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For Immediate Release
July 21, 2014

Land of Sky Regional Council Receives **National Association of Development Organizations 2014 Innovation Award**

WASHINGTON, DC – The Land of Sky Regional Council, based in Asheville, North Carolina, received a 2014 Innovation Award from the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) Research Foundation for the *GroWNC* project.

GroWNC (www.gro-wnc.org) was a three-year planning program for a five-county region in Western North Carolina, including Buncombe, Haywood, Henderson, Madison and Transylvania counties, to develop a framework of voluntary, locally-implemented, market-based solutions and strategies to ensure that as the region continues to grow, the effects of this growth have a positive impact on its communities. The regional plan wove together existing plans and strategies with extensive public input from people with a variety of backgrounds and interests in order to identify issues, goals and objectives across multiple topic areas. GroWNC, and its accompanying toolkit of products and resources, will foster economic prosperity through a regional vision that identifies implementable projects and actions. It was funded by a grant from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) through the Partnership for Sustainable Communities.

“For 28 years, NADO’s Innovation Awards have recognized regional development organizations for their hard work and commitment to promoting economic development in rural and small metropolitan communities across the country. Award recipients have created innovative solutions that build on the unique strengths and challenges of their regions, all while continuing to promote sustainable economic growth not only now, but for many years to come,” said NADO President Peter Gregory, Executive Director of the Two Rivers-Ottauquechee Regional Commission in Woodstock, VT.

NADO is a Washington, DC-based association that promotes programs and policies that strengthen local governments, communities, and economies through regional cooperation, program delivery, and comprehensive strategies. The association’s Innovation Awards program recognizes regional development organizations and partnering organizations for improving the economic and community competitiveness of our nation’s regions and local communities. Award winners will be showcased during NADO’s 2014 Annual Training Conference, August 23 - 26 in Denver, Colorado.

For more information about the award-winning project, contact the Land of Sky Regional Council at (828)251-6622.

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Since 1967 the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) has provided advocacy, education, networking, and research for the national network of 540 regional development organizations. NADO members provide professional, programmatic and technical assistance to over 2,300 counties and 15,000 municipalities. 400 North Capitol Street, NW, Suite 390 | Washington, DC 20001 | 202.624.5948 | info@nado.org | NADO.org