right in the middle."

That middle is the one-third of the county's land area that supports 1.7 million people in 400 square miles. The rest is wetland.

The county helped the school district plan the return of natural flora with more natural irrigation systems. The school district is one



Photo courtesy of Broward County, Fla.

Broward County Commissioner Kristin Jacobs distributes ladybugs to students as a natural form of pest control in their school garden.

of the largest landowners in the county, and those changes could help the district dramatically reduce the amount of water and energy needed to maintain the grounds.

Over the past four years, 268 irrigation systems have been improved at 125 schools. With some help from county staff, high school students in a horticulture program planted much of the vegetation, more than 1,500 drought-resistant trees. That drastically reduced the amount of water and care that went into maintaining the once-unsustainable landscaping, saving almost \$300,000 annually in water utility fees and almost \$15,000 in

reduced energy costs.

"This is a tricky climate," Rudolph said. "It's hot, and sometimes it rains a lot but we have dry winters. There are plants that survive through that but it wasn't what was around the schools."

On top of the outright savings, the plan also expanded classrooms beyond the walls and the test-oriented curricula.

"As we become so curriculum-focused, test-focused, the schools have had to downplay environmental education," Rudolph said. "The kids are learning the environment from a science book but coming outside and seeing something that would be impossible without a lot of resources supporting it."

Trying to do environmental education meant a field trip, said education specialist Victor Suarez, an experience that can now be achieved by simply going outdoors.

"When I show up and tell kids we're going to have class outside, they love it," he said.

Suarez, other staff and expenses cost roughly \$200,000 annually. Teacher training, too, has made significant progress because many of the district's new teachers come from out of state and need primers on native plants.

Though the high school students did much of the heavy lifting, planting the "learning gardens," there are opportunities for younger students to add to the ecosystem.

"Just the other week I was talking to some eighth graders and they pointed out a tree they planted two years before," he said. "They're already more invested in the environment, thanks to that."

Suarez's lessons include a variety of topics, including pollution, water resource management, the water cycle, plant and animal identification, and invasive plant species.

Rudolph also sees the classes as receptive audiences to send messages about water conservation.

"At one time, we were using half of our drinking water to care for plant species that couldn't live on their own in South Florida," he said.

"School-aged children are a very receptive age group for environmental lessons, and they take them home to their families," and defend them vigorously. While that's not one of the primary motivations behind the program, Rudolph hopes families become more conscious of the amount of water they use as a result.

The going-native effort has led the Broward County School District to be named the first School District Wildlife Habitat by the National Wildlife Federation.

"We've been working with them for a long time and they've made concentrated efforts to replace their lost trees smartly," said Nicole Rousmaniere, the NWF's senior coordinator for community outreach. "In addition to the schoolyard program, they've developed a series of community wildlife habitats, that, put together, makes the largest wildlife habitat in the country, on the county level."

County Innovations and Solutions highlights award-winning programs.

Broward County's Partnering to Promote Environmental Stewardship within Schools program was named Best in Category in Environmental Protection for the 2013 NACo Achievement Awards.

What's in a Seal?



» Union County, Ill.
www.unioncountyil.gov

Union County was founded on Jan. 2, 1818 and is named after the federal union of the states. Its county seat is Jonesboro, the site of the third Lincoln-Douglas debate in 1858.

That same year, the fourth Union County courthouse was built. The courthouse served the county until 2013 when construction of the fifth Union County courthouse was completed. Union County expanded from three to five commissioners in 2013.

The county seal shows two figures that represent men standing up and shaking hands. One of them is dressed in the old-fashioned shad-bellied coat and vest, broad-brimmed hat and long hair. The other is in the conventional ministerial suit. It represents a meeting of a Baptist preacher named Jones and George Wolf, a Dunkard preacher. The meeting of these pioneer preachers occurred about 1816 or 1817. The seal was designed and adopted by the county commissioners in 1850, and it was said to be the suggestion of Gov. Harry Dougherty.

(If you would like your county's seal featured, please contact Christopher Johnson at 202.942.4256 or cjohnson@naco.org.)

In Case You Missed It

News to Use From Past County News

» Guidebook, webinars highlight National Cybersecurity Awareness Month

Starting Oct. 1, NACo will launch National Cybersecurity Awareness Month with the release of a new publication, *Cyber for the Counties Guidebook*. It's a practical guide to protecting a county's information by preventing, detecting and responding to cyber-attacks. County officials and staff can request electronic or hard copies at www.cyberguidebook.com.

NACo will also be teaming up with the Department of Homeland Security, National Cybersecurity Alliance and the Multi-State Information Sharing and Analysis Center (MS-ISAC) to present five webinars devoted to the subject of cybersecurity every Wednesday in October at 2 p.m.

To view the topics and register, visit www.naco.org/research/Education/Pages/Webinars.aspx.

The H.R. Doctor Is In

Prisoners of the Spreadsheet

The school year began about a month ago and already in Florida, where the HR doctor lives, as well as in many other states, preparation is underway for children to be educated in how to take mandated state-wide tests.

This is part of a larger movement in which metrics becomes the dominant theme. Metrics refers to quantifiable measurements. Measuring things is very much a part of our lives, our science and of overall human history and development. Just ask anyone with a Home Depot credit card. However, it is raising very serious questions and, perhaps, harm to that development as we try to apply it to constructs such as creativity, honor and caring.

The idea in schools is that “no child will be left behind.” Those in Congress, state legislatures, and many in the education industry believe it to be true because we will be measuring their progress. Since measurement is quite scientific sounding, it must be a good thing to do. Progress will be reflected in higher scores on standardized tests. Higher scores mean more progress for individual students and schools. Failing scores put schools in danger of losing funding and students.

The idea that we can take a child and measure all sorts of characteristics, not unlike a tailor custom-making new outfits at an exclusive clothing store, is an appealing concept for many. Metrics certainly, at least in theory, gives us a way to tell whether all that property tax money, grant funding, and of course, the all-important lottery money funding schools, is being well spent.

For a couple of decades, metrics has emerged as part of the quest for the assessment Holy Grail in other areas of public and private business. For example, every hospital in the known

“The world is far more important than to allow it to be trusted only to spreadsheets — as wonderful as these tools may be. The zeal of embracing metrics must never be allowed to take the human out of human resources.”

universe, or at least the American part of that universe, is required to maintain statistics on average length of stay, treatment outcomes, amount and frequency of training received by the staff, available bed pans and many other elements.

Governments, too, seem to be acting like love-struck teenagers when it comes to keeping statistics. They want more and want them faster. They want them to cover all aspects of public service from police activities, to the number of drug doses placed on paramedic vehicles, the chemical additives used to treat our water and wastewater, traffic counts — virtually every element of government is now engaged in the accumulation of metrics just because they can. This imperative to collect has become a true measure of government success and a prime survival tool as next year's budget is being reviewed.

However, it is the HR Doctor's experience that, as one author put it, numbers can never make you happy, except for auditors, accountants, budget analysts and many CFOs. Who better than these career professionals would we expect to be happy equating the future of agency funding to the collection, analysis and interpretation of data?

My hope is that success for children in school, police officers in the field or physicians in the ER will go very far beyond exercises in the use of an Excel spreadsheet.

The various state-mandated comprehensive assessment tests do not

measure creativity well. They do not measure kindness and civility. They will not measure the compassion that a health care professional may display or the police officer may demonstrate in going above and beyond what it takes to help a person in great need. The metrics will fail in addressing how to correct a decline in civility, or caring about the person next door, or

the community at large.

Metrics can masquerade as hard evidence so that decision makers can act like they are scientific. It can offer statistics that make strong suggestions about what should and should not be available to citizens in a democratic society. Some might argue if you can't measure something like a child's capacity to create and innovate, or demonstrate a sense of humor, then it shouldn't be funded.

Metrics represents a powerful tool when combined with communication and presentation skills. It will be very difficult for elected officials to ignore the value of counting things. However, in human behavior areas such as those mentioned earlier in this

article, it must be recognized clearly that the more we use metrics as the centerpiece of our decision-making and exclude other considerations, the more we fail to remember the humanity of the work we do. Soon we may find school boards mandating a minimum number of smiling pats on the back for a child who has excelled in an assignment.

Real success in education and in every other aspect of our stewardship of the public's business must not be defined by standardized tests and measurements.



Phil Rosenberg

The HR Doctor • www.hrdr.net

Job Market & Classifieds

■ COUNTY MANAGER – EDDY COUNTY, N.M.

Salary: \$110,000 – \$150,000 annually; DOQ.


The Board of County Commissioners for Eddy County, N.M. is seeking an energetic, highly skilled public sector manager with team leadership qualities. Minimum qualifications include a Bachelor's degree in Public or Business Administration, plus 10 years of experience in executive management. The county's FY14 Budget is about \$64 million and has 327 FTE authorized. Currently, the County is experiencing

a period of very strong economic growth.

The Closing date is Friday, Sept. 6 at 4 p.m. The starting salary will be determined based on qualifications. Eddy County offers a very comprehensive benefits package.

Please send or email resume, including salary history, along with a completed County application and waiver to roxann@co.eddy.nm.us or mail to: Eddy County Board of Commissioners 101 West Greene Street Carlsbad, NM 88220.

The application along with a profile, job description and other information can be found at www.eddycounty.org.



REGISTER TODAY

Roadmaps to Health Forum




Dane County (Madison), Wis. ★ Oct. 31 – Nov. 1

The **2013 Roadmaps to Health Forum** will emphasize the County Health Rankings and Roadmaps, discuss ways to foster community change through a shared vision and commitment to improve county health.

To learn more, visit www.naco.org/programs/csd/pages/naco2013roadmapstohealthforum.aspx

CONTACT:
Katie Bess
kbess@naco.org | 202.942.4215

NACO National Association of Counties
The Voice of America's Counties



News From the Nation's Counties

► ARIZONA

The AARP has named **COCONINO COUNTY** one of the **best employers for workers over 50**.

It was the only county given such an honor. It cited the county's program "2 Young 2 Retire," a retirement transition course for employees getting ready to retire that covers issues related to money, work, volunteering and wellness.

AARP also noted the County's Wellness Incentive Program, which helps staff save money on medical premiums by participating in activities designed to aid them in making healthier choices.

The AARP's Best Employers list was open to any U.S.-based employer, most of which are rarely recognized on their first try.

► CALIFORNIA

FRESNO COUNTY residents will soon have a new permanent place to drop off **hazardous waste**. The county broke ground on a \$1.7 million facility that will collect items such as used batteries and medical sharps. Officials told ABC 30 News that the project would be completed by next spring, will be open on weekends and will operate a series of drop-off locations throughout the county.

The county has offered limited drop-off events to collect syringes and other household hazardous waste materials, typically twice a year.

► FLORIDA

• The **FLAGLER COUNTY** Board of Commissioners' vote to **ban job seekers who use tobacco** — even outside of work — may have been unconstitutional.

The American Civil Liberties Union of Florida says as much in alleging a violation of the Fourth Amendment, according to Florida Watchdog.

The civil liberties organization successfully challenged an overly broad drug testing policy in a Florida city earlier this year.

• Gay and lesbian **PALM BEACH COUNTY** government employees should no longer face a **tax penalty on health insurance** for their unmarried partners, according to the County Commission.

Palm Beach County's planned "tax equity" measure would use local tax dollars to start reimbursing employees with registered domestic partners for the additional federal income taxes they face when accepting county health benefits for

their partners.

Since 2006, the county has been offering health benefits for unmarried domestic partners of county employees. But because the federal government doesn't equate an unmarried partner to a spouse when it comes to taxes, the benefits are considered taxable income to the employee.

It will initially cost the county about \$136,000 a year total to boost the salaries of employees with domestic partners in order to reimburse them for the increased federal taxes they pay for their partners' benefit, the *Sun Sentinel* reported.

That extra county cost for the tax equity program could also go away if the federal government changes its tax policy or if Florida law is changed to recognize same sex marriage.

Palm Beach County now has just 48 employees with registered domestic partners, 39 of whom are opposite-sex couples. The other nine have same-sex partners.

► ILLINOIS

The **COOK COUNTY** medical examiner will have the power to **cremate bodies**, rather than letting them stack up in the morgue under a package of new rules commissioners approved.

Medical Examiner Stephen Cina has said approving cremations would bring the county in line with most big cities, allowing his department to act more quickly to deal with remains of indigents. The ordinance does not allow the county to cremate unidentified bodies. The morgue is overcrowded, the *Chicago Tribune* reported.

Cina said the county could store many more cremated bodies for much longer, giving families additional time to collect the remains.

► MARYLAND

Citing safety issues and moral concerns, **MONTGOMERY COUNTY** officials and social service providers are **discouraging motorists from giving money to panhandlers**.

A recent survey counted just 31 panhandlers throughout the county's 500 square miles, but they are visible. One panhandler was killed in May when a car jumped a median and struck her, *The Washington Post* reported.

The new publicity effort — "Give a Hand Up, Not a Hand-Out" — asks that contributions be directed to charities intended to help panhandlers with the problems that have driven them to the



Photo courtesy of King County, Wash.

King County Executive Dow Constantine asks attendees at a Disaster Recovery – CEO Leadership Summit for a show of hands by those whose organizations have supplier agreements in place to ensure continuity of operations during a disaster.

► WASHINGTON

KING COUNTY Executive Dow Constantine has launched a **Resilient King County initiative**. It's a county-wide, two-year planning process for crafting a comprehensive long-term recovery strategy following a major earthquake or other catastrophe.

The effort kicked off with a Disaster Recovery – CEO Leadership Summit earlier this month. Key representatives from the corporate and nonprofit sectors met on the Microsoft campus in Redmond to discuss the impact a major disaster would have on the region. Numerous studies show the Pacific Northwest faces a high probability of a mega-earthquake in the next 50 years.

The summit will be followed by a series of workshops throughout the county where participants can help to develop the recovery support functions to be used for re-establishing health and social services, rebuilding infrastructure systems, promoting economic development, restoring the environment, providing long-term housing and restoring cultural resources.

streets, usually mental illness and addiction. The campaign includes bus ads and a way for people to give via their cellphones.

Officials initially considered making panhandling illegal. But a state attorney general's opinion said that allowing soliciting by some groups — such as firefighters with their annual "Fill the Boot" campaign for muscular dystrophy — but not others raised First Amendment concerns.

► MINNESOTA

Aiming to revitalize downtown Minneapolis' North Loop area, the **HENNEPIN COUNTY** Board approved a plan to add a park, jumbo display screen, retail stores and a public plaza to the \$79.3 million rail hub being built near Target Field, where the Minnesota Twins play.

The new hub, to be called Target Field Station, will be **Minnesota's version of New York City's Grand Central Terminal** when it opens next year, Twins President Dave St. Peter to the *Star Tribune*.

In the deal, the Twins and United

Properties will pay \$3.7 million to the county: \$1.75 million in cash, \$240,000 to defray the cost of building 250 parking spaces for future office space, \$750,000 for a jumbo display screen overlooking the 65,000-square-foot public plaza, and \$1 million in unspecified enhancements and features. The baseball team and Metropolitan Transit also will divide operating costs for the plaza, which will include maintenance, security and programming.

► NEVADA

CLARK COUNTY commissioners are considering a proposal to strip the famed Las Vegas Strip of all news racks by the end of the year. They'll hold a public hearing on the issue in November.

County officials say the measure is part of a larger effort to remove or relocate obstacles to pedestrian traffic on the Strip's heavily traveled sidewalks, the *Las Vegas Review-Journal* reported.

Some of the news boxes that

would be affected contain publications featuring scantily clad women and ads for strip clubs and escort services. The county, however, says it's not just targeting the risqué stuff, according to commission Chairman Steve Sisolak. "It's fair all the way around. It will solve what we need to do," he said, "which is keep traffic flowing on Las Vegas Boulevard."

► NEW JERSEY

The state has provided all 21 counties' emergency medical services coordinators with **portable radios** to ensure 24/7 communication when landline and cellular systems fail, such as during Superstorm Sandy.

"Anytime we have an emergency situation or disaster, communication is always our weakest link, especially when comes to speaking across county lines and up to the state," said Frank Wheatley, **WARREN COUNTY** public safety director.

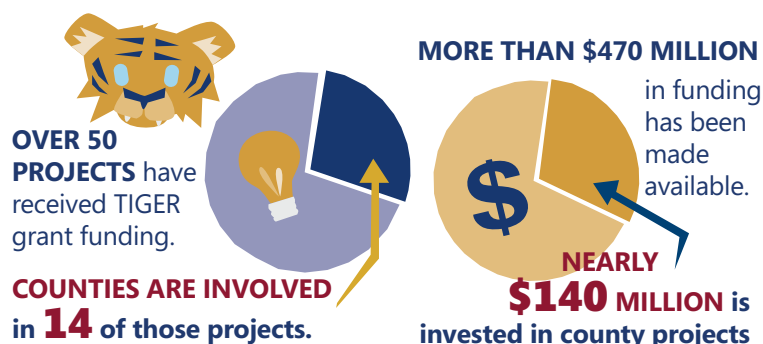
Research News

Eyeing the TIGER Grants

Counties play an essential role in building, maintaining and operating the nation's infrastructure. Many of their projects go beyond their jurisdictional boundaries and benefit a larger number of municipalities.

To assist in this effort, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DoT) in 2009 created the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Program that helps states and local governments with their transportation projects.

At the beginning of September, the U.S. DoT announced the 2013 round of TIGER grants and grantees. Over 50 projects in 37 states received more than \$470 million in



funding for infrastructure projects critical to national and local needs through this discretionary grant program. County governments are involved in 14 projects with a total investment of nearly \$140 million.

These 14 projects are located throughout the country, with

nine in the West and South, and the rest in the central and the northeast regions. In only four grants, counties are the direct applicant: Pima County, Ariz.; Winneshiek County, Iowa; Suffolk County, Mass. and Missoula County, Mont. In the remaining

grants, counties are involved in an authority that received a grant such as the San Diego Association of Governments in California and the Port of Houston in Texas, showing the broad involvement of counties in transportation.

Many projects awarded TIGER funding aim to improve flow of trade in the nation's ports. For example, Pima County will use \$5 million in grants to support a \$13 million project to install high-powered switches, a double-loop track and other improvements at the inland Port of Tucson, a logistics hub. The improvements will improve the flow of goods through the port and also decrease traffic delays on nearby roadways. The project will provide a throughway for the region's businesses and exports to international markets.

Other projects seek to improve transportation for bicycles and pedestrians. The Lee County, Fla. Metropolitan Planning Organization is creating transportation connections for bicycles and pedestrians through the construction of a regional trail network.

With \$10 million in TIGER

grant funding, the project will create a system connecting transit hubs with major areas throughout the county including residential, commercial and recreational facilities. The dedicated bike lanes and pedestrian walkways should improve safety in the county. Between 2000 and 2013, 22 percent of all crashes in Lee County involved injuries to bicyclists or pedestrians, almost double the national average.

The plan builds on a regional network of nearly 100 miles of transportation facilities for bicycles and pedestrians to improve safety for all who use the county roads.

TIGER grant funding is helping counties build and maintain the infrastructure needed to keep America moving, an example of federal-county collaboration. From ports to trails, counties are creating safer and more efficient ways for residents to travel and goods to move throughout the country.

(Research News was written by Kathryn Murphy, senior research associate.)

Allegheny County, Pa. begins 'Obamacare' town hall meetings

NEWS FROM *from page 14*

Currently, each county has one hand-held, two-way radio that is linked into the statewide 800-megahertz radio system. Having a second one will enhance communication with other state agencies.

The radios were purchased using \$118,000 from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Social Services Block Grant program.

► PENNSYLVANIA

ALLEGHENY COUNTY is taking steps to ensure that the public understands the impacts of "Obamacare."

The county Department of Human Service's Allegheny Link to Aging and Disability Resources will host a **Town Hall Forum on the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act** of 2010 Oct. 2. It will feature a panel discussion by experts and a question-and-answer session.

"It's a complex piece of legislation and the experts at the forum can answer many initial questions," said Joe Elliott, community programs manager at Allegheny Link, "including 'What do we do if our employer does not provide health insurance? Are we eligible for the marketplace? Will there be subsidies to make health insurance more affordable?'"

Online health insurance market-

places — originally called health insurance exchanges — will begin taking registrations on Oct. 1.

► VIRGINIA

PRINCE GEORGE and **DINWIDDIE** counties are weighing their options to **bridge the digital divide** and make broadband Internet more available in the largely rural counties, *The Progress-Index* reported.

"We are able to give [children] lunch money online. You can get your grades online," Jeffrey Stoke, Prince George economic development director, said. "You do your homework online. The children in rural areas should not have to suffer because of a lesser-quality Internet service."

Both counties have provided seed money to build fiber-optic networks in their business parks, but broadband providers have yet to span the "last mile" to serve all homes.

Among Prince George's options is creating a county broadband authority, similar to one in neighboring Surry County. At least seven Virginia counties have them.

"We wouldn't be looking to make a profit. It would be like water and sewer. We are just looking to cover our costs," Stoke said.

► WASHINGTON

The **SNOHOMISH COUNTY** Public Utility District (PUD), the state and industry partners hope

to begin testing a one-megawatt **battery energy storage system** by early 2014.

Once installed at an electrical substation, it would be used to store electricity generated by wind and solar during times of high production but low demand.

Under the partnership, 1Energy Systems will provide the battery, the size of a cargo shipping container. Alstom, a smart grid technology company, and faculty from the University of Washington will collaborate on research, analysis and design of technology interfaces.

► WISCONSIN

The **MILWAUKEE COUNTY** Board of Supervisors will consider a plan later this month that supporters say will make the taxicab market in the county and city more competitive.

If approved, the county and the city of Milwaukee would enter an intergovernmental agreement allowing the **county to oversee the local taxi industry** in both jurisdictions, the *Journal Sentinel* reported.

The board's transportation committee recently approved a resolution stating that the plan could open up the market so it's not dominated by a few large taxi companies.

(News From the Nation's Counties is compiled by Charles Taylor and Charlie Ban, staff writers. If you have an item for News From, please email ctaylor@naco.org or cban@naco.org.)

NACo on the Move

» NACo Officers, County Officials



Riki Hokama

• NACo First Vice President **Riki Hokama** provided an update on NACo's legislative priorities at the Michigan Association of Counties Annual Conference in Saginaw County Sept. 16.

» NACo Staff



Alyssum Pohl

• **Alyssum Pohl**, NOAA Digital Coast Fellow, gave a presentation about the Digital Coast website, highlighting tools including the Coastal Counties Snapshots, at the Naval Observatory in Washington, D.C. Sept. 11.

» Coming Up

• **Andrew Goldschmidt**, director, membership marketing, will be exhibiting on behalf of membership recruitment and retention at the Tennessee County Services Association Fall Conference in Hamilton County Oct. 9-11.

On the Move is compiled by Christopher Johnson.

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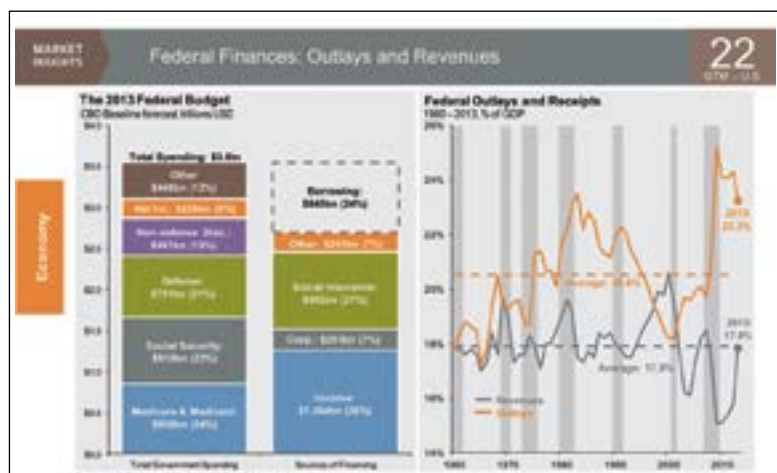
Financial Services News

Nationwide Helps County Employers Spot Economic Trends

County leaders who find it hard to keep up with economic trends or find usable information when they need it now have new resources just a few clicks away. Nationwide Retirement Solutions, provider of the NACo Deferred Compensation Program, has introduced new tools specifically intended to benefit county employers and plan sponsors.

"In the ever-changing public sector, employers are telling us that they'd appreciate receiving tools and information specifically tailored to their needs, to help them make the best decisions for their deferred compensation plans and participants," said Eric Stevenson, senior vice president, Nationwide Retirement Solutions. "Nationwide has responded by partnering with leading firms to deliver timely economic news and analysis as well as fiduciary education."

In May, Nationwide launched the J.P. Morgan Guide to the Markets, a quarterly webinar designed to detail and explain key market



Sample financial data provided by the J.P. Morgan guide.

and economic issues to governmental plan sponsors through clear, compelling charts and graphs, and audio commentary. The guide presents market and economic histories as well as trends and statistics, including market performance by asset class, consumer spending, corporate finances, federal finances, economic trends, employment trends and risk.

Each quarter, the webinar will

answer questions such as:

- How has sequestration affected the markets and the economy?
- How have the equity markets performed?
- What's going on in the bond market?
- What's been working and what hasn't?
- What is the benefit of proper asset allocation, and
- How does all of this impact

the public sector?

The guide provides insights that county plan sponsors may find relevant as they make decisions about their deferred compensation program. This quarterly webinar is available on the home page of Nationwide's plan sponsor website www.nrsforu.com/plansponsor.

The J.P. Morgan Guide to the Markets is just one of several tools available to county leaders. Other resources include a series of fiduciary education modules, quarterly Strategic Advantage newsletters, monthly legislative and regulatory reports, and other relevant news and information.

County leaders wanting to learn more about tools available to plan sponsors of the NACo Deferred Compensation Program can contact their Nationwide representative or call toll-free at 1.877.496.1630.

To learn more about the NACo Deferred Compensation Program and how promoting deferred compensation can benefit county

employees, contact Lisa Cole at lcole@nacorma.org or 202.942.4270.

(Financial Services News was written by Michael R. Burkhart, Nationwide Retirement Solutions.)

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July 11-14 • 2014

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Laissez les bon temps rouler!

