



Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot

Morris County, NJ

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5101)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

EPA's Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower States, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is a site, or portion thereof, that has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse. Since 1995, EPA has funded more than 200 Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilots, at up to \$200,000 each, to support creative two-year explorations and demonstrations of brownfields solutions. The Pilots are intended to provide EPA, States, Tribes, municipalities, and communities with useful information and strategies as they continue to seek new methods to promote a unified approach to site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

BACKGROUND

EPA has selected Morris County for a Brownfields Pilot. The Pilot includes 13 small municipalities (average population 15,714) that lie along a 40-mile corridor adjacent to the Rockaway River in northern New Jersey. The region has been an industrial center since the Revolutionary War, with mining and forging operations based on local iron deposits. Many of these industrial sites were abandoned and subsequently used for auto repair and salvage operations. The legacy of the area's industrial past has left brownfields scattered throughout the corridor where multiple industries have released unknown amounts of contaminants. The water quality of the Rockaway River and its associated aquifers, on which nearly one million people depend for drinking water, has been jeopardized by this contamination.

The communities located near brownfields are characterized by elevated unemployment and poverty rates and impaired property values. Tradition and "home rule" by local towns has prevented regional cooperation in brownfields assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment in the past.

PILOT SNAPSHOT



Morris County, New Jersey

Date of Announcement:
July 1998

Amount: \$200,000

Profile: The Pilot targets brownfields located in 13 municipalities that lie along a 40-mile corridor adjacent to the Rockaway River in northern New Jersey.

Contacts:

Municipal Utilities
Authority
Morris County
(973) 285-8383

Regional Brownfields Team
U.S. EPA - Region 2
(212) 637-4314

Visit the EPA Region 2 Brownfields web site at:
<http://www.epa.gov/r02earth/superfund/brownfld/bfmainpg.htm>

For further information, including specific Pilot contacts, additional Pilot information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at:
<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>

OBJECTIVES

Morris County's objectives are to return urban brownfields to commercial reuse consistent with community interests; relocate or modify existing riverside development to enhance water quality and create recreational uses; and create employment opportunities and strengthen the tax base in depressed municipalities. A major goal of the Pilot is to overcome the jurisdictional obstacles present when dealing with 13 separate towns with home rule. Pilot funding will be used to identify, characterize, and prioritize brownfields in the corridor. The Pilot plans to initiate and maintain community involvement activities with residents in brownfields communities. Finally, the Pilot plans to leverage assessment and cleanup funding from sources such as the New Jersey Hazardous Discharge Site Remediation Fund.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Activities planned as part of this Pilot include:

- Identifying and characterizing brownfields in Morris County and collecting site-specific information, to be compiled in a database with appropriate links to a regional geographic information system;
- Performing environmental assessments on a minimum of 9 sites based on evaluation and prioritization of sites in the County;
- Developing specific cleanup and redevelopment plans for these 9 sites;
- Conducting community outreach activities in the 13 target communities; and
- Developing a strategy to coordinate cleanup and reuse activities with 13 separate municipalities.

The cooperative agreement for this Pilot has not yet been negotiated; therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.