

Brownfields Sites Public Record

Ute Mountain Ute Tribal Environmental Department-Brownfields Tribal Response Program

Ute Mountain Ute Tribal Brownfields Sites-Public Record

In 2003, the Ute Mountain Environmental Department successfully applied for federal funding to initiate a new program, the Brownfields Tribal Response Program. This program has focused on reusing and revitalizing Tribal property contaminated by past activities where no responsible polluting party could be identified or no party could be identified to mitigate a potential contamination issue.

The Brownfields Law requires easy access to Brownfield site information. The following public record portion includes information to satisfy this requirement. Additional information can be acquired from the Ute Mountain Ute Environmental Department.

FY 03 Activities

Under fiscal year 2003 funding, the Environmental Department submitted the following sites for clean up approval to EPA Region VIII in Denver, CO

- **White Mesa asbestos assessment and clean up projects.** -This project completed in Spring of 04 removed asbestos from an illicit dump created by federally funded housing projects
- **Ute Mountain Tribal Motor Pool Targeted Brownfields Assessment.**- The removal of three underground storage tanks from a closed Tribal Motor Pool were facilitated using Targeted Brownfields Assessment funds for pre-removal analysis. Actual removal of the USTs was accomplished using Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) funds.
- **Towaoc Dining Hall Asbestos assessment and removal project.** - Likely the Tribes largest Brownfields site, the Towaoc Dining Hall (deeded to the Tribe in the 1950s from the BIA) was constructed using asbestos and lead containing materials. Brownfields funds removed the contaminants and the site will be reused for a community hall.
- **Towaoc Boiler/Stack assessment and removal project.** - Early power generation left boilers that were unsalvageable and contained asbestos.
- **White Mesa Smart Site Building Assessment.** – In order to return a building to potential use for a new Tribal Technology Center, Brownfields funds were

utilized to assess the building for possible contamination, specifically asbestos and lead.

FY 04 Activities

The following three sites were submitted to EPA Region VIII for clean up approval during fiscal year 2004.

- **White Mesa Re-use and Revitalization Housing Project Program** – Historically, mass housing projects in Tribal communities involved construction materials with asbestos and substandard building materials. Renovation of such houses in the Tribal community of White Mesa 10 or more years ago removed the problems from the home sites but created new problems when the demolition materials were deposited in open dumps.

FY 03 assessment efforts identified these dumps and completed asbestos removal. However, more work must be performed to identify other potential contaminants and remove them.

Using the established Public Notification process and the ongoing GIS database system, the dump sites will be revitalized and information will be stored to enhance the future uses of the sites for residential and commercial purposes.

- **Oil Field Assessment/Cleanup Program** – Previous lease holders of Tribal oil field operations have left behind a legacy of environmental problems when they went bankrupt. Spills, oil field trash and contaminated soil have made it difficult for the Tribe to attract new operators.

The Ute Mountain Environmental Department's Brownfields Tribal Response program proposes to inventory all oil and gas production facilities on the reservation to identify contaminated properties. In the process of gathering the information, responsible parties can be identified. If current operators are identified as the responsible party of the contamination potential enforcement actions could be pursued against them. These enforcement actions could result in Supplemental Environmental Projects (SEPs) forcing them to clean up contaminated oil field operations where no responsible parties can be identified.

Using the established Public Notification process and the ongoing GIS database system the sites will be revitalized and information will be stored to ensure that responsible parties are already identified.

- **Tribal Abandoned Housing Assessment/Clean Up Project-** Federally and Tribally subsidized housing programs have improved housing conditions in the Tribal communities of White Mesa, Utah and Towaoc, Colorado. However, new homes led to the abandonment of individually owned dwellings that ultimately fell into disrepair. Over the years, evidence of ownership of the homes has been lost.

Many of these homes contain asbestos that is becoming friable and a potential health and environmental hazard.

The Tribal Response Program proposes to conduct assessments of the homes and work in conjunction with the Ute Mountain Tribal Housing Authority (HUD) to revitalize the home sites for future residential use.

Using the established Public Notification process and the ongoing GIS database system the public and Tribal departments will have access to site information.

FY 05 Proposed Activities

The following three sites will be submitted to EPA Region VIII for clean up approval.

- **Mancos Creek Pesticide remediation project** – A Tribal farming operation in the remote corner of the Colorado portion of the Reservation has faced midnight dumping challenges for decades. Most dumping consists of household and construction debris. However, pesticides from an unknown source were left at the facility. Although a 1996 emergency clean up was conducted to remove the illicit pesticide barrels residents still complain of residual pesticide evidence.

FY 04 Phase I assessment efforts identified a potential for existing pesticide contamination. FY 05 funds will conduct sampling and clean up activities.

Using the established Public Notification process and the ongoing GIS database system, the contaminated pesticide site will be revitalized and information will be stored to enhance the future uses of the sites for residential and commercial purposes. (Anticipated completion date-6/06)

- **Oil Field Assessment/Cleanup Program** – Previous lease holders of Tribal oil field operations have left behind a legacy of environmental problems when their operations went bankrupt. Spills, oil field trash and contaminated soil have made it difficult for the Tribe to attract new operators. Tribal economic development success relies on profitable oil and gas operations. Such operations create royalties improving the economic vitality of the Tribe.

FY 04 assessment activities identified widespread problems in the oil patch including but not limited to an abandoned oil and gas lease called the Horseshoe Gallup Unit. Through these FY 04 Phase I assessments it has come to the Tribe's attention that many sites previously considered Plugged and Abandoned (P and A'd) by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and State Oil and Gas regulatory agencies in fact may not be adequately closed and need to be reevaluated.

The Ute Mountain Environmental Department's Brownfields Tribal Response program proposes to continue inventory all oil and gas production facilities on the

reservation to identify contaminated properties focusing on inventorying abandoned and previously P and A'd properties.

In the process of gathering the information, responsible parties can be identified. If current operators are identified as the responsible party of the contamination potential enforcement actions could be pursued against them. These enforcement actions could result in Supplemental Environmental Projects (SEPs) forcing them to clean up contaminated oil field operations where no responsible parties can be identified.

Using the established Public Notification process and the ongoing GIS database system the sites will be revitalized and information will be stored to ensure that responsible parties are already identified. (Anticipated completion date-9/06)

- **Cottonwood Renegade Construction Debris Pit Project** - Federally subsidized road construction projects have improved economic development opportunities and basic infrastructure in the Tribal community of Towaoc, Colorado. However, demolition of roads by federal contractors led to the unsupervised dumping in a local flood plain of construction debris, solvents, and oils and fluids associated with heavy road equipment. Not only does this create a potential environmental hazard for the ground, water, and air, but may worsen in the case of a flash flood. Because of the construction debris and contaminants that were deposited there, it has become attractive for midnight dumping problems and increases vectors for potential health hazards such as Hanta Virus and West Nile Virus. These are both respiratory ailments that have affected Tribal communities recently.

The Tribal Response Program proposes to conduct assessments of the Cottonwood Renegade Construction Debris Pit in an effort to conduct a clean up of the facility in FY 05.

Using the established Public Notification process, a web site and the ongoing GIS database system, the public and Tribal departments will have access to site information. (Anticipated completion date-9/06)

Brownfields Response Program Public Record

TABLE 1

Site Name	<i>White Mesa Asbestos Dump</i>	<i>Towaoc Dining Hall</i>	<i>Tribal Abandoned Housing Project</i>
If clean up has been completed, date action was	5/11/04	10/04	n/a

completed			
Date Action is planned	n/a	n/a	On going
Name of owner at time of clean-up	Ute Mountain Ute Indian Tribe	Ute Mountain Ute Indian Tribe	Ute Mountain Ute Indian Tribe
Type of site	Asbestos	Asbestos, lead,	Asbestos, lead
Site address	White Mesa, Utah, Ute Mountain Ute Indian Reservation	224 Sunset Blvd, Towaoc, CO 81334	Ute Mountain Ute Indian Reservation
Latitude/Longitude			
Institutional controls in place (yes/no)	Yes	Yes	n/a
Type of institutional control	Dumping ordinance	Site closure-locked facility	n/a
Summarize nature of contamination at site	Asbestos containing materials in construction debris	Asbestos containing materials in buildings	Asbestos containing materials in buildings
Site size in acres	Scattered over 10 acres	6000 ft2	20 homes

TABLE 2

Site Name	<i>White Mesa Smartsite Project</i>	<i>Oil Field Assessment/Cleanup Program</i>	<i>Cottonwood Renegade Construction Debris Pit Project</i>
If clean up has been completed, date action was completed	n/a	n/a	n/a
Date Action is planned	On going	On going	Spring 06
Name of owner at time of clean-up	Ute Mountain Ute Indian Tribe	Ute Mountain Ute Indian Tribe	Ute Mountain Ute Indian Tribe
Type of site	Asbestos	Hydrocarbons	Highway Construction demo debris
Site address	White Mesa, Utah Ute Mountain Ute Indian	Ute Mountain Ute Indian Reservation	Towaoc, CO, Ute Mountain Ute Indian

	Reservation		Reservation
Latitude/Longitude			
Institutional controls in place (yes/no)	Yes	Ute Mountain Ute Tribal Surface Water Quality Standards	Ute Mountain Ute Tribal Surface Water Quality Standards
Type of institutional control	Site closure-locked facility	Limited access	Limited access/ Dumping ordinance
Summarize nature of contamination at site	Asbestos containing materials in buildings	Abandoned oil and gas facilities	Highway/ pavement construction debris including hydrocarbons
Site size in acres	1 building	Scattered well sites and production infrastructure over 500 acres.	10 acres

TABLE 3

Site Name	<i>Mancos Creek Pesticide remediation project</i>		
If clean up has been completed, date action was completed	n/a		
Date Action is planned	March05		
Name of owner at time of clean-up	Ute Mountain Ute Indian Tribe		
Type of site	Pesticide/Herbicide		
Site address	Mancos Creek Farm, Towaoc, CO Ute Mountain Ute Indian Tribe		
Latitude/Longitude			
Institutional controls in place (yes/no)	Yes		

Type of institutional control	Restricted access		
Summarize nature of contamination at site	Abandoned pesticide and herbicide storage facility		
Site size in acres	1 acre +/-		