



U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
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Contact: R3press@epa.gov

***EPA announces \$1.1 million in Brownfields grants in Pennsylvania
for Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties***
EPA designates \$64.6 million for Brownfields nationwide

SCRANTON, Pa. (June 5, 2019) – Today, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Mid-Atlantic Regional Administrator Cosmo Servidio presented a \$600,000 Brownfields assessment grant to the Lackawanna County Coalition and a \$500,000 Brownfields clean up grant to the Earth Conservancy in Hanover Township, Pennsylvania.

These are two of the 149 communities nationwide that have been selected to receive 151 grant awards totaling \$64,623,553 in EPA Brownfields funding through our Multipurpose, Assessment, and Cleanup Grant Programs.

“These grants fulfill several of President Trump’s top priorities simultaneously: helping communities in need transform contaminated sites into community assets that not only create jobs and jumpstart economic development but also improve public health and the environment,” said **EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler**. “We are targeting these funds to areas that need them the most. Approximately 40 percent of the selected recipients are receiving Brownfields grants for the first time, which means we are reaching areas that may previously been neglected, and 108 of the selected communities have identified sites or targeted areas for redevelopment that fall within Opportunity Zones.”

“I congratulate the Lackawanna County Coalition and the Earth Conservancy for their outstanding efforts in Brownfields Redevelopment and am glad to support further progress,” said **EPA Mid-Atlantic Regional Administrator Cosmo Servidio**, “The grants awarded today will build on the success you’ve already achieved.”

The Lackawanna County Coalition will receive \$600,000 to conduct up to 25 environmental site assessments and complete cleanup plans for at least 10 sites. Grant funds also will be used to identify new sites to be added to the existing site inventory and conduct community outreach activities. The target areas include the former industrial and manufacturing hubs of Scranton, Old Forge, and Carbondale and mine-scarred sites throughout the county. Coalition partners are the Redevelopment Authority of Lackawanna County and the City of Scranton.

The Brownfields assessment grant awarded to Lackawanna County in 2015 resulted in completed environmental assessments, new jobs, and properties readied for reuse.

Earth Conservancy in Hanover Township, Luzerne County will use today's grant to fund clean up of the Bliss Bank in Hanover Township. The 200-acre site was formerly an anthracite mining operation and has been unused and abandoned since 1976. The site is mine-scarred land contaminated with sulfide minerals that produce acid mine drainage which has damaged the Espy Run stream that used to flow through the site. Grant funds also will be used for community outreach activities.

As of 2018, the Earth Conservancy has been awarded 17 Brownfields cleanup grants totaling \$3.4 million. With that seed money, the Conservancy has already reclaimed nearly 2,000 acres of mine-scarred lands, provided 8,000 acres for conservation and recreational use and built three mine discharge treatment systems.

Lackawanna County is one of the 108 communities selected for grants this year that have been identified as sites or targeted areas in census tracts designated as federal Opportunity Zones. An Opportunity Zone is an economically-distressed community where new investment, under certain conditions, may be eligible for preferential tax treatment.

"I am truly excited to join EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler in Pennsylvania today as he announces over \$64 million in Brownfield funding nationwide," said **Scott Turner, Executive Director of the White House Opportunity and Revitalization Council**. "The Brownfields grant program is a tremendous vehicle for bringing real revitalization and transformation to the distressed communities of America. As the Executive Director of the White House Opportunity and Revitalization Council I am pleased that EPA continues to support the Council and the President's work in this area. I look forward to seeing the impact that these grants will have on neighborhoods and citizens across the country."

Grants awarded by EPA's Brownfield Program provide communities across the country with an opportunity to transform contaminated sites into community assets that attract jobs and achieve broader economic development outcomes while taking advantage of existing infrastructure. For example, Brownfields grants have been shown to:

- Increase Local Tax Revenue: A study of 48 brownfields sites found that an estimated \$29 million to \$97 million in additional local tax revenue was generated in a single year after cleanup. This is two to seven times more than the \$12.4 million EPA contributed to the cleanup of these sites.
- Increase Residential Property Values: Another study found that property values of homes near revitalized brownfields sites increased between 5 and 15% following cleanup.

Background

A brownfield is a property for which the expansion, redevelopment or reuse may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant or contaminant. There are estimated to be more than 450,000 brownfields in the U.S. As of May 2019, under the EPA Brownfields Program 30,153 properties have been assessed, and 86,131 acres of idle land have been made ready for productive use. In addition, communities have been able to use Brownfields grants to leverage 150,120 jobs and more than \$28 billion of public and private funding.

In 2018 Congress reauthorized the statutory authority for the Brownfields Program. The reauthorization included changes to the program to expand the list of entities eligible for Brownfields grants, increase the

limit of individual Brownfields cleanup grants to \$500,000, and add grant authority for Multipurpose grants. These important changes will help communities address and cleanup more complex brownfield sites.

The 2019 National Brownfields Training Conference will be held on December 11-13 in Los Angeles, California. Offered every two years, this conference is the largest gathering of stakeholders focused on cleaning up and reusing formerly utilized commercial and industrial properties. EPA cosponsors this event with the International City/County Management Association.

For a list of all of the grants selected for funding: <https://www.epa.gov/brownfields/applicants-selected-fy19-brownfields-multipurpose-assessment-and-cleanup-grants>

For the booklet “Brownfields: Properties with New Purpose, Improving Local Economies in Communities with Brownfield Sites”: https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2019-06/documents/bf_booklet.pdf

For more on the Brownfields Grants: <https://www.epa.gov/brownfields/types-brownfields-grant-funding>

For more on EPA’s Brownfields Program: <https://www.epa.gov/brownfields>

More on the 2019 Brownfields Conference: <https://www.brownfields2019.org>

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