Welcome to the latest EPA Region 7 Digest!

EPA Region 7's Communities Information Digest provides communities with the latest news about funding technical assistance opportunities, webinars, conferences, and other activities related to human health and the environment.

An * indicates a new item.

Jump to:
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**Headlines**

**National**

*The EPA Invites Nominations for the Environmental Financial Advisory Board (EFAB). Deadline for nominations is February 10.*

Members of the EFAB provide advice and recommendations to EPA on a wide range of issues including: reducing the cost of financing environmental facilities; identifying approaches specifically targeted to small community financing; developing new and innovative environmental financing approaches and supporting and encouraging the use of cost-effective existing approaches; and increasing the total investment in environmental...
protection of public and private environmental resources to help ease the environmental
financing challenge facing our nation.

*EPA Releases Final Analysis of Metals Released from Gold King Mine in the Animas
and San Juan Rivers*

The EPA recently posted the final fate and transport report for the Gold King Mine (GKM)
release. The report focuses on understanding pre-existing river conditions, the movement of
metals related to the GKM release through the river system, and the effects of the GKM
release on water quality. The research supports EPA’s earlier statements that water quality
in the affected river system returned to the levels that existed prior to the GKM release and
contamination of metals from the release have moved through the river system to Lake
Powell.

*EPA Launches Online Water Quality Standards Tools for Tribes*

EPA has published a set of online tools to assist tribes in establishing Clean Water Act-
effective water quality standards (WQS). These tools are designed to help simplify the
application process for tribes to be treated in a similar manner as states (TAS) and
streamline the development of tribal WQS. The tools are another step toward achieving
EPA’s goal of closing a longstanding gap in Clean Water Act protections. Currently, fewer
than 50 of over 300 tribes with reservation lands have WQS effective under the Clean
Water Act.

*EPA Releases Informative Document on Dam Removal*

EPA has released a document to assist non-government organizations, state and local
officials, and private landowners in making decisions regarding the removal of obsolete
dams. The document describes the impacts of obsolete dams on water quality and public
safety, the permitting requirements for removal of these dams, and potential sources of
funding that may be available to support dam removal. The document does not change
existing policy on dam removal.

*Energy Department Partners with Department of Agriculture for Integrated
Biorefinery Optimization*

The Energy Department (DOE) and the Department of Agriculture’s National Institute of
Food and Agriculture (USDA-NIFA) jointly announced $22.7 million today to support the
optimization of integrated biorefineries (IBR). DOE is providing majority funding with up to
$19.8 million and USDA-NIFA is providing up to $2.9 million in funding.

*Energy Department Launches New Manufacturing USA Institute Focused on
Recycling and Reusing Materials*

As part of the Manufacturing USA initiative, today the Energy Department announced its
new Reducing Embodied-energy and Decreasing Emissions (REMADE) Institute, which will
be headquartered in Rochester, New York and led by the Sustainable Manufacturing
Innovation Alliance. REMADE will leverage up to $70 million in federal funding, subject to
appropriations, and will be matched by $70 million in private cost-share commitments from
over 100 partners.

*Now Open for Public Comment: Climate Science Special Report*

The U.S. Global Change Research Program (USGCRP) seeks public comment on the draft
of its Climate Science Special Report (CSSR). This special report provides an update to the
physical climate science presented in the Third National Climate Assessment released in
2014. The draft CSSR provides updated climate science findings and projections, and is an important input to the authors of the next quadrennial NCA (NCA4), expected in 2018.

*MyPlate, MyWins Helps Americans Turn Resolutions into Real Solutions for Healthy Eating in the New Year*
USDA’s Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion (CNPP) recently launched a New Year’s campaign to help Americans turn their resolutions into real solutions for healthy eating in 2017. This campaign is supported by new and existing MyPlate, MyWins resources available on ChooseMyPlate.gov, which are designed such that Americans can decide where to start on the journey to healthy eating.

*Energy Department Announces Six Projects for Pilot- and Demonstration-Scale Manufacturing of Biofuels, Bioproducts, and Biopower*
The Energy Department (DOE) recently announced the selection of six projects for up to $12.9 million in federal funding, entitled, “Project Definition for Pilot- and Demonstration-Scale Manufacturing of Biofuels, Bioproducts, and Biopower.” These projects, required to share the cost at a minimum of 50%, will develop and execute plans for the manufacturing of advanced or cellulosic biofuels, bioproducts, refinery-compatible intermediates, and/or biopower in a domestic pilot- or demonstration-scale integrated biorefinery.

*Energy Department Announces Up to $7 Million for the Co-Optimization of Fuels and Engines*
The Energy Department (DOE) recently announced up to $7 million for eight universities to accelerate the introduction of affordable, scalable, and sustainable high-performance fuels for use in high-efficiency, low-emission engines. Under the Co-Optimization of Fuels and Engines (Co-Optima) initiative, DOE’s Bioenergy Technologies Office and Vehicle Technologies Office are collaborating to maximize energy savings and on-road vehicle performance, while dramatically reducing transportation-related petroleum consumption and harmful emissions.

*How Cities Are Tackling Aging Water Systems*
Flint, Michigan, has shone a spotlight on the decrepit state and lack of investment in the U.S.’s water infrastructure, but the city isn’t alone in facing these challenges. A new policy brief from the Brookings Institute breaks down how cities with large drinking water utilities are financing their water systems, and what challenges they’re facing.

*Climate Change and Populations of Concern*
The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has developed eight communication kits that summarize key points from the U.S. Climate and Health Assessment that was released earlier this year by the U.S. Global Change Research Program. Climate change affects the health of all Americans, but as with many threats to our health, certain populations are at greater risk. Older adults may be more vulnerable to the impact of climate change because of where they live and may be more sensitive to health threats and less able to adapt to a changing climate.

*Climate Change Impacts by State*
As our climate changes, every state will become warmer. Aside from rising temperatures, the impacts of climate change are likely to be very different from state to state. Increased rainfall intensity will cause more flooding in some states, while increasingly severe droughts may threaten water supplies in other states. Farms and forests will be less productive in some states, but warmer temperatures may extend growing seasons in others.
New Report “Smart City Challenge: Lessons for Building Cities of the Future”
A little over one year ago, Smart City Challenge was launched, asking mid-sized cities across America to share their ideas for the creation of an integrated, first-of-its-kind smart transportation system using data, applications, and technology to help people and goods move faster, cheaper, and more efficiently. Over 75 cities competed for the resources to connect and deploy new technologies, and now those applications and a wealth of data is available to the public in a new comprehensive report, *Smart City Challenge: Lessons for Building Cities of the Future*.

USDA Announces Retailer Volunteers for SNAP Online Purchasing Pilot
USDA recently announced the seven retail firms selected to take part in a pilot designed to enable Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) participants to purchase their groceries online. The two-year pilot is slated to begin this summer. Online purchasing is a potential lifeline for SNAP participants living in urban neighborhoods and rural communities where access to healthy food choices can be limited.

EDRA Great Places Award Program Applications due January 31
The Environmental Design Research Association, in partnership with Project for Public Spaces, presents the 19th Annual Great Places Awards. Great Places Awards recognize work that combines expertise in design, research and practice; and contributes to the creation of dynamic, humane places that engage our attention and imagination.

EPA Presidential Environmental Education Awards for Teachers and Students Applications Due on March 1, 2017
The award recognizes outstanding K-12 teachers who employ innovative approaches to environmental education and use the environment as a context for learning. Award winners receive up to $2,500 to continue their professional development in environmental education. Additionally, the teacher's local education agency will receive up to $2,500 to fund environmental educational activities and programs. Youth can receive the Presidential Environmental Youth Award (PEYA).

Regional

PACE Debuts in KC to Close Funding Gap in a Redevelopment Project
A new financing tool, Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) funding, is helping redevelopers convert a former paper warehouse in Kansas City's Crossroads Arts District to apartments. The Walnut Terrace apartments will be at 1721 Walnut St.

EPA Rebates Will Fund Cleaner School Buses in 12 Region 7 Communities
The EPA recently awarded more than $7.7 million to replace or retrofit 401 older diesel school buses. The funds are going to 88 school bus fleets in 27 states, each of which will receive rebates through EPA's Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA) funding. The new and retrofitted buses will reduce pollutants that are linked to health problems such as asthma and lung damage. Twelve Region 7 communities will receive rebates: Bondurant, Lawton, and Sioux City, Iowa; Emporia, Sublette, and Ottawa, Kansas; Jamestown, Louisiana, Sullivan, and Wheaton, Missouri; as well as Arlington and Wahoo, Nebraska.
EPA Gives $3.8M to Help 19 Communities Plan New Uses for Former Brownfield Sites

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has selected 19 communities for approximately $3.8 million in funding to assist with planning for cleanup and reuse of Brownfield sites as part of the Brownfields Area-Wide Planning (AWP) program. Each recipient will receive up to $200,000 to engage their community and conduct planning activities for brownfield site reuse. The grants will help communities plan improvements such as housing, transportation options, recreation and open space, education and health facilities, social services, renewed infrastructure, increased commerce and employment opportunities. The City of Burlington, Iowa and the Resource Conservation and Development for Northeast Iowa, Inc., Postville, Iowa were among the communities selected.

Funding/Technical Assistance Opportunities & Due Dates

HHS Environmental Regulatory Enhancement Program for Tribal Governments January 9

USDA National Conservation Innovation Grants January 9

2017 Kinship Conservation Fellows January 16

AmeriCorps State and National Grants, Corporation for National and Community Service January 17

National Forest Foundation Matching Awards Program January 17

Center of Excellence for Chemical Alternatives Assessment January 17

Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) 2017 AmeriCorps State and National Grants January 18

Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative January 19

*Indian Tribes and Intertribal Consortia for Nonpoint Source Management Grants, EPA January 25

Partners for Places Round 10 Grant Cycle January 30

*CERCLA 128(a) State Implementation Support Grants January 31

Five Star & Urban Waters Restoration Grants January 31
EPA Environmental Justice Small Grants January 31
USDA Rural Energy for America Program January 31
Environmental Education Grants, Captain Planet Foundation January 31
NOAA Educational Partnership Program Undergraduate Scholarship January 31
NOAA Ernest F. Hollings Undergraduate Scholarship January 31
*2017 Healthy Watersheds Consortium Grant Program February 1
*Small Grants Program, Center for Health, Environment and Justice February 1
Endowment for Forestry and Communities Healthy Watersheds Consortium Grant (HWCG) Program February 1
Groundwork USA Program Funding and Technical Assistance February 1
Cliff Bar Foundation Small Grants February 1
Complete Streets Consortium Series Technical Assistance February 2
Center of Excellence for Chemical Alternatives Assessment February 3
EPA’s People, Prosperity and the Planet Award Program February 3
DOE Deployment of Clean Energy and Energy Efficiency Projects on Indian Lands Program February 7
Anticipating the Environmental Impacts and Behavioral Drivers of Deep Decarbonization February 10
DOE Scaling Up the Next Generation of Building Efficiency Packages Program February 10
Drought Response Program: Drought Contingency Planning Grants February 14
Drought Resiliency Projects February 14
Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer February 17
FTA Zero Emission Research Opportunity (ZERO) Program February 21
*FY2017 Brownfields Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training Grant February 24
EPA Presidential Environmental Education Awards for Teachers and Students March 1
Using a Total Environment Framework (Built, Natural, Social Environments) to Assess Life-long Health Effects of Chemical Exposures March 2

HHS Impacts of Climate Change on Oceans and Great Lakes Program March 7

**Ongoing Opportunities**

**USDA Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive Program Grants**

**River Network National Rain Barrel Program** Through June 2017

**POWER (Partnerships for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalization) Grants** Applications accepted on a rolling basis

**Tribal Climate Change Funding Guide** Regularly updated grants and programs

**EDA Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Program**

**USDA Agricultural Conservation Easement Program** [Local USDA Service Center](#)

**Apply for a Fruit Tree Planting Foundation Orchard in Your Community**

**American Planning Association Community Planning Assistance Teams**

**Climate Solutions University Adaptation Plan Assistance**

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# Meetings, Conferences, & Events

**Sustainable Foods Summit** January 18-20, San Francisco, CA

**Solar in Your Community Challenge Regional Workshop** January 18, Chicago, IL

**Solar in Your Community Challenge Regional Workshop** January 19, Madison, MI

**Superfund Radiation Risk Assessment Course** January 21, Bethesda, MD

**AGU Chapman Conference on Extreme Climate Event Impacts on Aquatic Biogeochemical Cycles and Fluxes** January 22-27, San Juan, Puerto Rico

**Kansas City Urban Stormwater Conference** January 23-24, Kansas City, MO

**California Climate Change Symposium** January 25-26, Sacramento, CA

**Kansas Natural Resources Conference** January 26-27, Wichita, KS

**Healthy Soils for Healthy Waters** February 1, Denver, CO
*Educational Partnerships for Innovation in Communities  February 1, St. Louis, MO
New Partners for Smart Growth Conference  February 2-4, St. Louis, MO
2017 Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference  February 5-8, Lincoln, NE
2017 Collegiate Sports Sustainability Summit  February 15-18, Gainesville, FL
USDA 2017 Agricultural Outlook Forum  February 23–24, Arlington, VI
Climate Leadership Conference  March 1-3, Chicago, IL
National Environmental Justice Conference and Training Program  March 8-10, Washington, D.C.
*RemTEC March 7-9, Denver, CO
11th Annual Iowa Water Conference March 22-23, Ames, IA
Children’s Environmental Health Network Translational Research Conference: New Challenges  April 5-7, Arlington, VA
ASFPM National Conference  April 30-May 5, Kansas City, MO
15th Annual Climate Prediction Applications Science Workshop (CPASW)  May 2-4, Anchorage, AK
*APA National Planning Conference  May 6-9, New York, NY
*International Trails Symposium May 7-10, Dayton, OH
National Adaptation Forum  May 9-11, St Paul, MN
*2017 International Conference on Ecology and Transportation  May 14-18, Lake City, UT
California Resource Recovery Association (CRRA) 2017 Conference  August 20-23, San Diego, CA
Soil and Water Conservation Society Annual Conference  August 30, 2017, Madison, WI
2017 National Brownfields Training Conference December 5-7, Pittsburgh, PA

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Webinars and Conference Calls

*ENERGY STAR Webinar: Portfolio Manager: Ask the Expert January 11 & 18 11:00 a.m. CST
Every Wednesday, ENERGY STAR holds a live webinar that gives all Portfolio Manager users an opportunity to ask their questions directly to EPA experts in an open forum.
**DOE Webinar: Efficiency Treasure Chest: How Cities, Manufacturers, and Retailers Are Unlocking Energy Savings in Warehouses and Distribution Centers** January 10, 3 p.m. CST

Hear how Better Buildings partners are addressing energy use in warehouses and distribution centers and gain ideas for you to take back to your buildings.

**DOE’s Solar in Your Community Challenge** January 10, 12 p.m. CST

This webinar will provide an overview of Solar in Your Community Challenge, a DOE-sponsored contest to support innovative and replicable community-based solar business models and programs that will bring solar to underserved communities.

**Using Adaptive Grazing to Improve Soil Health in Grazing Ecosystems** January 10, 1:00 p.m. CST

Adaptive management strategies are often employed in successful grazing land operations to adjust for uncertainty in ecological systems and processes. Livestock can be used as a tool to achieve specific resource objectives.

**Fisheries - Responding to Drought and Water Challenges** January 11, 1:00 CST

“Coldwater Fisheries and Climate Adaptation Case Studies in the Western and Eastern United States.” Multiple presenters including Nat Gillespie, Assistant National Fish Program Leader, Dan Isaak, Research Scientist USFS.

**EPA Webinar on Climate and Health Resources** January 11, 3:00 p.m. CST

EPA will be hosting a webinar to discuss the multiple climate and health related resources available on their website. These include communication kits and factsheets for populations of concern, state-by-state information and factsheets, and new reports like the Extreme Heat Guidebook and Climate Change Indicators.

**Access & Awareness Webinar Series from the Federal Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice** January 12, 12-1:30 p.m. CST

This webinar will discuss the nondiscrimination requirements of federally-assisted programs and activities related to emergency and disaster management as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina and subsequent events, the Federal government learned many critical lessons about how recipients of federal financial assistance engaged in emergency management activities can more effectively ensure that all members of the community receive access to information and services.

**EPA & Antioch University New England Webinar: Regional Collaboration for Resilience: How to Build Effective, Sustainable, Cross-Jurisdictional Climate Collaboratives** January 12, 11:00 a.m. CST

Participants in this webinar will learn how communities can collaborate at the regional scale to successfully advance climate mitigation and adaptation strategies. Cross-jurisdictional collaboration among municipal, county, and regional administrators; emergency managers; planners; public works personnel; leaders of business, community-based, health, education, and philanthropic institutions; and other stakeholders can successfully strengthen resilience and avoid maladaptive responses.

**Image Matters: How to successfully manage your city’s visual identity in a pro-growth environment** January 12

Learn how to establish and perpetuate a civic brand that attracts homebuyers and stimulates growth in this free webinar featuring regular SCN contributor Grant Hayzlett, president of
National Sign Plazas, Inc. This session will explain the sociology that drives the homebuyer experience and provide an update on the 2015 SCOTUS ruling governing sign ordinances.

**Designing Publicly Supported Solar Loan Programs** January 12, 12:00 p.m. CST  
This webinar will provide an overview of the Clean Energy States Alliance’s new best practices guidebook on designing publicly supported residential solar loan programs. Report author Travis Lowder of the National Renewable Energy Laboratory will present.

**Co-Location of Solar and Agriculture: Benefits and Tradeoffs of Low-Impact Solar Development Approaches** January 12, 12:00 p.m. CST  
Site preparation costs for utility-scale solar projects are expected to account for 20% of utility-scale photovoltaics installed costs in 2020. Reducing these costs via low-impact development can lead to cascading reductions in other environmental-related costs and risks. Learn about NREL's Innovative Site Preparation and Impact Reductions on the Environment (InSPIRE) study and state-based approaches to co-locate agriculture and solar photovoltaics.

**Writing and Monitoring Grazing Plans: Available tools, site specific planning and the economics of southern forage management** January 17, 1-3:00 p.m. CST  
Participants in this webinar will learn what content should be identifiable within the grazing plan, monitoring plan, and other economic considerations of forage management.

**Sustainability With Trees: Community Canopy Project** January 19, 12:00 p.m. CST  
This webinar will explore how distributing trees through a community canopy project can fit with your sustainability efforts, help maximize energy efficiency and engage homeowners within your community.

**New LEED Pilot Credit: How Economic Analysis is Making the Case for Sustainable Design** January 23  
This webinar will describe the new LEED Pilot Credit - Informing Design Using Triple Bottom Line Analysis – and how you can earn it. This new pilot credit requires calculating the triple bottom line (TBL) value of LEED credits, which can be a complicated process.

**ENERGY STAR Webinar: Portfolio Manager 101** January 24, 12:00 p.m. CST  
Learn about EPA's ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager tool. Attendees will learn how to: navigate Portfolio Manager; add a property and enter details about it; enter energy and water consumption data; and generate template performance reports to assess progress.

**ENERGY STAR Webinar: Portfolio Manager 201** January 25, 12:00 p.m. CST  
Continue to learn about EPA's ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager tool with a deeper dive into more advanced functionalities such as: editing property data; correcting and updating property use details; using the data quality checker; and sharing property data.

**State of the Voluntary Green Power Market** January 25, 12:00 p.m. CST  
EPA's Green Power Partnership Program (GPP) will host a webinar examining the state of the green power market within the United States. This webinar will focus primarily on the voluntary market, through which consumers and institutions voluntarily procure renewable energy for all or part of their electricity needs.

**ENERGY STAR Webinar: Portfolio Manager 301** January 26, 12 p.m. CST  
With a good background on the basic functionality of EPA’s ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager tool, learn about some advanced features including: using spreadsheet upload templates to
update property data; setting goals and targets to plan energy improvements for properties; creating custom reports; and using the Sustainable Buildings Checklist.

*ENERGY STAR Webinar: Benchmarking Water/Wastewater Treatment Facilities in Portfolio Manager  January 26, 12:00 p.m. CST
Learn how to track the progress of energy efficiency efforts and compare the energy use of wastewater treatment plants to other peer facilities across the country. Attendees will learn how to measure and track energy use and carbon dioxide emission reductions in water and wastewater treatment plants to establish baseline energy use, prioritize investments, set goals, and track improvements over time.

FY2017 EJ Small Grants Request for Proposals Pre-application Assistance Calls
Planning on applying to the FY2017 EJ Small Grants RFP? Have questions? Call-in to the pre-application assistance calls for the EJ Small Grants RFP. Dial conference call number: 1-866-299-3188. Then input conference code: 202-564-0152# to join the call. All potential applicants nationwide are welcome to call in. See a schedule of the remaining pre-application calls below:

- Thursday, January 12, 2017: 3:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.
- Tuesday, January 24, 2017: 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

On-Going and On-Demand Webinars

Communicating Climate Change Scenarios With Decision Makers
Research hydrologist Dr. Holly Hartmann discusses approaches for communicating with decision-makers on climate change, water management and planning.

Leveraging Resources for Brownfields Revitalization Webinar
This webinar discusses available tools to assist communities in leveraging resources to address community revitalization goals and challenges, including a presentation on Dubuque, Iowa’s efforts to leverage its own resources to attract other federal, state, public and private sources of funding and technical assistance.

EPA Computer Training Helps Water and Wastewater Utilities Build Resilience
The training covers several topics including: identifying and funding potential hazard mitigation projects, developing and updating an Emergency Response Plan (ERP), coordinating mutual aid and assistance during emergencies, conducting damage assessments, and many more.

EPA Sensible Steps to Healthier School Environments 10-Part Webinar Series
Student Curriculum: Recipes for Healthy Kids, and a Healthy Environment
Each 45-minute lesson empowers kids to take steps in their everyday lives to improve the environment for their communities and reduce their environmental risk.

LeanPath presents: Five Food Waste Myths to Debunk – Now!
This webinar will explore five myths about food waste and the facts you need to debunk them in your kitchen.

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