



Northeast Council of Governments

“At A Glance”

March 2010

2010 Census

The 2010 Census is a count of everyone living in the United States and is mandated by the U.S. Constitution. Census data are used to apportion congressional seats to states, to distribute more than \$400 billion in federal funds to tribal, state and local governments each year and to make decisions about what community services to provide. All census responses are confidential. Answers are protected by law and cannot be shared with anyone.

Most 2010 Census questionnaires are delivered from March 15-17, 2010. **The Census forms must be complete and mailed back between March 15, 2010 and April 15, 2010. The good news is that the 2010 Census questionnaire is one of the shortest in history-just 10 questions that only takes about 10 minutes to complete.**

In 2000, about 72 percent of the population mailed back their census forms. Mailing back the forms saves taxpayers money, as it reduces the number of census takers that must go door-to-door to follow up with households that failed to do so. The Census Bureau saves about \$85 million in operational costs for every percentage point increase in the national mail response rate. In 2010, the Census Bureau is challenging communities to improve their 2000 mail participation rates. Starting March 22, visitors to the 2010 Census Web site will be able to track how well their communities are participating in the census on a daily basis <http://2010.census.gov/2010census/take10map/>. This interactive Google-based map is now online and allows visitors to find out how well their communities did in the 2000 Census as well.

An electronic toolkit is also available at the 2010 Census Web site which includes talking points, sample speeches, new releases, newsletter copy, event suggestions, flyers, stickers, and doorknob hanger templates, and more.

Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program

NECOG staff recently completed 29 applications for the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) program. This program provides grant funding through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act for counties and communities to pay for the installation of energy efficiency measures such as furnaces, windows and doors in municipal or county owned facilities. These 29 applications requested nearly \$3 million dollars in grant funds. A decision on these applications will take place later this year.

Recreational Trails Program

The South Dakota Division of Parks and Recreation is now accepting applications for the Recreational Trails Program (RTP). This federal-aid program provides funding to help states provide and maintain recreational trails for both motorized and non-motorized uses. Eligible projects include constructing new trails, rehabilitating existing trails, developing trail-related facilities and educational programs that specifically address recreational trail issues. Sidewalks and street repair are not eligible.

Eligible applicants are non-profit organizations, units of local government, state agencies, federal agencies, and tribal entities. The grant will provide up to 80% of funds needed for the project. The remaining 20% must come from a local match in the form of cash, in-kind work,

materials, loans, or another grant. Applications are due around April 30, 2010.

Land and Water Conservation Fund

The Land and Water Conservation Fund program is administered by the SD Department of Game Fish and Parks, Division of Parks and Recreation. It provides matching grants to States and local governments for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities. The program is intended to create and maintain a nationwide legacy of high quality recreation areas and facilities and to stimulate non-federal investments in the protection and maintenance of recreation resources across the United States.

The fund is established to acquire, develop, and improve outdoor recreation facilities for use by the general public. Some examples of eligible projects are: playgrounds, sports and play fields, picnic and camping facilities, hiking/biking trails, beaches and pools, ice rinks, golf courses, amphitheaters/band shells, hunting areas/wetlands, winter sports facilities, fishing and boating facilities, interpretive and visitor information facilities, or renovation of existing facilities.

Grants are awarded for up to 50% of eligible project costs and are distributed on a reimbursement basis. Local matches can be cash or in-kind donations. The maximum grant amount is \$50,000. The minimum amount is

\$10,000. At this time the grant has yet to be announced, but NECOG anticipates that this program will be made available this summer and NECOG will provide an announcement of the application deadline once it is released.

Assistance to Fire Fighter Grants

Free workshops will be held around the country to provide information about the submission of competitive applications under the 2010 Assistance to Firefighters Grants program. The workshop lasts about two hours. Interested representatives from fire departments as well as representatives from non-affiliated EMS organizations are invited to attend the workshops. Information will be presented on program changes, program priorities, eligibility requirements, and the application process. General assistance in writing a competitive narrative for a department's grant application will also be covered. Registration is not necessary. Local workshops include:

- 4/7/10 in Aberdeen at the Fire Station #2 at 1825 8th Avenue NW at 7:00pm
- 4/8/10 in Pierre at the Fire Department Station #1 at 215 West Dakota at 7:00pm
- 4/12/10 in Linton at the Fire Protection District at 100 East Pine Street at 6:30pm

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