

# State and Tribal Response Program Highlights

EPA Funding Provided to States and Tribes to Address Contaminated Land in their Communities

## REGION 1

VERMONT – State, local and regional agencies are creating an environmentally sustainable development on the site of a former dairy factory in Richmond. The old creamery sat unused and derelict for more than two decades. Contaminants on the property included ammonia refrigeration tanks, asbestos, and lead paint in the dilapidated buildings. The buildings were in various stages of disrepair, becoming increasingly dangerous to residents and posing a threat of lead and asbestos being released into the environment. The Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation used Section 128(a) Response Program funding to oversee the assessment and removal of the lead paint and asbestos at the property. Completed in 2019, the first building has 14 apartments and almost 6,000 square feet of commercial space, with 70 percent of the commercial space leased. Construction is currently pending for the second building, which will add another 36,000 square feet and up to 30 apartments. The third phase is slated to add two more buildings totaling another 25,000 square feet. The first building is greenhouse gas emissions net-zero through solar arrays on the roof and on a 40-car parking canopy. The government partners and developers are planning additional solar panels for the future buildings.



Artist rendering of future development of Richmond Creamery.

## REGION 2

NEW JERSEY – A former automotive sales and service center in Jersey City was put to a new, yet similar, use after remediation ensured the safety of this former brownfield. First developed in 1896, the property was used commercially and residentially, until the property became vacant in the early 2000s. After demolition of the existing site structures in 2014—including a sales office, auto garage, and parking lot—the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) used Section 128(a) Response Program funding to oversee a site investigation. The investigation revealed that soil levels of polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and heavy metals exceeded state standards. Remediation activities included excavation of approximately 1,400 tons of soil and off-site disposal of contaminated soil. DEP capped the property to ensure protection from and containment of any remaining contaminants. In 2018, the property became home to an Autozone. The remediation benefited the Jersey City community through the revitalization of a contaminated site and the generation of increased tax revenue.

## REGION 3

PENNSYLVANIA – Communities across Pennsylvania have a story to tell. Whether it is the successful cleanup of a town's former industrial complex or the remediation of the corner gas station, these brownfields success stories illustrate the improved quality of life for people living and working in Pennsylvania. The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) has used Section 128(a) Response Program funding to develop success stories and short videos to highlight brownfields redevelopment projects and the impacts of those projects across the state. The stories and videos highlight successes from Pittsburgh to Harrisburg, to Allentown, to Philadelphia, and everywhere in-between. The stories and videos can be viewed on the [PADEP website](#).

## REGION 4

TENNESSEE – A former brownfields property, located near downtown Memphis, has been in commercial use since at least 1907. Most recently, the property was a gas station and tire shop. The former Reed's Tire Shop property had petroleum contamination in subsurface soils from years of incidental spillage. The property entered Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation's (DEC) Division of Remediation Brownfields Voluntary Program. Tennessee DEC used Section 128(a) Response Program funding to oversee several assessments and the removal of contaminated soil. Officials determined that placing a land use restriction on the site would allow the property to be redeveloped into a dog park, green space, and recreational area to benefit residents of an adjacent apartment building in this up-and-coming neighborhood. Redevelopment is expected to be completed in early 2021.



Artist rendering of future development of the Reed Tire Shop property.

## REGION 5

MINNESOTA – A 2.88-acre, former brownfields in the City of Mankata was originally used as an unpermitted dumping site in the 1930s and 1940s. The city later used the property as a bus maintenance facility and fueling station beginning in the 1940s. In 2018, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) used Section 128(a) Response Program funding to conduct assessment and cleanup activities and provide technical oversight of the environmental investigation, cleanup, and redevelopment at the property. The environmental assessments revealed that the soil was contaminated with arsenic, lead, mercury, polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), petroleum compounds, and some asbestos-containing materials. Cleanup activities included the excavation and disposal of about 2,638 tons of contaminated soil and about 53 tons of asbestos-containing waste. After cleanup activities were completed in 2017, the property was redeveloped into the Children's Museum of Southern Minnesota Site. The old facility maintenance building was renovated for reuse as museum space.

## REGION 6

TEXAS – Plaza Saltillo, also known as the Downtown Railyard Property, occupies 12 acres between East 4th and East 5th Streets, in Austin. The rail station operated from the late 1800s to the late 1900s, transporting coal, lumber, and cattle. The property was vacant for many years and, ultimately, entered the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality's (TCEQ) Brownfields Program and later the Voluntary Cleanup Program. TCEQ used Section 128(a) Response Program funding to oversee the excavation of 55,000 cubic yards of soil. A grocery store, affordable- and market-rate housing, and mixed-use office and retail space will occupy this formerly vacant area in the heart of the city. The development, set for completion in early 2021, will also include a public park, bike path (connected to the Lance Armstrong Bikeway), and bus stop connecting East Austin to downtown.

## REGION 7

NEBRASKA – In 2015, the Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy (NDEE) used Section 128(a) Response Program funding to complete a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment, asbestos-containing materials survey, and asbestos abatement at the former Progress Elementary School in the rural community of Ogallala. [A success story previously submitted by the NDEE to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\) in 2017 highlighted this project](#) and the leveraged dollars raised from Section 128(a) funding for the building demolition. Since that time, several entities worked together to leverage additional funds for a new library. The City of Ogallala, the Nebraska Department of Economic Development Civic and Community Center Financing Fund, Keith County, the Keith County Visitors Center, the Lute Family Foundation, several other foundations, and many local individual and family donors raised approximately \$2,600,000 to complete the redevelopment. The Kathleen Lute Public Library, set to open in July 2020, is a heartwarming example of community camaraderie and a small city working together to get things done.



The Kathleen Lute Public Library.

## REGION 8

**SPIRIT LAKE NATION** – Between 2006 and 2019, the Spirit Lake Tribe used EPA Brownfields funding to complete an impressive 41 cleanups throughout their tribal lands. The tribe used Section 128(a) Response Program funding to conduct assessment activities and several of the cleanups. In addition, they used an EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant to conduct the remaining cleanups. The majority of the cleanups have occurred on abandoned houses that were contaminated with asbestos and lead. Housing is a critical need for the Tribe, and these cleanups have removed substandard structures so that new and safe homes can be built in their place. Brownfields funding has also helped remove asbestos materials from a Head Start building prior to its renovation. At another site, asbestos present in the building debris of a former post office posed a health risk to people and nearby wetlands. The asbestos, building debris, and contaminated soils have been removed and the area is now natural open space adjacent to existing recreational fields.

## REGION 9

**NEVADA** – A former commercial property in Fernley was redeveloped as a distribution center for a Fortune 500 company. The Crossroads Commerce Center has historically served as industrial and commercial use. In 2018, the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection used Section 128(a) Response Program funding to oversee the assessment of the property. Assessment activities revealed that the property was not contaminated and was ready for reuse. The site was zoned for a mix of industrial and commercial use, and the Union Pacific Railroad main line runs immediately south of the property. Polaris Industries purchased a portion of the property for its recently announced new multi-brand distribution center.

## REGION 10

**ALASKA** – The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation used Section 128(a) Response Program funding to host the 22nd Alaska Forum on the Environment (AFE) on February 10-14, 2020. The AFE is a statewide gathering of environmental professionals from government agencies, non-profit and for-profit businesses, community leaders, Alaskan youth, conservationists, biologists, and community elders. The diversity of attendees sets this conference apart from any other. The 22nd AFE offered six keynote events, over 100 technical training sessions, panel discussions, special events, and workshops. The technical training sessions included climate change, emergency response, brownfields, marine debris, environmental regulations, fish and wildlife, forests, rural issues, energy, military issues, business issues, pollution prevention, contaminants, and more.



*The Alaska Forum on the Environment.*