



# Brownfields Overview

Eric Sroka

OHMS II

Brownfields/VRAP

MAINE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

*Protecting Maine's Air, Land and Water*

# What is a Brownfield?

- As defined by the US EPA, a Brownfield is:
  - “abandoned, idled, or under used industrial and commercial facilities/sites, where expansion or redevelopment is complicated by real or perceived contamination.”



- The MEDEP Brownfields Program encourages the redevelopment of these sites through cooperation with municipalities and/or potential owners to investigate and/or remediate sites
- The roots of the Brownfields Program are in the EPA's Superfund Program, with a streamlined or reduced regulatory approach



# The Brownfields Process

- A potential site is identified
- Generally, the site is assessed in two phases:
  - A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) determines if there is a likelihood of contamination (called Recognized Environmental Conditions or RECs)
  - A Phase II ESA determines the extent of contamination and if clean-up is necessary



# The Process, Continued

- Following the Phase II, if clean-up is appropriate, an Analysis of Brownfields Clean-up Alternatives (ABCA) may be prepared to assess remedial actions and provide an estimate of costs
- Typically, between the Phase I and Phase II, a project will enter in MEDEP's Voluntary Response Action Program (VRAP)



# Funding

- EPA can provide funds to assist with Brownfields in two ways:
  - Through direct grants to municipalities or other not-for-profit organizations (104k)
  - Or by dispensing money to State Brownfields programs, which in turn can grant or loan money (128a)



# Brownfields Uses

- In general, MEDEP does not direct what a Brownfields site can be used for, except that future use may determine levels of remedial action
- Solar arrays are an acceptable use for Brownfields sites
  - Brownfields concerns include access to and disturbing contaminated soil, water, indoor air, and/or other hazardous materials



# Brownfields Stats

- MEDEP maintains a database of existing brownfields sites, however:
  - In general, these sites are brought to the attention of MEDEP
  - MEDEP does not have an “average size” brownfield
  - A 2004 survey of Maine’s municipalities showed that gas stations and auto garages make up 46% of Maine’s brownfields





# Key Points

- ME Brownfields Program staff are available to assist navigating the process for potential and existing sites
- Maine municipalities are better equipped to determine potential Brownfields
- Each site is unique, and will have its own requirements



# Final Point

- Solar is an example of how a Brownfield can be revitalized!





# Land Bureau Considerations

Marybeth Richardson

Maine Department of Environmental Protection  
Acting Director, Bureau of Land Resources

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# Potential benefits of solar siting on developed sites

- Reduce concerns related to wildlife/habitat impacts
- Minimize the need for Natural Resources Protection Act (NRPA) permits
- Minimize degree of public interest related to potential loss of forest/farmland compared to developing on “greenfield” sites



# Siting in former borrow (gravel) pits

- Inactive pits
- Must be consistent with reclamation standards if the pit is registered with DEP
- Simplest if located in an “internally drained” pit



# Stormwater and redevelopment

- Chapter 500 rules consider the amount of existing untreated impervious area.
- Required treatment levels are reduced for “redevelopment” projects.
- Stormwater management review for solar projects on existing developed sites may not be triggered depending on site-specific details.





Contact:

Eric Sroka

[eric.sroka@maine.gov](mailto:eric.sroka@maine.gov)

(207)485-5792

[www.maine.gov/dep](http://www.maine.gov/dep)

