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EPA ANNOUNCES \$73.1 MILLION IN NATIONAL BROWNFIELDS GRANTS IN 37 STATES AND SEVEN TRIBAL COMMUNITIES

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As part of EPA's ongoing efforts to promote economic revitalization while safeguarding the environment and public health, EPA Administrator Christie Whitman today announced \$73.1 million in Brownfields funds for a variety of different grants made available from the Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act. EPA announced that 176 applicants were selected to receive awards. Applications came from communities located in 37 states and seven tribes.

In January 2002, President Bush signed into law the Brownfields Revitalization Act, which authorizes up to \$250 million in funds annually for Brownfields grants, including up to \$50 million for the assessment and cleanup of low-risk petroleum contaminated sites. Brownfields are abandoned, idled or under-used industrial and commercial facilities where expansion or redevelopment is complicated by real or perceived environmental contamination.

"These grants will help turn neighborhood eyesores into community assets, restoring hope and creating opportunity for the people who live nearby," Whitman said. "From the signing by President Bush of landmark Brownfields legislation last year, to the more than doubling of funds made available for Brownfields reclamation, this Administration has proven its commitment to the environmental cleanup and economic revitalization of our nation's communities. Every acre of reclaimed Brownfields saves 4.5 acres of greenspace, and every greenspace created, on average, has doubled the value of surrounding properties."

The \$73.1 million will provide: 117 assessment grants totaling \$30.7 million, 69 cleanup grants totaling \$12 million, and 28 revolving loan fund grants totaling \$30.4 million.

The assessment grants are used to inventory, characterize and conduct planning relating to one or more Brownfield sites or as part of a community-wide effort. The 2002 law expanded the definition of what's considered a Brownfield, so communities may now focus on sites contaminated with petroleum, as well as lands scarred by mining. Since the beginning of the Brownfields program, EPA has awarded 436 assessment grants totaling over \$120 million.

The revolving loan fund grants allow communities to give funds to public and private organizations to clean-up Brownfields. The new Brownfields law also allows loan fund officials to make subgrants to state and local governments or tribes and non-profit organizations to clean up sites they own. Since the beginning of the Brownfields program, EPA has announced 143 revolving loan fund grants totaling over \$115 million.

The Brownfields program encourages redevelopment of America's 450,000 abandoned and contaminated waste sites. Redevelopment approaches have included the conversion of industrial waterfronts to river-front parks, landfills to golf courses, and rail corridors to recreational trails. Currently, more than 44 different Brownfields-to-"greenspace" projects (such as parks, trails and nature preserves) are in various stages of completion. The Brownfields program provides funding incentives, feasibility tools, and individual grants up to \$1,000,000 to help States, tribes, communities and other organizations prevent, assess, safely clean up, and reuse Brownfields. EPA's Brownfields assistance has leveraged more than \$4.6 billion in private investment, helped create more than 20,000 jobs and resulted in the assessment of more than 4,000 properties. For more information, go to : <http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>

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