

State and Tribal Response Program Highlights

EPA Funding Provided to States and Tribes to Address Contaminated Land in their Communities

REGION 1

CONNECTICUT—A former manufacturing complex in South Norwalk has been cleaned up and is now a park with walking paths and open space along the banks of the Norwalk River. The property and surrounding area were once mud flats and marsh lands associated with the nearby Norwalk Harbor until the area was filled and developed in the early 1900s. Over the years, the property served as a rubber manufacturer, a machine shop, a chemical company, and a junk yard. By the 1950s, most of the large industrial buildings were demolished, and only residential and commercial properties remained. By 1991, all former site buildings were removed, and an open space was created. Flooding frequently plagued the area, however, with the most severe damage associated with Super Storm Sandy in October of 2012. As a part of an overall area cleanup effort, the Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection used Section 128(a) Response Program funding to conduct an environmental assessment that revealed elevated levels of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), volatile organic compounds (VOCs), petroleum compounds, and metals. By 2019, the cleanup was completed by removing over 10,000 tons of contaminants and constructing a soil cap. In 2021, Ryan Park opened and boasts a renewed landscaping, ample lighting, two new playgrounds, an open field area, walking paths, a splash pad, basketball courts, a picnic/gathering area, event pavilion, and a sculpture garden. The new park is an asset to the community and part of the city's revitalization initiative that focuses on climate resiliency, improving neighborhoods, and meeting community needs.



Ryan Park in South Norwalk

REGION 2

ST REGIS MOHAWK—The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe's Brownfields Program continues to move forward with the demolition of abandoned homes and structures in Akwesasne. The Program is picking up where it left off in 2019, when several tribal programs worked together to safely demolish and remove three of 25 unsafe structures previously identified in the community. The Tribe's Brownfield Program was planning to continue work in 2020 before the COVID-19 Pandemic postponed efforts. In 2021, the tribe resumed the work and used Section 128(a) Response Program funding activities to conduct cleanup activities to remove mold and lead-based paint on two properties before demolition. The demolition of the remaining 20 structures is expected to last more than one year. The Tribal Brownfields Program will then use Section 128(a) funding to conduct assessments on the estimated 150 additional old structures located throughout the community. These are structures that pose safety hazards, have environmental concerns, and are susceptible to pests, mold, illegal trespassing, drug use, arson, as well as an eyesore for the developing tourism industry. Removing all the concerns associated with unsafe structures is a benefit, but an even greater benefit is that the property owners may use their newly cleared areas for building a new home, developing a business, planting a garden or trees, or for selling the property.

REGION 3

VIRGINIA— A former three-story grocery warehouse building constructed in the early 1920s was a cornerstone of downtown Pulaski for over eight decades. After closing in the early 2000s, the building remained vacant for many years. In 2015, the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) used Section 128(a) Response Program funding to conduct an assessment on the property. In 2017, the Virginia DEQ provided oversight of the removal of asbestos, lead-based paint, and an underground oil storage tank and contaminated soil. In 2019, the property was transformed into the Jackson Park Inn, a boutique 32 guest room hotel and conference center that also includes a bar and restaurant with outdoor seating on Peak Creek. As a historic preservation project, the renovation respected many of the building's original features, including aged brick, exposed post and beam timbers, and wide plank wood floors are showcased throughout the hotel. A domino effect is happening in Pulaski. The Jackson Park Inn is attracting more tourists and developers

are now taking notice of the area and the opportunities. The revitalization of vacant and contaminated properties has provided Pulaski with the opportunity to increase its tax base, provide jobs, and offer recreational amenities to their residents.



Redeveloped Jackson Park Inn.

REGION 4

ALABAMA—The former American Red Cross headquarters building was constructed in 1940 in downtown Birmingham. It served the city and the region for nearly 60 years before becoming vacant when the Red Cross moved into a new building in 1999. After sitting vacant for more than 20 years, the building was purchased by a private investor. In 2021, the Alabama Department of Environmental Management used Section 128(a) Response Program funding to oversee the assessment and cleanup of the property. The redevelopment of the 140,000 square foot building began in the summer of 2022 and will reopen with 192 new units of workforce housing and 4,000 square feet of retail space. Woman-owned businesses are providing about 11% of the labor on the project, while minority-owned businesses enterprises are providing approximately 24% of the labor. And as part of the project, seven students from Tuskegee University's Taylor School of Architecture and Construction Science Program interned onsite, learning the development process while working with the Birmingham Public Library to design a mobile library resource.

REGION 5

INDIANA— The Bottleworks Hotel in downtown Indianapolis opened its doors in late 2020. The hotel is the first big milestone in the massive mixed-use development at the former Coca-Cola bottling plant on Massachusetts Avenue. The original bottling plant was built in 1931. By 1950, the plant more than doubled in size and the facility was the largest bottling operation in the world, producing more than 2 million bottles of Coca-Cola per

week. When Coca-Cola moved its operations in the late 1960s, the building was owned and used by the Indianapolis Public Schools for about two decades. It was then home to the IPS Service Center until 2016. In 2018, the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) used Section 128(a) Response program funding to conduct an environmental assessment on the property. In 2019, IDEM provided oversight of the removal of three underground storage tanks. After renovations, the hotel opened in 2020 and highlights the building's nearly 90-year history and emphasizes support for local businesses throughout the Indianapolis area. Another major part of the Bottleworks District is preparing to welcome its first guests. The Garage food hall, which will feature a variety of local food and beverage options, is set to open next month.



Revitalized Bottleworks Hotel in downtown Indianapolis.

REGION 6

TEXAS—Built in 1938, the former historic Kress Department Store served downtown El Paso for nearly 60 years before it closed in 1997. Throughout the years, the building was used for other businesses, but has sat idle and vacant for the last several years. In 2021, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality used Section 128(a) Response Program funding to provide oversight of an environmental assessment that revealed limited contamination. The building is currently being redeveloped into El Paso's first food hall and will feature twelve local food vendors, each in separate stations, interspersed with local retail vendors with no national franchised brands. A key feature of the food hall will be the revitalization of the historic lunch counter with a soda fountain. The redevelopment will also include a second-floor events center and basement spa connected by a tunnel to the next-door Plaza Hotel Pioneer Park. The project partners are currently applying for federal and state historical tax credits. The project is expected to be completed in mid-2023.

REGION 7

KANSAS—The Redbud Trail is an 11-mile trail system that follows the former BNSF railroad line through and around the City of Wichita. The railroad was once the lifeblood of the growing city and played a crucial role in the development of the region. The city is currently implementing a plan to expand the trail system to reach more areas of the community. As a part of the plan, in 2021, the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) used Section 128(a) Response Program funding to conduct an environmental assessment on a former railroad property adjacent to the trail system. The assessment revealed elevated level of arsenic, cadmium, and lead, and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) in the soil. KDHE worked with the city and provided oversight of the soil excavation on the property. After cleanup activities, the city capped a portion of the property with a concrete bike path and parking area. This portion of the trail connects the Canal Route path to the Wichita State University area and expands the trail system for walking, jogging, biking, and dog-walking.

REGION 8

SOUTH DAKOTA— Starting in 2018, the Rapid City Economic Development Foundation (RCEDF) reached out to the South Dakota Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources (DANR) to assess the proposed location of their new Ascent Innovation Center near the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology. In early 2019, the South Dakota DANR used Section 128(a) Response Program funding to conduct environmental assessments of the area. The property was once used as a gas station and a storage facility. The South Dakota DANR also provided oversight of the removal of two underground storage tanks and the excavation of petroleum contaminated soil. In March 2022, the 40,000 square foot Ascent Innovation Center opened. The building design highlights major features of the area, such as Rapid Creek, the Black Hills, and South Dakota Mines' M-Hill. The new facility will be able to house anywhere from five to 25 different projects, ranging from a multitude of innovative scientific and technological ideas. The center benefits Rapid City and the university by assisting in growing research capacity, creating job opportunities, and supporting economic development of the area.

REGION 9

ARIZONA—The Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community (SRPMIC) turned a former Brownfield property into an Environmental Education Demonstration Garden. The property was originally used as the Beeline Gravel Pit before turning into a motor raceway. After the raceway was no longer used, illegal dumping took place on the property for many years. In 2018, the SRPMIC used Section 128(a) Response Program funding to conduct assessment and cleanup activities on the property. The Environmental Education

Demonstration Garden was inspired by the idea of having a new green space to teach SRPMIC Community members about the importance of protecting and taking care of the land and its resources. SRPMIC began the site transformation with Community education in mind. In 2019, the first event was a grassroots ground-breaking with students and teachers from Salt River High School helping SRPMIC staff plant 30 plants, dig out a pond for rainwater harvesting, and construct small gullies for erosion control. The students planted the seeds that helped the Environmental Education Demonstration Garden become what the Community envisioned, but they also learned the history of the site, proper planting techniques, rainwater harvesting methods, and the importance of erosion control. The Environmental Education Demonstration Garden now hosts SRPMIC schools, Community government departments, and Community members to provide a lab for the Community to learn how to be good environmental stewards.



Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community's Environmental Education Demonstration Garden.

REGION 10

ALASKA—Big Lake, located in the City of Holy Cross, occupies approximately 4 to 5 acres of land. Big Lake was historically used for recreational swimming and fishing. However, in the 1960s a sawmill was built and operated adjacent to the lake. After the sawmill ceased operations in the 1970s the area was then used as a quarry for several years. The property was then used as a landfill for the last 20 years and the lake was reduced in size through backfilling. The city is now working with the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to address the contamination. In 2021, the Alaska DEC used Section 128(a) Response Program funding to conduct an assessment of the lake and surrounding area. The city is working to develop a cleanup plan and path forward with revitalization efforts. The reuse objective for Big Lake is to restore it such that the lake and surrounding area can be used for recreational activities such as swimming, ice skating, fishing, picnicking, and walking.