

APPENDIX A

***PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT &
ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PLAN***

LEWIS & CLARK COUNTY BROWNFIELDS PROJECT

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT & ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PLAN

**COMMUNITY-WIDE BROWNFIELDS
HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCE AND PETROLEUM
ASSESSMENT GRANT
LEWIS AND CLARK COUNTY**



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**LEWIS AND CLARK COUNTY
BROWNFIELDS PROJECT
PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT/ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PLAN
APRIL 2011**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Lewis and Clark County was awarded a Brownfields Hazardous Substance and Petroleum Assessment Grant in the amount of \$400,000 from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). This grant was awarded to complete a site inventory and Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessments at various properties within the boundaries of Lewis and Clark County including the cities of Helena and East Helena, and the communities of Augusta, Craig, Lincoln, Marysville, Wolf Creek, and all other unincorporated properties within the County boundaries. The grant can be used for public outreach, redevelopment planning and programmatic expenses related to Lewis and Clark County's Brownfields program. In addition, 10 percent of the grant money will be used for voluntary health monitoring and developing a permit system for environmental remediation projects that take place within the County.

This Public Involvement/Environmental Education Plan was prepared in accordance with EPA guidelines for public involvement on EPA-funded brownfields projects. It has been prepared to facilitate education of stakeholders and to encourage their participation in Lewis and Clark County's Brownfields program. It outlines individual steps for public involvement aimed at identifying and addressing public concerns and needs. This plan has been designed to be flexible and responsive to changes in the need for public information and community involvement and may be revised as necessary. This plan is also designed to ensure the project complies with EPA's grant requirements for public involvement.

2.0 GOALS/OBJECTIVES

The goal of public involvement is to provide opportunities for community stakeholders and local, state and federal government to participate meaningfully and substantively in the County Brownfields program. The stakeholder group gives the entities the opportunity to provide input and comments during execution of the Lewis and Clark County Brownfields project.

The goals for this Public Involvement Plan include:

- Broadening the base of involved individuals and groups by identifying stakeholders early in the project;
- Building trust by focusing on personal contact, dialogue, and mutual education; and
- Obtaining meaningful public input during the course of the brownfields project.

These goals will be implemented by meeting specific objectives, including:

- Educate the public and other key stakeholders about the Lewis and Clark County Brownfields program;
- Gain an understanding of stakeholder concerns and interests;
- Allow for public input and ensure that public needs and concerns are considered in the process;

- Encourage landowners to propose their properties for inclusion in Lewis and Clark County's Brownfields inventory;
- Develop partnerships to further sustainable cleanup and redevelopment of brownfields sites within Lewis and Clark County; and
- Keep interested parties informed of work progress.

Public involvement on this project will also assist Lewis and Clark County by:

- Broadening Lewis and Clark County's information base for decision making;
- Gaining consensus on a course of action with respect to site assessment;
- Gaining access to sites for assessment; and
- Providing input into the development of criteria for site inclusion in inventory and assessment process.

3.0 BROWNFIELDS TASK FORCE

The Brownfields Task Force will be established to guide the brownfields effort and offer recommendations to Lewis and Clark County for brownfields program management. The task force will be comprised of participants from Helena, Augusta, and Lincoln. The task force will meet on a regular basis, with a minimum of 12 meetings during the course of the three-year project. To ensure the task force has balanced and broad representation, participants from each of the groups listed below will be solicited for participation.

- Group #1 - Community-based Organizations and/or Economic Development Interests
- Group #2 - Local Government and/or Technical Experts
- Group #3 - General Public

Selection of task force members will involve a formal process to ensure all interested parties have an equal chance at participating and so there will be no challenges or disputes from the public regarding the decisions made during the course of the project. Task force members must reside or work in the county, will not be paid, should understand the time commitment involved, and should not have a conflict of interest with the project's goals.

A press release will be submitted to the local media requesting interested parties apply for the task force positions. In addition, Tetra Tech will contact individuals within the community who have expressed interest in the brownfields project and request they consider applying for a task force position. Interested parties will be asked to complete an application and respond to several questions, such as:

- Describe why you want to serve on the Lewis and Clark County Brownfields Task Force.
- Describe your level of knowledge of redevelopment and contaminated sites.
- Describe your current involvement in your community.

The Lewis and Clark County Sustainability Coordinator will review the applications and select the best qualified applicants to make-up of the task force. This list will then be sent to the Board of County Commissioners for approval.

4.0 PROJECT STAKEHOLDERS

A stakeholders list will be developed as a means of distributing information to all interested parties and providing notification of upcoming meetings, and other opportunities for public involvement. The list will include individuals from community groups, government agencies and the general public, as shown below. The list will be updated on an as needed/as requested basis. Public meetings will include sign-in sheets where individuals can request to be added to the project stakeholders list. E-mail addresses will be requested so information can be provided electronically.

Community Stakeholders

- Neighborhood Groups
- Economic Development Groups
- Landowners
- Realtors
- Developers
- Lenders
- Architects
- Citizen Groups
- Nonprofits
- Local business and industry that support community activities
- General Public

Government Stakeholders

- Local government entities including city-county planners, county health department, commissioners, mayors, and others.
- State government including the Montana Department of Environmental Quality, Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services and the Montana Department of Justice.
- Federal government including the U.S. EPA and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

5.0 COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The public involvement process will solicit public input on the direction of the brownfields project from local government and the community. Media such as the internet, newspaper, and radio/television will be utilized to accomplish this task, in conjunction with public meetings, fact sheets, and various other tools. Public outreach will be maximized to inform the public on key issues identified during the brownfields planning process.

5.1 Fact Sheets

Fact sheets will be prepared to disseminate information about the brownfields project to the public. A minimum of four and a maximum of nine fact sheets shall be prepared during the three year project life. The initial fact sheet will discuss program basics and describe participation in the web-based survey (see section 5.5). Fact sheets will be prepared to generally coincide with topics to be discussed at public meetings and will be available at the meetings and posted on the project website. Fact sheets are proposed at the following stages of the project:

- Fact Sheet #1: Introduce the project and web-based survey for site inventory
- Fact Sheet #2: Inventory results and site ranking
- Fact Sheet #3: Phase I ESA results/Phase II selections
- Fact Sheet #4: Phase II results/cleanup alternatives

Lewis and Clark County will review and approve the content of each fact sheet prior to finalizing. The Fact Sheets will be distributed at the public meetings and placed at locations around the County including the City-County building and the public libraries. Fact sheets will also be e-mailed to individuals on the stakeholders list and posted on the project website.

Additional notifications or letters will be prepared for distribution to surrounding property owners before field work begins for the Phase II assessments. The purpose of this communication is to inform those in the immediate area of the proposed work, and to apprise them of potential noise or other impacts associated with subsurface investigation work.

5.2 Public Meetings

Public meetings will be held throughout the project as a means to disseminate information about the County's Brownfields program and to garner public input concerning the program. The public and stakeholders will be invited to attend the meetings to learn about the program, and identify issues or concerns they may have related to brownfields assessment and redevelopment. Specialists with expertise in brownfields assessment will explain the program and results of the assessments.

Public meetings will either involve formal presentations or be an open house format. The formal meeting approach would involve the public listening to prepared presentations where they could ask questions and foster discussion. In the open-house format, attendees would circulate between various posters in the room and could visit individually with project representatives, review available fact sheets and other brownfields literature, and provide feedback to Lewis and Clark County staff or the brownfields consultant. The appropriate meeting format will be determined based on the meeting topic.

Four public meetings are proposed at the following stages of the project:

- Public Meeting #1: Introduce the project and web-based survey for site inventory
- Public Meeting #2: Inventory results and site ranking
- Public Meeting #3: Results of Phase I ESAs/Phase II selection
- Public Meeting #4: Phase II results/Cleanup alternatives

Public meetings will be held at locations throughout the Lewis and Clark County in order to provide the most community participation opportunities as possible. As sites are selected for cleanup consideration, meetings will be held in the neighborhoods where the public would be most affected by redevelopment. Meetings will be advertised through multi-media outlets as well as other methods. Helena Civic Television (HCTV) would be invited to video the meetings for rebroadcast on Channel 11 in Helena.

Tetra Tech will also hold or attend less formal meetings with organizations, landowners, and other key stakeholders, as needed, to inform them of the project findings and opportunities.

5.3 Press Releases

To increase public awareness of the Lewis and Clark County Brownfields Program, information will be provided to the local news media throughout the project to enhance public participation. The first anticipated press release will introduce the project and web-based survey (section 5.5) and announce the first public meetings. Other press releases shall occur in conjunction with public meetings or project milestones. Press releases will be reviewed and approved by the County prior to submittal to the media. Press releases will be sent to the *Helena Independent Record*, the *Blackfoot Valley Dispatch in Lincoln*, and other local newspaper media not yet identified. Local television stations (KTVH-channel 12, HCTB-channel 11) and radio stations (KBLL, KCAP/KZMT, KGPR and KMTX) will also receive press releases to promote community understanding and public meeting participation.

5.4 Project Website

A web page will be developed for the Lewis and Clark County Brownfields Project in order to post information for public review. The website will provide project contact information, host the on-line survey, and include postings of inventory results and maps, fact sheets, public meeting presentations, and links to relevant reference materials on brownfields. The website will be regularly updated to provide the community with current information on the brownfields project.

A web log – or “blog” will be added to the project website to track and measure progress on the brownfields grant and keep the project accountable to the project stakeholders. Journal entries will be posted on a weekly basis to provide commentary, describe events, or post material such as images, graphics, video, or links to other websites. Blog topics may include: the progress of the inventory, unique challenges associated with specific sites, brownfields opportunities for renewable energy or open space, and EPA Brownfields initiatives. The blog format will be interactive and allow readers to leave comments. Stakeholders may subscribe to the blog and receive notices of recent postings.

5.5 Web-Based Survey

The public will be invited to participate in an interactive, web-based survey designed to obtain information on potential brownfields sites in the community. The survey results will be an important tool to help guide site selection and identify ideas for sustainable redevelopment. Initially, a press release will be developed and distributed to the media describing the intent of the survey. Follow-up telephone calls and/or e-mails will be made to encourage the project stakeholders to complete the survey. Presentations will be made to civic groups or neighborhood groups, as needed, to enhance their understanding about the project to get participation in the survey. For individuals without access to the internet, the survey will also be available in hard copy. Survey results will be posted to the project website to keep the public informed. The survey will be kept open for a minimum of 90 days.

5.6 Document Repository

The Lewis and Clark County Grants Coordinator’s office will be the official repository for final versions of all technical documents prepared for this project.

6.0 EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Providing educational opportunities to the public is paramount to a successful community outreach effort and consistent with EPA Brownfields goals. Several educational opportunities planned for the Lewis and Clark County Brownfields program are described below.

6.1 Educational Presentations

The County and its brownfields consultant will make educational presentations throughout the term of the project. Presentations may be made to: Home Town Helena (chamber of commerce), various neighborhood and landowner groups, and/or at local government meetings. Presentation topics may include: explaining the brownfields program, describing sampling plans or investigation results, outlining cleanup alternatives and estimated costs, and/or other topics related to project's objectives and decisions.

6.2 Library Poster Display

A poster display will be created for exhibit in prominent locations such as public libraries, community centers, city halls, and/or the county courthouse. The posters will chronicle the brownfields project and will include maps, photographs, and conceptual drawings that will engage the public in the brownfields effort. This educational display will increase the public's understanding of environmental concerns in the community as well as promote sustainable redevelopment. Several copies of the display will be available so it can be exhibited at several locations simultaneously.

6.3 Brownfields Brochure

In order to engage community developers in the brownfields effort, a brochure will be developed and made available at the City-County planning offices. The purpose of the brochure is to ensure that developers considering investing in Lewis and Clark County are aware of the brownfields project and will consider a brownfields site for their development.

7.0 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES AND TIMING

Activities that will be completed throughout the Lewis and Clark County Brownfields project and a tentative schedule are presented in the table below. The schedule is subject to change as the project progresses.

TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT		
Activities	Description of Activity	Schedule
Public Involvement/ Environmental Education Plan	Plan will detail community involvement and environmental activities and identify media sources for public outreach.	4/22/2011
Project Website	Launch website and web-based survey. Website will contain a blog which will contain weekly journal entries to chronicle project progress.	5/13/2011
Develop Stakeholders List	Compilation of names and e-mail addresses of project stakeholders including local, state, and federal agencies, organizations, and community members who will be asked to complete an online or hard copy survey. The stakeholders will be given the opportunity to receive e-mail updates throughout the project.	5/6/2011
Establish Brownfields Task Force	Advisory committee will guide selection of assessment sites.	3/31/2011
Fact Sheet #1/Public Meeting #1	Introduce the project, brownfields task force, and on-line survey for site inventory.	5/20/2011
Website Update	Post Fact Sheet #1 and notify stakeholders of availability.	5/20/2011
Web-based Survey	Online or hard copy survey of stakeholders for potential brownfields sites to be included in site inventory.	5/13/2011
Create Brochure	Create brochure for potential developers about brownfields opportunities and make available at city/county planning offices and town halls.	5/27/2011
Fact Sheet #2/Public Meeting #2	Present results of inventory and site ranking. Announce sites selected for assessment.	8/26/2011
Website Update	Post Fact Sheet #2 and notify stakeholders of availability	8/26/2011
Poster Display	Post display in public libraries, community centers, county offices chronicling brownfields project	6/29/2012
Fact Sheet #3/Public Meeting #3	Topic: Phase I ESA Update and Phase II site selection	6/29/2012
Website Update	Post Fact Sheet #3 and notify stakeholders of availability	6/29/2012
Fact Sheet #4/Public Meeting #4	Topic: Phase II update and cleanup plans. Present cleanup alternatives. Project wrap-up.	8/30/2013
Website Update	Post Fact Sheet #4 and notify stakeholders of availability	8/30/2013