

# State and Tribal Response Program Highlights



EPA Funding Provided to States and Tribes to Address Contaminated Land in their Communities

## REGION 1

**MASSACHUSETTS** – The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) is using Section 128(a) Response Program funding to develop volatile petroleum hydrocarbons (VPH) detection method by gas chromatography and mass spectrometry (GC/MS) analysis. MassDEP is also developing guidance on per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) assessment and cleanup. The Waste Site Cleanup Advisory Committee provides input to MassDEP on waste site cleanup regulations, policies and programs. The Committee's well-attended meetings serve as forums that keep interested organizations and individuals up-to-date on related MassDEP activities. On January 26, 2017, the Committee discussed MassDEP's new draft VPH detection method guidance and presented a draft fact sheet on sampling and analysis of PFAS. Feedback from the committee will be incorporated into updated drafts. After completion, the guidance documents will be used by MassDEP staff to assist with the assessment and cleanup of VPH and emerging PFAS contamination concerns.

## REGION 2

**ST. REGIS MOHAWK TRIBE** – The St. Regis Mohawk Tribe (SRMT) has continued to develop its Section 128(a) Brownfields response program by creating an inventory database, working on an oversight and enforcement program, and conducting public outreach activities. A newly constructed database, which includes a Geographic Information System (GIS), records property data for over 120 properties. The database is used in outreach through an interactive, portable, digital display that is set up at community events where community members are able to access and view brownfield properties. The public was asked to identify important community resources such as cultural sites, medicine plant sites, and historic gathering places. The information was developed into GIS layers and analyzed with GIS tools to prioritize properties. During a presentation at the Tribal Lands and Environmental Forum, SRMT shared its public participation approach that focused on outreach to various groups, such as seniors and children. SRMT has created a strong foundation to help meet future goals on the SRMT reservation centered on cultural development, increased tourism, community beautification, and economic growth.

## REGION 3

**WEST VIRGINIA** – The Spelter Smelter site, located approximately seven miles north of Clarksburg along the West Fork River, is comprised of three separate parcels totaling 114.3 acres. The site opened in 1910 and operated as the largest zinc smelter plant in the United States. The property changed ownership several times until operations ceased in September 2001. The West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) used Section 128(a) Response Program funding to provide oversight at the property, including the demolition and removal of former manufacturing structures. Residue from zinc production and impacted material was consolidated to an area of approximately 42.6 acres and covered with an engineered cap. The extraction of groundwater for any use other than groundwater monitoring and remediation will be restricted. In 2017, the property received a Certificate of Completion, and the West Virginia DEP will continue to inspect the site according to their Land Use Covenant. The improvement of water quality in the nearby West Fork River has implications for fishing and other recreational uses. In 2017, a trail will be developed on the site to offer biking/hiking recreational opportunities in the area. The site offers potential for future commercial or industrial use, which may improve employment and economic opportunities for the local community.

## REGION 5

**WISCONSIN** – On November 2, 2016, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) used Section 128(a) Response Program funding to host *Brownfields 101: Redevelopment Resources for Local Governments* in Stevens Point. This one-day conference was attended by nearly 150 public-sector employees and covered a range of land recycling issues. Throughout the day, participants heard from developers, researchers, local government colleagues and others about tools and strategies to capitalize on underused or abandoned properties. Program staff and guest speakers presented on several topics relevant to local governments during the day-long conference, including:

- The positive economic impacts of brownfields investments revealed in a recent study commissioned by the Wisconsin Brownfields Study Group;
- The fundamentals of Wisconsin's cleanup law;

- The various tools and services the Wisconsin DNR has available to assist communities with turning around brownfields;
- Federal resources for brownfields redevelopment;
- The use of green infrastructure for stormwater management at brownfields; and
- Success stories from four communities and three private developers that the DNR has helped—or is helping—turn around troubled properties.

Participant feedback was overwhelmingly positive and the DNR is already planning another conference specifically for local government leaders in 2018.



Wisconsin's DNR Brownfields 101 Conference.

## REGION 6

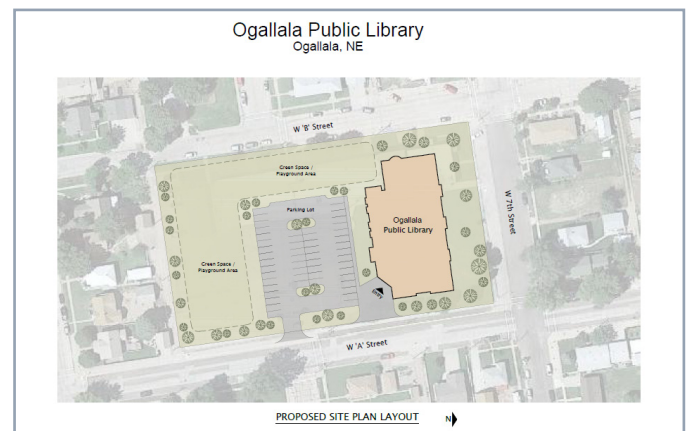
**TRIBAL RESPONSE GRANTEES** – The EPA Region 6 Tribal Response Programs held its first Section 128(a) meeting with EPA in November 2016. Four of the existing Tribal Response Program grantees—Absentee Shawnee Tribe, Eight Northern Indian Pueblo Council, Cherokee Nation/Inter-Tribal Environmental Council (ITEC), and Kickapoo Tribe of Oklahoma—were represented and two new Section 128(a) recipients also attended. EPA's Targeted Assistance for Brownfields partner, Kansas State University, also participated in the meeting. The focus of the meeting was to develop and update tribal inventories using the Brownfields Inventory Tool. Due to the meeting's success, EPA Region 6 anticipates holding Tribal Response Program meetings bi-annually.



Attendees at the Region 6 Tribal Response Program Workshop.

## REGION 7

**NEBRASKA** – The former 17,531 square-foot Progress Elementary School, located in Ogallala, was constructed in 1950 and served the community for over 60 years. By 2015, most of the building stood vacant. The Ogallala Public School District and the city worked together to develop plans to construct a new public library at the school's location. The Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (NDEQ) used Section 128(a) Response Program funding to complete a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment and an Asbestos Containing Materials Survey in association with the transfer of ownership to the city and proposed demolition of the school. The survey positively identified asbestos containing materials throughout the structure and NDEQ provided additional funding for its removal and disposal so the building could be safely razed. Today, demolition of the building is complete, the property is ready for redevelopment, and plans for the library are moving forward.



Site plan for the Ogallala Public Library.

## REGION 8

**UTAH** – The historic Ogden Stockyards were established in 1905, and over the course of time, millions of head of livestock passed through the facility. It was eventually closed in 1971 and the property was used for various other purposes. Storage of drums, containers, engines, vehicles, scrap piles, and railroad ties created a significant amount of environmental uncertainty that became an impediment to redevelopment efforts. In 2013, Ogden City used funding from an EPA Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment grant to perform a Phase II assessment at the property. The city then used a Utah Department of Environmental Quality (UDEQ) Enforceable Written Assurance (EWA) to facilitate cleanup and redevelopment. The city applied to the Voluntary Cleanup Program (VCP) in July 2014, and

UDEQ used Section 128(a) Response Program funding to provide oversight. A “No Further Action” letter for a portion of the property was issued in late 2015, followed by the construction of a new commercial facility. Field work for the remainder of the property is concluding and a site-wide Certificate of Completion is anticipated in 2017 upon completion of final reporting. Using various tools from the EPA and the UDEQ, Ogden City is on the verge of transforming this once blighted 50-acre site into the Ogden Business Exchange to attract offices, and technology and advanced manufacturing businesses.

## REGION 9

**TOHONO O’ODHAM NATION** – In Southern Arizona, the Tohono O’odham nation sits on the second largest Native American land holding in the United States—nearly 2.8 million acres. The Nation works diligently to address and prevent environmental contamination throughout its 11 districts, both via outreach, enforcement, and site-specific work. Using 128(a) Response Program funding, the tribe hired a consultant to assess an abandoned beauty shop in the Nation’s largest community of Sells, Arizona. The assessment activities included testing for potential environmental concerns associated with its past use and construction materials. In late 2016, asbestos containing materials were identified and successfully remediated using Section 128(a) funding. The property, which is a popular community gathering spot for food trucks, will be redeveloped into a traditionally covered outdoors eating area with seating.

## REGION 10

**ALASKA** – The former one-acre Headstart building is located in the Alaska Native Village of Ruby, on the Yukon River. Although vacant since 2013, the property was still a favorite community gathering place, used for ceremonies, an Iditarod checkpoint, and a playfield. Through these uses, the community noticed a diesel smell in the crawlspace of the building and became concerned about potential contamination levels at the property. In 2016, the Alaska Department of Environmental Control (DEC) used Section 128(a) Response Program funding to conduct assessment and cleanup activities. Tests revealed that the building required a vapor barrier, and the soil was contaminated with petroleum in two locations. The most cost-effective cleanup treatment was determined to be rhizoremediation—remediation through the interaction of soil and microbes and plants. This remedy included moving over 430 cubic yards of contaminated soil to a remote location, densely planting it with native plants, and monitoring progress while the plants’ roots accomplished the cleanup. After cleanup, the much-used property is again safe and available to the community.



*Rhizoremediation activities at the former Headstart property.*