

January 11, 2012

Notes from Brownfields Professional Learning Community (PLC)

Topics:       Status of the EPA grant review process  
              General program planning and design  
              Grant Opportunities

### **Upcoming events**

Joe Bruss, USEPA, has informed us the Environmental Job Development and Training Request for proposals will be released the week of January 23, 2012. Joe is planning two CLU-IN seminars (to be announced) regarding procedures and specifics of the RFP.

Our PLC calls will not duplicate information provided by EPA but instead be complementary, discussing strategies that enhance and improve the sustainability of environmental job development and training programs. In essence, how to make the best environmental job program customized to your community. We encourage your participation, as ideas discussed should be helpful in developing a comprehensive program and proposal.

### **Announcements**

Upcoming environmental workforce related conferences:

- The 15th National Brownfields Conference is headed to Atlanta, Georgia on May 15–17, 2013. The conference, co-sponsored by U.S. EPA, is the largest and most comprehensive event in the nation that focuses on issues important to community revitalization and the assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment of contaminated properties. Stay tuned to [www.brownfieldsconference.org](http://www.brownfieldsconference.org) for more information on the 2013 conference!
- NAWB Forum 2012 Dialogue for Workforce Excellence  
March 10 – 13, 2012  
Hilton Washington  
The program is posted online at [www.nawb.org/forum/](http://www.nawb.org/forum/)
- Oklahoma Brownfields Conference 2012  
The program is posted online at [www.oklahomabrownfields.com](http://www.oklahomabrownfields.com)
- Ohio Brownfields Conference 2012  
May 23 - 24, 2012  
Columbus Convention Center  
Attendee registration coming in Jan/Feb 2012
- New Partners for Smart Growth Conference  
February 2 - 4, 2012  
The program is posted online at [www.epa.gov/tp/calendar/conferences.htm](http://www.epa.gov/tp/calendar/conferences.htm)

Links to the Good Jobs, Green Jobs Conferences can be found at [www.epa.gov/brownfields/job.htm](http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/job.htm). Registration for Green Jobs Regional Conferences is now open.

- Southern Good Jobs, Green Jobs Conference  
February 23 & 24, 2012  
Atlanta, Georgia
- Western Good Jobs, Green Jobs Conference  
March 15 & 16, 2012  
Los Angeles, California
- Eastern Good Jobs, Green Jobs Conference  
April 3 & 4, 2012

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

- Midwestern Good Jobs, Green Jobs Conference  
May 10 & 11, 2012  
Detroit, Michigan

### **Status of the EPA Grant Review Process**

#### **The Requests for Proposals TO BE RELEASED NEXT WEEK**

It appears that EPA will finally release the new RFP the week of January 23rd. Details on proposal due dates and expected award dates should also be available.

Program planning and scheduling - an example schedule:

- Requests for proposals --- January 2012
- Proposals due April 2012
- Preparation of proposals and review on various levels
- Initial screening of proposals (qualifying criteria) (rejected proposals notified in 2-3 weeks)
- Intensive review of proposals (ranking criteria)
- Grant awards July-August 2012
- Annual All Grantee Meeting – Alexandria, VA late September 2012
- First training cycles begin late 2012-Early 2013
- Optimal placement opportunities – First quarter 2013

### **General Program Planning and Design**

Now is an opportune time to “picture” how a solid sustainable environmental job development and training program should look.

1. Who will be the participants of the program?
  - Veterans
  - Disabled
  - Ex-offenders
  - Unemployed community residents (what community)
  - Women
  - Minorities (which minorities)
  - None of the above
  - Combination of above
  - All of above
2. What are the minimum standards for acceptance into the program?
  - Academic
  - Physical
  - Experience
  - None of the above
  - Combination of above
  - All of above
3. What is the potential for placing program graduates?
  - Local labor market needs assessment
  - Discussions with potential placement organizations

- Discussions with potential employers
- Local economic conditions
- Major local projects planned and under construction
- Coordination with organized labor
- Local job incentives and programs in place
- Coordination with local workforce investment boards and One Stops

While basic, answers to these questions and action items are the foundation for the development of sustainable job development programs. They influence curriculum, instructional methods, and potential for graduate placement. Failure to address these issues can result in disappointments and unexpected difficulties placing graduates.

### **Environmental activities requiring environmentally trained workers**

When considering a proposed environmental training program, planners should consider the entire range of occupations associated with environmental activities. In addition to specific occupational training, health and safety training is required with all instruction.

**Site Identification** – Potentially contaminated sites are characterized in terms of location, types of structures, and potential contamination.

#### Training and jobs include:

- Phase I Assessment
- General site assessment

**Environmental Assessment** –The site is investigated to determine the nature and extent of contamination and whether it will require future cleanup activities. Results from the assessment may determine that cleanup is not necessary. If possible, future reuse of the site should be determined at this stage since it could significantly impact the cleanup process.

#### Training and jobs include:

- Sampling and analysis
- Phase II assessment (assistants)
- Test equipment maintenance and calibration
- Test well construction and sample handling

**Cleanup Plan** – If the site is found to have contamination in the preceding step, a cleanup plan is designed based on the information gathered during the environmental assessment.

#### Training and jobs Include:

- Environmental data technician
- Environmental equipment operation

**Cleanup** – The cleanup plan is implemented. Cleanup technologies such as groundwater pump-and-treat can take several years but often require little of a site's useable acreage.

#### Training and jobs include:

- Environmental deconstruction
- Environmental construction
- Hazardous materials handling, transportation, and disposal
- Environmental remediation safe material removal

**Reuse and Operation** – The site is returned to productive use without adversely affecting the cleanup plan or remedy. Some sites may require monitoring and Institutional Controls (ICs) to ensure protection of human health and the environment.

Training and jobs include:

- Environmental equipment operators
- Environmental monitoring and maintenance
- Material recycling and reuse

**Grant Opportunities**

EPA Announces Solicitation of Applications for \$1 Million in Environmental Justice Grants. More information on the Environmental Justice Small Grants program and a list of grantees:

<http://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/grants/ej-smgrants.html>.

Environment Justice Small Grants 2012 Request for Proposals and schedule of pre-application teleconference calls. EPA will host the last pre-application teleconference calls on February 1, 2012 and February 15, 2012 to help applicants understand the requirements.

<http://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/resources/publications/grants/ej-smgrants-rfp-2012.pdf>

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced that the Agency is seeking applicants for \$1 million in environmental justice small grants expected to be awarded in 2012. EPA's environmental justice efforts aim to ensure equal environmental and health protections for all Americans, regardless of race or socioeconomic status. The grants enable non-profit organizations to conduct research, provide education, and develop solutions to local health and environmental issues in communities overburdened by harmful pollution.

The 2012 grant solicitation is now open and will close on February 29, 2012. Applicants must be incorporated non-profits or tribal organizations working to educate, empower and enable their communities to understand and address local environmental and public health issues.

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR**

Next PLC Session: January 25, 2012  
2:00pm EST

Topic: Establishment, implementation, and sustainability of Environmental Job Development and Training Programs

Feel free to invite a guest! Send your contact information to Mike Senew at [msenew@aol.com](mailto:msenew@aol.com).

Visit our *Brownfields Toolbox* Web site at <http://www.brownfields-toolbox.org> for more information on Brownfields Job Training programs.