



Brownfields 2007 Grant Fact Sheet

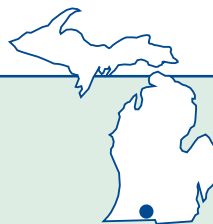
Branch County, MI

EPA Brownfields Program

EPA's Brownfields Program empowers states, communities, and other stakeholders to work together to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield site is real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. On January 11, 2002, President George W. Bush signed into law the Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act. Under the Brownfields Law, EPA provides financial assistance to eligible applicants through four competitive grant programs: assessment grants, revolving loan fund grants, cleanup grants, and job training grants. Additionally, funding support is provided to state and tribal response programs through a separate mechanism.

Community Description

Branch County was selected to receive two brownfields assessment grants. The decline in manufacturing has weakened the economy of Branch County (population 46,460), which is located in rural southern Michigan. While 70 percent of the land in the county is used for agricultural purposes, the loss of over 16 percent of the manufacturing jobs in recent years has rippled through the rest of the economy. The unemployment rate exceeds the state average and is much higher than the nationwide average. The majority of the idle industrial facilities are in the more impoverished areas of the county. Over 60 properties with environmental contamination have been identified. Brownfields assessments will help the county identify the potential risks to human health and the



Assessment Grants

New
2007

\$200,000 for hazardous substances

\$200,000 for petroleum

EPA has selected Branch County for two brownfields assessment grants. Hazardous substances grant funds will be used to identify and prioritize suspected brownfields, perform Phase I and II environmental site assessments, and conduct community outreach activities. Petroleum grant funds will be used to perform the same tasks at sites with potential petroleum contamination.

Contacts

For further information, including specific grant contacts, additional grant information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at: www.epa.gov/brownfields.

EPA Region 5 Brownfields Team
312-886-7576
<http://www.epa.gov/R5Brownfields/>

Grant Recipient: Branch County, MI
517-279-5104

The information presented in this fact sheet comes from the grant proposal; EPA cannot attest to the accuracy of this information. The cooperative agreement for the grant has not yet been negotiated. Therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.

environment and facilitate redevelopment. Redevelopment will help preserve greenspace, especially prime farmland, and provide much-needed jobs, affordable housing, and a stronger tax base.