

NACO National Association of Counties

# CountyNews

The Voice of America's Counties

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES ■ WASHINGTON, D.C.

VOL. 44, NO. 5 ■ March 12, 2012

## 'Waters of the U.S.' guidance to be finalized

By JULIE UFFNER  
ASSOCIATE LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

In an unexpected move, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) has sent the "waters of the U.S." guidance to the White House Office of Management and Budget for final review. The proposed guidance seeks to expand federal jurisdiction over U.S. waters by modifying the existing "waters

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### QuickTakes

#### States with the Highest Well Being

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Source: Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index 2012

## CountyNews Features



Photo by David Hathcox

U.S. Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood addresses attendees at NACo's Legislative Conference.

## Conference-goers set policies, advocate for America's counties



Legislative Conference  
After-Action Report

County officials from across the country came to Washington D.C. earlier this month to learn, deliberate and lobby during NACo's 2012 Legislative Conference March 3-7.

Some 1,400 conference attendees heard from key congressional and administration leaders, recommended new policy positions for the association and participated in a wide variety of workshops and committee meetings.

At the opening general session, Sens. Dick Durbin (D-Ill.) and Mike Enzi (R-Wyo.) sought attendee support for the Marketplace Fairness Act, a bill NACo supports, and one which could lead to states and local governments recouping nearly \$23 bil-

lion in sales tax revenue now lost to Internet transactions. The bill, a rare bipartisan effort, is also supported by Amazon.com.

Transportation infrastructure took a turn in the spotlight at the conference as well. NACo released a new survey of county engineers which found that the nation's roads and bridges, nearly half of which are under the financial control of local governments, are in desperate need of federal assistance for long-delayed maintenance and repair work.

In the meantime, U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood told conference attendees that it was unlikely Congress would pass a reauthorization of the surface transportation bill, now in its ninth extension, by the end of the month when its latest extension expires. The only question remaining, he said, is how long the next extension will be.

Another NACo legislative pri-

ority involves support for full funding of all titles in the 2012 reauthorization of the Farm Bill. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack challenged the prevailing attitude that no major legislation, including the Farm Bill, could be passed this year because of the presidential election. President Lincoln, he said, created the department of agriculture in 1862 in the midst of the Civil War. That same Congress also passed the Homestead Act expanding America to the West and funded the building of the Transcontinental Railroad. "So don't buy how tough it is," he said to a round of applause.

Also during the conference, county officials heard from House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.), Rep. Adrian Smith (R-Neb.), Rep. Kay Granger (R-Texas), and political commentators

See **CONFERENCE** page 4

## NACo, NACE: Survey shows transportation bill must pass

By CHARLES TAYLOR  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Ninety-eight percent of county engineers responding to a new NACo survey reported that some of their roads are in poor or fair condition, and 86 percent said their bridges are in poor condition.

NACo and National Association of County Engineers (NACE) officials say this underscores the need for Congress to pass a transportation bill. The most recent multi-year surface transportation reauthorization legislation expired in September 2009, and Congress has yet to pass a new long-term bill. Instead, it has provided funding through nine short-term extensions, ranging from 16 days to nine months — making it difficult for counties to plan and execute infrastructure projects. The current extension expires March 31.

"The nation's county roads

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# County governments seek to 'source' the crowd

By CHARLES TAYLOR  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER



Counties have always sought feedback from their citizens through surveys, focus groups and public hearings.

So what's the big deal about "crowd sourcing" — aside from its having a certain techie-buzzword coolness factor?

Also known as citizen sourcing in some government circles, crowd sourcing is more commonly used by businesses. As with Wikipedia, it's the process of bringing hundreds or thousands of minds together, online, to collaborate, solve problems or vet ideas. Call it outsourcing tasks to a network of people — the crowd. Participants also can provide their input in-person for smaller groups.

Increasingly, counties are using crowd sourcing through their websites to solve problems, solicit ideas and improve upon county-originated proposals and programs. Oakland County, Mich., Howard County, Md. and Stafford County, Va. are just a few of the local governments that are embracing the crowd.

"Really, what crowd sourcing is about is tapping into all of the good

## SpeedRead » » »

- » More counties using crowd sourcing
- » Gives citizens a voice in county affairs 24/7
- » "Gamification" utilized to make user experience more engaging

ideas that local governments know their citizenry has," said Ira Levy, Howard County's chief information officer, "and it's doing so in a way that citizens feel compelled to participate because it's easily accessible."

As any County Board member knows, there can be the same small cadre of vocal citizens who show up meeting after meeting to express their views. "You don't get a wide-ranging group of folks who have different knowledge sets," said Phil Bertolini, Oakland County's chief information officer and deputy county executive. "If you get the same three people that show up at your public comment all the time, then all you get is their opinion." Crowd sourcing opens the process to those who are unable to attend meetings.

In Stafford County, about 40 percent of residents commute outside

the county for work — many making the daily 45-mile slog to Washington, D.C. — so officials there hope a citizen-sourcing module called Community Voice will provide new opportunities for civic engagement.

"With modern technology, they can participate in a forum on their cellphone, tablet, laptop, etc.," county spokeswoman Cathy Vollbrecht said in an email. "The ability to have an active voice in their local government will be at their fingertips, 24/7."

Oakland County conducted a pilot project called IdeaScale in February 2011 in parks and recreation, economic development, facilities and IT. It resulted in 72 ideas being posted garnering 267 comments from 164 registered users and 550 votes cast, Bertolini said. The county's Ideas Project website currently is seeking suggestions on redesigning the county website.

IdeaScale was customized for the county by employees and students from Michigan State University; it cost the county about \$35,000 to implement, including the students' unpaid time valued at \$18,500. In addition, Bertolini said his staff spent about 280 hours on the effort, accounting for the balance of the county's investment. He added that

as a government client, there is no licensing fee.

Howard County's first foray into crowd-sourcing is using the same technology between now and May 31 to gather public input to help its Department of Technology and Communication Services develop a new strategic plan, Levy said.

"We looked at how Wikipedia works, and we feel that the fact that it has accurate information defies all logic," he added, "so we kind of felt, 'Why can't we defy logic, too?' Or at least we'll figure out if we can."

Howard's IdeaScale Web module will open the process not only to residents, but also to companies, whether manufacturers or consultants, "so that we end up with the best possible evolutionary type plan," Levy said. The county's "Ideas" Web page will permit participants and commenters to attach materials related to their comments such as white papers and supporting documents. Registration is required so the county can follow up on the ideas.

Vollbrecht said her county might use Community Voice to solicit ideas for celebrating the county's upcoming 350th anniversary in 2014. There is no extra cost for Community Voice as a part of a package deal with CivicPlus, the website developer that created the citizen-sourcing module.

those submissions, and if something generates a lot of interest and a lot of support, to actually see that through to implementation if it's a valid idea."

IT officials from all three counties said another benefit of crowd sourcing is that it aids in government transparency.

"I know that people throw around the terminology transparency in government," Bertolini said. "But when you engage the public and you allow them to give input in what is considered a very simple way — go online and just drop your comments in — you are opening up your decision-making process and you're making yourself more transparent. I believe that helps build public trust."

*\*For links to these counties' crowd-sourcing websites, visit the online version of this story at [www.naco.org/countynews](http://www.naco.org/countynews).*

## CORRECTION

In the Feb. 27 edition, the "Courthouse Awards Application Available" headline should have read 2012.

## EPA, Corps 'waters' guidance could place ditches under federal jurisdiction

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of the U.S." definition in the Clean Water Act (CWA).

According to an EPA news release, the guidance "will provide more predictable and consistent procedures for identifying waters and wetlands protected under the Clean Water Act."

A draft of the guidance was first released in April 2011. Since then, NACo has been consistent in its comments on the potentially devastating impact the guidance could have on local governments. The proposal increases the number of ditches that would fall under federal jurisdiction. This will have a significant impact on counties who maintain roadside, storm water and other types of drainage ditches.

The draft waters of the U.S. proposal acknowledged "that decisions concerning whether or not a water body is subject to the CWA have consequences for states, tribal and local governments..." However, at the point of original publication, the effects of the definitional changes on state and

local governments, were little understood by the EPA and Corps.

The proposal is significantly broader in scope than previous guidance documents on this subject. Previous guidance documents referred narrowly to CWA Section 404 wetlands jurisdiction, in light of the *SWANCC* and *Rapanos* U.S. Supreme Court decisions. In NACo's view, this proposal takes federal jurisdiction well beyond the Section 404 permit program, "into every crevice of the Clean Water Act," and thus, affecting every CWA program.

Guidance documents are used to clarify existing regulations, and technically guidance documents are nonbinding and lack the force of law. However, in recent years federal agencies have been using guidance, rather than regulations, for policy recommendations, as a way to circumvent the more transparent rule-making process. So, in effect, the guidance may be used more like a rule to claim jurisdiction over waters that are currently not under federal jurisdiction.

Additionally, since there is only

one waters of the U.S. definition in the CWA, any changes to the definition will impact other CWA programs such as the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES), total maximum daily load (TMDL) and other water-quality standards programs, state water quality certification process, or Spill Prevention, Control and Countermeasure (SPCC) programs.

It is uncertain when the policy will be released or what, if any, changes were made since publication of the draft guidance. Guidance generally falls under a 30-day OMB review process; however, that is a minimum time frame. It is expected legislation will be introduced on Capitol Hill to counter this guidance.

NACo policy states local streets, gutters and manmade ditches should be excluded from the definition of waters of the U.S.

*\*To read NACo's most recent letter to the EPA on the proposal, see this article on County News Online at [www.naco.org/countynews](http://www.naco.org/countynews).*

## Let the Games Begin

Taking a page from social media, some local governments are using "gamification" in their crowd-sourcing applications — making participants' online experience more game-like by awarding badges and ribbons as recognition for those who comment most, for example.

According to "How Gamification Drives Crowdsourcing," an editorial at [crowdsourcing.org](http://crowdsourcing.org), "The science behind Gamification as it's being applied to Crowdsourcing is to make the performance of an otherwise mundane online task, something fun to do. By presenting a simple task in a playful manner you motivate the user through the introduction of a competitive dynamic."

Also as with social media, participants can weigh in on other commenters' posts, similar to Facebook and various online news sites — but hopefully with less of the vitriol that occasionally can be found on the latter.

Bertolini said in order for crowd sourcing to be successful, the process must be monitored to provide feedback, when appropriate, to those making suggestions. Jesse Manning of Civic Plus said, "There does have to be a commitment on the side of the government to review

## CountyNews

The Voice of America's Counties

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Published biweekly except August by:

National Association of Counties  
Research Foundation, Inc.  
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STE. 500, Washington, D.C. 20001  
(202) 393-6226 | FAX (202) 393-2630

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Mail subscriptions are \$100 per year for non-members. \$60 per year for non-members purchasing multiple copies. Educational institution rate, \$50 per year. Member county supplemental subscriptions are \$20 each. Send payment with order and address changes to NACo, 25 Massachusetts Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001.

### POSTMASTER: send address changes to

County News, 25 Massachusetts Ave. N.W.,  
Ste. 500, Washington, D.C. 20001  
(USPS 704-620) ■ (ISSN: 0744-9798)

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Research Foundation, Inc.

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# Donated council pay honors late wife's love of libraries

By CHARLIE BAN  
STAFF WRITER

Steve Talley retired from the Indianapolis-Marion County, Ind. Council in 2006 to care for his ailing wife, Donna, a volunteer at her local library who read to children. When she died soon after, her family directed donations to a memorial fund to create a story theater at the library branch where she volunteered.

Talley took over his wife's duties, but in 2010, he saw the challenges the City-County Council was facing and wanted to lean into the punch and serve again. Cuts to library hours, specifically, worried him, and he wanted to be an advocate for the system.

So, he ran for his old seat in 2011. He decided during the campaign that if he won, he would donate his council pay and benefits, totaling more than \$52,000, to programs for children.

That money will fund the library's early childhood literacy programs, including its pre-kindergarten literacy program, sign language story programs, programming at day care centers and technology-enhanced story times at various library branches.

"The library asked if we could fund sign-language reading programs at all 23 branches," he said. "When they told me that research had shown children could learn sign language before they could speak, that was amazing to me."

The Donna Talley fund also financed a meaningful physical improvement to the library nearest to Talley's home.

"They took a storage room in the library and dressed it up and made it a good place for children to play," Talley said, acknowledging that kids' tendencies to play loudly aren't always congruent with libraries' quiet character. "They can have readings and puppet shows there."



Photo courtesy of Indianapolis-Marion County, Ind.

Indianapolis-Marion County, Ind. Councilman Steve Talley reads to children at one of the city-county library system's branches. Upon returning to the council after a four-year absence, he donated his council pay and benefits, totaling more than \$52,000, to programs for children.

Donna Talley's commitment to the library was born of its democratizing nature, and Steve Talley agrees.

"In the most challenged communities, you can't overstate the importance of a library or the stability it brings," he said.

draulic fracturing to cyber security.

## Conference attendees donate toiletries to charity

CONFERENCE from page 1

Tucker Carlson and Eleanor Clift. In addition, Ambassador Ron Kirk, U.S. Trade Representative, addressed the NACo International Economic Development Task Force.

NACo's Board of Directors adopted 20-plus new interim policy resolutions at their board meeting. The resolutions range from support for expediting the construction of Keystone XL pipeline to limiting the closures of U.S. Post Office facilities. (For a complete report, go to page 4)

Conference attendees could also chose from among 25 educational sessions exploring topics from hy-

draulic fracturing to cyber security.

New to this year's conference was an onsite donation drive, which collected unused toiletries such as complimentary hotel shampoos and lotions. The items will be donated to Covenant House Washington, an affiliate of the internationally renowned nonprofit of the same name. Covenant House is committed to protecting and safeguarding homeless and at-risk youth.

There will be an extended report and photo coverage of the 2012 Legislative Conference in the March 26 issue of *County News*. Photos from the conference will be available on the *County News* website the week of March 19.

# Webinar to feature FHFA rulemaking for PACE programs



NACo and the National League of Cities are co-sponsoring a webinar for an update of the Federal Housing Finance Agency's (FHFA) rulemaking effecting Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) programs March 16 at 2 p.m.

Last August, the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California found that FHFA violated the Administrative Procedure Act when it issued its July 6, 2010 statement directing Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac and the Federal Home Loan Banks to refrain from purchasing residential mortgages with PACE assessments.

The statement objected to local governments holding the first lien on PACE homes, calling it a significant risk to the mortgage financier and saying it effectively

shut down PACE programs across the country.

The speakers will explain the rulemaking process and provide resources to make it easy for voices to be heard. Speakers include Erin Deady, Leon County, Fla.; Mark Ruzzin, Boulder County, Colo.; David Gabrielson, councilmember, Bedford, N.Y. and executive director of the PACENow coalition.

NACo and NLC policy supports local authority to implement PACE programs. Both groups have urged the FHFA to withdraw the July 2010 statement.

To register for this upcoming webinar, go to [www.naco.org/meetings/webinars](http://www.naco.org/meetings/webinars).

\*For more information on PACE and the FHFA rulemaking, including talking points and a template letter, visit [www.pacenow.org](http://www.pacenow.org).

## Word Search

### Counties with 'Spring' Cities

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

CAMPBELL (Cold Spring, Ky.)  
FLOYD (Cave Spring, Ga.)  
FULTON (Mammoth Spring, Ark.)  
HOUSTON (Spring Grove, Minn.)  
JEFFERSON (Spring Valley, Ky.)  
JOHNSON (Spring Hill, Kan.)  
MAURY (Spring Hill, Tenn.)  
PIERCE (Spring Valley, Wis.)

RHEN (Spring City, Tenn.)  
SAINT CHARLES (Weldon Spring, Mo.)  
SANPETE (Spring City, Utah)  
STEAMS (Spring Hill, Minn.)  
STONE (Reeds Spring, Mo.)  
WARREN (Spring Hill, Iowa)

Created by: Christopher Johnson



Share your point of view ...

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# NACo Board tackles resolutions at D.C. conference



Legislative Conference  
After Action Report

NACo's policy steering committees deliberated over a two-day period at the Legislative Conference on policy concerns of significant importance to the nation's counties. Collectively, they presented 20-plus recommendations to the Board of Directors as interim policy positions. Interim policy resolutions are considered again for final adoption at NACo's Annual Meeting, held in conjunction with the Annual Conference and Exposition in July.

The Board accepted all recommendations. Following is a report on NACo's newest policy.

## AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AFFAIRS

### ■ DOD Matching Funds for Conservation Easement Programs

**Issue:** Restoring the ability of federal conservation easement programs to accept Department of Defense (DOD) matching funds.

**Adopted Policy:** NACo supports reauthorization of a 2012 Farm Bill that specifically authorizes the use of Department of Defense funds as match or cost share for all federal conservation easement programs and restores the ability of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to accept DOD matching funds.

### ■ Supporting the Local Farms, Food and Jobs Act

**Issue:** Support of local and regional farm and food systems.

**Adopted Policy:** NACo supports the Local Farms, Food and Jobs Act (S.1773 and H.R. 3286).

### ■ Farm Bill Programs Supporting Local Food Systems

**Issue:** Supporting local food systems



Santa Clara County, Calif. Supervisor Liz Kniss, who chairs the Health Steering Committee, offers her committee's policy recommendations.

**Adopted Policy:** NACo supports changes to the Farm Bill which would support county development and expansion of local food systems by allowing schools the option to use a portion of their USDA Agriculture Marketing Service (AMS) school lunch commodity dollars for the purchase of local and regional foods and securing support for the infrastructure necessary for local and regional food systems to thrive.

## COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### ■ Support for Reauthorization and Appropriations for the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA)

**Issue:** Support appropriations and reauthorization legislation for the U.S. EDA to keep communities strong and economically viable at a time when our nation needs it the most.

**Adopted Policy:** NACo urges Congress to reauthorize and continue funding levels for the Economic Development Administration programs.

### ■ Support of Project Rebuild

**Issue:** Creating jobs through rehabilitation of vacant and foreclosed properties

**Adopted Policy:** NACo supports passage of the Project Rebuild Act to create jobs and reinvest in local communities through the rehabilitation of vacant and foreclosed properties.

### ■ FY 2013 Appropriations for the Department of Housing and Urban Development

**Issue:** Support for FY 2013 Appropriations for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

**Adopted Policy:** NACo urges Congress to support the following levels of funding for core Department of Housing and Urban Development: no less than \$3.3 billion in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) formula funding; no less than \$1.6 billion in formula funding for the HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME); \$1.9 billion for Homeless Housing Assistance grants, including an amount to fully fund expiring supportive housing and Shelter Plus Care rent subsidy contracts; full funding for existing Section 8 project-based and tenant-based contracts; and \$275 million in Section 108 Loan Guarantee authority.

### ■ Support of Legislation to Limit Closures of Post Office Facilities

**Issue:** The United States Postal Service (USPS) is considering closing 3,700 post offices across the country, most of which are located in rural America.

**Adopted Policy:** NACo urges support of legislation to ensure that all Americans have adequate access to post office facilities. There is bipartisan support for legislation, which will require that postal facility closures cannot result in more than a 10-mile distance between post offices, measured on roads that are accessible year-round, or closure of



Photos by David Hathcox

Community and Economic Development Steering Committee Chair Lee May, commissioner, DeKalb County, Ga., presents his committee's report to NACo's Board of Directors meeting March 5 at the Legislative Conference.

existing distribution and processing facilities that adversely impact delivery and economic competitiveness.

## ENVIRONMENT, ENERGY AND LAND USE

### ■ Good Samaritan Environmental Laws

**Issue:** Liability for environmental clean-up around abandoned mine land sites

**Adopted Policy:** NACo supports legislation and/or policy that will immediately limit liability for "Good Samaritans" performing voluntary, cooperative mitigation efforts on water discharging from abandoned mine sites which measurably improves water quality that has been impacted by mining activity where there is no financially responsible party.

### ■ Support for the Development of Energy Storage Technology

**Issue:** Energy Storage

**Adopted Policy:** NACo supports legislation that encourages research and development of energy storage technology.

### ■ Support of Keystone XL Pipeline

**Issue:** Allowing construction of the Keystone XL Pipeline

**Adopted Policy:** NACo urges the Administration and Congress to expedite the comprehensive review and submission for the approval process, including the Presidential Permit for the Keystone XL Pipeline and other petroleum pipeline projects.

### ■ Support of the Restore Act

**Issue:** Using BP Clean Water Act fines from the Deep Water Horizon Oil Spill for Gulf Coast recovery efforts

**Adopted Policy:** NACo supports

H.R. 3096/S. 1400, the Resources and Ecosystems Sustainability, Tourism Opportunities and Revived Economy of the Gulf Coast Act of 2011 (RESTORE Act). NACo supports the concept established by the RESTORE Act, that diverts penalty money from the responsible party to local economic and environmental restoration plans, and supports the expansion of this policy to future pollution incidents.

## ■ Readiness and Environmental Protection Initiative

**Issue:** Urging continued bipartisan congressional support for the Department of Defense (DOD) Readiness and Environmental Protection Initiative (REPI)

**Adopted Policy:** NACo supports continued bipartisan congressional support and funding for DOD's Readiness and Environmental Protection Initiative (REPI).

## FINANCE AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

### ■ The Marketplace Fairness Act

**Issue:** Marketplace Fairness Act (S. 1832)

**Adopted Policy:** The National Association of Counties (NACo) encourages and supports efforts to permit the collection of sales and use taxes from remote sellers and endorses the Marketplace Fairness Act to provide states with the ability to enforce their existing state and local sales and use tax laws.

## HEALTH

### ■ Responding to the Behavioral Health Needs of our Returning Veterans

**Issue:** Behavioral health needs of returning veterans

**Adopted Policy:** NACo will undertake steps to assure that:

1. VA funds are made available to reimburse counties for the services provided to veterans eligible for VA services and for services provided to veterans awaiting determination of eligibility.

2. VA funds are made available to reimburse services provided to veterans eligible for VA services by public and private providers under contract with the VA

3. DOD funds are made available to reimburse counties for the services provided to veterans eligible for DOD services

4. Appropriate county level data are available so that counties know how many veterans are returning to their local areas, and

5. Appropriate legislation and guidance from the Administration are available to correct gaps and deficiencies in the DOD and VA service delivery systems.

### ■ Funding for Community Health Assessments

**Issue:** Funding for community health assessments

**Adopted Policy:** NACo supports funding county community health assessments

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# 81 percent of county engineers have deferred maintenance since 2008

INFRASTRUCTURE from page 1

and bridges need work, and the American people need jobs," said NACo President Lenny Eliason, commissioner, Athens County, Ohio. "Congress needs to stop playing politics and finding excuses not to reauthorize the federal highway and transit bill, as has been done successfully in a bipartisan way for many decades. It's long overdue for Washington to reach agreement on a multi-year surface transportation bill."

The survey results are reported in "Fixing It: Infrastructure and the Economy," in which 90 percent of respondents said they believed that potential funding from passage of the Surface Transportation Act would help them improve roads and bridges in their counties. According to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), 1.8 million miles of nearly 4 million miles of highways nationwide are under county control.

At a time when Congress has made funding decisions more difficult, states and counties have less funding available for infrastructure maintenance. Budget shortfalls at



the state and local levels have caused counties to defer much-needed maintenance on transportation infrastructure.

Of the responding county engineers, 51 percent said that they experienced funding cuts of between 10 to 25 percent since 2008.

"As revenues continue to decline and the costs keep rising, counties do not have the proper funding to adequately keep the county road networks in the same conditions as exist today," said Mark Craft, president of NACE, a NACo affiliate. "This is a concerning trend, as the more deteriorated a road becomes, the more expensive it is to fix." He is also engineer-manager of the Gratiot County Road Commission in Michigan.

As many counties have examined ways to save money and balance budgets, some have furloughed or laid off county employees. During the summer of 2011, the total number of laid off state and local workers exceeded 23,000 a month.

Jobs that could be created by counties in the construction industry are not available because there is no secure funding stream for these infrastructure programs.

Other major findings of the survey include the following:

- 81 percent said that they have deferred maintenance since the beginning of the economic slowdown in 2008.
- 11 percent reported that more than \$50 million in additional funding would be needed to put all county roads in "good" condition.
- 86 percent of large urban counties (population 400,000 to 4 million) said that some of their roads are in poor condition, and
- 52 percent of large urban counties reported that more than half of their roads are not in "good" condition.

County engineers often design, review and approve plans for new developments, including roadways

and bridges, bikeways, sidewalks and storm water facilities. In addition, they are often responsible for the planning and maintenance of the local transportation network.

"It's difficult trying to explain to our citizens why we are closing bridges, why we are not fixing roads, why we are turning paved roads back to gravel, and why it's taking us longer to plow the snow on roads," Craft said. "That's a tough job, explaining why we are

not doing the things that need to be done. But the bottom line is lack of proper funding to do the job that people expect."

National Research, LLC conducted the survey by telephone and received 400 responses from 31 states, all of which have road and bridge responsibilities.

\*For a link to the full survey report, see the online version of this story at [www.naco.org/countynews](http://www.naco.org/countynews).

## In Case You Missed It ...

### News to Use from Past County News

#### ► NACo now accepting 2012 County Courthouse Award Applications

NACo is now accepting applications for the 2012 County Courthouse Awards. One County Courthouse Award is presented each year in three categories: rural, suburban and urban. The awards program provides recognition for innovative county leaders and helps publicize their efforts so that others can build upon the good governance practices they have initiated in their communities.

Applications must be received online by April 27 to be considered. Information about the 2012 NACo County Courthouse Awards is now available on the NACo website at [www.naco.org/courthouseawards](http://www.naco.org/courthouseawards).

If you have questions, please contact NACo associate legislative directors Dalen Harris or Erik Johnston at 202.393.6226 or by email at [dharris@naco.org](mailto:dharris@naco.org) or [ejohnston@naco.org](mailto:ejohnston@naco.org).

## NACo Prescription Discount Card Program

### New - Marketing Fee Reimbursement Option

### Join the webinar and learn more!

**Title:** NACo Prescription Discount Card Program:  
More Resources, More Success!

**Date:** Wednesday, March 14, 2012

**Time:** 2:00 p.m. - 3:15 p.m. EDT

Reserve your webinar seat for Wednesday at [www.naco.org/webinars](http://www.naco.org/webinars) if you have not already done so!

The program has proven results to provide you the confidence to offer this program to your residents. County residents nationwide have saved in excess of \$454 million dollars on more than 36 million prescriptions. Currently, 1,400 counties and counting participate in the program.



Access the program  
information at [www.naco.org](http://www.naco.org)  
or scan your smartphone here.

Operated by CVS Caremark.  
This is NOT insurance.  
Discounts are only available at participating pharmacies. Rev 02.12



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





# Celebrate National County Government Month

## Healthy Counties, Healthy Families

**NACO** National Association of Counties  
The Voice of America's Counties  
[www.naco.org/NCGM](http://www.naco.org/NCGM)

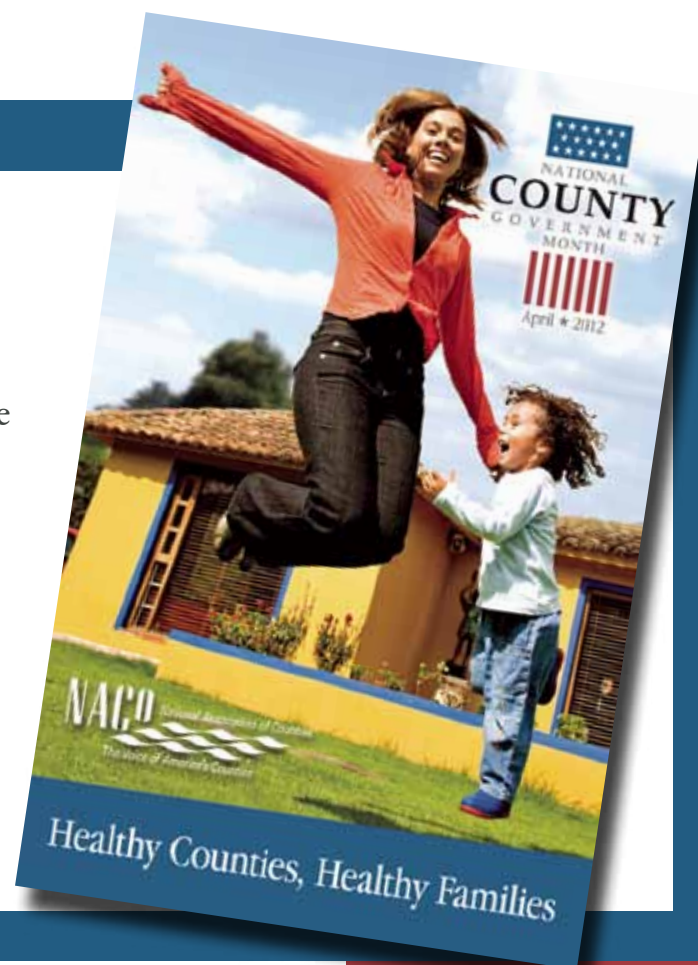
This year's National County Government Month theme is "Healthy Counties, Healthy Families." Start planning today to hold fun and interactive events to promote your county's health care and wellness services and recreational programs.

A special feature of NCGM is the National County Government Month Award. The purpose of the award program is to encourage counties to participate in NCGM and recognize nationally counties that sponsor outstanding programs during the month of April.

Visit [www.naco.org/NCGM](http://www.naco.org/NCGM) for more information about specific judging criteria. Applications must be received by Friday, May 25 to be eligible. All entries will be posted online to serve as a database of ideas for other counties to use.

For more information contact Jim Philipps at [jphilipps@naco.org](mailto:jphilipps@naco.org) or 202.942.4220

*Sponsored by the National Association of Counties to raise public awareness about the roles and responsibilities of counties.*



## National County Government Month

### April ★ 2012



# Committee urges stronger SNAP program in next Farm Bill

## RESOLUTIONS from page 4

from the Prevention and Public Health Fund.

### ■ Integration of Medicare and Medicaid for Dual Eligibles

**Issue:** Medicare and Medicaid are not well integrated, causing fragmentation between acute and long-term care, especially for people who are eligible for both programs.

**Adopted Policy:** NACo supports initiatives to improve quality of care and control expenditures by integrating the delivery of Medicare and Medicaid services for individuals eligible for both programs. NACo supports detailed quality and access standards for managed care plans which provide services to dual eligibles. Managed care plans participating in the program should be required to provide detailed data on utilization, expenditures, quality of care and health and morbidity outcomes to state and federal officials and evaluators NACo supports demonstration designs in which counties can share in Medicaid and Medicare savings and where cost shifts to counties are avoided.

### ■ Maintaining the Health Safety Net after ACA Implementation

**Issue:** Maintaining a strong local safety net after Affordable Care Act (ACA) Implementation

**Adopted Policy:** NACo supports the maintaining a strong safety net for the uninsured residual and vulnerable populations with medical and behavioral health needs after full implementation of the ACA in 2014 and beyond. NACo urges the federal and state governments to ensure the availability of adequate and sustainable funding for safety net providers as they continue to care for the uninsured.

## HUMAN SERVICES AND EDUCATION

### ■ Reauthorization and Funding of the Older Americans Act

**Issue:** Aging population growth is increasing demand for Long Term Care, Medicare and human services to older Americans.

**Adopted Policy:** NACo urges the strengthening, through additional funding, of the Older Americans Act in these key areas: home delivered nutrition services, case management, information and assistance service, Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), Supportive Services (including Long Term Care), Ombudsman Program, and Health Promotion and Disease Prevention. NACo further urges Congress to reauthorize the Older Americans Act (OAA), expand program flexibility to distribute funds between nutrition programs (Title III C) as well as between Title III C and Supportive Services (Title III B). NACo further supports the local service delivery structure for Older Americans Act programs.

### ■ Strengthening the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program

**Issue:** The Supplemental Nutrition



Photo by David Hathcox

Ag and Rural Affairs Steering Committee Chair Don Larson, Brookings County, S.D. commissioner, details his committee's recommended policy positions.

Assistance Program (SNAP) is up for reauthorization in the 2012 Farm Bill.

**Adopted Policy:** NACo urges Congress to strengthen the SNAP program by:

1. Restoring the federal share of state and county administrative costs so that every state is guaranteed a 50 percent reimbursement;
2. Allowing all states to operate the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Combined Application Program (CAP);
3. Continuing to simplify the SNAP application process;
4. Extending the SNAP benefit increase that is scheduled to sunset in 2013; and
5. Increasing the minimum benefit.

### ■ The Child Support Enforcement Collection Fee

**Issue:** Maintain the Child Support Enforcement Collection Fee

**Adopted Policy:** For states that elect to collect the application fee from a non-custodial or absent parent allow the state/county administered child support program to retain the full fee collected by identifying the fee as an administrative cost rather than as program income as is currently in federal law. Amend S.1383 SEC. 13 CHILD SUPPORT FEES 454(6) (42 U.S.C. 654(6) (B)) (6) (B) (ii) to reflect this change.

## JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY

### ■ Opposition to the Restructuring of Grants as Recommended in the 2013 National Preparedness Grand (NPG) Vision and the 2012 Changes to the Emergency Management Performance Grant (NPG)

**Issue:** Adopted changes to the FY 2012 Emergency Management Performance Grant scope of applicants and the Adopted National Preparedness Grant process

**Adopted Policy:** NACo opposes the change in the 2012 Emergency Management Performance Grant Program (EMPG) guidance expanding eligible subgrantees for the grant program, and urges Congress to require the Secretary to return to the intent of the EMPG funding and ensure that the funding is passed to local governments.

NACo opposes the assignment of final authority of the Adopted FY2013 National Preparedness Grant Program (NPGP) block grant to the state administrator. NACo requests that Congress require the Secretary to ensure that commissions consisting of county emergency managers and other county Public Safety agents be established in each state to vet requests for funding and ensure that the overall needs of the local communities are met, and that the state administrator not become the final decision maker.

Further, the NPGP must include the requirement to pass through no less than 80 percent of the funds to the counties directly. NACo opposes the inclusion of the Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) funding in the NPG block grant. NACo requests that Congress fully fund the UASI program and assure that no less than 80 percent of funds are passed through to the large urban areas. Further, NACo requests that Congress fully considers the risk of disaster to such areas and not limit the UASI program to the specific terrorism risk of certain large cities.

## LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT

### ■ Support of Streamlining the Department of Labor's Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Grant Approval Process

**Issue:** Streamlining the Department of Labor's Trade Adjustment Assistance grant approval process

**Adopted Policy:** The Department of Labor should provide decisions to applicant agencies within 30 calendar days — not 30 business days as noted in current policies; and streamline the approval and process and information sharing across agencies.

### ■ Transforming the Local Health Workforce

**Issue:** Transforming the local health workforce

**Adopted Policy:** Support and provide continued funding opportunities for health workforce development through the departments of labor, health and human services and education.

## PUBLIC LANDS

### ■ Support the Community Forestry Conservation Act of 2011 and the Use of Community Forestry Bonds

**Issue:** Authorizing the use of municipal debt (Community Forestry Bonds) as a tool to help keep working forests working in communities across the Nation.

**Adopted Policy:** NACo supports the passage of The Community Forestry Conservation Act of 2011 (S.1105, H.R.1982)

and calls on the U.S. Congress to approve this legislation during the 112th Session.

### ■ Restrictions Against Use of Land in Proximity to Wilderness Study Areas

**Issue:** De facto Wilderness Areas

**Adopted Policy:** Oppose any de facto federal restrictions not explicitly enacted on use of public or private lands in proximity to a designated Wilderness or a Wilderness Study Area.

### ■ Urging Congress to Establish Community Forest Trust Pilot Programs

**Issue:** Revenues for County Governments for counties with United States Forest Service (USFS) land

**Adopted Policy:** NACo supports the creation of a community forest trust pilot program that:

1. Designates specific USFS land, or natural resources on specific USFS land, outside of wilderness designations to be managed by the states on behalf of counties and schools according to state land management practices and federal and state laws as they apply to state land;
2. Allocates revenues generated from the management of these designated lands to all forest counties with the participating state using a mutually agreed upon formula;
3. Establishes a management board of county commissioners submitted by a state association of counties (or comparable), and appointed by the governor for each participating state; and
4. Allows the USFS to maintain ownership and fire management responsibility of the land.

### ■ Retirement of Grazing Permits on Federal Land

**Issue:** Retirement of grazing permits on federal land

**Adopted Policy:** NACo urges Congress to oppose the Rural Economic Vitalization Act (H.R. 3432), which would allow for the permanent retirement of grazing permits by allowing non-ranching third parties to buy out grazing permits.

### ■ Supporting the Transfer of Certain Federal Lands to State Ownership

**Issue:** State acquisition of federal land

**Adopted Policy:** NACo supports the transfer of specially identified federal land to states through an application process, coordinated by a formal gubernatorial petition process.

### ■ Urging the U.S. Government to Acknowledge the Importance of Adopting Arctic Policy

**Issue:** Arctic policies within the U.S. Government

**Adopted Policy:** NACo urges the United States government to acknowledge the importance of adopting definitive Arctic policies in order to protect national security and to further U.S. commerce.



# Model Programs From the Nation's Counties

San Diego County, Calif.

## Summer Camp Means Time Together for Foster Children

By CHARLIE BAN  
STAFF WRITER

Although foster programs take children out of hazardous situations, in removing them they can inadvertently decimate a child's emotional support network from their homes.

Estimates in national studies indicate that 70 percent of siblings are separated when placed in foster care, and that separation can cause emotional turmoil and limit the child's development.

"For many years, the importance of siblings and separation trauma wasn't a primary focus," said Margo Fudge, the assistant to the San Diego County, Calif. child welfare services (CWS) director. "Then research started showing foster children who have been apart from their siblings had higher rates of homelessness and incarceration and lower high school graduation rates."

For the last eight years, her department has been prioritizing keeping siblings together — it's a vital part of new employee training — and reaching closer to 74 percent of siblings placed together, but some

circumstances prevent that from happening.

"Sometimes one child has different needs than another, he needs to be in a group home, but we can't put all his siblings in with him," Fudge said. "The county is geographically very large, so it's unfortunately easy to be apart from a sibling in many cases."

After a trip to Baltimore County, Md., however, Fudge saw there was an opportunity to give those siblings living apart a chance to grow together in a memorable way. Rather than meeting new friends at camp, children there spent their time at a retreat renewing bonds with their relatives.

In 2008, San Diego County started Camp Connect, a four-day overnight camping trip to the mountains where siblings can spend time together, which they might have been unable to do for months or years. The sustained contact relieves the time pressures that come with short visits, Fudge said, and allows the children, ages 5 to 18, to interact in a relaxed atmosphere.

The time is focused on fun activities designed to excite kids, including ziplining, rock climbing and horse-



Photo courtesy of San Diego County Child Welfare Services

Siblings separated by the San Diego County foster system reunite for bonding activities like horseback riding at Camp Connect, a four-day retreat to reunite families.

back riding. Music therapy sessions give siblings a chance to air their frustrations and talk about issues.

"We try to give them experiences they normally wouldn't have and simply an extended time for bonding," Fudge said. "My favorite part is the talent show. The amount of

support they show one another is amazing."

The camp partners include the county, the United Way of San Diego and the nonprofit Promises2Kids. More than half of the camp's \$45,000 comes from Rivers of Hope, a foundation started by San Diego

Chargers quarterback Phillip Rivers.

Outside of the four-day camp, the CWS department organizes several other one-day events with the same goal of getting siblings together. Program participants were the first visitors to Legoland's water park when it opened, and community organizations have been generous with in-kind donations.

A local yacht club's members have thrown barbecues for the children, and local lasertag operators open their doors for a party. This summer's big activity will be surfing lessons at the beach. Many of the activities put siblings in a position to grow by supporting each other while trying something new, creating stronger bonds.

"The support we get from the community has been incredible," Fudge said. "They make a lot of these outings possible."

*Camp Connect was named best in category for the 2011 NACo Achievement Awards Children and Youth programs category.*

*Model Programs from the Nation's Counties highlights award-winning programs.*

## National Association of Counties County Courthouse Awards 2012

NACo is now accepting applications for the 2012 County Courthouse Awards.

As a leader in innovative problem solving, you deserve to be recognized for your outstanding efforts. The purpose of the award is to profile elected county officials who have improved the lives of citizens through outstanding governance and strong leadership.

Applications must be received online at [www.naco.org/courthouseawards](http://www.naco.org/courthouseawards) by April 27. If you have questions, please contact NACo associate legislative directors Dalen Harris or Erik Johnston at 202.393.6226 or by email at [dharris@naco.org](mailto:dharris@naco.org) or [ejohnston@naco.org](mailto:ejohnston@naco.org).



## Research News

# National Archives Releases 1940 Census Data

April is right around the corner and for many that means warmer temperatures and spring blossoms. However, for those interested in history, population data, or family genealogy, April also marks the release of key census data. On April 2, the National Archives and Records Administration will make individual records from the 1940 Census available to the public.

This important historical data is available only now due to a law passed in 1978 stating that all individual records must be held for 72 years before being released to the public. Census data is released following every decennial census, but after 72 years personally identifiable information about individuals can legally be released. Essentially, exact answers to Census questions from those alive in 1940 will become available.

The 2012 release marks the first time that this information will be digitally accessible. The digital images will be available free of charge on the Internet as well as at National

Archives and Records Administration facilities nationwide. NARA staff has spent more than three years digitizing the microfilmed population schedules to prepare for this release.

All data will be categorized by enumeration district, the area which an enumerator (census taker) could cover in a particular amount of time, which was two weeks in urban areas and one month in rural areas. If the 1940 address of an individual is known, that can be used to find the district. Additionally, there are county and city maps that distinguish these districts. A name index will not be used for the data; however, *Ancestry.com* and *FamilySearch.org* have both announced plans to index the information.

Not surprisingly, much has changed in the U.S. population, as well as the Census format since 1940. In the 1940 Census, 132.2 million people were counted while 308.7 million were identified in 2010. It is estimated that there are about 21.2 million people in the U.S. and Puerto



Rico alive today who were eligible to be counted in the 1940 Census.

A major difference between the 2010 Census and the 1940 Census is the number of questions asked. Thirty-four questions were asked of every household in 1940 with an additional 16 questions for a sample that included about 5 percent of the population. The 2010 form had just 10 questions and no sample group for additional questions. More detailed

demographic, economic and housing questions that had been asked up until 2000 are now asked annually in the American Community Survey which is sent to about 3 million households.

In 1940, roughly 120,000 enumerators were hired to visit every house, building, tent, cabin, hut or other place in which a person might be living or staying. Enumerators interviewed residents and filled out their answers on a portfolio-sized book. In 2010, more than 120 million questionnaires were delivered by mail to residences while another 12 million were delivered by census workers. A nonresponse follow-up was conducted by 635,000 enumerators.

New York was the most populous state in 1940 with a population of 13.5 million, followed by Pennsylvania, Illinois, Ohio and California. A population of 37.3 million made California the most populous state

in 2010 followed by Texas, New York, Florida and Illinois. The white population were identified as 89.9 percent in 1940 and 9.8 percent were black. Information on the Hispanic population was not collected. In 2010, 72.4 percent were single-race white, 12.6 percent single-race black and 16.3 percent Hispanic.

Total cost is something that has dramatically increased between the 1940 and 2010 Censuses. In 1940, \$67.5 million was spent on the census, which would be \$1 billion in 2010 dollars. That equals about \$7.56 per capita in 2010 dollars. In comparison, \$12.4 billion was spent on the 2010 Census. This cost equates to about \$40.17 per capita, more than 5 times greater than the 1940 cost.

*(Research News was written by Sarah Sunderman, research associate.)*

## Financial Services News

# Thousands Served, Billions Saved

If a local government cooperative purchasing alliance, like NACo-endorsed U.S. Communities, was synonymous with McDonald's Golden Arches, the advertising signs would read "thousands served, billions saved."

Since its creation 18 years ago, thousands of local and state governments have used cooperative purchasing to buy billions of dollars of products and services, and have saved taxpayers several billion dollars in the process.

U.S. Communities combines the purchasing power of state and local governments, schools and universities to secure nationally bid contracts that guarantee at least a 10 percent savings from the retail prices that government usually pays. Other cooperative purchasing organizations, large and small, have emerged to follow in its footsteps. While they offer a variety of contracts, most of which can be used by public entities, none have the same gold standard created by U.S. Communities.

Unlike other government cooperative purchasing organizations, U.S. Communities was founded by five national sponsors and more than 70 state, city and regional organizations, and its third-party audits on contracts

ensure that pricing commitments are met.

It has also saved money in other, less tangible ways. When one of the nearly 50,000 registered participants looks for a product, the presence of a competitively bid contract is likely a strong message to all suppliers that they have to sharpen their pencils. From the early days until now, there is strong evidence that the bids NACo members receive are pre-adjusted to acknowledge the possible presence of a cooperative contract. That is the power of working together to leverage the purchasing volumes and expertise of all local governments.

When U.S. Communities was created, cooperative purchasing wasn't permitted in many states. Today, cooperative purchasing is allowed in every state except one. In 2012, NACo and U.S. Communities have teamed with the New York State Association of Counties to change purchasing laws to allow local governments in New York to use the benefits of cooperative purchasing.

Last year, the New Jersey Association of Counties played a key role when it worked with the State Legislature to pass a bill that allows purchasing cooperatives to offer their services and products to local governments.

U.S. Communities is also creating industry standards that give every purchasing officer the confidence that a cooperative purchasing contract they want to use meets the highest standard of integrity under purchasing rules in every state. U.S. Communities has set the standard for an open-bidding process, initiated and awarded by local government professionals and managed for compliance to bid specifications over the life of the contract.

NACo and U.S. Communities are the industry leaders that created government purchasing standards that are trusted and recognized by procurement officials who work in the best interest of their community to find the best products and services for the least amount of money. Simply put, thousands working together to save billions in tax dollars.

To learn more about the U.S. Communities cooperative purchasing alliance and NACo's support of the program, please contact Peter Torvik at [ptorvik@naco.org](mailto:ptorvik@naco.org) or 202.942.4240 or Jim Sawyer at [jsawyer@naco.org](mailto:jsawyer@naco.org) or 202.661.8868.

*(Financial Services News was written by Jim Sawyer, director, NACo Financial Services Corporation.)*

## What's in a Seal?

» Santa Rosa County, Fla.  
[www.santarosaf.fl.gov](http://www.santarosaf.fl.gov)



Santa Rosa County was created in 1842. It was named for the Roman Catholic Saint, Rosa de Viterbo and is located in the panhandle of Florida. It is bounded on the north by the state of Alabama and on the south by the Gulf of Mexico. The list of the natural resources is vast including abundant wildlife, yellow pine, juniper, live oak, wiregrass and shallow coastal waters and pure, clear streams.

In the early years, the county existed as a thriving trading center with a brisk import-export business. The earliest record of the lumber industry in the area was in 1743 when yellow pine was shipped to Havana by a Spanish schooner. The logging industry flourished for more than 100 years before ending in the 1930s due to overharvesting of the yellow pine trees.

Santa Rosa County is home to Navarre Beach, known for its white sand and turquoise water, and Gulf Islands National Seashore, one of only 10 National Seashores with miles of undeveloped beaches and dunes.

The seal features an outline of the county in green for its many lush forests and farming communities. The orange and yellow sun beams shine on the county with a background of blue to signify the gulf, bays and rivers residents live amongst.

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





## News From the Nation's Counties

### ► ARIZONA

The chairman of the **MOHAVE COUNTY** Board of Supervisors called on the federal government to revoke a recently imposed 20-year ban on **uranium mining near the Grand Canyon**.

Buster Johnson, testifying at a Congressional Western Caucus hearing on private property rights, said the ban on new mining claims on 1 million acres in Mohave and **COCONINO COUNTY** is hurting an already struggling local economy.

Johnson, who is co-chairman of the Arizona-Utah Local Economic Coalition, cited a 2009 study that said the mining could bring Mohave and Coconino counties 1,078 new jobs, \$20.4 billion in output, and \$2 billion in federal and state corporate income taxes over the next 40 years.

Interior Secretary Ken Salazar imposed the new mining ban in January, citing the protection of the Grand Canyon.

### ► CALIFORNIA

Concerns over contaminated drinking water and drug abuse or misuse has motivated **ALAMEDA COUNTY** to pursue a measure making drug manufacturers responsible for disposing of **unused and expired pharmaceuticals**.

The proposal would require drug companies to finance and operate the collection of unused prescription and over-the-counter medications, which the local governments already pay to maintain, according to the *Oakland Tribune*.

San Francisco Bay-area residents disposed of more than 60,000 pounds of unwanted pharmaceuticals at 128 sites across the nine counties, according Supervisor Nate Miley. Alameda County citizens alone returned roughly 4,000 pounds of pharmaceuticals. **SANTA CLARA COUNTY** residents disposed of 19,000 pounds and **SAN MATEO COUNTY** residents close to 18,000.

In an attempt to rein in predatory lending to the working poor, **SANTA CLARA COUNTY** supervisors passed a 45-day moratorium that bans additional "payday" lenders from setting up shop, while officials draft a law that could permanently ban new payday businesses — or at least seriously restrict them.

The county has 64 payday

loan storefronts concentrated in low-income neighborhoods, many just blocks from each other. Just two establishments are located in unincorporated areas affected by the new ban, the *Mercury News* reported.

### ► FLORIDA

On the recommendation of its health department, the **LAKE COUNTY** Commission passed a resolution asking retailers to not sell or market **flavored tobacco products**.

The health department has reported an increase in these products on the shelves of convenience stores over the past five years. Cigarillos, cigars and smokeless tobacco products come in a variety of flavors, such as vanilla, orange, chocolate and cherry. Bright packaging makes the products look like candy products.

According to the Florida Health Department and Tobacco Free Florida, these products are considered to be a gateway to tobacco addiction, and tobacco companies have traditionally developed products and advertising campaigns aimed at youths, the *Daily Commercial* reported.

Commissioners said that while they cannot force retailers to stop the sales, they want to at least heighten awareness of the problem. Numerous counties and municipalities, including **MARION, POLK, OSCEOLA, SEMINOLE, VOLUSIA**, and **SUMTER counties** have passed similar resolutions in recent months.

A bill passed in the state House prevents **PALM BEACH COUNTY** from creating an **out-of-court system** to help workers who accuse employers of cheating them out of their pay.

Members of People Engaged in Active Community Efforts, as well as labor and immigrant activists have been pushing county commissioners for more than a year to approve an ordinance mirroring a **MIAMI-DADE COUNTY** law that established a non-judicial system to resolve disputes between workers and employers. The House bill would invalidate the Miami-Dade ordinance and prohibit other counties from passing similar laws.

Labor and immigrant activists say anti-wage-theft laws are needed, according to the *Palm Beach Post*,

because undocumented workers in low-paying jobs often aren't paid by unscrupulous employers for work they've done and are afraid to take them to court to recoup uncompensated wages.

### ► ILLINOIS

The director of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has offered to pay the costs of holding suspected illegal immigrants who are arrested for other crimes in **COOK COUNTY**, part of an effort to get county officials to reconsider their refusal to cooperate with **federal detention requests**.

A county ordinance orders the sheriff's office to ignore ICE detainer requests and release illegal immigrants who have been jailed on other charges after they've posted bail. County officials have said the measure is partly related to the costs of keeping suspected illegal immigrants locked up.

In a letter sent last week to Board President Toni Preckwinkle, obtained by the *Chicago Tribune*, ICE offered to pay any additional expenses of holding inmates until they can be picked up for deportation proceedings.

ICE Director John Morton also said the detainees would be picked up on the same day they've posted bail. Under his proposal, federal immigration officials would be stationed at Cook County Jail and ICE would be notified in advance about when illegal immigrants were scheduled to be released.

"Cook County is unlikely to incur additional costs to hold an alien on an immigration detainer if ICE officers are once again permitted to work inside Cook County Jail," the agency said in a statement.

### ► IOWA

Security concerns have prompted **LINN COUNTY** elections officials to end the use of **several schools as polling stations**.

Linn County Auditor Joel Miller, who serves as elections commissioner, told *The Gazette* that he doesn't want anything bad to happen on Election Day, citing emails from parents worried about having voters at schools while students

are present. Miller says he doesn't know of schools having security problems on Election Day, but he's taking steps for safety anyway.

### ► MICHIGAN

Drivers in **ISABELLA COUNTY** will soon be **sharing the road with all-terrain vehicles** and other similar types of transportation, after the commissioners passed an ordinance allowing off-road vehicles to drive on county roads in unincorporated areas.

Off-road vehicle drivers must also travel single file, display a headlight and taillight at all times and wear a helmet and protective eyewear unless the vehicle is equipped with a protective shields and roll bar. Under the ordinance, vehicles must not exceed 25 miles per hour and travel on the far right maintained portion of the road with the flow of traffic, but making sure not to disrupt the flow.

Drivers must be at least 12 years old, and those under 18 must have an off road vehicle safety certificate. Teen drivers must have a valid driver's license or be under direct visual supervision of an adult, *Central Michigan Life* reported.

### ► NEW YORK

The **JEFFERSON COUNTY** Legislature's Health and Human Services Committee voted recently to sue the state to recoup at least **\$189,516 owed by the state** for a Medicaid program for people with disabilities.

Several counties across the state have successfully sued the state to get that money back. But Jefferson County officials were concerned that a provision in Gov. Andrew Cuomo's 2012-13 budget could prevent them from receiving their share, according to the *Watertown Daily Times*.

Counties statewide are owed an estimated \$100 million, County Attorney David Paulsen said. Approval of the full legislature is still needed.

### ► NORTH DAKOTA

**MOUNTRAIL** and **MCKENZIE county** officials recently shared the **pros and cons of oil development** with neighboring

counties and cities on the cusp of increased activity.

At a recent forum, Gene Veeder, McKenzie County economic development director, told attendees, "If I were you I would not be afraid of this thing. I would embrace it.... The numbers don't show that you are going to get inundated the way we were," the *Minot Daily News* reported.

McKenzie County had the most active rigs in the state at the end of 2011 with 55, and Mountrail County accounts for 34 percent of the state's oil production.

Veeder, Mountrail County Commissioner Greg Boschee and other officials discussed how oil production has impacted roads, emergency services, airports and housing. They encouraged neighboring counties to have a plan in place before the oil development begins.

State officials announced that they will ask the Legislature to change state law so counties can keep at least a share of the fines they collect from load-limit violations by **overweight trucks**, *The Bismarck Tribune* reported.

The penalties can be substantial; in a recent incident, an overweight truck mired in road gravel was fined \$20,000. Problem is, the fines get turned over to the state, which in turn redistributes the revenue back to counties by population, not by where the fines were collected.

That helps counties somewhat, but **WILLIAMS COUNTY** Sheriff Scott Busching said he wants more than a share.

"Share? Hell, we should get it all back," he said. "Why, for the life of me, I can't figure out why they're getting anything (from fines collected) on county roads."

### ► OHIO

The clerks of courts in **LUCAS** and **WOOD counties** are working together to offer **digital-imaging services** to surrounding counties. Lucas and Wood have invested in the staff and equipment to convert decades worth of documents into images and microfilm, the *Toledo Blade* reported, but several surrounding counties haven't made the transition.

"We are living in a time period when all government needs to work together to accomplish the same goal, which is cutting cost for the constituents," said Bernie Quilter, Lucas County clerk of courts.

They hope to have the program up and running by June. Quilter said

## NACo on the Move

### » Coming Up

• **Ilene Manster**, membership coordinator, will be exhibiting at the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania Spring Conference in Dauphin County (Harrisburg), Pa. March 25-27.

*On the Move is compiled by Christopher Johnson.*

Keep up with NACo online ...

**www.naco.org**





## The H.R. Doctor Is In

# The Day the Earth Turned Green

Every March 17, green becomes the dominant color in the minds and spirits of many people around the world. The day commemorates the death of Saint Patrick in 461 B.C. He was dispatched from Britain back to Ireland, where he had previously been a slave, to convert the Irish from their belief in many gods to the beliefs of the Catholic Church. The holiday has come to mean a time of celebration and pride in both the cultural heritage of Ireland as well as a time of religious significance for Christians.

The holiday became an official public commemoration in Ireland in 1903. It included, soon thereafter, the closing of the pubs to reduce the excesses which resulted from over-celebration. This period of prohibition in Ireland, just as in the United States, ended. In the case of the Irish, that ending took place in the 1970s.

It is a day of parades and competition for bragging rights about who is more Irish. This is demonstrated by the "wearing of the Green" — most notably the shamrock. That plant was used as a teaching tool by Saint Patrick to demonstrate the concept of the Holy Trinity. Never mind, however that the original color associated with Saint Patrick was blue. Ireland, its patron saint, and the color green will always be intertwined.

While on the subject of green, consider how some of the phrases involving the color have taken on some different meanings. For example, the "Green Movement" is based on having an obligation to enhance the beauty and sanctity of Mother Earth. It means reducing our footprint or rather boot stomp on the planet in terms of the destruction and pillaging of resources that we are so good at in the U.S. as well as in the rest of the world. We also "turn green with envy" which, in the extreme, is hardly consistent with the fundamental religious principle against coveting the property of others.



Saint Patrick's Day has become one of the true equal-opportunity celebrations. Anyone anywhere can wear green and join the celebration. You can even, for just a little while, imagine that you can converse with leprechauns. You will certainly smile more than you might do on other days.

The formal behavior we require in a bureaucracy also occasionally needs a bit of chilling out. We need to find more time to enjoy the fun and value in serving the public. This, of course, does not extend to consuming huge quantities of green beer at work, or seeking a sponsorship by Guinness for the Sheriff's Drunk Driving Task Force. It certainly means that the idea of a festival celebrating pride, common bonds and beliefs in service to others is very important. It can be a metaphor recognizing our success in serving the public while appreciating our colleagues in public service.

In Gaelic the traditional greeting is "*Erin go bragh*," Ireland Forever. Why not extend the joy, meaning and spirit of appreciation found on March 17 to other days. Having a "Bureaucrat's Day" perhaps symbolized by the color red (as in red tape) could be such a day. In the meantime, "*La le Padraig shone*," Happy St. Patrick's Day.

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## Job Market & Classifieds

### ► COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR – COLBERT COUNTY, ALA.

Salary: DOQ.

Colbert County Commission is accepting applications for the position of County Administrator. Job description and applications are available in the County Commission office located at 201 North Main Street, Tuscumbia, AL 35674. Applications will be accepted through Monday, April 23. Colbert County Commission is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

### ► COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTOR – CROW WING COUNTY, MINN.

Salary: DOQ.

Crow Wing County, located in the heart of the Brainerd Lakes Area in Minnesota, a popular outdoor recreation and vacation destination in north central Minn. with seasonal population of 250,000, is actively seeking qualified candidates for a Director of Community Services opportunity. This senior management assignment leads a highly complex business unit comprised of Health and Human Services, Public Health and Veterans Services, with 160 staff and an annual operating budget of \$22 million.

Accountabilities include the de-

velopment, execution, measurement and reporting of strategic initiatives addressing community, policy and programmatic objectives; financial and organizational management; community relations and performance management.

Also, as a member of the senior management team this opportunity extends beyond the traditional Community Services Director role to include a contributory impact on organizational leadership including work with organizational priorities, finances, culture, vision, mission and values. It presents a unique opportunity to work with other senior managers in an expanded leadership capacity.

We are looking for a community-focused, strategic and collaborative partner, committed to the principles of organizational excellence; an individual who is well versed in health and human service vision and strategy with the capacity to advance the organization's performance-focused, outcome based initiatives. The position requires a minimum of seven (7) years' closely related management experience, Bachelor's degree in social work or a related field is required, Master's degree preferred. Salary is commensurate with qualifications and experience.

The County provides an attractive benefit package including health, dental

and life insurance, fully funded short-term and long-term disability insurance, paid time off, professional development, and retirement contributions through the Public Employees Retirement Association.

To apply, send a cover letter, resume, salary history and work-related references to Tamra Laska, Human Resource Director, Crow Wing County Courthouse, 326 Laurel Street, Suite 12. Brainerd, MN 56401 or email to [tamra.laska@co.crow-wing.mn.us](mailto:tamra.laska@co.crow-wing.mn.us). The position is open until filled. EOE.

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► Programs & Services  
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## Utah county backs removing gray wolf from endangered-species list

NEWS FROM *from page 10*

a \$400,000 grant from the Ohio Local Government Innovation Fund would help create a plan to offer digital imaging to other counties.

### ► TENNESSEE

UNICOI COUNTY has restricted the sale and use of synthetic drugs and so-called bath salts. At their meeting late last month, county commissioners unanimously passed a resolution prohibiting the sale and use of synthetic drugs, *timesnews.net* reported.

The sale of bath salts and synthetic marijuana hasn't been outlawed in WASHINGTON COUNTY. However, county commissioners recently passed two resolutions saying the substances are "a public health crisis" and making the manufacture and sale of these synthetic drugs a public nuisance.

"This basically puts everyone on notice that Washington County can and will act," County Attorney John Rambo said.

"The county now has the power to regulate nuisances and to declare synthetic drugs as a nuisance."

As such, if there is proof that sales are going on, an injunction can be filed and a judge can shut down the seller's business.

### ► UTAH

The IRON COUNTY Commission unanimously approved a recent resolution supporting the removal of the gray wolf from the Endangered Species Act (ESA) in the state and opposing the establishment of Mexican wolf colonies in Utah, the *St. George Daily Spectrum* reported.

Last year, gray wolves in Idaho and Montana were officially "delisted" from the ESA. Utah and Oregon are attempting to achieve the same result.

"The packs became so large they are migrating into other areas," said Michael Worthen, resource specialist in the Iron County Department of Natural Resources. "We have seen wolves in northern Utah and may have a breeding pair up there."

The Mexican wolf is a subspecies of wolf that Worthen said is

accustomed to receiving handouts from humans and hunting livestock.

"We want to make it clear that we oppose any wolf recovery in Utah, north or south," Worthen added.

• SALT LAKE COUNTY won a national Gold Medal for customer service at the Stevie Awards of Sales and Customer Service. Mayor Peter Corroon has made becoming a national leader in customer service one of his priorities for 2012.

Salt Lake County also took second place in the People's Choice portion of the awards, which is chosen in a world-wide vote.

"For the past seven years we have worked to restore public trust and confidence in Salt Lake County Government," Corroon said. "I believe this prestigious national award recognizes our efforts to make our government more transparent and accessible to the public."

(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](mailto:ctaylor@naco.org) or [cban@naco.org](mailto:cban@naco.org).)



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