

Moving Forward

We envision the Network becoming a national force in providing much needed assistance to community decision makers.

Where do we go from here? Onward and upward—both as individual programs and as a Network!

Increasingly, Network members are experiencing benefits such as the sharing of educational materials, the mentoring of new programs by established members and the recognition that comes from being a part of a national effort. As each program grows and matures, multifaceted benefits to the entire Network will accrue. The Network Hub is committed to facilitating this process.

Most important, the Network is starting to realize the unique and inherent power of functioning as a true network. As demonstrated in the preceding section, this power can be manifested in many ways: the ability to stimulate new partnerships at the local, state and federal levels; a vehicle for conducting national research; and, a mechanism for leveraging small federal investments into on-the-

ground programs assisting many communities. With each move forward, the Network becomes stronger and realizes more of its potential.

Our Vision for the Future

We envision the Network becoming a national force in providing much needed assistance to community decision makers. We envision robust, well-funded and staffed programs in all 50 states. We envision an evolving and adapting Network that is more than the sum of its parts, leveraging the talents and resources of a long list of federal, state, regional and local organizations to the betterment of the entire system. We envision an ever increasing number of America's communities taking a proactive planning approach to balancing growth and natural resources protection, empowered by the information, education and tools provided to them by the National NEMO Network.



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How We are Doing

The National NEMO Network is currently a small effort, compared to the enormous needs of America's communities. As demonstrated in this report, however, we are making real progress, based on our commitment to changing land use decision making one town at a time. Our experience demonstrates that given the education and resources, communities can and will do a better job of planning their future.

Our chief obstacle is the “mission gap” that makes programs for local land use officials fall between the cracks when it comes to support of federal agencies and national organizations. The fundamental fact that land use is local has resulted in a scarcity of agencies, programs and funding to support efforts like NEMO.

Given this situation, perhaps the greatest achievement of the Network is its very existence. The Network is not the creature of any one agency or organization, but has been supported by forward-thinking individuals at those agencies that have come to realize the critical importance of better land use decisions. At the state level, each Network program has been pieced together from the bottom up, by dedicated professionals committed to making a difference at the local level.

Over the past five years, NEMO has been a voice making the case, nationally, for the need to assist local land use officials. With success on this front, and with continuing success at the local level, the Network will continue to grow and become a major national resource to the communities of America.

