



# Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot

## *Cowpens, SC*

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5105)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

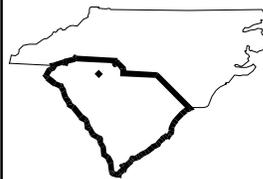
**EPA's** Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower states, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is a site, or portion thereof, that has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse. EPA is funding: assessment demonstration pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to assess brownfields sites and to test cleanup and redevelopment models; job training pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to provide training for residents of communities affected by brownfields to facilitate cleanup of brownfields sites and prepare trainees for future employment in the environmental field; and, cleanup revolving loan fund programs (each funded up to \$500,000 over five years) to capitalize loan funds to make loans for the environmental cleanup of brownfields. These pilot programs are intended to provide EPA, states, tribes, municipalities, and communities with useful information and strategies as they continue to seek new methods to promote a unified approach to site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

### BACKGROUND

EPA selected the Town of Cowpens for a Brownfields Pilot. Cowpens established a textile mill at the turn of the century, and chemicals were increasingly used to advance the industry. In the late 1960s, a major textile dyeing and finishing company moved into the area. In 1990, the company declared bankruptcy, closed the facility, and left town, eliminating 400 jobs in the process. The closing of this facility, complicated by possible environmental contamination and on-site vandalism, has had a devastating economic impact on the town.

The Pilot-targeted site is an abandoned, 228,000-square-foot textile facility located on 70 acres within the town limits. Economic problems faced by Cowpens include unemployment and low wages. Of the town's 930 households, 261 have no earnings, and the average per capita income is \$9,844. For the past nine years, the town has not received property taxes from the abandoned facility. Several industrial prospects have investigated the site, but have chosen not to redevelop it based on initial investigations and unknown environmental conditions, including possible groundwater and soil contamination.

### PILOT SNAPSHOT



*Cowpens, South Carolina*

**Date of Award:** September 1997

**Amount:** \$200,000

**Profile:** The Pilot targets a 228,000-square-foot abandoned textile facility located on 70 acres.

#### Contacts:

Town of Cowpens  
(864) 949-5250

U.S. EPA – Region 4  
(404) 562-8923

Visit the EPA Region 4 Brownfields web site at:  
<http://www.epa.gov/region4/waste/bf/bf.htm>

For further information, including specific Pilot contacts, additional Pilot information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at:  
<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>

## OBJECTIVES

Cowpens' objective is to obtain technical assistance to evaluate and assess environmental contamination in the Pilot area. Extensive testing was initiated at the site, but further site assessment is necessary. The Pilot will also help identify methods to fund cleanup and develop a comprehensive reuse strategy.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

*The Pilot has:*

- Conducted the first Cowpens Brownfields Pilot Town Meeting in the elementary school across the street from the Pilot site [the mayor, EPA representatives, South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) officials, and University of South Carolina (USC) representatives participated and answered questions by the residents surrounding the targeted site]; and
- Collected 30 hydrosparge samples to assess a contaminated groundwater plume. Hydrosparging is a technique used to characterize the plume of contaminants in a shallow aquifer.

*The Pilot is:*

- Conducting site assessments and developing a plan for cleanup and redevelopment; and
- Conducting community outreach.

## LEVERAGING OTHER ACTIVITIES

Experience with the Cowpens Pilot has been a catalyst for related activities, including the following:

- The Pilot received a commitment by the Center for Manufacturing and Technology at USC to assist the Town of Cowpens in a redevelopment study. The center will determine the feasibility of developing an eco-industrial park.
- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers conducted approximately \$40,000 worth of assessment activities, which included hydrosparging.
- The Center for Economic and Community Development at USC Spartanburg completed an economic baseline study of the Town of Cowpens relative to the rest of Spartanburg County for Pilot use.
- A local company removed 85 drums of hazardous materials from the target site at its own cost; the cleanup cost for the company was estimated at between \$25,000 and \$50,000.
- A local environmental company performed an asbestos survey for the targeted site at no cost.
- A Cowpens brownfields web page was developed for the town's web site.
- The Pilot-leveraged redevelopment dollars to date total approximately \$800,000.
- The town received a \$500,000 Brownfields Cleanup Revolving Loan Fund Pilot grant from EPA.