

OUR TEAM

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LAND REVITALIZATION



LAND REVITALIZATION
restoring land for America's communities

OSWER
Land Revitalization
Program





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OUR MISSION

Restore land and other natural resources into sustainable community assets that maximize beneficial economic, ecological and social uses and ensure protection of human health and the environment.

The Land Revitalization Team's mission contributes significantly to the Agency's strategic planning goals by placing protective, sustainable, and energy-efficient solutions at the forefront when considering solutions for restoring contaminated properties to useful life.

OUR PRIORITIES

Promote the cleanup, beneficial reuse, and long-term stewardship of brownfields and other contaminated properties. Encourage sustainable development, environmentally protective "green" remediation, and ecological enhancements. A major priority is supporting the attainment of the goals included in the Agency's Strategic Plan.

- The Team promotes clean air (Goal 1) by searching for ways to reduce vehicle miles traveled and carbon emissions by promoting smart growth and infill redevelopment and by reducing energy consumption through the promotion of green building technologies.
- We promote clean and safe water (Goal 2) by promoting the implementation of green urban stormwater best management practices and by incorporating watershed protection into site cleanup solutions.
- We are ensuring land preservation and restoration (Goal 3) by promoting cleanup technologies and redevelopment plans that reduce waste generation, promote recycling and reuse, and ensure long-term stewardship of land resources.
- We promote healthy communities and ecosystems (Goal 4) by incorporating sustainable development techniques into cleanup and land management approaches that will create measurable improvements in community health through green building designs, walkable neighborhoods and mixed-use development, and by promoting redevelopment practices that reduce stresses on our air, water, and land resources.
- We promote compliance and environmental stewardship (Goal 5) by incorporating green and sustainable practices into the Agency's regulatory programs, particularly by promoting pollution prevention and green cleanup approaches.

OUR APPROACH

Outreach and Education

Knowledge of comprehensive sustainable land revitalization approaches is needed to encourage the implementation of our program and projects. OSWER's land revitalization coordinators will address this need through targeted outreach and educational efforts. Recent and ongoing projects include:

- Region 4 is facilitating collaborative problem solving in environmental justice communities in South Carolina to promote sustainable cleanup and redevelopment.
- Region 5 is convening a policy forum to examine green building and sustainable development alternatives for affordable housing.
- Regions 4 and 9 are working with communities to identify ways to incorporate the reuse of construction and demolition debris into redevelopment projects.
- Region 7 provides comprehensive "hands on" training to local government officials on assessing, remediating and revitalizing contaminated properties in a sustainable manner.
- The Office of Brownfields and Land Revitalization is studying state programs that take a "one cleanup" approach to site remediation to identify program efficiencies and best management practices.
- The Superfund Redevelopment Initiative is drafting two reports that highlight facilities incorporating sustainable agricultural and alternative energy reuse.

Demonstration and Pilot Projects

To best serve our land revitalization mission we need to be fully informed on the best available "green" technologies and environmental sustainability practices. To advance this knowledge, representative demonstration and pilot projects are funded each year. Demonstration projects offer opportunities to test green technologies and review approaches for sustainable development. Pilot projects provide opportunities to identify successful approaches and share lessons learned. Recent and ongoing projects include:

- Region 8 is analyzing the feasibility of placing renewable energy alternatives on several sites, including a mine-scarred land site (Clear Creek, CO) and a closed landfill (Templeton Gap, CO).

- Region 3, with the University of West Virginia, plans to study the feasibility of growing switchgrass, as a renewable energy source, on mine-scarred lands.
- Region 1 is working with the Jackson Square community in Boston to study the feasibility of using a green roof system to promote effective stormwater management and sustainable redevelopment.
- Region 5 recently assisted Bay City, MI, by designing and facilitating a Design Charrette to develop a community revitalization plan.
- The Superfund Redevelopment Initiative is funding an evaluation of the potential for building a solar farm or other renewable energy facility at a site in St. David, AZ.

Identification and Removal of Barriers

Legal, financial and information barriers make adopting sustainable cleanup and redevelopment approaches challenging. Barriers will be identified and addressed. Recent and ongoing projects include:

- Region 5 is working to collect and publish performance data on building design features to encourage the development of a common and equitable strategy for assessing the long-term cost and performance of green building designs that will enable evaluation of building design options based on life cycle costs and benefits.
- Region 4's Prospective Purchaser Inquiry Team encourages early coordination and continuous communication between regional staff and perspective purchasers of contaminated properties to quickly, efficiently, and consistently facilitate revitalization.
- Region 3's Land Revitalization Action Team responds expeditiously to public and private inquiries regarding the revitalization of sites where there is a Federal interest. The objective is to advise interested parties of EPA's statutory and enforcement interests and allow parties to make informed decisions regarding revitalization opportunities.
- The Superfund Redevelopment Initiative is considering candidates for the next round of Return to Use Demonstration projects with a particular emphasis on sites that offer sustainable cleanup and redevelopment elements.

Creating a New Norm

We want sustainable approaches to remediation and revitalization to become the norm throughout our cleanup programs. The implementation of sustainable cleanup and

development techniques must be incorporated into standard practices, guidance, codes, ordinances, and laws to ensure mainstream adaptation and long-term benefits. Recent and ongoing projects that may contribute to this goal include:

- Region 7 is working with the community of Greensburg, KS, to develop sustainable design standards for residential properties to enhance the community's ability to rebuild in a fully sustainable manner after a devastating tornado. This effort could set a new norm for sustainable home and neighborhood design.
- Region 3 is developing voluntary standards and a verification system for evaluating the full environmental impact of cleanup remedies to maximize the net environmental benefits of engineered remedies. This effort could create a new norm for environmental cleanup standards.

Looking Toward Our Future

Our priorities include supporting, promoting, and communicating the results of our pilot efforts to restore land to beneficial use while ensuring protection of public health and the environment. As a result of past and continued successes, we will champion and deliver results on:

- Promoting sustainable cleanup remedies and technologies across OSWER cleanup programs, as well as across EPA media programs.
- Reducing the effects of global climate change by promoting technologies and practices that minimize the carbon footprints of cleanup and redevelopment projects.
- Making energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy resources a priority.
- Promoting watershed-based cleanup and reuse strategies to ensure integrated and cross media approaches to redevelopment and ecological restoration.
- Adopting a "one cleanup" approach to site remediations to allow for sustainable cross-program solutions that reduce administrative burdens and allow for expedited cleanup.
- Incorporating sustainable stormwater and wastewater management planning into our cleanup and redevelopment strategies.
- Continuing to work with the public and private sectors to test new approaches and technologies that may ensure environmental protection and sustainable development.
- Challenging all our partners and stakeholders to make sustainable development the norm.

