

Region 6: Land Revitalization

Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE)



JANUARY 2011

Highlights

CARE Grants are available to assist small towns and rural communities develop sustainable waste stream reduction alternatives

Gallup, New Mexico received its Level II grant in 2009 and has put it to good use through recycling, programs, alternative energy projects, community garden, a farmers market and citizen training sessions on various environmental topics

Interest has been expressed by a company to set up a facility in the area to make use of and provide room for a bio-diesel production facility that would power their equipment and easily consume all the fuel produced from current waste oil streams.

Connections, Inc. in Gallup, New Mexico, grows environmental awareness from the ground up with help from an EPA CARE Grant

Community Action for a Renewed Environment Grants are competitive and offer an innovative way for a community to organize and take action to reduce toxic pollution in its local environment. Through CARE, a community creates a partnership that implements solutions to reduce releases of toxic pollutants and minimize people's exposure to them. By providing financial and technical assistance, EPA helps CARE communities get on the path to a renewed environment.

A CARE Grant, Level II award, was made to Gallup, New Mexico, in 2009, but the program actually began as part of a larger area grant made in 2005 to the Northwest New Mexico Councils of Government. The newest grant was awarded to focus on cleaning up the waste stream,

reuse and recycling of materials, and reclaiming land for these purposes through outreach, education and organization. Gallup is a perfect example of a CARE grantee because it is a small town within a high-poverty rural area.

An emphasis in this CARE II project, is to leverage the opportunity for small towns and rural counties to successfully participate in recycling and environmental stewardship and to become a model that can be replicated elsewhere. In this regard, part of this project includes the development of an Environmental Advocacy Center, that will provide staff-supported research toward developing sustainable waste stream reduction initiatives (recycling, alternative energy, and green technology).

Planting the seeds of change for the common good of the community

Through a process of building local networks, establishing partnerships and developing groups that bring local entities and communities together, they have begun making meaningful change. Education and awareness begins with classroom recycling programs and features two new recycling centers. Training neighborhood residents how to compost is enhanced by opening a composting facility and developing community garden spaces on

public lands, schoolyards and backyards around the county. Sustainability opportunities are seen in citizens helping citizens install solar panels for their home to large-scale solar installations at the regional high school.

It has been a collaborative process that has not only brought these diverse groups together, but has created a framework that will allow these initiatives to be sustained for years to come.



A community garden not only provides sustainable food sources at a reasonable cost, it also provides income-producing opportunities.



The community turned out for an event on backyard composting.



A homeowner found help within the community for a solar-panel installation.



Very green! Finishing touches on the community's new recycling center.



Raising a hoop house for a school class gardening project.

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