



# WBWire

CONNECTING WESTERN BROWNFIELDS EFFORTS AND STAKEHOLDERS

U.S. EPA REGIONS 8, 9 & 10

FALL 2010

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"Brownfields projects show that the right thing to do for our health and our environment is also the right thing to do for our economy."

- EPA Administrator  
Lisa P. Jackson



## Brownfields Revolving Loan Funds Fill a Critical Niche in the West

The Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) has become one of the most effective financial tools for cleaning up and returning contaminated properties to productive use. Across the west, communities large and small have responded to a strong demand for cleanup dollars by developing a RLF. In fact, some of the nation's most successful loan funds operate in the west, resulting in over \$1.4 billion leveraged toward cleanup and redevelopment and 3,083 jobs created over the past decade. Collectively, RLFs across Regions 8, 9 and 10 have closed on 41 loans, resulting in 308 acres made ready for redevelopment. A large portion of these loans have been paid back and have already "revolved" into new cleanup loans. For more information, see RLF in Numbers on page 3.

EPA's RLF program has filled a critical niche in the redevelopment



*The cleanup of lead contaminated soils at the 178 Townsend property (above) is being facilitated by an RLF loan. On the right is an architectural rendering of the proposed redevelopment, the first residential building in San Francisco to apply for LEED Gold Certification.*

ment process. Traditional lenders and investors can be leery about investing in projects that have an environmental component. Cleanup loans can overcome/allay such fears by offering low-interest rates and flexible repayment terms. This capital can also make the difference in a project moving

from ideas and blueprints, to a reality. Feedback from various RLF projects indicate that these resources are indispensable for pri-



vate developers and local governments, especially at the early stages of a project when cash flow is low.

The California Department of Toxic Substances Control recently closed on a \$1.25 million low-interest loan that will fund excavation of lead-contaminated soil from the 178 Townsend Street property in San Francisco. The project is situated in the center of the South Beach neighborhood, close to AT&T Park, home of the San Francisco Giants.

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## WBWire: A Note from the Editors

*The Staff of Regions 8, 9 and 10*

Horace Greeley, a 19<sup>th</sup> Century editor of the *New York Tribune* called it the "Great West." He urged its settlement saying, "... build up a home and fortune." Today, millions of us call the "Great West" home and for us this includes Alaska and the Pacific Islands. We live in cities and small towns, on its coasts, on tribal lands and in vast open spaces. We share its bounty as well as its legacy from mining, milling, and industrialization that has contaminated our land and water.

At the end of the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, we're creating a new, sustainable future in the West. We are restoring land and meeting the diverse challenges that brownfields create.

We at EPA want to create a new way to inform, support and connect our partners and stakeholders. Western Brownfields Workshops (WBW) have brought us together in communities across the west. We have shared and learned together.

### **Beyond connecting practitioners**

- We recognize these are exciting times with new brownfields resources coming on-line rapidly (see p.2: EPA-HUD-DOT) and techniques and technologies evolving quickly. While the prospects for sustainable redevelopment have never been brighter, communities face ongoing challenges in the face of a slow recovery from the current global recession. For these reasons, we are exploring new ways to keep the Western Brown-

fields community connected beyond the annual WBW.

In the coming months we will examine how best to communicate with and connect practitioners. This WBWire newsletter is a "pilot." We want it to begin and sustain a conversation. And we want to hear from you. How can we make a newsletter, our websites, (and other tools) useful resources for your work and your community? Be sure to give us your feedback through the WBW evaluation form, in the halls of the WBW, or by direct contact afterwards.

Thanks for all the work you do to revitalize the communities of the "Great West".



The Shoshone-Bannock Tribes abated this former railroad station (below) and plan to reuse the structure (above) for a new veteran's center.



## Open Minds on an Open Plain: Capturing the Success of a Brownfields Tribal Response Program

In SE Idaho, the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes have a clean wind at their backs when it comes to Brownfields reclamation. Historical pollution from agriculture, industry and illegal dumping, has left many sites on this 815 square mile reservation with asbestos, lead and pesticide contamination. Now, with over \$2.1 million in EPA Tribal Response grants received since 2005, they are finally being dealt with. Twenty one Phase I site assessments, three Phase II site assessments and three site cleanups have been conducted, while expanding the tribe's Environmental Waste Management Program (EWMP).

After casting a wide net in assessing sites, the tribe is now

demonstrating creativity in limited brownfields redevelopment. A former railroad station is slated to become the tribal veteran's center, and plans are underway to turn an old hospital into an environmental education center, in partnership with Idaho State University. Some sites have undergone ecological restoration, and three are being studied as possible locations for a wind farm or waste-to-energy plant.

Reflecting on these accomplishments, Kelly Wright, EWMP Program Manager, says, "Working with the EPA has significantly improved the reservation from an environmental standpoint. It has helped us educate and make

partnerships with other tribes." Likewise, they have made education the central part of this program within the tribe as well. Special "Brownfields' Days" were held in each district of the reservation over the last year, and brownfields outreach has taken place through presentations, newsletters and brochures. While the response program has a long way to go from a redevelopment standpoint, Wright sees it as a positive step forward for the tribe. As he optimistically states, "Nothing ventured, nothing gained."

Visit the Shoshone-Bannock Tribal Brownfields Response Program website at <http://sbtribes-ewmp.com/>.

Finding suitable environmentally impaired lands to site renewable energy facilities is one significant way EPA and the states can help the Administration meet its goals of 25 percent renewable energy by 2025 (EPA FY2011 Budget Brief).

### Did you Know?

**HUD will award \$100m** under its new Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program (2010 applications were due Aug 23, 2010) with \$25 million set aside for communities with a population less than 500,000.

**DOT and HUD will award up to \$75 million in 2010** \$35 million in TIGER II Planning Grants and \$40 million in Sustainable Community Challenge Grants for localized planning activities that ultimately lead to projects that integrate transportation, housing and economic development.

**\$360.9m** is the combined 2011 funding request for HUD, DOT & EPA sustainable communities efforts (based on the White House budget request).

## EPA-HUD-DOT Partnership Hits the Ground Running

*EPA and its partner agencies are rolling-out numerous initiatives either related to or centrally focused on brownfields. These efforts aim to improve urban waters, encourage area-wide planning and sustainability and to reconnect Americans to the outdoors. The EPA will use this section to highlight the implementation, outcomes, lessons learned and future opportunities related to these emerging initiatives.*

### The Sustainable Communities Partnership Hits the Ground Running

With a focus on improving access to affordable housing, increasing transportation options and lowering transportation costs, while protecting the environment, the HUD-DOT-EPA Sustainable Communities Partnership was announced June 16, 2009. While all three agencies are moving forward with funding projects and strategic planning, EPA's initial efforts are beginning to bear fruit.

Two of the Agency's five sustainability pilots are located in the Western United States – the La Alma/S. Lincoln Park Redevelopment (Denver) and the Westside Affordable Housing Transit-Oriented Development in National City, Calif. and both have brownfields reuse as central components of their plan.

EPA funded design charettes are taking place this fall for the La Alma/S Lincoln Park pilot and will focus on energy, stormwater/green infrastructure, and transportation. Additionally, the Denver Housing Authority received \$10 million in stimulus funding from HUD for the first phase of the project, which will be senior affordable housing.

The Westside Neighborhood in National City, California, a low income neighborhood with 389 polluters per square mile, has been designated as an environmental justice community.

The City will receive assistance to create and implement a sustainability plan and financial strategy for a 14-acre brownfield it sees as the catalyst site for broader neighborhood change. Existing industrial uses on the site are adjacent to an elementary school, homes and a degraded tidal creek. The Sustainability Plan will assist the City in leveraging resources to clean up the site, form a link to an adjacent light rail station, create open space, improve the tidal creek, and create a 201-unit infill affordable housing project.

Overall, this partnership will shape the policies and funding mechanisms of the three federal agencies well into the future, which will benefit brownfields and community revitalization efforts for years to come.

For more information visit <http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/>



## RLFs and subgrants continue to support brownfields cleanup despite economic downturn

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This project will expand affordable housing, and create an estimated 100 construction and 60 permanent jobs in the process.

Beyond low-interest loans, RLF's in the west also provide grant funds to public and non-profit organizations to address contamination and return properties to productive use. Subgrants can be a critical piece of a project's overall financial puzzle, especially at properties that are otherwise financially upside down.

Nestled in the heart of the San Juan Mountains of Colorado, San Juan County (pop. 558) recently completed the cleanup of a property that will soon house the Anvil Mountain Neighborhood. Redevelopment of the 13-acre former smelter site will provide much needed affordable, and energy efficient, housing for the Town of Silverton, located at 9,308 feet. A \$200,000 subgrant, issued by the CO Coalition, provided the funds to complete the cleanup in 2010 after costs exceeded the initial project budget.

While western communities have generated numerous RLF successes, there have also been significant challenges. Even with cleanup funds available, developers often have trouble securing financing for vertical construction.

This has limited the market for new redevelopment efforts and led to significant delays for some existing projects, especially during the recent economic downturn. In response, RLF administrators have



*Cleanup of the former Martha Rose Walsh Smelter is making way for the Anvil Mountain Community. A subgrant from the State of Colorado's RLF was critical in finishing the cleanup of the former smelter.*



*A typical home designed to maintain the historical character of Silverton, Colorado. Anvil Mountain Neighborhood home construction is scheduled to begin in Fall 2010.*

done an exceptional job marketing RLF products and fostering relationships with potential borrowers and subgrantees. Loans and subgrants have continued, and as the economy rebounds, properties that have been restored during these lean years will be well-positioned for redevelopment.

In recent years, EPA has significantly increased the level of supple-

mental funds made available to existing RLF grant recipients. This annual infusion has been critical in replenishing loan funds and ensuring liquidity. These resources have substantially increased the overall amount of funds available, and are allowing RLF administrators to move forward with more and larger loans and subgrants without fear of fund depletion and program stagnation. EPA has also made changes to several RLF requirements, including rules associated with grant close-out, as well as allowing for greater flexibility in subgranting.

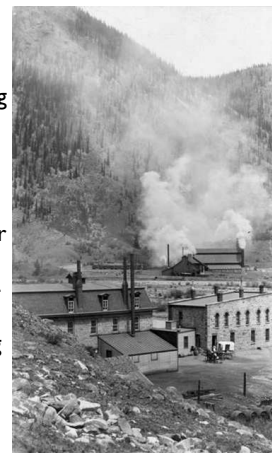
EPA will continue to evaluate opportunities to improve and increase the flexibility of the RLF program to meet the needs of our communities. As population growth continues to pressure land development in the west, the RLF will remain an indispensable funding tool for cleanup and redevelopment projects. For more information on existing RLFs or to learn about developing an RLF in your community visit <http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/rlfst.htm>.

To read more about the projects highlighted in this story go to:

[http://www.epa.gov/region8/land\\_waste/bfhome/SanJuanBrownfieldsSuccessStoryApr2010.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/region8/land_waste/bfhome/SanJuanBrownfieldsSuccessStoryApr2010.pdf)

<http://www.sanjuandevlopment.org/housing.htm>

[http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/SiteCleanup/Brownfields/Loans\\_Grants.cfm](http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/SiteCleanup/Brownfields/Loans_Grants.cfm)



*Martha Rose Walsh Smelter (circa 1890s)  
Photo Courtesy of the San Juan Historical Society*

### RLF in Numbers: Program Results for Regions 8, 9 and 10

- 24 active loan funds
- 41 loans issued
- 22 subgrants issued
- 36 cleanups completed
- \$1.4 billion leveraged
- 3,083 jobs leveraged

## EPA Brownfields Grant Application Tools & Tips

This year's grant guidelines have largely remained the same for EPA's brownfields assessment, revolving loan fund and cleanup grants. However, this year brings substantial changes for those applying for a job training grant. To find out more go to <http://epa.gov/brownfields/job.htm>.

The following six tips are applicable to applicants for any of EPA's competitive brownfields grants.

- Be thorough. Read the guide-

lines carefully and address all required criteria and sub-criteria in the listed order. This makes it easier for reviewers to find information and assign points.

- Assume that your reviewer knows nothing about your community, its social and economic history, or its present state.
- Clearly cite the sources of all information and data.
- Use active, not passive, language throughout (e.g. "we are

working on..." and "we will commit").

- Provide examples of past achievements to demonstrate a real commitment behind stated goals.

- Contact partners and the state early to get commitments, letters of support and input.

For additional assistance in writing a successful brownfields grant

### Two Easy Grant Tips

1. Follow all page limits

2. Follow the format

guidelines of 1-inch

margins, 12-point font, no

binders, no color, no

pictures and no maps.

See additional suggestions

on page 4

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## EPA Brownfields Grant Application Tools & Tips

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application, we recommend the following tools:

- The TABEZ tool was created to provide technical assistance specifically for EPA's brownfields grant applicants. Access this tool online at <http://www.tabez.org>.
- For a sustainable management approach and revitalization tool, go to **SmartE** at <http://www.smarte.org>
- Visit the Region 10 website (see map below) to view a tool that will be coming out alongside the revised fiscal year 2011 grant guidelines. This tool will guide you through the ranking criteria, provide tips from reviewers as well as provide examples of successful applications. This article is a snapshot of one component of this tool.

## Editors' Suggestion

### Continuing Conversations: The State of Brownfields in the West

EPA Region 10 supported an online newsletter that was managed by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality. In the final issue of *Brownfields Update for the Pacific Northwest*, three directors of state brownfields programs weighed in with observations and suggestions about the future of brownfields. We encourage our readers to consider those comments, and to continue the conversation with us in Missoula at the Western Brownfields Workshop. Available online at <http://www.nwbrownfields-update.com/2010/07/commentators-consider-the-future-of-brownfields/>



## For More Information, Visit Your Region's Brownfields Website

### Region 8

<http://www.epa.gov/region8/brownfields>

800-227-8917

### Region 9

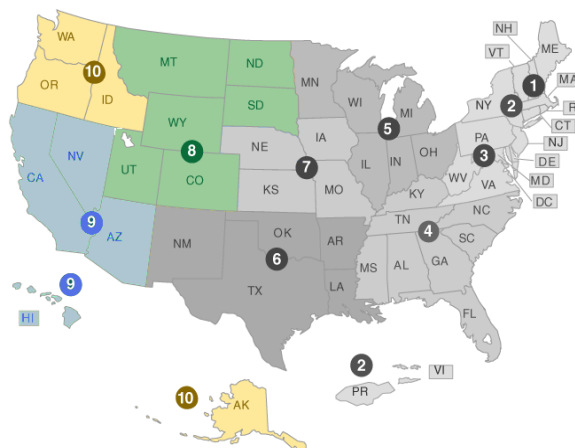
<http://www.epa.gov/region9/brownfields>

866-378-9378

### Region 10

<http://yosemite.epa.gov/R10/CLEANUP.NSF/sites/BF>

800-424-4372



## Fall-Winter 2010 Calendar

- September 14-16 - Western Brownfields Workshop in Missoula, MT—[http://www.epa.gov/region8/land\\_waste/bfhome/wbw.html](http://www.epa.gov/region8/land_waste/bfhome/wbw.html)
- September - EPA announcement of 2010 Area-Wide Planning Pilot Communities [http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/areawide\\_grants.htm](http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/areawide_grants.htm)
- October 6-7—Washington Brownfields Conference in Tacoma, WA—<http://www.nebc.org/Events.aspx>
- October 13 - EPA Region 8 Job Training webinar for potential applicants [http://www.epa.gov/region8/land\\_waste/bfhome/bfhome.html](http://www.epa.gov/region8/land_waste/bfhome/bfhome.html)
- October - Request for Proposals issued for FY11 EPA Job Training Program—<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/job.htm>
- October 15 - EPA submission deadline for FY11 Assessment, RLF & Cleanup grant proposals [http://epa.gov/brownfields/grant\\_info/index.htm](http://epa.gov/brownfields/grant_info/index.htm)
- October 20—Center for Creative Land Recycling Workshop in Los Angeles, CA—<http://www.cclr.org/news>
- November 15-16 - Colorado Brownfields Conference in Golden, CO—<http://www.coloradobrownfieldsfoundation.org/>
- November 17—National Brownfields Association Strategic Redevelopment of Urban Centers Forum in San Diego, CA <http://www.brownfieldassociation.org/EducationTraining/Default.aspx>
- December—National EPA Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE) Conference in San Diego, CA

### Looking ahead...

- February 3-5 - New Partners for Smart Growth Conference in Charlotte, NC—<http://www.newpartners.org/>
- April 3-5 - 2011 - National Brownfields Conference in Philadelphia, PA—<http://www.brownfields2011.org/en/home>