



Brownfields Program awarded Snowy Mountain Development Corporation “Partner of the Year”

Local governments and others discovering Brownfields funding, benefitting Montana communities

The Remediation Division’s Brownfields Program was recently honored in Lewistown where they were awarded the “Partner of the Year” award by Snowy Mountain Development Corporation (SMDC). The award recognized the significant impact the Brownfields program has had supporting economic development through environmental cleanup efforts in Central Montana communities.

Kathie Bailey, Executive Director of SMDC, said with assistance from DEQ, they received \$1.8 million in Brownfields funding and leveraged an additional \$16 million from other sources for redevelopment projects.

SMDC is one of the lead partners in the Central Montana Brownfields Coalition which covers the following counties: Judith Basin, Fergus, Petroleum, Musselshell, Golden Valley, Wheatland, Lewis and Clark, Broadwater, Meagher, Gallatin, and Park.

The Brownfields program represents a new paradigm in the cleanup world.

“The Montana Brownfields program is bringing a whole new image of DEQ to communities. It’s really refreshing and is changing the mindset and culture (about environmental cleanup) in our communities,” said Bailey.

Federal funding is provided to eligible grant recipients, including cities, counties, and local Certified Regional Development Corporations (CRDCs). These entities use the funding to address underdeveloped sites in that have significant obstacles to redevelopment due to known or suspected contamination.

To be eligible for funding, a site must meet Brownfields criteria and demonstrate a strong community benefit. There are two primary types of Brownfields grant awards: assessment and cleanup. The following are examples of sites that DEQ has been able to assist Central Montana Brownfields Coalition with, through assessment and cleanup: Caird Engineering Works (former foundry with metals contamination) in Helena; Berg

Lumber (former lumber yard with petroleum and hazardous substance contamination) in Lewistown; Bob's Chevron (former gas station) in Harlowton; and a meth-contaminated house in Roundup. Many communities throughout Montana have Brownfield assessment and/or Revolving Loan Fund grants available to them for the redevelopment of similar blighted properties.

Brownfields sites typically fall into two classifications: Hazardous Substance Brownfields and Petroleum Brownfields. Criteria used to evaluate the eligibility of possible Petroleum Brownfields sites can be found online at <http://deq.mt.gov/Brownfields/MTBrownfieldsPrograms.mcp>.

DEQ's Brownfields program recently enacted several innovative changes to standard EPA practices. One change was codified by Senate bill 355 and allows other funding sources (e.g. Brownfields, DNRC RDG) to count as a credit towards the Montana Petroleum Fund's required \$17,500 co-payment. Once the co-payment is met at eligible petroleum storage tank release sites, all additional eligible remedial costs can be reimbursed by the Petroleum Fund, up to \$1 million.

DEQ, in partnership with local governments and CRDCs, continually find opportunities to use this funding to benefit Montana communities. Communities such as those in Central Montana are experiencing the positive benefits of the Brownfields program.