



The WBWire

CONNECTING WESTERN BROWNFIELDS EFFORTS AND STAKEHOLDERS

U.S. EPA REGIONS 8, 9 & 10

SPRING 2012

Looking ahead...

April 24-25, 2012: [Wyoming Redevelopment Workshop](#), Laramie, WY.

May/June 2012: The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) will request proposals for Brown-field and/or land reuse community health projects. Stay tuned for more information.

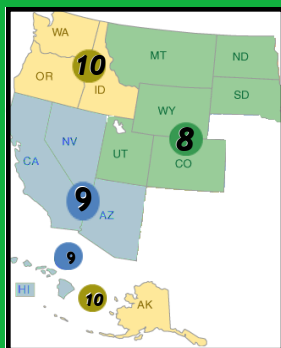
June 11-13 2012: Region 8 Tribal Response Program Workshop, Denver, CO. If interested, email Barbara at benoy.barbara@epa.gov. An addition to the agenda this year is a Tribal oil and gas forum that will be held on June 13.

June 13-14, 2012: [Oregon Brownfields Conference](#), Portland, OR.

June 21-22, 2012: [Northwest Brownfields and Land Revitalization Conference](#), Spokane, WA.

Summer 2012: [EPA Assessment, Revolving Loan Fund, Cleanup and Area-wide Planning Grant request for proposals](#) will be issued.

May 15-17, 2013: Save the Date - [National Brownfields Conference](#), Atlanta, GA.



United States
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Planting Gardens and Growing Communities on Former Brownfields

As the popularity and need for community gardens increase, so does the appeal of turning brownfields into productive gardens. Western communities are no exception. This spring edition of the WBWire focuses on community garden projects.



A work day held at the Golden Community Garden.

diverse and low-income populations. Development of this former landfill space into a multi-use public park with a community garden cannot come soon enough. *Read more on page 2.*

- In Denver, Colorado, EPA provides support for stream restoration on Westerly Creek. This project builds upon work being conducted by the Trust for Public Lands for a new park that will include soccer fields and a community garden adjacent to Westerly Creek. *Read more on page 3.*

- To answer environmental questions, EPA conducted a Targeted Brownfields Assessment at the Golden Community Garden located in Golden, Colorado. *Read more on page 2.*
- Fresno Youth Council leads the way for an urban garden project in an area of West Fresno, California designated by USDA as a food desert. *Read more on page 3.*
- The Thomas Cully Park in Northeast Portland, Oregon is situated among Portland's most



Golden Community Garden.
Photos courtesy of Golden Community Garden.

Community Garden and Urban Agriculture Resources

- For assistance with completing a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment prior to purchasing your property and/or assistance with soil testing, consider contacting EPA about a Targeted Brownfields Assessment (TBA). Click on the following link to visit your region's TBA webpage [Region 8](#), [Region 9](#), and [Region 10](#).
- Community garden resources are available on the EPA's [brownfields urban agriculture webpage](#). This page provides the basic steps needed to create a community garden and expand urban agriculture as well as several related web links.
- For guidelines regarding safe gardening practices, view the EPA document: [Brownfields and Urban Agriculture: Interim Guidelines for Safe Gardening Practices](#).
- To learn about USDA funding programs that support agriculture and community gardens, view the [Memo on USDA Resources for Urban Agriculture](#).



A crowd stops to look at a booth displayed at the Fresno Youth Council's community garden meeting.



Students at the Harvey Scott School helped design the community garden portion of Cully Park. Photo courtesy of Let Us Build Cully Park!



Interested in Targeted Brownfield Assessments?



Environmental Assessment Support Available! Did you know that EPA will conduct Phase I and II environmental site assessments and cleanup planning for communities free of charge? The assessment support is available to public entities and non-profits and applications can be submitted any time. For more information, click the link to visit your region's TBA webpage [Region 8](#), [Region 9](#), and [Region 10](#).

Plans Completed for a Community Garden in the Cully Neighborhood

Plans to bring a new community garden to the Cully Neighborhood in Northeast Portland have been completed with construction expected to begin this summer. On the corner of 75th & NE Killingsworth, 25 acres of undeveloped open space mark the future site of the Thomas Cully Park. Situated among Portland's most diverse and low-income populations, development of this underutilized space cannot come soon enough. The property was settled as farmland with a few homes, then was mined for gravel and used as a construction and debris landfill that was closed in 1990 and fenced off from the community. During this period, the Cully neighborhood was identified as Portland's most park deficient com-

munity, with only one 4-acre park serving 13,000 community residents. Verde, a local nonprofit organization, worked with Portland Parks and Recreation and Let Us Build Cully Park! (LUBCP!) coalition to create a detailed plan that would see the property developed into a multi-use public park. The park plans include walking trails, soccer fields, covered picnic areas, and a community garden. The community garden is expected to be completed by summer 2012, with additional stages in the park's construction slated to occur in 2013. While sampling for contamination throughout the park is ongoing, an EPA-funded site assessment - through the City of Portland - cleared the .68-

acre future garden area for reuse.

In January, Verde and LUBCP! partnered with students from the Harvey Scott School to determine the final layout of the community garden. The garden is expected to cost approximately \$48,000 and has been aided by generous donations of time by the Portland-based landscape architecture firm Terra.Fluxus.

Click the following links to read more about Cully Park.

- verdenw.org
- letusbuiltcullypark.org
- elhispanicnews.com
- dcoregon.com
- eastportland.org

How can we make this newsletter, our websites, and other tools more useful resources for your work and community? Be sure to give us your feedback on the Western Brownfields Wire discussion page on LinkedIn: <http://www.linkedin.com/groups?mostPopular=&gid=3743967>.

A Targeted Brownfields Assessment Eases Gardener's Concerns

The vision for an organic community garden was able to take root and grow when the Golden Community Garden group (GCG) received permission from the City of Golden to use an acre of City property for its garden. Located west of Denver in the Colorado foothills, the City of Golden embraced the garden and included the use and current location of the community garden in their Clear Creek Corridor Master Plan.

In preparation for the garden, GCG completed soil tests with a local soil extension service to determine the adequacy of the soil for growing plants. However, a garden member raised concerns about the potential for contamination related to the unknown source of the soil used for fill. In response to the concern, GCG contacted EPA and requested a Targeted Brownfields Assessment

(TBA) to characterize environmental conditions on the property.

As part of the Phase II Environmental Site Assessment (ESA), surface and subsurface soil samples were collected from the garden plots, a proposed area for an orchard, and soil piles. The soil samples were analyzed for semi-volatile organic compounds, total metals, pesticides, and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). Potential risks to users of the garden from exposure to soil/dust or consumption of produce grown in the soil were also evaluated. The compounds identified in the Phase II ESA were below Colorado Soil Evaluation Values or comparable to expected background levels for the area. The Phase II ESA determined that the use of the soil as an urban garden is appropriate.



Pictured above: Golden Community Garden. Pictured left: Soil sampling at the garden.

GCG has had three successful growing seasons and recently planted an orchard and a native grass area where community members can enjoy nature and walk in a labyrinth ([Click for site plan](#)). By providing vegetables to food banks and educational opportunities for local schools, GCG actively serves the broader community.

For more information, visit GCG's website at www.goldencommunitygarden.org/

Fresno Youth Council Working with EPA's Brownfields Program to Plan a Community Garden

Imagine turning a brownfield site into a thriving community garden in a community designated by the USDA as a food desert. That's exactly what the Fresno Youth Council for Sustainable Communities is doing in West Fresno. The Youth Council is made up of nine high school and college students from Fresno, California, who have been working with the EPA and contractors to assess potential sites, gather community input and put together an implementation plan for the garden.

West Fresno is a neighborhood in the City of Fresno with a population of 35,000 people and a poverty rate of 51%. The population is made up of 49.9% Latino, 25.2% African American, and 9.2% Asian, with a large Hmong community. The community has a mix of industrial and commercial sites interspersed with residential sections, lacks many public services and amenities, and suffers from some of the worst air quality in the nation. According to USDA, two of the four Food Deserts in Fresno are located in southwest Fresno. The community has only one full service grocery store.

The Youth Council held a very successful community meeting at nearby Edison High School in March with 60 community members attending as well as local news crews ([click for news story](#)). The purpose was to explain the garden project to the community, get their input on what kind of garden they would like, and gauge initial interest in gardening. Councilmember Oliver Baines welcomed participants and the Fresno Youth Council explained the history of the project. Next, the audience was invited to



Pictured above: Field trip to the Emeryville Community Garden. Left to right: Ignacio Dayrit with the Center for Creative Land Recycling, Sara Russell with EPA, and students with the Fresno Youth Council.



Pictured above: Fresno Youth Council community garden public meeting activities.

seven poster areas to learn from experts on specific gardening elements. They even got to get their hands dirty in a soil table display run by USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Last, they were asked to vote for their preferences. The voting showed an overwhelming interest in participating in a garden, as well as a preference for specific locations, a desire to have a farmers market, and the need for a specific garden element such as teaching areas.

Presenters and project partners include: USDA-NRCS, Fresno Metro Ministries Urban Garden Program, the Fresno Economic Opportunity Center, and the Center for Creative Land Recycling.

EPA will assist the Fresno Youth Council with developing an Implementation Plan with short term and long-term action items, a list of resources to assist with the garden, a section on how to replicate this process, and a targeted brownfields assessment as necessary. The plan will be made available by June on the EPA [Region 9 Brownfields webpage](#). The hope is for the garden to be established by the end of the year.

Additionally, on the website you can find previous work in Fresno on a brownfields education and information gathering project. For example, the [West Fresno Action Plan](#) not only captures information specific to this community but also includes a great brownfields primer that would be useful with any community group when trying to explain the benefits of brownfields cleanup and reuse.

Westerly Creek Flowing with Opportunities

For Aurora and Denver, Colorado, Westerly Creek presents many of the challenges and opportunities of a typical urban waterbody. A flurry of recent activity on Westerly Creek highlights the opportunities and seeks to address many of the challenges. An example of this convergence can be seen in a low-income East Colfax, Denver neighborhood with a large refugee population.

Part of the EPA Region 8 Urban Waters Initiative, with funding from the Brownfield Revitalization and Environmental Justice programs, will provide stream restoration designs for this area of Westerly Creek. The

stream restoration design builds upon a park and community garden project adjacent to this same section of Westerly Creek. The Trust for Public Land and local partners are turning a vacant lot into a park with soccer fields and an expansion of garden plots for an existing community garden.

At the first stream design community meeting, input received from both children and adults reflected the community's desire to make the creek an asset to the community by linking the creek to the park and garden space. Based on this input, the draft stream design will explore a low water creek crossing, an area where children can

access and play in the creek, and small areas where visitors can visit the creek from the park. Stream designs will include plans for use of native grasses, decking over an inlet to create a public space, areas where visitors can picnic, and new lighting.

For more information on the new park and community garden expansion along Westerly Creek, visit [the Trust for Public Land's website](#) and watch a [YouTube video about the project](#).