



National NEMO Network

(Nonpoint Education for Municipal Officials)

Overview

The National NEMO Network is a confederation of programs that educate local land use decision makers about the links between land use and natural resource protection. Network programs are patterned after the original Nonpoint Education for Municipal Officials (NEMO) Program developed at the University of Connecticut, but each program is a unique entity, typically operated as a multi-organizational consortium. The University based USDA Land Grant and NOAA Sea Grant systems are the most common institutional homes of NEMO programs, although lead organizations also include state agencies and nonprofit groups. These programs, now numbering 32 in 30 states (see map on back), have joined together of their own accord to create a unique national network that is sharing information, educational methods and technical tools across state and agency lines.



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What is NEMO?

The NEMO Program was created in 1991 at the University of Connecticut as a partnership between the Cooperative Extension System, the Connecticut Sea Grant College Program and the Natural Resources Management and Engineering Department. NEMO has a tight focus on local land use decision makers as the target audience, seeking to help them understand the links between the decisions that they make and the quality of their water (and other) resources. (See the NEMO Program fact sheet for more information.)

The Birth of the Network

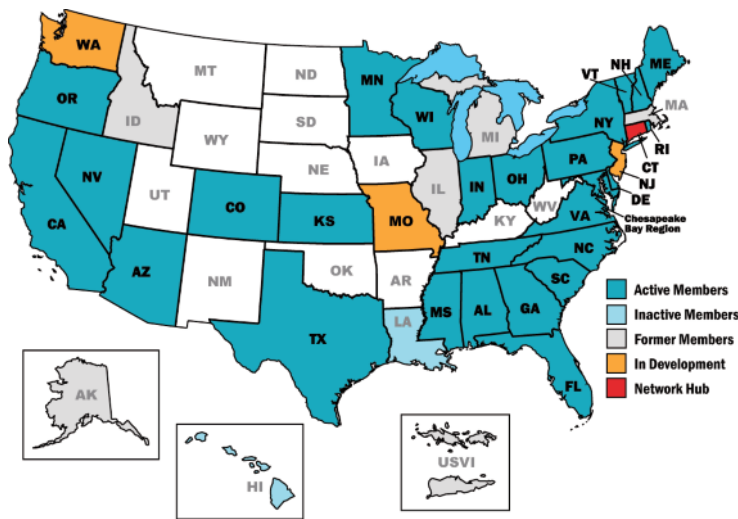
By 1995, Connecticut NEMO staff began to conduct workshops to assist their colleagues in other states to plan, organize and initiate NEMO adaptations. By 1997, with the number of NEMO programs growing and with the advice of an Interagency Work Group that included USDA, NOAA, EPA

and NASA, the idea of a national network began to take hold. In October 2000, 15 NEMO programs from across the country met for the first time to share experiences and expertise, and to discuss ways to better collaborate. It was during this first NEMO conference, dubbed NEMO University or “NEMO U,” that the National NEMO Network was truly founded.

NEMO Programs are Diverse

Institutional makeup, geographic coverage, topical focus, methodology, funding and staffing vary from state to state. Network programs are united by the principles set forth in the National NEMO Network Charter, a document each new program signs that states the vision, guiding principles and responsibilities of being a part of the Network. All Network programs share these few key elements:

(1.) The method is education. (2.) The



The National Network map includes active members, inactive members, past members and members in development (see legend).

topic is natural resource-based land use planning and site design. (3.) The target audience is local land use decision makers. (4.) The educational messages are enhanced by the use of geospatial technology.

Greater Than the Sum of Its Parts

Why a national network? First, because no one has the corner on good ideas! Community leaders need as many effective and innovative approaches as possible as they struggle to balance economic growth with natural resource protection and preservation of community character. Second, because those few groups working in the arena of land use education need the assistance and support of their colleagues. Land use is largely a local issue, so federal and state agencies have few programs that directly address land use or the education of local officials.

In order to create effective educational programs, NEMO educators need access to resources and expertise that may not exist in their home institutions or state. The National NEMO Network allows for the transfer of innovation and information so that it can benefit the people who will actually make the difference—land use decision makers.

Coordination of a National Network

Coordination of the Network comes from the Network Hub located in the Department of Cooperative Extension at the University of Connecticut. Drawing on the expertise of the CLEAR Team, the Network Hub provides presentations, publications, impact reports, communications, and coordinates workshops, training and networking opportunities. The ability to share experiences, educational resources and publications has proved invaluable for many programs, helping them to jumpstart new educational modules and grow their educational efforts.

Where to go From Here

The Network is proving to be an effective national force in disseminating land use information and techniques. Federal agencies recognize the power of this unique national network as a way to both transmit federal initiatives and learn about new methods developed at the local level. With the addition of 60 million new residents nationwide by 2020, the need for creative and innovative land use planning techniques will become more vital than ever. The National NEMO Network will help the critical decision makers achieve this balance.

Network Facts

- As of 2008, there are 32 funded Network programs operating in 30 U.S. states.
- 26 of the 32 programs are in coastal states.
- Programs range from small pilot programs operating at the town or county level to larger statewide or multi-state programs, many operating at the watershed level.
- The average NEMO program gives a workshop or presentation every 3 weeks and reaches 450 people per year. Combined, that's over 500 presentations a year and over 14,000 people reached Network-wide.
- New programs in 2007 and 2008: Oregon, Chesapeake Bay Region, New York - Hudson River and Virginia.
- Programs in development: Missouri, Washington, New Jersey.

The National NEMO Network is a group of affiliated projects that educate local land use decision makers about the relationship of land use to natural resource protection. The Network is coordinated by the University of Connecticut Nonpoint Education for Municipal Officials (NEMO) Program, with funding from USDA/CRSEES and EPA/OWOW. The National NEMO Network is a program of the Center for Land Use Education and Research (CLEAR). Land, Sea and Space Grant collaborating. For more information about CLEAR, visit clear.uconn.edu.