

SUMMARY OF PROGRESS ON BROWNFIELDS CONFERENCE RECOMMENDATIONS

PROVIDE LEADERSHIP AND COORDINATION -- GOVERNOR AND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

REC	Establish an Ombudsman's Office for properties recycling and Brownfields in governor's office
Action	Grow Smart scheduled to have meeting with Governor's policy staff in July
REC	Governor's Council on Growth Issues should recommend specific policies for supporting Brownfields
Action	Working on Brownfields is listed as agenda item for Council for FY 2002 (begins July 1, 2001)

STRENGTHENING STATE AGENCY ORGANIZATION AND STAFFING

REC	Reorganize DEM's approach to Brownfields to serve site cleanup projects more efficiently.
Action	DEM's Office of Waste Management has organized a task force of stakeholders to work with the department on streamlining permitting and strengthening the program. A number of conference attendees serve on the task force. Grow Smart attended the first meeting of that task force and will track the task force's progress. DEM is also in the process of filling two staff vacancies, and the people hired will work on Brownfields.
REC	Assign at least one or two more full time staff to Office of Waste Mgmt for Brownfields program
REC	Explore developing a Licensed Environmental Professional (LEP) program for Rhode Island.
	We encourage the Society of Environmental Professionals to consider forming a task force to undertake this exploration.
REC	Ensure that there is adequate funding for EDC to have at least one full-time staff person working on Brownfields
REC	EDC should make promotion of RI's Brownfields program a high priority
REC	Written materials also need to be upgraded. We urge DEM and EDC to establish specific deadlines for upgrading their communication materials and to allocate resources within their budgets to bring in outside consultants to develop the web site and achieve effective and expeditious changes in printed materials.
Action	DEM and EDC are jointly developing a Brownfields web site, www.ribrownfields.org The web site, which will be up shortly in skeleton form and will then be expanded and enhanced over the next few months, is designed to meet the needs of developers, current property owners, municipalities, and citizens. The web site will include information on assessment and remediation regulations, model settlement agreements, financial tools, and eventually will link to an inventory of sites in Rhode Island.
Action	Brownfields Task Force has had some discussions of printed materials needed.
Action	DEM and EDC have identified a central point of contact within each agency to respond to Brownfields inquiries. EDC point-of-

	contact Adrienne Southgate and DEM point-of-contact Kelly Owens are in communication to ensure that all requests for information can be fielded by either agency.
REC	Develop a statewide inventory of potential redevelopment sites
Action	GSRI has hired Harvard graduate student for summer to work on inventory -- advisory committee from DEM, EDC and SWP is will assist him
FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE	
REC	Governor should establish a working group to develop a Brownfields financial incentive/assistance proposal for 2002 session.
Action	Legislation is being introduced by House for a Legislative Commission -- GSRI helped to draft
Action	GSRI has hired graduate student to do more research on financial incentives/assistance
REC	A task force should be assembled immediately to review the results to date of the Mill Revitalization Act, to analyze current legislative proposals to modify the Act, and to recommend any further revisions deemed necessary to strengthen the act in a cost effective manner.
Action	After evaluation, GSRI decided to put more energy into Commercial Tax Credit.
REC	Ombudsman's Office should help municipalities/developers identify federal funding
Action	
PROTECTION AGAINST LIABILITY	
REC	Establish environmental insurance program for Brownfields, similar to Massachusetts
Action	EDC is doing some research on this; GSRI made work on as well.
REC	Provide statutory relief for municipalities, redevelopment authorities, and community development corporations.
Action	
COORDINATION BETWEEN STATE AGENCIES AND MUNICIPALITIES	
REC	DEM and EDC need to work with municipalities
Action	DEM and the EDC have sent out a joint letter to cities and towns offering to meet with individual municipalities to provide information about the Brownfields program and assistance currently available. In addition, they plan to hold regional information meetings for municipal government representatives. GSRI will probably assist with those meetings.
REC	Municipalities should encourage Brownfields redevelopment by forgiving back taxes, waiving local permitting fees
Action	Grow Smart is disseminating the report " <i>Revitalizing Brownfields: How Can Rhode Island Do More?</i> " to all local chief elected officials and city/town planners in the state.

ARSENIC LEVELS	
REC	DEM should raise standard for reporting arsenic concentrations
Action	DEM is evaluating current program.
PUBLIC EDUCATION AND INFORMATION ABOUT EXISTING PROGRAMS	
REC	General public awareness is critical for an issue that is so complex and negatively perceived. Some efforts can begin immediately via the media. We were disappointed by the lack of media attention to the Brownfields conference itself, although Mayor Bollwage's presence in Rhode Island for the conference did result in an Op Ed piece in the <i>Providence Journal</i> and an interview in the <i>Providence Business News</i> . Grow Smart has used the release of the recommendations report as another opportunity to generate some media coverage, and planners in several communities have helped to identify projects that could "localize" the subject for the media. (What is
REC	We also encourage conference attendees to think about ways to use conferences, newsletters and other public information outlets to educate their individual constituencies about the Brownfields issue and to relate Brownfields to their constituencies' specific interests. For example, the Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission will include a Brownfields session in its spring conference.
REC	If specific programmatic goals, such as a bond issue to finance Brownfields redevelopment assistance or new legislation, are introduced, then there will be a need for an orchestrated public education campaign.
SUPPORT FEDERAL BROWNFIELDS LEGISLATION	