



Regional Brownfields Assessment Pilot

East St. Louis, IL

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5101)

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. Between 1995 and 1996, EPA funded 76 National and Regional Brownfields Assessment Pilots, at up to \$200,000 each, to support creative two-year explorations and demonstrations of brownfields solutions. EPA is funding more than 27 Pilots in 1997. The Pilots 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 Region 5 selected the Metro-East St. Louis community governments for a Regional Brownfields Pilot. The communities include Alorton, Centreville, and East St. Louis, with a combined population of over 50,000. The region was an industrial and transportation center that began to decline starting in the 1930's due to a number of factors, including high crime, low productivity, flood plain constraints, poor public image, deterioration of industrial facilities, and changes in waste disposal regulation. Intercommunity competition, deterioration of the existing industrial infrastructure, and a long-term pattern of neglect has constrained development in the area.

OBJECTIVES

East St. Louis has initiated reindustrialization of a former Alcoa Aluminum site on 220 acres in a predominantly minority community in the metro area. The focus of the East St. Louis Pilot is on developing a sustainable secondary materials manufacturing district on the former Alcoa site. The site is in an economically depressed area, which has a 90% minority population, a 24% unemployment rate, and a loss of 10,000 jobs in the last three decades. The Pilot will develop and test

PILOT SNAPSHOT



East St. Louis, Illinois

Date of Award:
September 1996

Amount: \$200,000

Site Profile: The Pilot targets the 220-acre former Alcoa Aluminum site that is located in a predominantly minority community in the metro area.

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innovative remediation technologies for the clean-up of the Alcoa site, recovering gypsum and red-clay tailings for reuse if possible.

The East St. Louis Pilot, called the Metro East Initiative, will develop a geographic information system (GIS) to locate other contaminated sites in the area and assist in on-site remediation projects and in measuring environmental and fiscal impacts of brownfields redevelopment. The EPA grant will be used for an Advisory Committee, title searches and research, GIS creation, GIS analysis, transaction screening of sites, and reports and presentations.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

The Pilot is:

- Evaluating technical, legal, and financial risks associated with effective reuse of the Alcoa Aluminum site;
- Implementing and adapting a GIS database to inventory brownfields in the metro area;
- Developing a community neighborhood outreach program;
- Creating a market-based index of available, brownfields sites for prospective employers; and
- Conducting a base-line analysis to determine availability of secondary resource materials manufacturing in the metropolitan region.

LEVERAGING OTHER ACTIVITIES

Experience with the East St. Louis Pilot has been a catalyst for related activities including the funding.

- East St. Louis is working with the Economic Development Administration (EDA) about infrastructure grants for the redevelopment of the Alcoa Aluminum site.
- East St. Louis continues to coordinate technical and financial resources from EPA, EDA, and the Department of Housing and Urban Development to target brownfields redevelopment in the metro area.