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NMED Receives Award from EPA for Cleaning Up Contaminated Properties

(Santa Fe, NM) The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 6 bestowed an award upon the New Mexico Environment Department for its efforts in revitalizing contaminated properties in the state through its Brownfields program.

EPA recognized the department's Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund Program this month for cleaning up the greatest number of acres, almost 10, under a revolving loan fund grant.

"We are honored to receive this award because we find it gratifying to work with businesses to spur development in the state through our Brownfields Program," said New Mexico Environment Department Secretary Ron Curry. "The Brownfields program -- which merges environmental restoration and economic development -- helps transform blighted properties into thriving ventures and usable sites."

NMED approved two loans last year totaling \$725,000 for two Brownfields cleanup projects. Americus, LLC borrowed \$500,000 to remove solid waste material from more than 6 acres of a former City of Albuquerque Landfill, located north of Alameda Drive and adjacent to San Mateo Blvd. Construction of office and warehouse space on the cleaned up property will begin soon. Sawmill Community Land Trust signed a loan agreement with the department for up to \$225,000 to clean up contaminated surface soil associated with an abandoned rail spur at the former Ponderosa Products manufacturing plant. Sawmill Community Land Trust will be revitalizing the former factory property, which is on Bellamah Ave. and north of the New Mexico Natural History Museum, into retail space, restaurants and low-income housing. Both projects will bring jobs and economic development opportunities to New Mexico.

The department oversaw the remediation of nearly 100 Brownfields properties in New Mexico that have been restored and revitalized for the benefit of surrounding communities. NMED receives funding for the loan program through a grant from EPA.

For more information on Brownfields, call Rick Shean, Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund Coordinator (505) 222-9550. For further information, call Marissa Stone at (505) 827-0314.

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