



# West Virginia Brownfields Assistance Center

Winter 2012 - 2013 Newsletter

Marshall University's West Virginia Brownfield Assistance Center (WVBAC), a state-mandated program within Marshall University's Center for Environmental, Geotechnical and Applied Sciences (CEGAS), Serving 22 Central and Southern West Virginia Counties

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## New WV "Blueprint" Communities - Southern WV Spotlight

The Blueprint Communities initiative, started in 2005 by FHL Bank Pittsburgh and supported by the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation, was created to assist in revitalizing older communities by training in leadership and capacity building, sound planning and encouragement of coordinated public and private funding investments. West Virginia has benefited greatly from this initiative, with ten initial "Blueprint Communities" in the program, leveraging more than \$26 Million in private and public investment.

Six communities have been announced as the newest participants in this program, all located in southern WV. The communities selected are: Bluefield, Hinton, Marlinton, Princeton, Richwood, and Sophia. These communities were chosen due to their regional proximity to the Summit Bechtel Family Boy Scout Reserve and the extensive impact this facility will have on the region. It is anticipated that this facility will transform the regional economy and bring new potential for development.

A kick-off event was held at Tamarack in Beckley in February 2013 to announce the

newest communities to participate in this program. The six communities will complete the training aspect of the project by November 2013, and will continue through December of 2014 with technical assistance activities. Each community will work with their team to implement a plan that focuses on developing a community assessment, outlining community aspirations, connecting resource providers with community leaders, and providing communities connection to resources to meet assessment needs.



Railroad Station next to the Historic Downtown Section of the Blueprint Community of Hinton



Historic Section of Sophia, one of six new Blueprint Communities (photo courtesy of Coal Heritage Area)

The WVBAC at Marshall University is reaching out to each of the communities as they work toward their goals. Dennis Jarvis, Economic Development Specialist with the WVBAC, stated "These communities will be following the Boy Scouts theme to 'Always Be Prepared', and we're excited at the opportunity to assist them with brownfield-related development opportunities. Since I'm from southern WV, I have a personal interest in helping these communities as they strive to meet their goals".



## **WVDEP Performing Petroleum Brownfield Site Investigations**

The WVDEP's Division of Land Restoration (DLR), with grant and project management assistance from the WVBAC, has begun site investigations on properties utilizing EPA brownfields assessment funding. The first site is the former Elkins City Garage property located at 11th Street and Barron Avenue in Elkins. This property is being evaluated primarily for potential petroleum impacts. The long-term plan includes selling the property so it can be returned to productive use, under the leadership of the Randolph County Economic Development Authority and City of Elkins.

The second site, located at 1125 Main Street in Milton, was at one time a drug store, and as far back as the 1930's, a service station. Underground storage tanks (UST's) are present on

the site, and haven't been used since the 1950's. The property has been purchased by Co-Ex Plastic Tooling, Inc., a small plastic die manufacturing business that is expanding its operations. UST's on the property must be properly closed out so the company can obtain financing for company expansion.

After it was determined by WVDEP, Underground Storage Tank Section personnel that there is no responsible party for these tanks, the DLR has taken the lead to see that the UST's are properly closed, and the property assessed to determine if petroleum impacts from the former gas station exists. Closure of the UST's and compilation of an environmental assessment is expected to be completed by April 2013.



*Former Elkins City Garage property*



*New Home of Co-Ex Plastic Tooling in Milton*

## **Ansted Starts Next Phase of Former High School Redevelopment**

Redeveloping brownfield properties can be a slow process, yet well worth the time and effort. Just ask Ansted Mayor Pete Hobbs. Ansted first started working on the closed Ansted High School property in 2009, as this site was the most prominent eye-sore in the town, yet had the greatest potential for positive redevelopment. After discussions with the WVBAC, a targeted brownfield assessment from EPA Region III was obtained to determine environmental impacts in the building and property. Results indicated only minor amounts of contamination, mostly in the form of asbestos. After additional interaction with the property owner, Ansted was able to secure title to the building and property, as a gift from the owner.

Now the next phase is well underway. "Cleaning out the building contents is our first priority", said Mayor Hobbs. "We've already had a metal recycler remove scrap metal, with more materials to be removed this Spring. Asbestos removal will also be addressed". In addition, Ansted hosted a public meeting, with help from Concord University and the WV Preservation Alliance, to determine how the building and property will best benefit the town. Current plans call for a public use facility that would house all town offices, a small museum with Ansted and former High School memorabilia, plus meeting facilities and small business incubator space.



*Above : Current View of Former Ansted High School*

*Below: Concord University Students Rendering of Former Ansted High School After Renovations*



## Morris Creek Watershed Installs Micro-Hydro Turbine Using Mine Water Discharge

*“Electricity generated from this installation will be used to power water monitoring and related equipment used by the watershed, and will be used to educate the local community, as well as watershed visitors and other watershed groups”*

The Morris Creek Watershed Association (MCWA), located near Montgomery, WV, is in the process of installing a 1.3 kW micro-hydro electric generating turbine. While this is a small turbine, it's water source is quite unique. The MCWA is using water discharging from a former coal mine to power the unit.

With assistance from Marshall University's Center for Environmental, Geotechnical and Applied Sciences (CEGAS), the MCWA was awarded a renewable energy demonstration grant from the West Virginia Division of Energy, in partnership with the Appalachian Regional Commission.

Electricity generated from this installation will be used to power water monitoring and related equipment used by the watershed, and will be used to educate the local community, as well as watershed visitors and other watershed groups, on hydropower generation. MCWA worked with West Virginia University Institute of Technology to design the system, which includes approximately 200 feet of piping to divert water from the mine discharge, with an estimated vertical drop of 30 feet and an estimated water flow of up to 117 gallons per minute.

Becoming operational by April of 2013, MCWA is developing an information fact sheet on system design and performance that other entities can use to target locations that may benefit from hydro-based power generation. Interests from various entities has already occurred, including the Boys Scouts of America and the WV National Guard, for educational and training purposes. The system is designed so an additional unit can be installed in the future to increase power output. For more information, visit the MCWA's website, located at [www.morriscreekwatershed.org](http://www.morriscreekwatershed.org).



*MCWA members installing piping to divert mine water discharge to micro-hydro turbine*



*Mine water discharge will generate electricity for watershed monitoring equipment*

## West Virginia and National Brownfields Conferences Announced



Don't miss ***“Brownfields 2013: Sustainable Communities Start Here”***

The National EPA Brownfields Conference is being held at the Georgia World Congress Center. Complete conference details are available at: [www.brownfieldsconference.org](http://www.brownfieldsconference.org)



The West Virginia Brownfields Conference is scheduled for September 12th and 13th, at Waterfront Hotel and Conference Center, Morgantown, WV. Complete details, including registration, conference exhibitor and sponsorship information is being provided at [www.wvbrownfields.org](http://www.wvbrownfields.org). A full agenda, including session details and educational offerings, will be available later this Spring. We hope to see you in Morgantown in September.



**Marshall University Center for  
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**WV Brownfields Assistance Center**

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*West Virginia Brownfields Assistance  
Center at Marshall University*

*“Brownfields: A Piece of the Economic  
Development Puzzle”*

Mercer Mingo Monroe Nicholas Pocahontas  
Putnam Raleigh Summers Wayne  
Webster Wyoming

## ***WVBAC Completing Surface Mine Land Development Packages***

For the past year, CEGAS and the WVBAC at Marshall University has been compiling data on multiple surface mine lands across southern and central WV. The purpose of these efforts is to produce Surface Mine Property Information Packages on select properties for future new developments. In the past, surface mining generally consisted of extracting the coal and reclaiming the property, most often for hay land/pastureland or forestland use. While some reclaimed mine lands have been reutilized for new business opportunities, thousands of acres of these lands yield minimal benefit to the landowner and local community.

With funding provided by the WV Division of Energy (WVDOE), through their Office of Coalfield Community Development, and the Appalachian Regional Commission, matched by WVBAC contributions, a few select properties have been evaluated for potential new development opportunities. Property information packages have been developed that summarizes available infrastructure and related site features, conditions and reclamation stages, plus landowner information and potential reuse options that are specific to the property. Reuse options may include various energy development, industrial / commercial uses, residential and /or recreational uses. George Carico, Environmental Manager of the WVBAC and Environmental Specialist at CEGAS, said “We’re finding out that most of the large landholding companies are quite interested in figuring out how to redevelop some of their properties where surface mining is complete, or nearing completion. These properties, in the past, have been largely overlooked for new developments. Hopefully we can help change traditional views of some of these properties, that

will ultimately bring about new developments beneficial to the land owners, nearby communities, and region.”



*Arch Coal Birch River Surface Mine Complex near Cowen has an extensive road network, large sections of flat reclaimed land, and electric and water utilities*

To date, three Property Information Packages have been completed, including properties in Webster County (Arch Coal - Birch River), Fayette County (PVR Partners - Alloy) and Kanawha County (PVR Partners - Slaughter Creek). Several other sites have been reviewed, with a couple of additional sites to have informational packages developed. Efforts are scheduled to be completed by July of 2013. Completed information packages will be made available on the WVDOE’s website ([www.wvcommerce.org/info/aboutcommerce/energy](http://www.wvcommerce.org/info/aboutcommerce/energy)) for public use later this year.