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## Brownfields in Small Towns

Communities in the small towns of New England's Region 1, in addition to the large, heavily-industrialized cities, suffer from the contamination and blight of brownfields. The center of small towns is often occupied by an abandoned factory, tannery, or mill that once brought jobs and economic stability to the community, but now stands empty. These small towns have found it difficult to compete for EPA's Brownfields Pilots and Grants.



Region 1 has made a special effort to level the playing field for New England's small towns. After tackling many of the brownfields in cities such as Boston, Massachusetts, and Hartford, Connecticut, Region 1 began marketing the brownfields program to New England's regional planning commissions, which bring together nearby communities to jointly pursue common planning goals. Region 1 is sparking redevelopment even where regional planning commissions are not present or are not addressing brownfields. Using Targeted Brownfields Assessment funds, Region 1 has been able to help small communities assess their abandoned properties and get the redevelopment process started.

Since working with the first revolving loan fund pilots to make a loan, Region 1 has continued to market the BCRLF program as a source of funding for brownfields cleanup. BCRLF grants provide funding to capitalize a revolving loan fund which is used to provide low- or no-interest loans for brownfields cleanup. Modeling their programs on Region 1's success, states have also set up their own revolving loan fund programs, including New Hampshire's highly successful \$2.4 million fund.

### Highlights of Region 1 Successes



#### **Bates Mill, Lewiston, Maine**

Using EPA grants and a property-specific revolving loan fund capitalized by EPA, Lewiston redeveloped the former Bates of Maine Woolen Mill into a complex that features a bank, restaurant, and several start-up companies. The building was renovated from the inside-out, keeping as much of the existing structure as possible and minimizing demolition.

#### **Whitney Screw Property, Nashua, New Hampshire**

The first loan under New Hampshire's Revolving Loan Fund was used to assist cleanup efforts at the Whitney Screw property, a former industrial site in the center of town. The community also tapped into EPA assessment grants and state resources to redevelop the property into an inviting space for retailers, including Goodale's Bike, New England's largest bicycle dealer.

**Region 1: Serving Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont, and ten Tribal Nations.**



# Life After EPA Funding

Brownfields in Region 2 range from very old industrial properties in the Northeast U.S. to abandoned pharmaceutical and energy properties in Puerto Rico. With such diverse challenges, cultivating partnerships with communities enables the Region 2 Brownfields Program to provide resources that go beyond the basic needs of the community.

Region 2 has developed unique relationships with other federal and state agencies, including the Army Corps of Engineers, Housing and Urban Development, Department of Transportation, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, New York Department of Environmental Conservation, and the Puerto Rico Environmental Quality Board. These and other partners help Pilots build entire brownfields programs that continue well beyond the EPA grant and remain as

viable, long-term local efforts to clean up and redevelop contaminated properties.

The Region 2 Brownfields Team becomes active partners with the Regional Pilot recipients and is committed to providing the resources needed to successfully implement a brownfields program. Starting with a kick-off workshop for each newly awarded grantee, Region 2 helps the communities start up their brownfields program by introducing them to brownfields concepts. The process continues with quarterly state roundtable meetings and interagency workgroup meetings with grantees and various state and federal agencies. Pilots get help establishing and keeping their brownfields programs alive with technical assistance and training from EPA offices and partners like the New Jersey Institute of Technology.

## Highlights of Region 2 Successes

### 507 Elm Street, Kearney, New Jersey

Redeveloping a former tool and dye facility, abandoned for two decades, the town of Kearney is creating much needed park space for local residents. With funding from the Hudson County Brownfields Pilot and input from a stakeholder group, the town is transforming the property through cleanup and redevelopment into a toddler park, giving residents easier access to greenspace.

### Voluntary Cleanup Program, Puerto Rico

Under a cooperative agreement from Region 2, Puerto Rico's Environmental Quality Board (EQB) has made significant steps in establishing a Voluntary Cleanup Program (VCP). The board worked with the New Jersey Institute of Technology and Northeast-Midwest Institute to propose a structure for a Puerto Rico VCP. In August 2000, the Senate of Puerto Rico passed legislation allowing the EQB to implement the program.



**Region 2: Serving New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, and 7 Tribal Nations.**

# Greening Brownfields

Throughout mining communities and along the Chesapeake Bay, a major focus of the Region 3 brownfields program has been supporting and encouraging “green” design. Integrating the concepts and technologies of “green building” and “green development” design increases the environmental benefits of brownfields redevelopment. Green design technologies, such as energy efficiency, low impact design, pollution prevention, open space, and beneficial landscaping, provide more environmental benefits than traditional development practices. These technologies result in reduced air and water pollution, water and energy conservation, and reduced solid waste production.

Region 3 designed a workshop for Brownfields Pilot communities at which attendees learned the basics of green design and how it can be incorporated into brownfield redevelopment projects. Several communities in the area have since incorporated green building design into brownfields redevelopment projects, including cities like Baltimore, Maryland, and Washington, D.C., and rural communities like Cape Charles, Virginia.

Building on the greening success in Region 3, EPA launched a national pilot initiative to provide assistance for constructing green buildings on brownfields. In Region 3, the National Aquarium in Baltimore was selected as one of eight Green Buildings on Brownfields showcase projects. The Aquarium’s new Center for Aquatic Life and Conservation, which will house additional space for animal care, breeding, education, and marine mammal rescue operations, will be built on a brownfield. The building’s proposed green design will feature photovoltaics, thermal mass walls, heat exchange technology, innovative ventilation, materials low in polluting volatile organic compounds, and storm water management.



## Highlights of Region 3 Successes

### **Nine-Mile Run, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania**

An EPA Brownfields Pilot allowed Pittsburgh’s Urban Redevelopment Authority to fully assess a long-neglected 238-acre tract known as Nine-Mile Run, a former industrial slag dump, and the Lectromelt property, a former electroplating plant. In a feat of urban ecological restoration, more than 700 new energy-efficient homes will be nestled alongside a rehabilitated natural habitat area.

### **Whitehall Robins Expansion, Richmond, Virginia**

With expansion of its pharmaceutical research facility, Whitehall Robins brought hundreds of new jobs and millions of investment dollars to northern Richmond, Virginia. The city facilitated the expansion by providing municipally-owned land for the facility and using an EPA Brownfields Pilot to hire environmental consultants for environmental assessment review and advice on detailed cleanup techniques.

**Region 3: Serving Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia.**

# Pursuing Environmental Justice

In the southeastern United States, Region 4 is marked by not only small mill and agricultural towns, but also some of the country's fastest growing metropolitan areas. While dealing with inner city blight and sprawl throughout the area, Region 4 is also addressing environmental justice issues by actively engaging communities.



Bringing together federal partners and community groups, Region 4 enhances community awareness and coordination of brownfields efforts among government and community stakeholders, enabling communities to assess, clean up, and redevelop eyesores. For example, in Spartanburg, South Carolina, the Arkwright community used Assessment Demonstration Pilot funding to spark the redevelopment process. These funds enabled this predominantly African-American community, where about 18 percent of citizens fall below the poverty level, to complete a brownfields inventory, assess properties, work with stakeholders on brownfields issues, and obtain input for its cleanup plan.

Webb Corner, a community in Columbia, Mississippi, is home to a population that is 87 percent minorities, with a 67 percent poverty rate and 58 percent unemployment rate. Actively involving all interested parties in the redevelopment of brownfields in areas such as Webb Corner, the city of Columbia formed the Columbia Brownfields Redevelopment Partnership. Inviting community members to discuss plans and voice their concerns in public forums, the partnership is reaching redevelopment decisions that are beneficial to the low-income and minority residents directly impacted by brownfields. The city has tied environmental justice to brownfields redevelopment by using a Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot grant to identify and inventory brownfields, conduct property assessments, and hold public forums and other outreach activities to encourage community involvement.



## Highlights of Region 4 Successes

### Enterprise Zone, Clearwater, Florida

As the site of the first revolving loan fund loan in Region 4, Clearwater is successfully addressing hundreds of properties in the Clearwater Brownfields Area, a state-designated Enterprise Zone. Leading the way for other communities, the city also published an environmental justice guidebook in conjunction with the International City/County Management Association.

### Airborne and Special Operations Museum, Fayetteville, North Carolina

Working with local citizens and state and federal partners, Fayetteville revitalized an area of former car lots and gas stations to pay tribute to the military. Starting the process with a Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot grant, the city transformed abandoned properties into the Airborne and Special Operations Museum.

# Partnering for Redevelopment

Brownfields redevelopment is thriving in the older industrialized areas of America's former Rust Belt. With hundreds of old, abandoned industrial properties, the Great Lakes states in Region 5 are ripe for redevelopment. Realizing the importance of state involvement in redeveloping these properties, Region 5 has cultivated strong relationships with state programs, which in turn build and maintain relationships with local communities. With the new Brownfields Law in effect, Region 5 is extending the hand of partnership to its 35 tribes.

In its annual Nuts and Bolts of Brownfields Redevelopment conference, Region 5 builds relationships and encourages partnerships among EPA and state, local, and tribal governments. This five-day training course introduces local government staff and officials to the real-life details of assessing, cleaning up, and redeveloping brownfields. Bringing in representatives of local



communities who are in the process of redevelopment or have successfully completed it, Region 5 illustrates the benefits of partnering for successful brownfields redevelopment. The learning continues throughout the conference with presentations by EPA brownfields staff and professionals in related fields, such as cleanup contracting, finance, insurance, and architecture, and from other EPA offices.

Region 5 facilitated partnering in Hennepin County, Minnesota, to improve Habitat for Humanity's property acquisition process by incorporating environmental assessments into the process. Several groups, including the Metropolitan Council, Minnesota Environmental Initiative, and Braun Intertec, an engineering and consulting firm, work together to screen properties with environmental concerns, allowing Twin Cities Habitat to build housing on properties it otherwise would have been forced to pass over.

## Highlights of Region 5 Successes

### **Bairstow Property, Hammond, Indiana**

Under a larger project to restore the George Lake watershed, the city of Hammond stabilized a lakeshore ecosystem desecrated with slag at the Bairstow property, a former steel mill slag waste dump. Along with other redevelopment, the property's driving range, nine-hole youth golf course, and planned 18-hole golf course have helped stimulate the local economy and slow a residential exodus.

### **Job Training, Toledo, Ohio**

Starting with an advisory group that included unions, potential employers, and community groups, Toledo's Job Training program trained residents in skills that included spill cleanup, lead and asbestos abatement, and emergency response. Environmental cleanup jobs are bringing new aspirations to residents in neighborhoods with poverty rates of up to 60 percent and unemployment as high as 31 percent.

### **Region 5: Serving Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, Wisconsin, and 35 Tribes.**



# Brownfields On the Border

Spanning the Mississippi River delta, the United States-Mexico border, and the great Southwest, Region 6 cleans up brownfields in the nation's backyard. Working through a proactive and aggressive outreach team, the Region is tackling brownfields along the Rio Grande.

Large cities throughout Region 6 are ringed by sprawling suburbs and separated by rural expanses dotted with small towns. Rather than focusing on brownfields in disparate urban areas, Region 6 works on projects clustered across a region, thereby incorporating regional planning into the process and addressing varying landscape and community needs. This method is especially helpful in dealing with the area's ubiquitous oil production sites. These are not just the corner gas station typically associated with petroleum brownfields, but remnants of the area's oil industry.

Along the United States-Mexico border, the Rio Grande Council of Governments (COG) used a Brownfields Pilot project grant to identify brownfields in the Upper Rio Grande area of southern New Mexico and west Texas. The city of El Paso, Texas, was also awarded a Brownfields Pilot project grant to further inventory and assess brownfields in the city's Empowerment Zone. Emphasizing community involvement in redevelopment planning, the city and the COG together are transforming brownfields into building blocks for community revitalization and sustainable urban redevelopment. Along with Region 6, these organizations further pursued this goal with a border brownfields workshop in El Paso. The conference promoted brownfields awareness and collaboration across borders, and sparked a continuous information exchange between the two nations.

## Highlights of Region 6 Successes

### **Native American Cultural Facility, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma**

A Targeted Brownfields Assessment on a former oil field sparked the planning for a Native American museum and cultural center featuring green design elements. Oklahoma City, the Native American Cultural and Educational Authority, Oklahoma Department of Transportation, EPA, and others will soon redevelop the area with leveraged funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and other organizations.

### **Heifer International Center, Little Rock, Arkansas**

Heifer International, a nonprofit organization that provides food- and income-producing livestock to impoverished families around the world, selected a former light-industrial and transportation property to house its new headquarters. The planned green building will include an education center, an international gift shop, and indoor/outdoor education programming.





# Sustainable Development in the Heartland

Region 7 serves communities in a 4-state region in the heart of America. This Region is largely agricultural with many small communities, some mid-sized towns and a few major urban centers. Communities across this spectrum are challenged by abandoned and underutilized property and the resulting loss of tax base and community pride. They are also challenged by the costs of expanding infrastructure (streets, sewers, power & communication links) to accommodate growth on the fringes and by the resulting environmental impacts to air and water, loss of natural areas and farmland and the need to improve quality of life for residents.

The Region 7 Brownfields Program works directly with communities to assess, cleanup and plan for redevelopment of brownfield properties. Staff provide assistance and encouragement for communities to implement designs which improve environmental quality, reduce energy and water consumption, prevent pollution, increase the quantity of green space and assure sustainable reuse of land and infrastructure. Regions 5

and 7 collaborated to sponsor a Midwest Summit on the Sustainable Redevelopment of Brownfields for community leaders, government organizations and consultants to share information on new technologies and design techniques.

Region 7 is also partnering with other federal, state and local governments and non profit organizations to encourage, through education and incentives, green architecture and landscaping, the development of trails, parks and greenways, community involvement in planning for revitalization, transit and pedestrian-oriented development and reuse of historic buildings.

Region 7 has awarded job training grants to community colleges in the Region to prepare students for employment in the environmental cleanup field and has also partnered internally to assure that all relevant environmental issues are addressed during brownfields assessment and cleanup. As a result of these mutual efforts, there are a growing number of sustainable development actions in the Region.

## Highlights of Region 7 Successes

### **Heritage Trail, Kansas City, Kansas and Kansas City, Missouri**

Kansas City KS/MO has a new Heritage Trail which links Kansas City, MO and Kansas City, KS, connecting recreational open space and parks with employment, commercial, retail and residential centers along the urban riverfront and brownfields redevelopment corridor. Recent brownfield projects include the restoration of the historic railroad roundhouse for office space, the Missouri Department of Natural Resources' Discovery Center for children and EPA's new Science and Technology Center, a certified green building.

### **Habitat for Humanity, Wellston, MO**

Using a Brownfields Assessment Demonstration grant, the St. Louis County Economic Council assessed 16 properties in the small urban community of Wellston, facilitating the transfer of these 12 properties to Habitat for Humanity St. Louis. Habitat subsequently constructed 12 new homes on these properties.

**Region 7: Serving Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, and nine Tribal Nations.**



# Success in Funding Support

Region 8 approaches brownfields from a unique perspective, shaped by the special characteristics of this western area. Lacking the heavy industrial brownfields prevalent in other parts of the United States, Region 8 was one of the first areas in the country to focus on preservation of greenspace and beneficial reuse of open spaces such as mine-scarred lands.

As one of the least populated EPA regions, Region 8 faces particular economic challenges posed by the large number of primarily rural and tribal communities. Lacking the financial opportunities for brownfields redevelopment that are available in more populated parts of the country, these communities may have difficulty stimulating developer interest in their reuse plans.

As a result, tribes and rural communities must be creative in enticing developer interest and leveraging funds. Tribes, in particular, seek additional funding from other federal agencies, some state agencies, and other organizations that fund many existing tribal activities. Tribes are finding that these alternative sources of funding are easier to access *after* assessments have been completed, many funded with EPA grants.

A lack of funding for assessment activities does not have to be the end of the road for communities in Region 8. To address funding challenges, the Colorado Department of Public Health and the Environment, in conjunction with local government and EPA Region 8, developed the Colorado Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund, a model now used in other parts of the country. In 2002 and 2003, the fund provided more than \$2.5 million in low-interest loans to encourage redevelopment of brownfields.



## Highlights of Region 8 Successes

### Gateway District, Salt Lake City, Utah

An EPA Showcase Community, this 650-acre area just blocks from Main Street is being redeveloped into a mixed-use, mixed-income area. More than \$400 million has been leveraged for redevelopment through a focused effort by the city, state transportation officials, Union Pacific Railroad, and federal agencies.

### Turtle Mountain, Belcourt, North Dakota

A Brownfields Job Training and Development Demonstration Pilot, Turtle Mountain Community College has leveraged funding from federal sources to develop training programs for environmental jobs. Under the tribe's Brownfields Assessment Grant, resources and funding are being leveraged to redevelop a former state mental rehabilitation hospital into a tourism area and natural history park.

**Region 8: Serving Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, Wyoming, and 27 Tribal Nations.**



# Changing Lives through Job Training

Large cities, coastal areas, and federal facilities are among the features that pose challenges to brownfields redevelopment in Region 9. Nevada, for example, is full of secured federal facilities that the Region must work around. In Southern California, vast metropolitan areas struggle to find a bit of green.

The impacts of brownfields redevelopment can extend beyond assessment and redevelopment of a property to the lives of individuals in the community, as Region 9 has demonstrated through job training programs for disadvantaged residents. Locating Brownfields Job Training Pilots within or near a Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot, the Region seeks to train residents in communities impacted by these abandoned properties. This training helps to guarantee that members of communities where brownfields redevelopment is underway have an opportunity to compete for assessment and cleanup jobs. For example, in Los Angeles, California, the Region 9 Job Training Pilot in the city's federal Empowerment Zone is training students in hazardous waste handling and lead and asbestos abatement, skills that will be applied directly to the cleanup of many properties in the zone.

After brownfields cleanup and redevelopment is complete in one area, trainees can seek employment in the environmental field, including cleanups using alternative or innovative technologies. This is exactly what has happened in Long Beach, California, where students have been trained in innovative environmental technologies to meet the rising demands for skilled environmental staff in the area.

**Region 9: Serving Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, the Pacific Islands, and Tribal Nations.**



## Highlights of Region 9 Successes

### **Young Community Developers, Inc., San Francisco, California**

Historically an African-American neighborhood, the Bayview Hunters Point community has a 16 percent unemployment rate, and typical household incomes only two-thirds the city average. Young Community Developers used a Brownfields Job Training grant to train disadvantaged residents as environmental technicians, and created their own local remediation company in the process.

### **National Guard Armory, Las Vegas, Nevada**

Using the first Brownfields Cleanup Revolving Loan Fund loan, Las Vegas cleaned up soil contaminated with hazardous waste and petroleum hydrocarbons at the former National Guard Armory property. By redeveloping the property into a community center with space for a senior center, a small business incubator, and a cultural center, the city has created a place of pride and activity for local citizens.

# Where One Size Cannot Fit All, a Tailored Approach

Serving four states and 269 tribes, Region 10 must tailor its approach to the needs of its diverse communities. The Region is home to both cities leading the way in smart growth and small rural towns facing the shutdown of timber, fishing, and mining industries. The ecosystems of Region 10 are likewise diverse, from temperate rain forest to high desert, from tiny urban wetlands to vast expanses of tundra. With so much variation, the approach to cleanup and redevelopment must be appropriate to each community's unique mix of physical, economic, and social factors.

For each brownfields project, Region 10's role depends on the needs of the community. Targeted Brownfields Assessments are used where a community does not have the capacity to manage a grant, as well as with Alaska Native villages which are legally prohibited from competing for assessment and cleanup grants. State and tribal response program funding reflects both the variety of our partners' levels of capacity and means

to address the unique environmental cleanup issues. And some properties, with a combination of past users, overlapping current jurisdictions, and competing interests for reuse, require the Region to take a cross-programmatic approach.

Ecological issues also shape how assessment, cleanup and redevelopment are accomplished within Region 10. For example, sampling windows and techniques are often affected by the migration patterns, spawning/mating seasons, or habitat conditions of the incredible diversity of fish, birds and mammals within the Region (especially those covered by the Endangered Species Act). With thousands of miles of coastline, rivers, lakes, and estuaries, improving conditions at ports and along waterfronts is both important throughout the Region and complicated. In some specialized areas, such as dealing with contaminants in sediments, the Region is a leader within national working groups.

## Highlights of Region 10 Successes

### Oregon Mills, Astoria, Oregon

Working in partnership with EPA, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, ECOTRUST, and the community, the City of Astoria cleaned up the city's abandoned mill sites and transformed them into thriving waterfront properties. With a jump-start from a Brownfields Pilot grant, two properties on the site, located adjacent to downtown Astoria's historic area, are being developed into a public promenade, shops, and residential housing.

### Environmental Extension Service, King County, Washington

King County used an EPA grant to spark brownfields redevelopment, creating a home for the Environmental Extension Service, run by the non-profit Environmental Coalition of South Seattle. The Environmental Extension Service provides assistance in pollution prevention and direct, door-to-door assistance to manufacturing and industrial businesses in assessing and cleaning up contaminated land.



**Region 10: Serving Alaska, Idaho,  
Oregon, Washington, and Native Tribes.**