

NEFRC Highlights

Monthly Report of the Northeast Florida Regional Council

February 2011



Happy Birthday NEFRC!

The Northeast Florida Regional Council was founded on February 14, 1977. This year marks 34 years that the Council has been "Bringing Communities Together to Advance the Regional Agenda".



NEFRC and RCI Discuss Planning and Visioning at Generation Check 2011

NEFRC staff and Regional Community Institute volunteers conducted a regional visioning exercise at Creekside High School in St. Johns County on February 10 and 11 with students in Creekside's Urban Planning and Engineering Academy.

On the first day, students used Legos® to build growth scenarios in the Region in a method similar to Reality Check First Coast. The Guiding Principles that the students devised, listed below, echo those from Reality Check First Coast and seem to indicate that consensus is building around growth issues in the Region:

- Respect for the natural environment
- Efficient transportation systems
- Good jobs and economic development
- Access to good health care
- Maintain agricultural lands and jobs
- Equity and diversity in housing and access to recreational areas

On the second day, RCI subject matter experts and NEFRC staff facilitated discussions with the students about how Northeast Florida might achieve its goals.

Opinions were gathered from the students as part of the public input for First Coast Vision. For more information on Generation Check 2011 or First Coast Vision, please contact Margo Moehring at mmoehring@nefrc.org, or (904) 279-0880.



l-r Creekside High School teacher Kevin Davenport and Tom Crawford, St. Johns County Director of Housing and Community Services, discuss the future of Northeast Florida with students in Mr. Davenport's class

First Coast Vision Town Halls in Progress

NEFRC staff and a team of dedicated volunteers have been conducting Town Hall meetings in each of the Region's seven counties to elicit input on the draft Goals and Objectives for First Coast Vision and hear what citizens of the Region want for future generations. Town Hall meetings have been held to date in Baker, Flagler, Nassau, Putnam and St. Johns Counties. There are still two opportunities for input on the future of the Region with NEFRC staff and volunteers via the Town Hall format in Clay County and Duval County as detailed below:

County	Date & Time	Location
Clay	March 3, 2011 @ 6:30 pm	Green Cove Springs City Hall
Duval	March 7, 2011 @ 6:30 pm	Northeast Florida Regional Council

Additionally, you may provide input online at www.firstcoastvision.com. For additional information on First Coast Vision, please contact Margo Moehring at mmoehring@nefrc.org, or (904) 279-0880.

Region Hosts 2011 Florida Rural Economic Development Summit

The 2011 Florida Rural Economic Development Summit was held February 16-18 at the World Golf Village in St. Johns County. The event was attended by economic development practitioners, elected officials, county and city administrators, private development interests, and other economic development stakeholders.

The theme of this year's Summit was Florida's Rural Economic Development Future in the New Economy. The Summit included a diverse range of high-quality, interactive educational sessions focused on innovation and best practices, and provided opportunities to participate in hands-on demonstrations. Sessions that were of particular relevance to the economic development efforts being undertaken by the Northeast Florida Regional Council included: Maximizing Strategic Partnership Between Workforce Florida and Local/Regional Economic Development, Community Stakeholder Visioning, Planning and Economic Gardening, and The Power of Regional Partnerships. Highlights of the Summit were presentations by Governor Rick Scott and Dr. Dale Brill, President of the Florida Chamber Foundation. Governor Scott's presentation focused on education, job creation, and the streamlining of government. Dr. Brill gave the closing address focused on the six pillars for creating sustainable job growth in Florida. For additional information on this event, please contact Guy Parola at gparola@nefrfc.org, or (904) 279-0880.

State Road 16 in Penney Farms Designated Scenic Highway

A portion of State Road 16 through Clay County was officially designated as the "J.C. Penney Memorial Scenic Highway" at a ribbon cutting hosted by the Town of Penney Farms on February 25, 2011.

The designated portion includes three miles of S.R. 16 through the Town of Penney Farms and also loops through the local streets of the Town. The Scenic Highway is thick with a canopy of live oaks and magnolia trees that date back to the

late 1920s. In attendance were several Town officials, elected officials, representatives of the Town and several Town citizens. The Town began work on designation of the roadway in 2008. For additional information on this event, please contact Ameera Sayeed at asayeed@nefrfc.org, or (904) 279-0880.



Top: State officials and local dignitaries participate in the ribbon cutting ceremony.

Left: J.C. Penney Memorial Scenic Highway

Regional Leadership Academy Class of 2011 Kicks Off

The 2011 class of the Regional Leadership Academy (RLA) kicked off on Wednesday, February 16th, with the opening session, "Tools for Regional Leadership". This session featured an overview of the Region that included numerous interesting factoids that contribute to the Region's character. A panel of RLA alumni discussed their thoughts on regional issues and how a regional perspective enhances their abilities to better understand these issues. The day concluded with a diversity training session conducted by Cal Jackson, an RLA Alumni and noted diversity trainer. This year's class includes 20 participants from a variety of disciplines and will continue the RLA tradition of critical thinking and dialogue on a wide range of regional issues. For more information on the Regional Leadership Academy, please contact Jennifer Hewett-Apperson at jhewettapperson@nefrfc.org, or (904) 279-0880.

Emergency Deployable Interoperable Communication System/Emergency Deployable Wide Area Remote Data System (EDICS/EDWARDS) Training

The Northeast Florida Regional Council hosted an EDICS/EDWARDS training class for Regional Domestic Security Task Force (RDSTF) Region 3, which includes 13 Northeast Florida counties that extend from Levy County to Nassau County. This course was held at the Alachua County Emergency Operations Center February 21-23, and had 19 students in attendance from multiple disciplines and agencies. This was the ninth and final training class held around the State of Florida.

This course is an important step in training for communication experts to become familiar with communication equipment that can be used in the emergency response field by responders to maintain or restore communications under any conditions. Funding for the 3-day EDICS/EDWARDS class was from the Interoperable Emergency Communications Grant Program (IECGP) from the Division of Emergency Management. This statewide program, which is managed by NEFRC, provides funding for training on interoperable emergency communications throughout the State in response to natural disasters, acts of terrorism and other man-made disasters.

For more information on EDICS/EDWARDS or IECGP, please contact Traci Hochhalter at 279-0885 x155, or thochhalter@nefrfc.org.