

## News Release

Special to NHMA membership

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Seven US communities are network pilots.

### **NHMA facilitates new Resilient Neighbors Network**

The Natural Hazard Mitigation Association is launching a special program named Resilient Neighbors Network (RNN) to link together grassroots communities working to become safer, disaster-resilient, and sustainable.

NHMA is working with seven pilot communities around the USA to create a peer-to-peer sharing network, so grassroots communities can work together directly to strengthen and expand local hazard-mitigation programs.

NHMA has applied for supporting funds through the Federal Emergency Management Agency. FEMA has developed a “Mitigation Model” to establish mechanisms and incentives to facilitate and enable local risk reduction actions. This RNN co-mentoring network will also offer ideas and feedback to FEMA on how the federal government can help increase community resilience to natural hazards. Depending on the findings during the pilot development phase, it is anticipated that the RNN will be expanded in the future to include other communities working on grassroots disaster resilience and sustainability.

Among pilot communities in the widely-dispersed network of peer-to-peer communication, sharing, and support are Grays Harbor County, WA; Hillsborough County, FL; Jefferson County, WV; Pasadena, TX; Rockford, IL; Tulsa, OK; and the State of Vermont.

Representatives of the pilot communities will meet in a special RNN program planning meeting July 19 in Broomfield, CO. Funding is being provided for one representative per community to attend. Among tasks: development of a framework plan for the peer-to-peer sharing network. NHMA is also fielding a Blue Ribbon Advisory Team of national experts who will serve as resources for the communities, along with NHMA representatives who serve as facilitators for the meeting and the RNN network.

The July 19 RNN workshop is one of three held back-to-back in Broomfield. First, the University of Colorado’s Natural Hazards Center invitational summer workshop is set for July 14-17.

Next will come NHMA’s 3<sup>rd</sup> annual International Mitigation Practitioner’s Workshop in Broomfield, CO, from July 17-18. The representatives of RNN pilot communities will also attend the NHMA workshop. Here is a link to the agenda for the NHMA workshop: <http://nhma.info/practioners-workshops/2012-workshop/2012-workshop-agenda/>

The July 19 RNN meeting will be the third in the series. More information about all the workshops and the network is available on NHMA.info. NHMA members are also encouraged to “friend” the program’s Facebook page, <http://www.facebook.com/#!/pages/Resilient-Neighbors/114981628639754> to follow NHMA’s emerging and evolving new program, Resilient Neighbors Network.

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