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**EPA, NOAA SIGN BROWNFIELDS AGREEMENT LAYING GROUNDWORK FOR
REVITALIZING AGING PORT CITIES**

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EPA and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Jan. 14 in New Bedford, Mass., to expedite cleanup of local Brownfields in that city. (A Brownfield site is real property, the expansion, redevelopment or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant or contaminant.) The MOU will enhance interagency cooperation and collaboration in support of Brownfields assessment and cleanup, community revitalization and environmental protection efforts. Signing for NOAA was Dr. James Mahoney, Deputy Administrator and Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere. Signing for EPA, Marianne Lamont Horinko, Assistant Administrator for the Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response, pointed out that the MOU lays the groundwork for EPA's further collaboration with NOAA and other agencies to provide life to aging port cities across the country. This agreement will serve as a model for coastal communities as they clean up and sustainably redevelop Brownfields. Actions under the agreement may include jointly identifying and implementing actions that link Brownfields assessment and cleanup with coastal habitat restoration and waterfront revitalization planning and implementation. On a national level, President Bush signed the Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act in January 2002 with broad bipartisan support and has increased spending for Brownfields cleanup by doubling funding to \$200 million in his FY03 budgeting. This legislation demonstrates unprecedented recognition of the environmental and economic ramifications of Brownfields and the need to address them. EPA is the lead federal agency for Brownfields with more than 20 other federal agencies supporting the effort. Through the 2002 Brownfields Federal Partnership Action Agenda, these agencies have committed to working together in a timely manner to help communities more effectively prevent, assess, clean up and sustainably reuse Brownfields. More information on general Brownfields issues is at: <http://www.epa.gov/brownfields>.