

LOCAL LAND USE DECISION MAKERS AS THE BOTTOM LINE: TALES FROM THE NATIONAL NEMO NETWORK

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Session Title: Communicating Stormwater Research to a Diverse Set of Stakeholders

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Abstract:

The National NEMO Network is a coalition of 32 autonomous education programs in 30 states working with local land use officials to protect water quality through improved land use planning. The majority of NEMO programs are in coastal states, and are led by university staff associated with the NOAA Sea Grant and/or USDA Land Grant networks.

Network programs are adapted from the original *Nonpoint Education for Municipal Officials* (NEMO) program at the University of Connecticut, but each has been modified in structure and approach to reflect local needs and resources. NEMO programs vary widely in geographic scope and educational methodology, but all share several key characteristics: an educational approach; a tight focus on local land use decision makers as the principal target audience; a topical framework of natural resource-based planning with an emphasis on stormwater, and; the use of geospatial technology to support and enhance the educational programs.

After nine years of the Network's existence, NEMO programs have accumulated an impressive record of assisting communities to make changes to their land use plans, regulations, and development practices. This presentation will focus on the wide range of community-level impacts throughout the country that NEMO education has helped to catalyze. A number of innovative educational practices developed by NEMO programs will also be highlighted, ranging from community charrettes to technical tools to online planning tools.