



HAWAII STATE
DEPARTMENT
OF HEALTH

HEER NEWS

The Hawaii Department of Health, Office of Hazard Evaluation and Emergency Response (HEER Office), has prepared this newsletter to provide select updates on recent and current HEER activities and announcements of future activities. With the newsletter, the HEER Office hopes to better inform the environmental community and the public of the roles and services that the agency offers.

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Teamwork Enables a Successful Removal Action at Ilio Point, Molokai

The HEER Office, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Emergency Response Section, and the EPA Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) Corrective Actions Office recently collaborated to oversee an emergency action by the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) Civil Engineering Unit. The purpose of the emergency action was to remove polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB)-contaminated debris and contaminated soil from a sensitive environmental area at Ilio Point on the northwestern tip of Molokai. Considering the remote location, the hazardous site conditions, the rugged terrain, and the potential for encountering unexploded ordnance (UXO), successful completion of this time-critical removal action was no small feat.

Closed to the public and located 10 miles down a very primitive dirt access road, Ilio Point is home to unique and precious environmental and cultural resources. Ilio Point harbors land snails, wedge-tail shearwaters, monk seals, koa trees, pili grass, ilima, and other endemic or indigenous vegetation. The Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) has proposed creation of a 261-acre Natural Area Reserve that will protect this wildlife as well as the lithified sand dunes, sea cliffs, native Hawaiian cultural resources, and fossilized bird bones at Ilio Point.



Above – Crews complete a successful cleanup in remote, harsh conditions.

From 1940 to 1949, the U.S. Navy used much of the northwestern part of Molokai, including Ilio Point, as an aerial bombing and strafing range, and later transferred the site to USCG for use as a Long Range Navigation (LORAN) Station. The immediate area was cleared of UXO for construction of the facility, and the larger property was superficially cleared. USCG actively operated the LORAN station until 1966, and later transferred it to DLNR. Due to remaining hazards from UXO, the state property remains closed to all public use. Hiking trails along the impacted shoreline continue to be used by local fisherman despite posted warning signs.

Feature Article

In 2007, long after the LORAN station was closed, a Coast Guard employee was looking at an old plot plan of the station and noticed the word “Dump” at the end of a dirt road that terminated at the cliff face. Three debris piles of LORAN Station waste were subsequently discovered at the bottom of a 75-foot cliff. Field investigations of the debris in 2008 and 2009 confirmed the presence of TSCA regulated PCBs, non-friable asbestos, and RCRA metals. After removal of transformer components and visible asbestos in spring 2010, additional sampling indicated unexpectedly high levels of PCBs in the remaining materials and soil, and DOH determined that immediate action was needed to remove the threat to nearby natural resources and human trespassers.

To quickly implement a rapid, safe and protective removal action before the winter storm season, DOH requested participation from both the RCRA and Emergency Response programs at EPA Region 9 to manage federal oversight of the planned removal. USCG began a time-critical removal action on October 19. Prior to workers entering the site, the entire road was surveyed for UXO, and all crews entering the site were trained in UXO response. Because of the vertical drop and harsh terrain, a Gradall Lift was used to raise waste from the debris piles near sea level to the waste holding areas atop the 75-foot cliff. Likewise, a Hurricane 500 vacuum loader was staged at the top of the cliff while laborers operated a vacuum hose at the bottom to remove sandy soil and all the small PCB-contaminated debris (glass, rusted metal flakes, soil, and sand). Teams at the bottom of the cliff had to keep in close communication with the teams at the top, so two-way radios, hand signals, and a spotter were used.



Above – Prior to cleanup, contaminated debris and soil at Ilio Point posed a significant threat to human health and sensitive natural resources.

The project goal was to remove 100 percent of 70 cubic yards (CY) of known contamination in debris piles and the upland shoreline area. In the end, more than 130 CY of debris and contaminated soil and scrap metal were removed, including over 90 CY of PCB and electrical component debris.

The non-contaminated metal waste was recycled; all other debris and soil was loaded into triwall boxes or supersacks for transportation and safe RCRA disposal off island. After the debris pile was removed, the remaining soil on top of and in between the talus rocks was removed by vacuuming until no visible soil remained. Because of the harsh road conditions, the USCG arranged for the U.S. Navy Construction Battalion Maintenance Unit 303, based out of Pearl Harbor, to use its Medium Tactical Vehicle Replacements and drivers to transport the waste and scrap metal off site.

Multi-incremental confirmation samples verified that concentrations of PCBs and metals were below the removal action target levels. A Removal Action Report is pending to determine whether the debris pile removal is fully protective of human health and the environment. The success of this logistically complicated project hinged on the cooperation of multiple government agencies and stakeholders working together, as well as the planning, hard work, and expertise of local environmental consultants.

DOH would like to extend its thanks to the Molokai Land Trust, who graciously shared their knowledge of the unique local ecosystem and cultural history of Ilio Point, as well as the DLNR and Molokai Ranch who granted access to the site and the access road, and worked with DOH to iron out the difficult logistics. We are grateful to US EPA for its active participation in on-site response activities and ecological risk assessment assistance. The U. S. Navy Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit Three provided critical UXO support to allow the teams to work safely on the site.



Workshops, Forums, and Trainings

PIBRT Brought Together through Multi-Day Workshop in Hawaii

In May, the Pacific Islands Brownfields Response Team (PIBRT) met in Honolulu for a multi-day workshop where team members shared their experiences with environmental programs, technical solutions, policy, and funding. The PIBRT was created to establish regional support for the development and enhancement of Response Programs under Section 128(a) of the Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act. The PIBRT member agencies include American Samoa (AS) EPA, Guam EPA, Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), and the HDOH. Team members seek to enhance their respective response programs through cooperation, coordination, and leveraging of resources. PIBRT also hopes to bring greater recognition and attention to the unique challenges and accomplishments of response programs in the Pacific Islands.

During the PIBRT visit, all divisions of the HEER Office pitched in to give presentations, assist with logistics, discuss common issues, and answer questions. Three days of instruction included classroom, field, and laboratory training on multi-incremental sampling. A Hawai'i Emergency Response Program Workshop included a tour of the Hawaii Oil Spill Response Center, which introduced participants to the Clean Island Council; the Hawaii Area Contingency Management Plan; roles and responsibilities of an Incident Command System, and field equipment used during emergency response. According to Lieutenant Commander (LCDR) Matt Vojik, Technical Services Manager of the AS-EPA, "This was a valuable opportunity for AS-EPA staff to gain field experience with multi-increment sampling methods and take a first-hand look at the different components of environmental response programs in Hawaii. The [2011 Hawaii Build and Buy Green + Brownfields Redevelopment + Green Workforce Development Conference & Expo] also provided a lot of useful information on Brownfields and green-building concepts, many of which we plan to demonstrate in the on-going reconstruction of the AS-EPA office building in American Samoa."

Several members from AS-EPA, CNMI DEQ, and CNMI Department of Public Lands were able to participate. Regretfully, representatives from the Guam EPA were unable to attend this event, but presentation materials were made available to them. The PIBRT workshop was a rare opportunity for all these parties to gather and discuss unique aspects of their programs and learn from each other. The event was successful because so many people with varied experiences came together to share their knowledge, and everyone was excited about learning from each other. "On behalf of our Director, Fanuatele Dr. Toafa Vaiaga'e, AS-EPA would like to thank the HEER Office for their hard work and hospitality in hosting such a diverse and successful workshop," remarked LCDR Vojik.



Far left – Equipment used for the workshop demonstration of MIS sampling techniques. Left – Roger Brewer of the HEER Office demonstrates the process for setting up a decision unit.



Workshops, Forums, and Trainings

Fifth Hawaii Brownfields Forum Success Story

The HEER Office collaborated with two other state agencies — the Hawaii Department of Business Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT) and the Hawaii Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR) — to conduct the Hawaii Build and Buy Green + Brownfields Redevelopment + Green Workforce Development Conference and Expo, held May 24, 2011. This year is the first the three stand-alone events were brought together as one. The combined event focused on regeneration and reuse of contaminated land, renewable energy, green buildings, and green workforce development. More than 400 participants and five exhibitors attended.

One of the many benefits of the combined event is that it provided an opportunity to make connections between Brownfields redevelopment and sustainable technologies such as renewable energy. For example, the Brownfields redevelopment track included a presentation on a solar field constructed at a former steel manufacturing site that was cleaned up with HDOH HEER Office oversight and achieved site closure with restricted use. Brownfields properties typically make ideal sites for renewable energy projects because they provide an economically viable reuse for land with significant cleanup costs or low real estate demand. In addition, building green projects on Brownfields preserves “greenspace” by taking the stress off of undeveloped land for new construction projects and provides job opportunities. Providing real-world case studies and take-away resources such as information on funding opportunities made this event successful. Visit the HEER Office website to learn more about the conference and to download presentations.



Left – A photovoltaic (PV) solar field to be constructed atop a brownfield located in western Oahu. The site is the former Hawaiian Western Steel (HWS) waste pile. HWS converted scrap steel to rebar and 100,000 cubic yards of waste material was disposed of at the site. In 1992, cleanup for the site began with DOH oversight. The waste was consolidated and capped and the groundwater was monitored. In 2006, DOH issued a post-closure permit for the site restricting future site activities as non-intrusive. In 2011, DOH approved a permit modification and allowed the PV farm to be constructed on top of the cap.

Right – Stuart Yamada, Division Chief of the DOH Environmental Management Division, speak about electronic permitting at the Fifth Brownfields Forum in May 2011.



Announcements

EPA Brownfields Program Fiscal Year 2012 Grant Funding

EPA's Brownfields Program empowers states, communities, and other stakeholders to work together to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse Brownfields. A Brownfield site is real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. In 2002, the Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act was enacted to help states and communities around the country clean up and revitalize Brownfields sites. Under this law, EPA provides financial assistance to eligible applicants through four competitive grant programs described below.

- **Assessment Grants** – Assessment grants provide funding for a grant recipient to inventory, characterize, assess, and conduct planning and community involvement related to Brownfields sites.
- **Revolving Loan Fund Grants**- The purpose of Revolving Loan Fund Grants is to enable states, political subdivision, and Indian tribes to make low interest loans to carry out cleanup at Brownfields properties.
- **Cleanup Grants** – Cleanup grants provide funding for a grant recipient to carry out cleanup at Brownfields sites.
- **Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training Grants** – Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training Grants are designed to provide funding to eligible entities, including nonprofit organizations, to recruit, train and place predominantly low-income and minority, unemployed, and underemployed residents of communities affected by solid and hazardous waste with the skills needed to secure full-time, sustainable employment in the environmental field and in the assessment and cleanup work taking place in their communities.

The table below provides a summary of previous grant recipients for the State of Hawaii.

Previous Grant Recipients for the State of Hawaii

| Grant Recipient | Grant Type | Announcement Year | Funding Amount |
|---|---------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| State of Hawaii | Assessment | 2000 | \$200,000 |
| Anahola Homesteaders Council | Assessment | 2001 | \$200,000 |
| Anahola Homesteaders Council | Cleanup | 2004 | \$196,334 |
| Kauai County | Assessment | 2004 | \$200,000 |
| State of Hawaii | Assessment | 2004 | \$200,000 |
| University of Hawaii | Job Training | 2004 | \$196,877 |
| Hawaii County | Assessment | 2005 | \$200,000 |
| City and County of Honolulu | Assessment | 2006 | \$400,000 |
| State of Hawaii DBEDT | Revolving Loan Fund | 2006 | \$2,000,000 |
| Hawaii Department of Hawaiian Homelands | Cleanup | 2009 | \$200,000 |



Announcements

Eligible grant applicants include:

- Government entities
- Non-profit organizations (clean-up grants)
- Must own property for cleanup grants – but not be the responsible party

The EPA Brownfields Program fiscal year 2012 grant funding is currently under way. An estimated timeline is provided below:

- **September 2011:** Application guidelines available on the EPA website
- **October 2011: Proposals due**
- **April – May 2012:** Awards announced
- **June – August 2012:** Work plans finalized and grants awarded

Don't miss out! Grant guidelines resources and contact information to learn more about these funding opportunities are provided below:

- **Free Grant Guidelines Webinars:** www.epa.gov/region9/brownfields
 - Archived presentations of completed webinars are available.
 - An additional Webinar detailing FY2012 grant guideline changes will be available (time and date to be announced soon).
- **TABEZ:** www.tabez.org
- **CCLR:** www.cclr.org
- **EPA:** www.epa.gov/brownfields

Contact Information

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Hawaii Department of Health, Hilo Office Has Moved

The new location of the Hawaii County District Health Office is:

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