

RETURN TO USE INITIATIVE

2007 Demonstration Project

AUBURN ROAD LANDFILL: Londonderry, New Hampshire

THE SITE: The Auburn Road Landfill in Londonderry, New Hampshire, is a 200-acre site that contains three separate disposal areas covering just over 12 acres, as well as large areas of wetlands. Set in a rural residential area, the site includes streams, drainage trenches, and wetlands that flow northward to Whispering Pines Pond and Cochas Brook, a tributary of the Merrimack River. All surface water runoff from the site drains into Whispering Pines Pond, which lies partially on the northern boundary of the site. In order to offset the damage sustained by original wetlands as a result of landfill contamination, the Town created approximately seven acres of mitigating wetlands at the base of the disposal areas. Construction of the site's remedy was completed in 1998, and included capping the three disposal areas, establishing institutional controls, performing monitored natural attenuation of arsenic-contaminated ground water, and installing a water-line to provide non-contaminated drinking water to residents surrounding the site.

THE OPPORTUNITY: The site is easily accessible and is directly adjacent to Auburn Road, Old Derry Road, State Highway 28 Bypass, and the Londonderry-Auburn Road. The cleaned-up site remained vacant and attracted little interest until 2005, when a local Academy of Model Aeronautics (AMA) club known as the New Hampshire Flying Tigers noticed the vacant land and approached EPA and the Town of Londonderry about the possibility of using a small portion of the site as a model airplane flying field.

THE BARRIERS: Both EPA and the Town of Londonderry expressed concerns about the potentially harmful effects that the club's activities could have on the ongoing maintenance efforts at the site. Disruption of the cap during runway construction was one concern. Another was the possible effect that minor fuel spills



PICTURED: A fenced portion of the site, along with a cautionary sign limiting access to the site. (source: EPA)

BARRIERS:

Concerns about the effects of reuse on the integrity of the site's remedy.

SOLUTION:

Frequent and informed communication among stakeholders to address concerns about reuse and find a common ground.



PICTURED: An aeromodeler enjoys flying a model airplane in the site's flying field. (source: EPA)

BEFORE:

Underutilized vacant land.

AFTER:

Recreational model airplane flying field.

could have on the accuracy of ground water samples from monitoring wells. Finally, because the site's institutional controls limit access to the site, EPA and the Town had questions about how the club would maintain security and limit site access.

THE SOLUTION: From AMA's original inquiry about the site in August 2005 to the completion of negotiations with the Town two years later, EPA maintained a pivotal role in each step of the process. EPA took the lead in facilitating discussions among the various stakeholders to ensure that all concerns about AMA's use of the site were addressed. In addition to collaborative discussions and meetings, a site walk was scheduled to assess both the opportunities afforded and the limitations presented by the site's hydrology, topography, and existing remedy. Representatives from EPA, AMA, and the Town of Londonderry took part in the site walk together to ensure that the needs of the AMA club and the realities of the site were a suitable match.

THE SITE NOW: A Grand Opening event at the Auburn Road Flying Field, hosted by local AMA Club the New Hampshire Flying Tigers, took place in August 2008. The celebration marked EPA and AMA's first successfully established flying field at a Superfund site in New England. This partnership has produced substantial benefits for each of the stakeholders involved. The site's remedy is enhanced by the Flying Tigers new stewardship activities, including bringing in loam for a runway and establishing user rules. Londonderry officials are pleased that the site's reuse by responsible stewards will deter trespassing, vandalism, and vagrancy. The Flying Tigers enjoy a much-needed field in a convenient location.



PICTURED: A model airplane ready for flight on the new air field.
(source: EPA)

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT: Byron Mah, Remedial Project Manager, at (617) 918-1249 or mah.byron@epa.gov; or John Podgurski, Region 1 Superfund Redevelopment Coordinator, at (617) 918-1296 or podgurski.john@epa.gov.