

# Regional Update



A Monthly Report of Activities on the Eastern Shore of Virginia

May 2009

## A-NPDC Broadband Efforts Shift to Community Broadband Network Development

From backbone financing and development, A-NPDC broadband development efforts are now moving toward building out community broadband networks with the technical and financial support of the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). A-NPDC will continue to assist the Eastern Shore of Virginia Broadband Authority (ESVBA) with managing the EDA grant for backbone construction.

Last year, A-NPDC successfully wrote two Community Development Block Grant applications, on behalf of the Towns of Cape Charles and Parksley, to build connections to the backbone. This spring, the Towns of Chincoteague and Onancock are following suit. Announcements are expected at the end of June or early July.

A-NPDC secretarial and accounting assistance to the ESVBA organization is also winding down and all remaining staff support duties will transfer over to them at the end of June.



*Britton, N.L., and A. Brown. 1913.  
A rare species called the Twistleaf Goldenrod was believed to grow near the Broadband backbone route. Fortunately, an inventory arranged by A-NPDC found that it still exists and is growing in an area that will not be disturbed.*

### Major Milestones on Broadband Development

2005 Mid-Atlantic Broadband Cooperative comes to the Eastern Shore and presents information to A-NPDC regarding potential for development of a fiber optic network on the Eastern Shore of Virginia.

2006 A-NPDC applies for and administers three broadband planning grants, on behalf of Exmore, Chincoteague and Accomack County. This leads to the development of a telecommunications study for northern Northampton County and Accomack County.

2007 The Virginia Legislature approves an earmark for \$3 million for the Eastern Shore Broadband project. Congress approves a \$2 million NASA earmark for the Eastern Shore broadband backbone. Congress also approves funds for a rural utility program through USDA for broadband development, Congress writes language asking USDA to give consideration to the Eastern Shore project by name as well as seven others.

February 2008 A survey of funding to date is completed showing four initial funding partners (DHCD \$75,000, A-NPDC \$33,398, Accomack County \$4,368, and local donations from A&N Electric & Mercantile Peninsula Bank in the amount of \$500). Both Northampton County and Accomack County provide additional planning funds for a new Broadband Authority in the amount of \$266,000.

March 2008 A-NPDC prepares two applications, on behalf of the Towns of Cape Charles and Parksley, for construction funds for community networks. Those application awards total \$1,018,300.

April 2008 The Eastern Shore of Virginia Broadband Authority (ESVBA) is established by both Boards of Supervisors. A-NPDC secures an invitation to submit a pre-application for \$2.3 million for construction of a new fiber-optic backbone on the Eastern Shore. A-NPDC secures an invitation, prepares and submits a pre-application for \$2.3 million from the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA).

May 2008 A-NPDC applies and administers a DHCD \$35,000 planning grant for Northampton County for expert services for the ESVBA.

July 2008 EDA invites A-NPDC to submit a full application for broadband backbone construction. A-NPDC prepares the application and also agrees to allow ESVBA to become the applicant. EDA later awards the application for \$2.3 million.

January 2009 ESVBA hires an administrative assistant and Interim Executive Director.

February 2009 ESVBA holds groundbreaking ceremony for the southern section of the backbone. ESVBA hires an in-house engineer.

Spring 2009 Congress approves a second earmark for the Eastern Shore Broadband project. A-NPDC prepares applications for community networks in Onancock and Chincoteague

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# May Calendar of Events



- May 13 - ESV Broadband Authority, 3:00- 5:00 PM, AC Airport, Melfa  
May 14 - "Growing Your Money" Classes 6-8p.m., Dea's Chapel, Horntown.  
May 18 - A-NPDC Monthly Meeting 7:00 p.m. A-NPDC  
May 19 - ESV Groundwater Committee 10:30 a.m. A-NPDC  
May 25 - Office Closed - Memorial Day Observed  
May 27 - Regional Housing Authority 4:00 p.m, A-NPDC  
May 27 - Eastern Shore of Virginia Housing Alliance 7:00 p.m, A-NPDC  
May 28 - "Growing Your Money" Classes 6-8p.m., Dea's Chapel, Horntown.  
June 4 - "Growing Your Money" Classes 6-8p.m., Dea's Chapel, Horntown.  
June 11- "Growing Your Money" Classes 6-8p.m., Dea's Chapel, Horntown.  
June 18 -"Growing Your Money" Classes 6-8p.m., Dea's Chapel, Horntown  
June 25- "Growing Your Money" Classes 6-8p.m., Dea's Chapel, Horntown.

## How to Contact the A-NPDC

If you have questions or would like to discontinue your subscription, please contact the Planning District Commission.

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