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UNH Hosts Regional Symposium on Impacts of Urban Sprawl

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UNH Hosts Regional Symposium on Impacts of Urban Sprawl
DURHAM, N.H. – The University of New Hampshire’s Center for Integrative Regional Problem Solving (CIRPS) will host a symposium Saturday, Sept. 6, 2003, that will bring together communities in southern New Hampshire, southern Maine, and northeastern Massachusetts challenged by the impacts of sprawl and increasing growth and development.

“The Voices of Communities Experiencing Rapid Change: A Symposium” takes place at the Elliott Alumni Center on the Durham campus from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Participation is free, but space is limited. Those wishing to attend should go to the event Web site at www.unh.edu/cirps/symposium.html or contact Amy Seif, CIRPS project director, at 603-862-4650 or amy.seif@unh.edu. Participants must register before Sept. 6.

“The symposium is an opportunity for community leaders and decision makers to come together and share common concerns on the varied issues surrounding growth and development in the region,” says Seif. “Topics explored will include New England-style development, biodiversity, conservation planning, environmental education and outreach, and water resources, among others.”

A State of the Region panel featuring respected experts in their fields will include Richard England, UNH professor of economics, speaking on land use economics and taxes; Barry Rock, UNH professor of natural resources, speaking on the impact of growth on regional climate change; and Ellen Snyder, UNH Cooperative Extension educator, speaking on the state of biodiversity in the region.

In addition, the symposium will be the first public presentation of the results of a survey of voters in towns that considered conservation bond issues in March 2003. The survey will inform about citizens’ attitudes about open space preservation, community development and fiscal affairs.

Seif says that the main objective of the symposium is to provide community members with an opportunity to identify ways for UNH and its collaborators to help them in their roles and to provide assistance to their communities.

“What we learn at this event will inform the action plan of CIRPS, as it moves forward in developing innovative approaches to help New England communities negotiate the challenges of land use change,” says Seif.
CIRPS is headquartered in UNH’s College of Life Sciences and Agriculture, but its work is multidisciplinary. The mission of this regional center is facilitating ecologically based, innovative approaches for securing quality of life and addressing land use challenges in New England through integrated research, outreach, education, and multidisciplinary partnerships.

The symposium is made possible by the Fuller Foundation and the Greater Piscataqua Community Foundation, a regional division of the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation, and is the result of a collaboration between CIRPS and UNH Cooperative Extension, NH Office of State Planning and Energy Programs, Livable NH, the Jordan Institute, Essex County Community Foundation, and the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve.

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