

EPA Region 9 Targeted Brownfields Assessment (TBA) Application

Applicant Type

Are you a:

- Government Entity
- Tribe
- Native Hawaiian organization
- Non-profit organization (501(c)(3))

Applying Organization(s)

Name of organization(s) or individual(s) requesting Brownfields Assessment

Humboldt Bay Harbor Conservation and Recreation District

Primary Contact Name of the applying organization

Name and title of the primary contact representing the organization(s) or individual(s) making this request

Larry Oetker, Harbor District Executive Director

Applying organization address

601 Startare Drive, Eureka CA, 95501

Phone

Primary contact telephone #

(707) 443-0801

Email

Larry Oetker <loetker@humboldtbay.org>

A copy of your application will be sent to this address.

Web address

Web address of applying organization's website. DO NOT enter "http://" or "https://": it may cause a form error.

humboldtbay.org/

Property Information

Address of the property requested to be assessed

Map of property

Web link to a map of the property location (e.g., Google map or Bing map) - DO NOT enter "http://" or "https://": it may cause a form error.

www.google.com/maps/search/1+TCF+Drive/@40.8049474,-124.1950886,17z/data=!3m1!4b1

Current owner(s) name, business address, and phone number (if different than applicant)

Name, business address, and phone number

Same as applicant.

Total acreage of property

Number of buildings on property

Building(s) description and past use(s)

The project area occupies approximately 30 acres centrally located on a larger (70 acre) industrial site now known as Redwood Marine Terminal II (RMT II). The first site development occurred in 1964 when a bleached Kraft pulp mill was constructed by Georgia Pacific (GP). The pulp mill, in its original configuration, was in operation between 1965 and 1994 when it was then converted to a chlorine-free process. Multiple owners including LP and Evergreen Pulp operated the mill from 1994 to 2008.

Freshwater Tissue Company (FTC) purchased the site in 2009 and planned on reopening the mill; however, they abandoned these plans and began decommissioning equipment, demolishing various buildings, and liquidating assets. Buildings and land uses of the site included offices, pulp warehouses, a machine building, a sand blasting shop, petroleum products distribution and storage, a hazardous waste storage area, diesel aboveground storage tanks, a chemical storage tank farm, a water treatment plant, a "black liquor" processing area, a bleach plant, and a chip conveyor.

Is there known or suspected contamination on the property?

- Yes
- No

What are the known or suspected contaminants?

This application proposes to supplement existing brownfield cleanup at the site. Past cleanup has included removal of the toxic liquors and debris piles from demolition of structures involved in wood processing. Multiple chemicals, metals, and organic compounds (such as dioxins) have been identified in previous sampling, monitoring and cleanup activities performed at RMT II. However, there is a lack of information related to contaminants in the upper 5-10 feet of soil in the proposed project area.

Contaminants may include potential pulping and bleaching chemicals such as:

- Acids: Sulfuric/Sulfurous, hydrochloride acids
- Oxidizers: hydrogen peroxide, sodium hydroxide
- Sodium Hydrosulfite
- Ammonia
- Metals (Arsenic, Chromium, Lead, Manganese and Mercury)
- Cyanide
- Chlorinated compounds
- Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs)
- Dioxins/Furans

The existing buildings and smoke stack which are planned to be removed have the potential for lead, asbestos and other potential contaminants.

What are the sources of contamination?

Potential sources of contamination include: leaks from surface storage structures and equipment; leaks from sub-grade features such as interior pulp compression liquid pools and fuel piping, and liquor drainage trench systems; and incidental spills. Additionally, the historical presence of above ground fuel storage tanks, underground fuel storage tanks, fuel dispensing facilities, and vehicle maintenance activities all contributed to existing sources of contamination.

Are there current uses on the property, e.g. residences, community gardening, commercial activities? Describe.

Currently, industrial debris remains at RMT II, which limits use on about one-third of the site. There are no uses in the proposed project area. There are

approximately 18 commercial businesses that operate within existing warehouse buildings on the RMT II site, outside of the proposed project area.

The Harbor District signed a 30 year lease with two, ten year automatic extensions with a Norwegian Aquaculture company for the proposed 30 acre Brownfield project. The company has stated that they plan to invest up to \$400 million in a two phase project. The lease has an extended option period that is contingent on among other items a detailed environmental site assessment.

Are there any perceived health concerns to the users of the site?

The site is known to contain contaminants from historical site uses as assessment and cleanup activities continue to take place. Certain areas of the site are perceived to have more of a potential health concern than others.

Is the property or building(s) listed on the state or National Register of Historic Places?

No.

Property Eligibility

Is the property a "Brownfield"?

Does the property meet the definition of a "Brownfield" as contained in federal Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act (Section 211(a)(39) of the Public Law 107-118 (H.R. 2869)), i.e., real property whose reuse has been complicated by real or perceived contamination.

Yes. The property has been designated as a Brownfield by the EPA during the County's Redevelopment Area-wide Brownfield Assessment Project (BF-96915401) and has received Brownfield funding in the past. Some of the contaminants at the site have been analyzed and removed, but the site still has contamination, and the upper 10 feet of soil lacks sufficient assessment and requires further sampling to determine potential remediation needs prior to site reuse.

Legal permission to enter?

Does the applicant have legal permission to enter the property to conduct the property assessment activities, including collecting environmental samples for testing? (Applicant must obtain access to property for EPA contractor to conduct a Phase II assessment)

- Yes
- No

Physical accessibility of property?

Is the property physically accessible for assessment, including free of debris or materials that may obstruct entry onto the site or into buildings? Are all buildings physically safe to enter? (EPA may visit the property or request photos to confirm its physical accessibility)

- Yes
- No

Is the applicant the property owner?

- Yes
- No

If "YES", answer the following. If "NO", skip to Community Description

Did the applicant generate or dispose of any of the contaminants?

If "Yes", please explain in the next field.

- Yes
- No

If 'yes', please explain.

Did the applicant own the property when contamination occurred?

If "Yes", please explain in the next field.

- Yes
- No

If 'yes', please explain.

When was the property acquired?

How was the property acquired?

In August 2013, the Freshwater Tissue Company transferred ownership of the site to the Harbor District. At the time of transfer the District was aware the site contained significant contamination and immediately began working to address site contamination in partnership with the EPA.

Measures taken to prevent release of contaminants?

If the applicant owns the property, describe measures taken to ensure potential pollutants, contaminants and hazardous substances are not released from the property and do not present a threat to human health or the environment.

The District acquired site control in 2013 and immediately began to undertake measures to assess and control site contaminants in partnership with the EPA and State Water Board. USEPA removal actions from 2013 to 2016 included removal of on-site liquid wastes (~4,000,000 gallons of caustic and acidic liquids and ~10,000 tons of contaminated caustic and acidic sludges).

Shortly after acquisition, the County of Humboldt Community Development Department administered EPA Brownfields grant funded a site wide Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA). Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) results included recognition of at least 35 recognized environmental conditions (REC). Later in 2013, a select subgroup of RECs was evaluated and reported in a Limited Scope Phase II ESA. Subsequently, cleanup of many of the Phase I RECs were resolved by the District, and additional demolition of idle and/or inoperative infrastructure occurred. Recovery boilers 1 and 2, and the bleach-plant complex were demolished. The debris piles were characterized and segregated based on hazard level and contamination type, with disposal of materials which have not been cleared for onsite reuse at an appropriately classified landfill.

Property investigation for contaminants?

If the applicant owns the property and purchased the property after January 11, 2002, did the applicant conduct an investigation into the potential presence of pollutants, contaminants or hazardous substances at or near the property? If so, identify the investigations and dates.

As stated above, immediately after acquisition the District began to undertake measures to assess and control site contaminants. Many of the investigations have focused on targeted areas of the site; see summary of assessment dates in prior question. Some of the contaminants at the site have been analyzed and removed, but the site still has contamination, and the upper 10 feet of soil lacks sufficient assessment and requires further sampling to determine potential remediation needs prior to site reuse.

Affiliation with any former owner or operator?

If the applicant owns the property, is the applicant affiliated with or related to any former owner or operator of the property (e.g., family, contract, corporate or financial arrangement, etc.), or with any person who may have generated hazardous substances located at or near the property, or with any person who may have transported or arranged for the transportation of hazardous substances located at or near the property?

- Yes
- No

Properties not eligible for funding

- Properties listed, or proposed for listing, under the [Superfund National Priorities List](#).
- Facilities subject to U.S. EPA unilateral administrative orders, court orders, administrative orders on consent, or judicial consent decrees issued to, or entered into, by parties under [CERCLA](#).
- Facilities that are subject to the jurisdiction, custody or control of the United States Government.

Some ineligible properties may be eligible with a “property specific determination.” Contact EPA for more information.

Community Description

The Redwood Marine Terminal II site (former pulp mill site) is located on the Samoa Peninsula in Humboldt County, California. Along with industrial and public lands, the Samoa Peninsula contains three small distinct communities: Samoa, Fairhaven, and Finntown. All communities on the peninsula historically relied heavily on the area’s logging and wood processing industries. In the past 150 years numerous industrial timber processing ventures have come and gone. The area was once home to world’s largest redwood mill and several pulp mills. The last working pulp mill on the Samoa peninsula permanently closed on September 28, 2010.

Existing uses within the area include a mix of residential, commercial, industrial, coastal dependent industrial, parks, and public uses. Notable non-residential uses within the peninsula include the Samoa Cookhouse, the DG Fairhaven Biomass Power Plant, the Fairhaven Business Park, the Samoa Drag Strip, the Eureka Municipal Airport, Redwood Marine Terminal I, Redwood Marine Terminal II, and County recreational parks.

The residents of the Samoa Census Designated Place (CDP) have a lower unemployment rate than the County, State and National rates. However, the residents of this community have a higher percentage of people living at or below the poverty level than the County, State and National rates. In the Samoa CDP, 98.8% percent of residents work outside of the area. Due to the decline in industry, there are very few jobs available on the Samoa peninsula.

Project Information

Assistance needed

What assistance does the applicant request from EPA? (Check all that apply):

- Phase I: Property records search and report
- Phase II: Environmental assessment (sampling, analysis, report)
- Analysis of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives: identification of cleanup options and costs

Time frame for proposed assistance

Is the time frame in which EPA assistance is needed, time sensitive?

- Time-sensitive
- Not time-sensitive

Proposed assistance completion date

When would you like the deliverable/assistance completed? Note: A Phase I will take a minimum of 3-4 months, and a Phase II a minimum of 8-9 months. Please factor these time frames into your response.

Month

Day

Year

If the project is “time sensitive,” please explain with date and timing details:

Is the applicant already working with a local or state regulatory agency concerning property contamination?

- Yes
- No

If yes, identify the local or state regulatory agency and briefly describe their involvement at the property.

The North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) has been involved with historical site characterization and remediation actions and continues to be maintain records related to existing onsite groundwater monitoring wells.

Briefly describe the conclusions from any previous property assessment activities. Identify client, consultant, and approximate dates of past studies.

Many studies have been conducted to characterize the extent of the contamination on targeted areas of the site. Most of the assessment activities to date have focused on either groundwater or aboveground materials associated with structures used for past site activities. There has been limited assessment of the upper 10 feet of subsurface soils in the proposed project area.

Some of the following studies occurred before the District became the site owner; studies included sampling from numerous boring and monitoring well locations. Past studies including date and preparer are listed below:

- 1997 Preliminary Site Investigation (LP)
- 2006 Site Characterization and Investigation Report (MFG)

- 2011 Conceptual Site Model (SHN)
- 2013 Updated Conceptual Site Model (SHN)
- 2013 Phase I Assessment (LACO)
- 2014 Phase II Assessment (LACO)
- 2014 Remedial Action Plan – Eastern Half (SHN)
- 2016 Analysis of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives for Debris Clean Up Project (SHN)
- 2018 Sampling and Analysis Plan - Debris Clean Up Project (SHN)

Briefly describe public interest and/or community involvement in property reuse planning activities to date.

The community has been involved and notified of site cleanup and reuse planning activities since the District acquired the site in 2013. Specific scoping meetings and workshops have been held since that time to support previous funding applications and grants. In addition, site reuse activities are regularly discussed at regularly scheduled Harbor District Commission meetings.

Briefly describe why this property is a priority for the applicant.

The Harbor District has a 30 year lease with an aquaculture company that wants to invest up to \$400 million over two phases. Analyzing and assessing the potential contamination is a top priority of the tenant. The Harbor District acquired the property with the vision of revitalizing the property’s dock facility, fostering economic development, and protecting the environmental quality of Humboldt Bay. Due to the decline in the timber industry, there are very few jobs available on the Samoa peninsula. One of the primary aims of the site’s clean-up is to facilitate port revitalization and infrastructure improvements to support aquaculture, freight movement and other coastal dependent uses that will provide living wage jobs.

Is the applicant currently receiving federal Brownfields assistance, such as a Brownfields Assessment grant or 128(a) funding?

- Yes
- No

If “Yes,” briefly describe why this funding cannot be used for this property.

The current EPA Brownfields Cleanup funding (Brownfields Grant Project BF-99T55301-0) is for targeted assessment and removal of contaminated debris piles and cannot be used for the proposed subsurface soils sampling and assessment.

Property Redevelopment

What are the redevelopment plans for the property, and what is the time frame for redevelopment?

The project area is planned to be redeveloped for aquaculture activities as soon as assessment, cleanup, and permitting are complete. The goal is to submit permit applications by March 2020.

Is funding in place, or anticipated, for redevelopment?

- Yes
- No

What are the funding sources?

The District has a lease with a private developer who will assist with assessment activities, including preparation and implementation of the sampling plan. The tenant is committed to cleaning up the property, but needs to assess and limit their liability to ensure that the project can proceed in a timely manner and within budget.