

Superfund Redevelopment Pilots

Coeur d'Alene River Basin Panhandle Health District I, ID

EPA's Superfund Redevelopment Initiative (SRI) is a nationally coordinated effort to facilitate the return of Superfund sites to productive use by selecting response actions consistent with anticipated use. The SRI Pilots are intended to help local governments enhance their involvement in the Superfund decision-making process by assisting EPA in predicting future land uses for Superfund sites. Under the Pilot Program, EPA will provide up to \$100,000 in financial assistance and/or services to local governments for specified activities. Applicants are offered several types of program assistance, including funding through a cooperative agreement, access to facilitation services, and/or the availability of personnel under the Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA).

BACKGROUND

EPA selected the Panhandle Health District I in Shoshone County, Idaho, for a Superfund Redevelopment Pilot. Shoshone County is home to the Coeur d'Alene River Basin Superfund site. Mining began in the region in the late 1800s, and smelting operations followed in the early 1900s. This area is referred to as the "Silver Valley" due to its colorful and rich history of mining for silver, lead, zinc, and gold. For more than 100 years, the lead-silver-zinc mining region on the South Fork of the Coeur d'Alene River has been a major financial force in northern Idaho and the inland northwest. However, the 1980s brought a rapid decline in the silver industry, and many of the mines and the major smelters began to shut down. Shoshone County lost thousands of mining industry-related jobs, resulting in a considerable population decrease over the course of many years. In September 1983, EPA added the site to its list of hazardous waste sites needing cleanup. Cleanup of a 21-square-mile area of the site, referred to as the Bunker Hill Superfund Site, is nearing completion. However, there are still potential human health and ecological risks in other areas of the site because of heavy metals in the soil, sediment, surface water, and groundwater. Despite outstanding progress in environmental cleanup and economic growth at the Bunker Hill site, similar valley-wide efforts continue to be a challenge because of diverse interests and the overall status of cleanup activities. Part of the site is in a minority community and is near a Brownfields Pilot.

OBJECTIVES

Working with the Panhandle Area Council and the Silver Valley Economic Development Organization, the Panhandle Health District I will use Pilot funds to help communities develop and maintain a coordinated, valley-wide approach to cleanup and reuse of the site. The funding will also help communities choose land use options, and to create land use plans that may enhance the economic sustainability of the region. Shoshone County, government agencies, and community members will assist the district in this effort. Because of the size of the site and the number of communities involved, the district may encounter difficulties in reaching a consensus on a future vision for the valley.

PILOT SNAPSHOT



Applicant Name: Panhandle Health District I, ID

Site Name: Coeur d'Alene River Basin

Date of Award: July 2000

Anticipated Award: Cooperative Agreement (\$100,000)

Profile: The Panhandle Health District I will create a coordinated, valley-wide approach to cleanup and reuse of the site.

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