



Brownfields Cleanup Revolving Loan Fund Pilot

Orono, ME

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 \$250,000 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, brownfields cleanup revolving loan fund (BCRLF) programs (each funded up to \$1,000,000 over five years), to provide financial assistance 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

During the last half of the twentieth century, the number of traditional heavy industry manufacturing jobs in Maine has steadily declined. The Town of Orono experienced this loss with the closing of the Striar Textile Mill on Ayers Island in 1996. The closing of this mill led to the loss of 300 jobs. Significant environmental remediation is needed to bring Ayers Island, which is uninhabited, back to productive use. Redevelopment of this 62-acre island will create needed jobs and serve as a critical catalyst in advancing the economy of the town. Orono's most distressed neighborhood is near Ayers Island and contains the homes of many of the Striar Textile Mill's former employees.

BCRLF OBJECTIVES

The Orono BCRLF seeks to clean up brownfields on Ayers Island, and return the island to an environmentally sound, publicly accessible, aesthetically inviting, and economically productive site. Ultimately, the objective is to create 200 jobs and allow 100,000 visitors to engage in one of several activities planned for the island.

A prominent local developer has expressed interest in

PILOT SNAPSHOT



Orono, ME

Date of Announcement:
April 2001

Amount: \$500,000

BCRLF Target Area:
Ayers Island

Contacts:

Orono Town
Manager
(207) 866-2556

Region 1 Brownfields
Coordinator
(617) 918-1210

Visit the EPA Region 1 Brownfields web site at:
www.epa.gov/region01/brownfields

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:
www.epa.gov/brownfields

replacing the old mill with a modern, high-tech, “non-smokestack” manufacturing facility. This project will create new, well-paying jobs in Orono. The University of Maine, which is located in Orono, will partner with the developer in this effort. This partnership will aim to carry the results of university research into commercial development. The redevelopment of Ayers Island will also include nature trails, a conference center, a sculpture garden, and a Science/Advanced Technology Museum.

An EPA Targeted Brownfields Assessment of the brownfields on Ayers Island is currently underway. The Town plans to make a BCRLF loan available to the local developer soon after the environmental assessment is complete.

FUND STRUCTURE AND OPERATIONS

The Town of Orono will serve as the lead agency and fund manager. The site manager will be provided by the Site Assessment and Support Services Unit of the Division of Remediation, Bureau of Remediation & Waste Management, which is a division of the Maine Department of Environmental Protection.

It is anticipated that it will take two years to clean up the contaminated properties, renovate a portion of the structure, and attract an anchor tenant to Ayers Island.

LEVERAGING OTHER RESOURCES

To encourage development, the Town has waived the back taxes and fees due from the Ayers Island property. Furthermore, the Maine Department of Transportation will replace the bridge to Ayers Island, which is estimated to cost more than \$3,000,000. The Town has also applied to the State to have certain land areas become part of a Tax Incentive Financing District.

Use of BCRLF Pilot funds must be in accordance with CERCLA, and all CERCLA restrictions on use of funding also apply to BCRLF funds.
