

Brownfields Supplemental Assistance

Great Barrington, MA

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5105)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

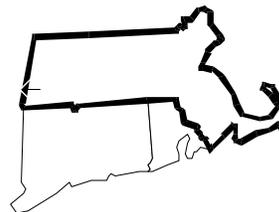
EPA's Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower states, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, and safely clean up brownfields to promote their sustainable reuse. Brownfields are abandoned, idled, or under-used industrial and commercial facilities where expansion or redevelopment is complicated by real or perceived environmental contamination. EPA is funding: assessment demonstration pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years, with additional funding provided for greenspace), to test assessment models and facilitate coordinated assessment and cleanup efforts at the federal, state, tribal, and local levels; and 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, a cleanup revolving loan fund program (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

EPA has selected the Town of Great Barrington to receive supplemental assistance for its Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot. Great Barrington (population 7,740) is the commercial center of southern Berkshire County, a rural area of western Massachusetts. The town's poverty rate is 7.5 percent; its unemployment rate is 4 percent; and its household income is 91 percent of the statewide median income. Between 1993 and 1997, the Berkshire Economic Target Area, which includes Great Barrington, lost more than 2,000 jobs. The town has been designated as a state Economic Target Area, which allows it to take advantage of the state's Economic Incentive Development Program.

Great Barrington plans to further the efforts of the original Assessment Pilot by targeting the 150-year old, 8.2-acre former industrial riverside site for cleanup and redevelopment. Originally a textile mill, it was used more recently as a wood processing and treatment facility for the New England Log Homes company. Affected by the housing slump during the late 1980s, the company finally closed its facility in 1993, leaving an abandoned building. An assessment by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) discovered the presence of

PILOT SNAPSHOT



Great Barrington, Massachusetts

Date of Award: April 2001

Amount: \$100,000

Profile: The Pilot targets the New England Log Homes site, a 8.2-acre former wood processing and treatment facility located on the Housatonic River in western Massachusetts.

Contacts:

Town of Great Barrington
Office of the Town Manager
(413) 528-1619

Regional Brownfields Team
U.S. EPA - Region 1
(617) 918-1347

Visit the EPA Region 1 Brownfields web site at:
<http://www.epa.gov/region01/remed/brnflid/>

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/>

hazardous materials, including dioxins and polynuclear hydrocarbons (PAHs) in the soil. After a short-term cleanup was conducted, the DEP deemed that further assessments of the site were required, which were subsequently conducted by the original Assessment Pilot. Through the Pilot, the town and the Community Development Corporation of South Berkshire, Inc. (CDC) forged a strong partnership and proved instrumental in designating the targeted site an Economic Opportunity Area. While the site stands empty, unpaid property taxes are currently estimated at more than \$137,000.

OBJECTIVES AND PLANNED ACTIVITIES

The Pilot, in coordination with the CDC, will use EPA's supplemental assistance grant to build on the momentum generated by the original Assessment Pilot grant to return the 8.2-acre downtown site to productive use by evaluating cleanup options and designing a cleanup plan.

The Pilot plans to:

- Conduct an evaluation of cleanup alternatives;
- Develop a design plan for selected cleanup options;
- Conduct site preparation and cleanup planning; and
- Conduct community outreach regarding the targeted site.

The cooperative agreement for this Pilot has not yet been negotiated; therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.