

**EPA REGION 10
BROWNFIELDS PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN (PIP)**

FOR

Wild Rivers Land Trust – EPA Cleanup Grant

March 1, 2024 – September 30, 2028

Address

**93639 Elk River Road
Curry County, OR 97465**

wildriverslandtrust.org

Overview

The purpose of the Public Involvement Plan (PIP) is to describe the Wild Rivers Land Trust (WRLT) strategy to address the needs and concerns of the community potentially affected by the proposed environmental work being conducted to address the remediation of the Western States Plywood Cooperative Mill Site, which is adjacent to the Elk River - one of Oregon's Wild and Scenic Rivers and less than three miles from the Pacific Ocean. The site received a \$1.94 million dollar EPA brownfields cleanup grant.

The PIP outlines how WRLT has involved, and will continue to involve affected tribal members, local residents and local organizations in the decision-making process regarding the environmental cleanup at the Site. The success of the environmental cleanup and subsequent reuse of the property hinges on informed public involvement in each step of the remediation process.

This PIP was prepared in accordance with EPA guidelines for public involvement on EPA-funded brownfields projects. It was prepared to facilitate education and involvement of stakeholders, and to encourage their participation in the project. It outlines individual steps for public involvement aimed at identifying and addressing public concerns and needs. This plan has been designed to be flexible and responsive to changes in the need for public information and community involvement and may be revised as necessary. This plan is also designed to ensure the project complies with EPA's grant requirements for public involvement.

Spokesperson and Information Repository

The spokesperson for this project is Mike Rosen, .
Contact Information:

Mike Rosen
mike@wildriverslandtrust.org

Copies of all environmental assessment reports will be located on WRLT's website www.wildriverslandtrust.org If physical copies are needed, please contact Mike Rosen for assistance at the above contact information.

All public meetings will be held in-person or virtually and be announced on WRLT's website www.wildriverslandtrust.org.

Site Description, Background and Ownership

The 17-acre Site is located in section 27 of township 32 south, range 15 west of the Willamette Meridian and includes Curry County tax lots 104, 900, and 901. Prior to construction of the mill, the Site was used as pasture by a local ranching family. The land has been largely vacant since a fire destroyed the mill in 1976 and is covered with vegetation and disturbed ground from former mill operations. After closure, the Site was divided into five parcels and sold to private individuals. In an effort to protect the land from development, three of the parcels were bought by Elk River Partners LLC (ERP) who then entered into a 99-year lease with WRLT for management of the site with an option to acquire the Site in the future. ERP was formed in 2018

specifically, to acquire properties in the Elk River watershed to support of salmon recovery efforts. The remaining two properties are currently open space as undeveloped land and are owned by a neighbor who has no plans to develop or change the use of the properties.

The site was added to the DEQ database due to reports of a glue spill in 1972. The contamination present at the Site is the result of normal plywood mill operations and, potentially in part due to the mill allowing employees to burn household refuse in the large industrial burners. Initially, Phase I Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs) were performed on tax lots 900 and 901. Phase II ESAs were later completed for tax lots 104 and 901 during November 2018. Hydrocarbons, metals, and formaldehyde, were identified across the two tax lots, and in January 2019, additional testing was completed in shallow soil for dioxin and furans. In December 2020, EPA delivered a Targeted Brownfields Assessment to WRLT further characterizing the site. In November 2022, a Phase I ESA was completed on tax lots 104, 901 and 900. Contaminants posing unacceptable risks to human health are dioxins and furans present in soil, sediments, and surface water.

Most of the Site is relatively flat at an elevation of approximately 80 feet above sea level. The eastern portion of tax lot 104 contains a slight topographic slope to Elk River. The Site is bordered by agricultural land to the west and north, rural residences to the east, and by Elk River Road (CR 208) to the south, which runs through the rural countryside and along the Elk River. Two ponds are present on the Site that were constructed as part of the former mill operations and are intersected by Bagley Creek, a tributary of the Elk River: the former log pond and the former fire suppression pond. Bagley Creek crosses the Site in a southwest to northeast direction, through the former fire suppression pond and former log pond and enters the Elk River near the northeast corner of the Site. These ponds were created by building an earthen dike on the southern end of the log pond, and by construction of a concrete spillway between the two ponds. These impoundment structures blocked fish from passing above the ponds, eliminating access to over 1 mile of spawning beds upstream from the Site and are one of the last two remaining fish passage barriers in the entire Elk River watershed.

CURRENT LOCAL PLANNING & ENVIRONMENTAL EFFORTS

The reuse strategy for the Site is to clean up the contamination, restore the land and waterways and protect the property for future generations. A major goal of this project is to restore fish passage to Bagley Creek. This project is part of a larger effort to restore habitat for Coho salmon in this region, which are listed as threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act. The reason for removing barriers to salmon is that eggs are laid in clear, cold streams, the salmon then swim out to the ocean where they live for 1-2 years and then return to the stream where they were hatched to spawn and continue the cycle. When barriers are present, salmon are unable to spawn and thus unable to reproduce. Cleaning up the legacy contamination at the Site will finally allow this ecological restoration to take place.

INTENDED AUDIENCE

The intended audience for this PIP includes: Brownfields Project Team and Taskforce members, representatives of government offices and agencies, community stakeholders, Tribal representatives and their communities and the general public.

Goals/Objectives of Public Participation

Remediating brownfields is a long-term, multi-step process. Keeping the public informed and involved can help achieve project goals. Priorities for public involvement include:

- Education about brownfields;
- Ensuring project environmental assessment objectives and activities are explained to the local community members that are most directly impacted;
- Soliciting community input regarding clean-up activities and redevelopment; and
- Consulting stakeholders, technical advisers, and community leaders for assistance in achieving assessment and public information objectives.

Brownfield Project Team

The Brownfield Project Team (Table 1.1) will be lead by Mike Rosen at WRLT.. He will also assist with grant management, and in evaluating the Site as an opportunity for habitat conservation. Charles Getter, Environmental Planner with WRLT Natural Resources NR Department will assist with managing the contractor (TBD) to conduct assessment and remediation activities. Dan McCue, WRLT Chief Financial Officer, will be WRLT financial lead for the project.

Table 1.1 Brownfield Project Team

Brownfield Project Team			
Personnel Name & Title	Organization	Project Organizational Role	Contact Info
Mike Rosen, Brownfields Manager	WRLT	Project Manager, lead contact for all project tasks	mike@wildriverslandtrust.org
Amy Knapp Pettit, Executive Director	WRLT	Executive Director	amy@wildriverslandtrust.org

**Contractor Support and Procurement - WRLT may procure one or more contractors as needed to support the various tasks under the cooperative agreement. WRLT will solicit contractor/s in compliance with competitive federal procurement requirements under 2 CFR Part 200 and 2 CFR Part 1500. WRLT will issue Requests for Proposals and or Requests for Qualifications as necessary for contractors who will provide additional technical expertise for project tasks.*

BROWNFIELD PROJECT PARTNERS

WRLT has identified several community partners for collaboration in implementation of this grant. Brownfield Project Partners who have agreed to participate in implementation of this grant are included in the table below (Table 1.2 on next page) where their roles are defined.

Table 1.2 Brownfield Project Partners

Brownfield Project Partners			
Personnel Name & Title	Agency	Project Organizational Role	Contact Info
Margaret Olson, Project Manager	EPA	Oversee grant and support grant management	olson.margaret@epa.gov
<i>Jerry Sorte Brownfield Specialist</i>	Business Oregon	Brownfields and funding support	Jerry.sorte@biz.oregon.org
Mary Camarata, Regional Solutions Coordinator	Oregon DEQ	Will provide overall brownfields assistance and oversight in the Voluntary Cleanup Program	Mary.camarata@deq.oregon.gov 541-687-7435 503-983-2277 (cell)

Community Outreach

The Brownfield Project Partners will work with WRLT to educate and inform the public about the project, its processes, and project milestones, strategically employing activities geared towards the intended audiences. Educating the general public about brownfields will allow for a foundation upon which further public involvement in the project can be built. In preparing outreach materials and activities, it should be assumed that the general public is not familiar with brownfields, the effects of their presence on the community, or the financial necessities of remediation.

CREATION OF INFORMATION REPOSITORY

An information repository (IR) was established at WRLT's office with certain project announcement and information on its website (see addresses listed previously on page 2), making all information pertaining to the project readily available to interested parties. The location of the repositories will be clearly stated in all public announcements. Materials to be included in the administrative record include: cooperative agreement work plan, site investigation reports, any proposed cleanup plans, Analysis of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives (ABCA), cleanup standards referenced, and responses to public comments.

PUBLIC NOTICE AND COMMENT

In beginning implementation of the project cleanup, WRLT will prepare brochures, stakeholder meetings, project signboards and other appropriate methods may be used to keep the public informed of the status of this project in general and of revitalization activities and results. Public meetings provide stakeholders an opportunity to comment on the proposed cleanup and revitalization plans and may be used on a quarterly basis depending on public interest. Outreach may also include participation in regularly scheduled meetings such as Tribal Council meetings, neighborhood meetings or other mechanisms which encourage interactive communication about the project.

Wild Rivers Land Trust EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant/Western States Plywood Site – December 2024

WRLT has enrolled the Western States Plywood Mill property into DEQ's Voluntary Cleanup Program (VCP) program to develop a cleanup plan, called a Voluntary Remediation Work Plan (VRWP). Within thirty (30) days of receiving the proposed Workplan, DEQ will initiate the public notification and comment requirements under the Oregon Code.

PROJECT UPDATES AND OTHER PUBLIC INFORMATION

WRLT's websites will have project updates, announcements and information on its website. The Project Manager or someone who the Brownfields Project Team designates will be responsible for responding to general questions and inquiries from the public and the media about this project.

BROWNFIELDS FACTSHEET

The Brownfields Project Team will create a one-page, double-sided factsheet regarding the project to be posted on WRLT's webpage and/or distributed to applicable community groups, tribal communities and other interested parties. Factsheets will:

- Use non-technical or jargon language to extent possible
- Use images to help clearly convey the message
- Include contact info for the Brownfields Project Team

The factsheet will focus on various issues, including, but not limited to:

- 1) Introduction of the project
- 2) Contact information for the project team
- 3) Explain general brownfield issues
- 4) Provide answers to frequently asked questions
- 5) Provide details regarding the Phase I and Phase II assessments
- 6) Provide project status updates

PRESS RELEASES

The Brownfields Project Team will circulate press releases to local newspapers (XX) and Tribal newspaper (XX) to encourage coverage of project details. Press releases shall occur in conjunction with public meetings or at specific project milestones.

WRLT PROJECT PAGE

A project page on WRLT's website, containing pertinent information about the project will be developed and updated regularly with project information, updates, and links to greater information about brownfields. This dedicated webpage connected to WRLT's website is anticipated to be launched by spring 2025.

PUBLIC OUTREACH AND INVOLVEMENT

WRLT will host 3 public meetings during the 4-year grant term to inform the public and solicit input on the project. The events will be held at key milestones which may include during planning stages and during cleanup. WRLT can hold public meetings virtually or in person depending on interest and content WRLT can also record presentations for posting on WRLT and partner websites, if needed. WRLT will prepare signage for display during the project to inform the public about project activities and note that it was funded by an EPA Brownfields Grant.

Objective: To inform and seek input from the community affected by the project.

Work Lead: WRLT will lead public involvement and will be supported by its Environmental Contractor, DEQ's VCP staff and Brownfield Project Partners.

Milestones/Deliverable Completion Dates:

MILESTON/DELIVERABLE	EST. COMPLETION DATE/S
Website/Updates/General Information Sharing	Summer 2025; On-going throughout grant period
Public Project Kickoff Cleanup Planning Meeting	Fall 2025
Program brochures/Fact Sheets	On-going throughout grant period
Press Releases to Local Media	On-going throughout grant period
Community Public Meetings	3 at key milestones