



## Revitalizing Local Economies and Improving Quality of Life

**B**rownfields are abandoned, idle, or underused industrial or commercial sites where contamination complicates redevelopment. Thousands of Brownfields sites remain where industries were historically located along waterways. Cleaning up and redeveloping coastal Brownfields expands local economies, improves public access to the coast, restores coastal natural resources, and revitalizes waterfronts.

### DoC/NOAA's Role in Brownfields

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the Department of Commerce (DoC) work to balance environmental and economic needs and benefits. Since 1997, DoC and NOAA have contributed funding, facilitation, and/or technical expertise at coastal Brownfields sites in NJ, NY, VA, WI, IL, AK, CA, and other states.

- NOAA's Office of Sustainable Development and Intergovernmental Affairs sponsors local workshops focusing on Brownfields revitalization. These workshops help communities gather input from all parties involved in the revitalization process, creating strong partnerships for more efficient action.
- NOAA's Coastal Zone Management Program, through its strong partnerships with coastal states, helps revitalize community waterfronts and redevelop Brownfields sites.
- NOAA's Office of Response and Restoration protects and restores contaminated coastal resources and habitats through cost-effective environmental cleanup and restoration solutions at Brownfields sites. The Office has provided its nationally recognized expertise on risk assessment and proven approach of applying sound science to reach cost-effective solutions.
- DoC's Economic Development Administration (EDA) has worked with EPA to support the economic redevelopment of former industrial and commercial sites since 1995, as part of its mission to support development in the nation's most economically disadvantaged areas. Since 1997, EDA has invested over \$250 million in more than 250 Brownfields redevelopment projects nation-wide. In 2001, EDA provided \$52 million for 58 Brownfields revitalization projects.

### New Bedford, MA

This city provides an example of the redevelopment issues faced by many coastal communities:

- High unemployment, poverty, and high school dropout rates cause economic distress.
- Superfund sites contaminate the harbor area.
- Brownfields sites occupy 150 acres of the city.
- Pressure to develop vacant land surrounding the city threatens open space.
- Harbor and wetland contamination impedes lobster, fish, and clam fisheries, which have been closed since the 1970s.



### NOAA Supports a Brownfields Showcase Community

- New Bedford is a 2000 Brownfields Showcase Community.
- A NOAA Brownfields coordinator lives and works in the community to support the local Brownfields task force.
- The New Bedford Brownfields Task Force has inventoried and prioritized its Brownfields sites, some of which have already been cleaned up and redeveloped.
- EPA's Showcase Communities Grant Program funds projects in the community.
- NOAA involvement in New Bedford dates to the late 1980s, when it began promoting cleanup and restoration at the New Bedford Harbor Superfund site.

## Expanded Services

DoC and NOAA are working to expand their activities at coastal Brownfields sites. Potential services include:

- Working with partners to assess and safely clean up coastal contamination to revitalize local economies.
- Promoting the compatible and sustainable use of coastal areas for urban fisheries, port and industrial activities, recreation, and tourism.
- Providing access to DoC and other Federal programs that offer funding and technical assistance for economic redevelopment and training programs.
- Developing and delivering a decision-making database and mapping tools to assist in repairing sites and restoring habitat.
- Training communities and local and state agencies in assessing, cleaning up, and redeveloping Brownfields; planning and implementing environmental restoration; and using decision-making software tools.
- Lending expertise in advanced marine transportation tools and services that will revitalize communities.

DoC/NOAA's role as the primary coastal stewardship agency and a leader in promoting safe navigation allows it to deliver a unique suite of tools and expertise to revitalize urban estuaries and port areas while improving coastal habitat. With NOAA's experience in solving critical environmental challenges, combined with DoC's economic development programs, environmental and economic needs are being balanced.

For additional information:

Richard Legatski  
NOAA Office of Legislative Affairs  
(202) 482-4638

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*NOAA's Office of Response & Restoration—Protecting our Coastal Environment*

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**For further information about NOAA's Office of Response and Restoration,  
please visit our Web site at**

**<http://response.restoration.noaa.gov> or call (301) 713-2989.**

