

Northern Maine Development Commission Application Information Sheet

1. Applicant Identification: Northern Maine Development Commission
11 West Presque Isle Road, Caribou, Maine 04736
Aroostook County
2. Website URL: www.nmdc.org
3. Funding Requested:
 - a. Assessment Grant Type: Community-wide
 - b. Federal Funds Requested: \$500,000
4. Location: Northern Maine Development Commission's (NMDC) Service area includes Aroostook and Washington Counties in Maine. Activities for this project will only include **Aroostook County**. The area consists of 2 cities, 65 municipalities, and 105 unorganized townships, 6,828 square miles, and approximately 67,105 people.
5. Target Area and Priority Site Information:
 - Target Area #1: Easton Village Center(Census Tract 9517)
 - Priority Site #1: Easton Fire Department, 3 Station Road, Easton Maine 04704
 - Target Area 2: Downtown Van Buren (Census Tract 9502)
 - Priority Site #2; Former Covenant, 154 Main Street, Van Buren Maine 04785
 - Target Area #3: Downtown Eagle Lake (Census Tract 9507)
 - Target Site #2: Mercy Home, 3400 Aroostook Road, Eagle Lake, Maine 04739
6. Contacts
 - a. Project Director:
Hannah Huston, Community Development Specialist/Project Manager
(207) 768-1420
hhuston@nmdc.org
PO Box 779, Caribou, Maine 04736
 - b. Chief Executive/Highest Ranking Elected Official:
Robert P. Clark, Executive Director
(207) 551-5844
relark@nmdc.org
PO Box 779, Caribou, Maine 04736

Population: Aroostook County 67,105

 - a. Easton, Maine: 1,320
 - b. Van Buren Maine; 2,038
 - c. Eagle Lake, Maine 772

8. Other Factors

Other Factors	Page #
Community Population is 15,000 or less	1
The applicant is, or will assist, a federally recognized Indian Tribe or United States Territory	N/A
The priority site(s) is impacted by mine scarred land.	N/A
The priority site (s) is adjacent to a body of water (i.e., the border of the priority site(s) is contiguous or partially contiguous to a body of water or would be contiguous or partially contiguous with a body of water but for a street, road, or other public thoroughfare separating them).	2
The priority site (s) is in a federally designated flood plain.	2
The reuse of the priority site(s) will facilitate renewable energy from wind, solar, or geothermal energy.	3
The reuse of the priority site(s) will incorporate energy efficiency measure.	3
The proposed project will improve local resilience to the impacts of extreme weather events and natural disasters.	1
At least 30% of the overall project budget will be spent on eligible reuse/area-wide planning activities, as described in Section 3.A.(2) for priority site(s) within the target area(s).	8 and 9
The target area(s) is impacted by a coal-fired power plant that has recently closed (2015 or later) or is closing.	N/A

9. Letter from the State or Tribal Environmental Authority: Attached.

10. Releasing Copies of Applications: Not applicable. Application does not contain confidential, privileged, or sensitive information.



JANET T. MILLS
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION



MELANIE LOYZIM
COMMISSIONER

November 21, 2025

Northern Maine Development Commission
Attn: Robert P. Clark, Executive Director
PO Box 779
Caribou, ME 04736

Dear Robert P. Clark:

The Maine Department of Environmental Protection (Department) acknowledges that the Northern Maine Development Commission plans to conduct assessments of brownfields sites and is applying for a FY26 Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Brownfields Assessment Grant.

The Northern Maine Development Commission has developed an application requesting federal Brownfields Site Assessment Grant funding to assess Brownfields sites in their service area.

If the Northern Maine Development Commission receives funding, the Department will assign project management staff to conduct eligibility determinations and provide review and comment on all assessments, workplans, quality assurance plans, and health and safety plans. For sites where cleanup is pursued, the Department's Voluntary Response Action Program (VRAP) staff will provide review and comment on investigation reports and remedial workplans, and will provide oversight, as necessary, of their contractor's work at the properties. Upon successful completion of remedial activities at a property, the VRAP will provide protections from Department enforcement actions by issuing a Commissioner's Certificate of Completion.

Please feel free to call me directly at (207) 215-8597 should you have any questions regarding this letter.

Sincerely,

Christopher Redmond
Department Brownfields Coordinator
Voluntary Response Action Program Manager
Bureau of Remediation and Waste Management, Division of Remediation
Maine Department of Environmental Protection

cc: EPA Brownfields Region 1

AUGUSTA
17 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0017
(207) 287-7688 FAX: (207) 287-7826

BANGOR
106 HOGAN ROAD, SUITE 6
BANGOR, MAINE 04401
(207) 941-4570 FAX: (207) 941-4584

PORTLAND
312 CANCO ROAD
PORTLAND, MAINE 04103
(207) 822-6300 FAX: (207) 822-6303

PRESQUE ISLE
1235 CENTRAL DRIVE, SKYWAY PARK
PRESQUE ISLE, MAINE 04769
(207) 764-0477 FAX: (207) 760-3143

EPA Community-wide Assessment Proposal Narrative

(1) PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION

Target Area and Brownfields a. Overview of Brownfield Challenges and Description of Target Area

The Northern Maine Development Commission (NMDC) is a nonprofit membership organization serving the Aroostook-Washington Economic Development District (AWEDD). The district is comprised of 4 cities, 95 towns, and 146 unorganized territories, and called home by almost 99,000 residents between the two counties.

The geographic boundary for this grant is Aroostook County. Aroostook alone is comprised of 2 cities, 53 towns, and 112 unorganized territories, as well as 9 plantations. There are just over 67,000 residents living in Aroostook County, with Presque Isle being the largest city (8,736). Since its most recent brownfield work done in 2016, NMDC anticipates the number of brownfields to have increased from 72 sites. For over 150 years, the economy of the AWEDD has been deeply tied to the forestry and agriculture sectors. Both industries produce hazardous substances and petroleum-based products that pose risks to environmental and public health. Within the region, groundwater contamination typically stems from leaking underground or above-ground storage tanks, agricultural practices, and locations where hazardous substances have been used, stored, or improperly disposed of. The scale and nature of these operations left lasting environmental impacts such as groundwater, surface water, and soil contamination. **The contraction of these once dominant and prosperous industries reshaped the county's economic and social landscape, leaving behind a number of blighted brownfield sites.**

The incongruent relationships between the built environment and the natural environment, including both human and animal populations, are seen county-wide. Following the closure of Loring Air Force Base and the gradual decline of the forestry and agriculture sectors, Aroostook County began to face the heavy effects of blight, deteriorating and outdated infrastructure, reduced tax bases, a diminished workforce, and declining levels of private and public investment. These shifts ultimately function as a cause and effect of declining populations, which are especially low-income.

Residents in Northern Maine rely heavily on groundwater for their drinking water supplies. Within the AWEDD communities, 16,563 housing units (43%) have an individual drilled well and 2,375 units (6%) have a dug well. Residents with wells, especially the most vulnerable populations, such as children (12,229, 2024 Census) and the elderly (17,759, 2024 Census), who live near contaminated sites are potentially exposed to these contaminants. Aroostook's housing stock is considerably outdated and antiquated. Roughly 65% of housing units were built prior to 1980. Unsuitable housing stock and incredibly low new construction rates have led to a significant housing shortage across the county, much like the state and nation. These conditions, coupled with rising housing costs, lowered property values due to proximity to contaminated sites, and reduced income from lost jobs in the area makes relocation nearly impossible leaving sensitive populations at higher risk. Ultimately, the community is not able to tackle these brownfield issues on their own without external funding further emphasizing the need for this grant funding. **The target areas of this grant will be the Town of Easton, the Town of Van Buren, and the Town of Eagle Lake.**

The Town of Easton has a population of 1,320 (2020 Census) and was settled and incorporated in 1856 and 1865 respectively. Located along the Canadian border, the community places strong value on the vitality of its natural environment—for its role in sustaining local livelihoods. Like many communities in the region, Easton's early development was shaped by the forestry and agriculture sectors, including numerous mills operating throughout the 1800s. This industrial foundation continues today with the presence of McCain Foods and Huber Engineered Woods, significant economic anchors in the community. Nearly 30% of the population is aged 65 or older, and 17% is aged 18 or younger.

The Town of Van Buren has a population of 2,038 (2020 Census) and was first settled in 1790 and later incorporated in 1881. Due to its similar geography and location along the Canadian border, Van Buren developed quickly as a lumbering and milling community. These industries continued to shape the local economy throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. Van Buren felt the impacts of Loring's closure heavily, at which point the town's population began a steady decline and loss of critical revenue flow. A small, decreasing, and aging workforce paired with critical shrinking of the forestry sector has led Van Buren to a feeble economic state, presently dominated by the health care and social assistance sectors. Over a third of the Van Buren population is 65 years or older, and 16.4% are under the age of 18, collectively making up over half of the population. There are two previously identified brownfield sites, with more suspected. It is unknown how many other brownfields might be within the town, though outdated infrastructure is present throughout. **The Town of Eagle Lake has a population of 772 (2020 Census) and was first organized in 1859 and later designated as a**

town in 1911. Eagle Lake, another longstanding lumbering town, has faced population fluctuations since the decline of former prosperous industry. The priority site, presently owned and formerly operated by Northern Maine General, housed the first hospital north of Bangor in the state of Maine. The facility transitioned from the hospital to a care facility during the mid 1950's. The site remained a prominent employer for the town until its closure; however, the remainder of Northern Maine General's facilities continue to be an essential employer in the town. The loss of a previously bustling logging industry in and around Eagle Lake has led to a significant decline in population, ultimately leading to staffing shortages which further led to the demise of the priority site. 44.8% of the population is 65 years or older, and nearly 10% are over the age of 85. Just 4.3% of the population is 5 years or younger. Similarly to Easton, there are suspected brownfields within Eagle Lake, though the number is uncertain.

The largest threats to the small and sensitive communities throughout Aroostook County lie within the unknown. Systemically identifying, documenting, and addressing contaminated and blighted sites throughout the region is a vital step to take towards reclaiming and redeveloping resilient communities. The EPA's EnviroAtlas highlights the Cities of Presque Isle and Caribou, along with the towns of Houlton, Ashland, Fort Fairfield, and Fort Kent as 'hotspots', each with at least four preknown, confirmed sites.

b. Description of the Priority Brownfield Site(s) Within the Town of Easton, our priority site is the Easton Fire Department, located on a .75-acre lot at 3 Station Road. It has been identified as a priority site for investment and redevelopment due to significant structural concerns and desire as reuse as a community asset. The building on site was a fire station, constructed in 1959. It has been deemed structurally unfit to support the weight and operational needs of modern fire apparatus—equipment essential for maintaining public safety and response efficiency. Structural concerns along with suspected contamination have led to limited use of this building and the relocation of previous tenants, rendering the site underutilized to unusable. These current barriers to potential reuse simultaneously pose environmental health risks to the surrounding community, Given the structure's proximity to Prestile Stream (federal floodplain), greater care must be taken to ensure that whatever contaminants might be located are dealt with properly to mitigate potential harm to the waterway and its subsequent ecosystem.

The priority site in the Town of Van Buren is the former St. Brunos Convent located at 152 Main Street on a .46-acre lot. Prior evaluations have indicated significant presences of asbestos throughout the lone structure, along with significant structural concerns including a collapsed roof. Given its central location, the convent site is of particular interest for redevelopment as housing. Discussions have lent themselves to the idea of repurposing the site as affordable housing, however, the current condition has served as the primary deterrent for investment. Van Buren is of particular interest for redevelopment given its impressively low energy costs thanks to its private power company, Van Buren Light & Power District.

The priority site in the Town of Eagle Lake is the Mercy and Franciscan Home, a former nursing home and assisted living facility. These facilities were owned and operated by Northern Maine General. Functioning as separate homes, they are physically connected via a breezeway. Located at 3400 and 3402 Aroostook Road in Eagle Lake on a 5.4-acre lot, the former facility is located centrally to the small downtown, as well as the still-functioning Northern Maine General facilities. The two structures are still owned by NMG and are currently for sale, however confirmed presence of asbestos throughout various sections of either structure is a barrier to reuse and further action. The two buildings are generally structurally sound; however, they are considerably outdated and there is an anticipated presence of asbestos throughout the remaining sections that have yet to be renovated under NMG ownership. Given the facilities former uses as living arrangements, there has been slight circulation of ideas regarding the reconfiguration of spaces to accommodate broader housing needs throughout the town and region. Additionally, the historic significance of the Franciscan Home is locally acknowledged. As the first hospital north of Bangor in the state of Maine, originally opened in 1907, the building has a long-standing reputation.

c. Identifying Additional Sites NMDC is looking to solicit potential target sites via email contact with town managers throughout Aroostook County. Provided towns respond to the email solicitation, the idea is that a 'master list' will be compiled. At the very least the solicited responses are anticipated to be put into an organized datasheet noting the location, prior use, etc. A previously established but since dormant Brownfields Driving Committee is anticipated to be reactivated to provide structured and established points of conversation and collaboration regarding the prioritization of sites. Sites brought to the committee will then be prioritized

based on the following criteria: overall development potential; redevelopment plan in place; stimulate other projects in the community; return on investment (job creation, impact to tax base); and risk to human health and the environment.

Revitalization of the Target Area d. Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans

Aroostook County, much like the rest of the nation, has faced an intensifying housing crisis. As of 2023, nearly 65% of the county's housing stock was built prior to 1980. Not only is the housing stock old, outdated, and inefficient, but it is unaffordable and fails to meet the needs of the large senior populations present in the county. Discussions regarding both the Van Buren and Eagle Lake priority sites have referenced housing as a primary interest for potential reuses of what could potentially be salvaged of current structures, or the space remaining when the current structures are deconstructed. Given both sites' locations within their respective towns, their centrality is a primary appeal to the potential as housing units. Among those that have developed comprehensive plans, there is an echoed mission to enhance recreational opportunities and accessibility. The Town of Easton, which had completed a comprehensive plan in 2016, has expressed interest in potentially repurposing the infrastructure at 3 Station Road as a recreation center and community food pantry, improving upon current makeshift facilities that are dysfunctional for current demands and community interests.

e. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy Completion of Brownfields assessments and the initiation of redevelopment activities within the target areas and geographic boundary are expected to catalyze economic revitalization and renewed community investment across Aroostook County. Addressing long-vacant and underutilized properties through a coordinated, community-centered approach is a critical first step toward restoring these sites as productive community assets. For the Mercy and Franciscan Home and St. Bruno's Convent sites, anticipated redevelopment concepts are oriented toward addressing documented housing needs within the Eagle Lake and Van Buren communities. Potential reuse scenarios include rehabilitation of existing structures where feasible or redevelopment of the parcels to support new housing opportunities. In either case, redevelopment would directly address environmental and public health concerns while responding to local housing shortages. The Eagle Lake site also includes existing greenspace that presents an opportunity for complementary community-focused reuse. Given the site's proximity to Eagle Lake, the parcel could support a community park, passive recreation area, or preservation of open space. Such reuse would directly address the documented lack of recreational access. By establishing a clear and transparent understanding of site-specific conditions, assessment results will reduce uncertainty, inform appropriate cleanup and reuse strategies, and enable redevelopment plans that address climate resilience, environmental health risks, and social vulnerabilities experienced by residents.

Strategy for Leveraging Resources f. Resources Needed for Site Reuse NMDC and its municipal partners are eligible for and actively pursue multiple federal, state, and private funding sources to support environmental assessment, remediation, and redevelopment of brownfield sites. NMDC has extensive experience coordinating and administering federal and state grants and serving as a regional fiscal agent for small rural communities with limited local capacity. At the state level, the project area is eligible for funding through the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Brownfields Program, including the Brownfields Redevelopment Fund, Voluntary Response Action Program (VRAP), and petroleum-related cleanup resources. The Maine Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and the Northern Border Regional Commission (NBRC) are additional sources for infrastructure improvements and site reuse implementation. For housing-related reuse concepts, MaineHousing programs and Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) are potential future funding mechanisms. This grant will directly stimulate additional investment by reducing uncertainty, quantifying environmental risks, and establishing clear cleanup pathways. Completion of site assessments will position the priority sites to compete for cleanup grants, attract private development partners, and leverage state and federal redevelopment resources. For communities with limited tax base and staff capacity, EPA Brownfields funding is often the sole catalyst for advancing blighted properties toward productive reuse.

g. Use of Existing Infrastructure This grant will facilitate the reuse of existing infrastructure by enabling environmental due diligence that is necessary to safely reintegrate underutilized properties into the local built environment. The priority sites are located within established municipal centers and are already served by core infrastructure, including paved roads, water and sewer (where available), electric power, and

telecommunications. This grant will support cost-effective redevelopment, reduce environmental risk, and advance sustainable land use patterns within the target communities.

(2) COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community Need

a. The Community's Need for Funding

Aroostook County has experienced sustained population decline since the late 1990s, driven largely by the loss of critical employment opportunities and rising housing and living costs. Both Eagle Lake and Van Buren have seen drastic and rapid population decreases of roughly 24% between 2013 and 2023, Eagle Lake with a population of 533 and Van Buren with a population of 1,836 as of 2023. Compared to state and national values, all three target areas see higher rates of poverty and lower median household income, as well as notably higher elderly rates.

The priority sites are in towns with notably high percentages of the population below the poverty line.

According to the 2023 American Community Survey, Van Buren has a poverty rate of 24.7%, almost double of the national average (12.4%). Easton has a poverty rate of 15%, also notably higher than the national average, while the entirety of Aroostook County has a poverty rate of 15.7%, showcasing the immense need that exists throughout each target area and the entire county.

Easton, Van Buren, and Eagle Lake, like most municipalities in Aroostook County, are classified as very small communities under EPA standards, each with a population under 10,000, as well as limited administrative and financial capacity. Population loss, an aging tax base, and extremely high poverty rates all severely constrain each town's ability to secure funding for environmental assessment, remediation, and reuse. As a result, properties throughout the target areas sit idly with known or suspected contamination, creating even more barriers to redevelopment and economic recovery. This EPA Grant is essential to meeting community needs, sparking investment and revitalization, and restoring the safety and health of these towns.

b. Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations

Significant out-migration among younger families and working-age individuals, leaving behind aging residents with limited geographic mobility within and beyond the region. The most prevalent sensitive populations throughout the target areas include older adults, people living in poverty, and individuals with disabilities. Easton's population is 29.2% older adults, while Van Buren has 35.6% older adults and Eagle Lake has an even more significant 46.8% - nearly half of this micro town's population being 65 and older. These values substantially exceed both the state and national averages. Between 2013 and 2023, the senior population increased by 5.8% while the county's total population declined by approximately 4%, further intensifying age-related vulnerability.

Disability prevalence emphasizes the vulnerability of populations in each target area. According to CDC PLACES estimates, 38.4% of adults aged 18 or older in Aroostook County were living with a disability as of 2023. Census data also shows that 32.2% of the population in Eagle Lake has a disability, while 35.7% of the population in Van Buren falls in the same category. Across all disability categories measured, including ambulatory, cognitive, independent living, hearing, self-care, and vision, prevalence rates consistently exceed statewide levels. In addition, the county experiences elevated rates of chronic health conditions, with an estimated 13.4% of adults living with asthma, 10.5% with cancer, 11.0% with COPD, and 9.5% with heart disease, all of which surpass state averages.

These demographic and health characteristics heighten community sensitivity to environmental exposures. Potential contaminants commonly associated with brownfield sites—such as particulate matter, respiratory irritants including asbestos, and legacy hazards like lead-based paint—pose disproportionate risks to older adults, individuals with disabilities, and residents with pre-existing health conditions. EPA Brownfields assessment activities are critical to identifying, characterizing, and mitigating these risks. Projected site reuse will prioritize removing exposure pathways, improving environmental conditions, and supporting redevelopment that reduces public health risks for older adults, individuals with disabilities, and low-income residents, thereby promoting long-term community health, safety, and well-being across Aroostook County.

c. Greater than Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions

According to the 2025 *Shared Community Health Needs Assessment* completed by a collaborative partnership of healthcare providers across the State of Maine, Aroostook County experiences a higher overall cancer incidence rate than the nation as a whole, at 474.4 cases per 100,000 people compared to the U.S. rate of 438.6

per 100,000. Lung cancer incidence is particularly elevated, with Aroostook County reporting a rate of 65.5 per 100,000 people—exceeding both the statewide rate of 52.9 per 100,000 and contributing significantly to the county’s overall cancer burden. CDC PLACES supports these points, reporting a significant prevalence of cancer among all target area census tracts, particularly Van Buren (13.9%) and Eagle Lake (13.3%). These values are much higher than the national average of 9.0%. PLACES data also demonstrates a significant asthma burden, with at least a 13.3% prevalence in asthma for each target area census tract (all exceeding the national average prevalence of 10.6%).

Chronic lower respiratory disease mortality rates are also notably higher in Aroostook County, at 58.1 deaths per 100,000 people, compared to 40.0 per 100,000 statewide and 38.2 per 100,000 nationally. In addition, Easton was identified as falling within the 90th percentile for radon levels in indoor air, indicating actionable concentrations above 2.0 pCi/L based on testing conducted through the Maine CDC Radiation Control Program. The health conditions most prevalent throughout the target area are exacerbated by environmental conditions commonly associated with brownfield properties. Many brownfields—both among the identified priority sites and others presumed to exist throughout the county—contain particulate matter, asbestos, and other respiratory irritants known to aggravate or contribute to conditions such as asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), as well as to increase cancer risk. The adverse health effects in each of the target areas may be associated with the environmental conditions found at local brownfields properties.

The proposed EPA Brownfields assessment grant and projected site reuse strategy will directly address these threats by identifying, characterizing, and mitigating environmental contamination at priority sites. Grant-funded assessment activities will inform targeted cleanup actions and support redevelopment that removes or reduces exposure pathways, resulting in cleaner, safer sites suitable for productive reuse. These efforts will reduce long-term health risks, improve environmental conditions, and support healthier living environments, including clean, safe, and affordable housing, for populations already experiencing elevated rates of cancer and asthma.

d. Economically Impoverished/Disproportionately Impacted Populations

According to the U.S. Census Bureau’s ACS 5-year estimates, the census tracts encompassing the target areas experience persistent economic hardship, with an average poverty rate of 17.2%, exceeding both state and national averages. Widening wage gaps—while reflective of broader statewide and national trends—have particularly acute impacts in Aroostook County, compounding the effects of poverty and low wages. The same data reports very low median household incomes for all three census tracts, with an average income of 38,805 between each target area. This is less than half of the average median income throughout the United States (\$78,538), reflecting long-standing economic distress, limited capacity, and lack of access to opportunity. CDC/ATSDR data demonstrates that all three census tracts encompassing the priority sites experience high cumulative environmental and socioeconomic burden. All three census tracts have multiple rankings above .75, indicating a high burden. These rankings include harmful conditions like Lack of Recreational Parks (.89 ranking in Easton), Lack of Walkability (.98 ranking in Eagle Lake), Housing Built Pre-1980 (.77 ranking in Van Buren), and Extreme Heat (.80 ranking in Eagle Lake). These values illustrate how residents in these communities experience constrained access to safe, healthy, age-friendly environments alongside elevated poverty and other vulnerabilities.

Suspected contamination, aging infrastructure, and deteriorated built environments (conditions commonly associated with brownfield properties) further compound these inequities by discouraging private investment and limiting safe community use of land. The proposed EPA Brownfields assessment grant and projected site reuse strategy will directly address these challenges by identifying and characterizing environmental contamination, reducing uncertainty that deters redevelopment, and informing cleanup and reuse planning that prioritizes safe, accessible, and community-serving outcomes. By enabling redevelopment of underutilized properties into clean and productive uses, this grant will help reduce environmental risks, improve neighborhood conditions, and support economic growth in communities that have been disproportionately impacted by negative environmental consequences.

Community Engagement

2.e-2.f

Name of	Entity’s Mission	Point of Contact (name,	Specific involvement in the
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organization/ entity/group		email & phone)	project or assistance provided
Aroostook County Action Program (ACAP)	Provides guidance to the community in responding to emerging human health needs.	Jason Parent, Executive Director jparent@acap-me.org (207) 764-3721	ACAP staff serve on the Brownfields Steering Committee and provide reuse oversight.
Aroostook Partnership (AP)	Dedicated to aggressive and effective results-oriented economic development actions that leverage many sources of financial opportunity.	Kiersten Purrington, President kpurrington@aroostookpartner.org (207) 554-0680	Provide site information and steering committee members
Aroostook County Tourism (ACT)	Provides technical assistance to the region's municipalities, chamber of commerce, and business relating to the region's robust tourism industry.	Jacob Pelkey jpelkey@nmdc.org (207) 498-5065	ACT staff and board members will serve on the steering committee and work on green and open space and trail redevelopment programs.
Aroostook Municipal Association (AMA)	Facilitates collaboration among municipalities to identify and implement cost saving and efficiency strategies for local governments.	Sandra Fournier, Town Manager, Mapleton/Castle Hill/Chapman Townmanager@mapleton.me (207) 764-3754	Members serve of Steering Committee and provide site information
Southern Aroostook Developmen t (SADC)	Drives economic progress through support, resources, and networking opportunities.	Johannah Johnston Ex. Dir johannah@sadcaroostook.org (207) 521-0157	Members serve of Steering Committee and provide site information

g. Incorporating Community Input

Project progress will be communicated through a consistent, transparent, and multi-channel outreach approach designed to reach residents directly affected by the project as well as partner organizations and stakeholders. NMDC will provide **quarterly project updates** through public meetings, local newspapers, municipal websites, and email newsletters, with additional updates issued at key project milestones. In-person meetings will be held in accessible community locations, while **virtual engagement options**, such as online meetings, recorded presentations, and web-based updates, will be offered to ensure participation by residents who may face transportation, scheduling, or mobility barriers. Project information will be shared in clear, non-technical language and coordinated with municipal officials, community organizations, and regional partners to ensure broad distribution.

Community input will be meaningfully solicited through public comment periods, facilitated discussions, surveys, and direct outreach to affected property owners and residents. Feedback will be documented, reviewed by the project team, and incorporated into decision-making related to site prioritization, assessment activities, cleanup planning, and redevelopment goals. NMDC will respond to community input by summarizing comments received, explaining how feedback influenced project decisions, and identifying constraints where suggestions cannot be implemented. Ongoing two-way communication will be maintained throughout the project to ensure community concerns are addressed promptly and that redevelopment efforts reflect local needs while protecting human health and the environment.

3. TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES, AND MEASURING PROGRESS

Description of Tasks/Activities and Outputs

Task/Activity 1: Cooperative Agreement Oversight

- a. **Project Implementation:** EPA Funded tasks/activities: Prepare and issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) to solicit bids from qualified environmental professionals (QEPs) to conduct Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs), Remedial Planning and related project tasks. Host one pre-bid meeting, review and score proposals, conduct interviews as needed, and select and execute a contract with chosen QEP. Procurement will comply with all applicable state and federal rules and regulations, Project management activities will include oversight and coordination of QEP's assessment work, submission of quarterly ACRES reports, and staff professional development activities, including travel to the National Brownfields Conference and regionally sponsored MDEP/EPA workshops.
Non-EPA grant resources needed to carry out tasks/activities, if applicable: None
- b. **Anticipated Project Schedule:** Q1-Q2, Procure QEP following execution of Cooperative Agreement. Prepare quarterly ACRES reports and project financial reporting throughout project period. Grant closeout activities and final reporting will be completed during the final quarter of the grant period and through the end of the calendar year. NMDC personnel will attend 2 biennial National Brownfield conferences and two (2) biennial regional brownfield workshops.
- c. **Task/Activity Lead(s):** NMDC Staff, QEP to provide assistance with ACRES reporting.
Output(s): 16 quarterly progress reports and ACRES data updates. Minutes of monthly coordination meetings with QEP and partner organizations to ensure effective program oversight and timely implementation of assessment activities.

Task/Activity 2: Community Outreach

- a. **Project Implementation:** EPA-funded tasks/activities: Inform municipalities and stakeholders about the availability of funding and related technical assistance; develop and mail informational letter to all municipalities; develop quarterly updates to NMDC's Northern Maine Brownfields Program website; prepare and distribute press releases announcing program activities and opportunities; post all Brownfield Steering Committee (BSC) meeting notices on website and submit announcements to local newspapers; present quarterly program updates to Executive Board of Directors; conduct direct outreach by meeting with or contacting prospective brownfield property owners, municipalities, or community-based organizations to discuss redevelopment opportunities and program eligibility.
Non-EPA grant resources needed to carry out tasks/activities, if applicable: Organize and facilitate public meetings, partner meetings and annual meeting to share information about Brownfields activities, solicit community input, and provide opportunities for stakeholder participation. Initial meetings will emphasize Priority Sites to gather public feedback, address community concerns, and build support for assessment activities. BSC will provide guidance on community outreach and engagement efforts, and the QEP will support NMDC by providing technical information during public meetings, as appropriate. Develop and update outreach and informational materials to notify community members, property owners, developers, and other stakeholders of public information sessions and site assessment activities. Public input will be considered in all decision making.
- b. **Anticipated Project Schedule:** Website, flyers, brochures, and newsletters created and/or updated by the end of Quarter 3 and updated throughout grant period. Outreach activities will be conducted throughout the 4-year grant.
- c. **Task/Activity Leads:** NMDC staff will lead with assistance from the selected QEP
- d. **Outputs:** Four (4) community/partner meetings and/or virtual public meetings; annual NMDC meetings. Updated outreach materials (brochures, flyers, newsletters). NMDC website updates and web postings regarding Brownfields program sites/potential sites

Task/Activity 3: Phase I and Phase II Site Assessments

- a. **Project Implementation:** EPA-funded tasks/activities: Inventory, prioritize, and select brownfield sites within its service region and designated target areas. Sites located within identified target areas will be prioritized. Continuously update and refine existing inventory of potential brownfield sites. Priority Sites identified advanced for assessment as soon as the QEP is contracted, with other eligible sites added as funding allows. Prepare and submit EPA Brownfields site eligibility and threshold criteria forms

approval and obtain site access agreements for privately owned properties. Conduct ASTM-compliant Phase I ESAs for each selected site. For sites requiring further investigation, prepare site-specific Quality Assurance Project Plans (QAPPs) and conduct ASTM-compliant Phase II ESAs and/or hazardous building materials surveys. Assessment submitted to MDEP and EPA for review and approval
Non-EPA grant resources needed to carry out tasks/activities, if applicable: None

- b. Anticipated Project Schedule: Following EPA approval of site eligibility and threshold criteria, NMDC will proceed with environmental assessment activities. Phase I ESAs are expected to be completed within one month, followed by a 30-day review period by EPA and MDEP. For Phase II ESAs, the QEP will prepare a QAPP within approximately two to four weeks. Submit QAPP for EPA and MDEP review and approval. Upon approval Phase II field activities and reporting approval Phase be completed within approximately two months, followed by a 30-day regulatory review period. Update the EPA Assessment, Cleanup, and Redevelopment Exchange System (ACRES) in a timely manner at key milestones throughout the site assessment process.
- c. Task/Activity Lead(s): QEP lead with oversight by NMDC staff.
- d. Output(s): Prepare and maintain a site inventory, complete site eligibility and threshold criteria documentation, and obtain site access agreements for properties proposed for assessment. Conduct up to approximately eleven (11) Phase I ESAs and six (6) Phase II ESAs. Phase II ESAs will include preparation of site-specific QAPPs and Health and Safety Plans (HASPs), as required. Convene coordination meetings with the Brownfields Steering Committee for each Phase II ESA site to review assessment plans, discuss findings, and ensure effective communication among project partners.

Task/Activity 4: Cleanup and Site Reuse Planning

- a. **Project Implementation:** EPA-funded tasks/activities: Evaluate cleanup alternatives and potential reuse options for assessed sites. Preparation of Analyses of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives (ABCAs) and/or Reuse Plans as appropriate. Three (3) Priority Sites will complete the full assessment and cleanup planning process and may leverage cleanup funding from other sources to support remedial actions. Additional sites for cleanup planning selected based on Phase II ESA findings, recommendations, and other assessment information. For sites where remediation or reuse is warranted, develop ABCAs and/or Remedial Action Plans (RAPs). Provide technical support and guidance in preparing applications to the Maine Voluntary Response Action Program (VRAP), when applicable.

Non-EPA grant resources needed to carry out tasks/activities, if applicable: None

- b. Anticipated Project Schedule: Cleanup planning activities will be conducted throughout the four-year grant period of performance. Analyses of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives (ABCAs) and/or Remedial Action Plans (RAPs) will be initiated following completion of the corresponding Phase IESAs and will be scheduled on a staggered basis.
- c. Task/Activity Lead(s): QEP lead with NMDC oversight.
- d. Output(s): Up to nine (9) ABCA and/or Remedial Action Plan reports. Feasible sites will be followed up with remediation plans and VRAP applications.

e. Cost Estimates

No administrative costs will be charged to this grant. The costs for all necessary administrative activities will be borne by NMDC and its project partners.

	Task 1	Task 2	Task 3	Task 4	
Budget Categories	Cooperative Agreement Oversight	Community Outreach	Phase I and II ESAs	Cleanup and Site Reuse Planning	Total
Personnel	\$10,000	\$2,500	\$7,000	\$11,500	\$31,000
Travel	\$3,000	\$0	\$0	\$3,000	\$6,000
Equipment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Supplies	\$1,000	\$1,500	\$0	\$1,500	\$4,000
Contractual	\$5,000	\$10,000	\$378,000	\$66,000	\$459,000
Construction	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Total	\$21,000	\$14,000	\$385,000	\$80,000	\$500,000
Indirect'	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Budget	\$21,000	\$14,000	\$385,000	\$80,000	\$500,000

Task 1: Cooperative Agreement Oversight: Funding includes NMDC’s staff time (133 hours x \$75=\$10,000) to: Prepare a Request for Proposals (RFP) to solicit bids from QEP to perform Phase I/II ESAs; conduct one pre-bid meeting for interested qualified environmental professionals; review and score proposals, interview potential qualified environmental professionals, and hire and execute contract with an Environmental Consultant. Also included is the preparation of 16 quarterly reports, oversight and coordination of QEP’s assessment work. Travel to the national Brownfield Conference (\$1,500 airfare, \$600 hotel, \$500 per diem, \$400 (551 miles x \$0.725/mile) for local travel to regionally sponsored MDEP/EPA workshops). \$1,000 for supplies (copies, contract documents); and \$5,000 contractual for QEP and/or an attorney to assist with cooperative agreement oversight and access agreements. Total for task = \$21,000

Task 2: Community Outreach: NMDC’s staff time (33 hours x \$75 = \$2,500 and the QEP’s time (\$10,000). Develop and email to all municipalities indicating the availability of Brownfield grant funds and technical assistance, quarterly updates to NMDC’s Northern Maine Brownfields’ website, and developing and submitting press releases. All Steering Committee meeting announcements will be posted on NMDC’s website and submitted to all local newspapers to encourage attendance. Present quarterly updates to NMDC’s Executive Board of Directors. Meet with or contact at least 25 prospective Brownfield property owners/communities/community groups. Total for task = \$14,000.

Task 3: Phase I & Phase II ESAs: \$7,000 for NMDC personnel for site selection, interfacing with site owners, and overseeing ESAs (93 hours x \$75); and \$378,000 contractual for QEP services (11 Phase I ESAs x \$5,000 = \$55,000; 6 Phase II ESAs (several of which would include hazardous building materials surveys or inventories) x \$55,500 = \$330,000). Total for task = \$385,000.

Task 4: Cleanup & Site Reuse Planning: \$11,500 for NMDC staff to assist with reuse/redevelopment planning, coordinating with site owners and potential site redevelopers, and review of ABCA/RAPs (153 hours @ \$50/hour); \$1,500 in supplies (letters/correspondence with site owners, meeting materials for redevelopment charettes, brochures, and marketing materials) and \$66,000 contractual for QEP to conduct 9 ABCA/RAPs @ \$5,466 each = \$49,200; 6 VRAP applications and submittals @ \$2,800/each = \$16,800. Total Task 4 = \$80,000.

a. Plan to Measure and Evaluate Environmental Progress and Results

NMDC will ensure effective project oversight and performance tracking through detailed bookkeeping, quarterly ACRES reporting, and regular coordination with the QEP and EPA Project Officer. Key project outputs will be measured by completion of Phase I and Phase II ESAs, as well as Analyses of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives (ABCAs) and/or Remedial Action Plans (RAPs), according to the milestones outlined in the grant work plan.

NMDC will also document and report outcomes to demonstrate measurable environmental, economic, and community revitalization benefits achieved through the grant. These outcomes will include performance metrics such as the amount of leveraging of other public or private funding to support site assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment activities, as well as tangible redevelopment results at assessed properties.

4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE

a.-c. Organizational Capacity, Structure, and Key Staff

NMDC has a staff of 22 people including Jay Kamm, Senior Planner and Hannah Huston, Community Development Specialist. Jay and Hannah will co-manage the project.

NMDC has demonstrated exceptional organizational capacity to administer Brownfields grants through nearly six decades of federal grant management and economic development experience. The organization currently oversees approximately \$14 million in Economic Development Administration (EDA) and Northern Border Regional Commission grants and manages a loan portfolio exceeding \$35 million from EDA, USDA Rural Development, and other sources. This scale of activity reflects well-established administrative infrastructure and financial management systems essential for successful Brownfields program implementation. NMDC’s annual audit complies with Uniform Grant Guidance (2 CFR 200), and the audit for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025 reported no adverse findings, comments, or exceptions.

NMDC also maintains a strong track record in Brownfields assessment and redevelopment, having advanced projects in multiple Aroostook County communities where vacant and abandoned properties have been redeveloped into productive commercial, service, or public use spaces. As a designated Economic Development District, NMDC integrates regional planning expertise with deep knowledge of environmental and economic redevelopment. Federal certifications, including CDFI, SBA Microloan Intermediary, USDA Intermediary Relender, and operation of the Small Business Development Center and APEX Accelerator, demonstrate rigorous compliance and further support NMDC's capacity to successfully implement complex Brownfields assessment and cleanup initiatives.

Jay Kamm, Senior Planner - Jay Kamm has been with NMDC since 1993, serves as Senior Planner. He works closely with municipalities across NMDC's service area to develop comprehensive plans, land use ordinances, and shoreland zoning regulations. Jay also administers several programs and contracts, including the State of Maine Housing Service Provider grant program, MaineDOT transportation projects, and Maine Office of Community Affairs (MOCA) land use technical assistance. Previously, Jay co-managed NMDC's Brownfields Assessment Program, overseeing the assessment and redevelopment of more than 54 properties.

Hannah Huston, Community Development Specialist/Project Manager – Hannah Huston has been with NMDC since 2025 and currently serves as Community Development Specialist. She works closely with municipalities to process and administer a variety of grant programs, such as the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Northern Border Regional Commission (NBRC), and Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

d. Acquiring Additional Resources

NMDC is prepared to leverage its own financial resources and pursue additional funding to support required environmental assessment and cleanup activities. The organization manages a range of loan programs tailored to the needs of the business community, each with defined eligibility criteria, allowable uses, and financial terms. Many of these programs support environmental cleanup and redevelopment as eligible activities, including the USDA Intermediary Relending Program, SBA Microloan Fund, Northern Maine Development Revolving Loan Fund, and USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grant Fund, with most loans requiring job creation or retention outcomes. Additional funding sources available for environmental assessment and remediation include Maine DEP 128(a) Assessment Funding, EPA Targeted Brownfields Assessment (TBA) Program, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Non-Profit Development Funds, the Maine DECD Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund, Maine DEP Municipal Brownfields Remedial Program, and the Finance Authority of Maine Regional Economic Development Revolving Loan Fund. These programs provide a range of grant and loan options to address site-specific assessment and cleanup needs. Further resources to support reuse and redevelopment include HUD Economic Development Initiative Special Project Grants, Economic Development Administration Public Works Grants, HUD Brownfields Economic Development Initiative Grants and Section 108 Loans, CDBG Public Infrastructure Grants, and USDA Rural Development Rural Business Enterprise Grants. Municipal funding mechanisms such as bonds or Tax Increment Financing, along with private funding from foundations, private equity, and community donations, may also be leveraged. NMDC will actively inform landowners and municipalities of these opportunities to encourage participation and investment in Brownfields redevelopment.

Past Performance and Accomplishments

a. Currently Has or Previously Received an EPA Brownfield Grant

NMDC received a \$200,000 EPA Brownfields grant on October 1, 2007, to conduct community-wide petroleum site assessments, which was successfully completed in 2010 with all funds fully expended and in full compliance with grant requirements. NMDC followed the approved work plan, completed all tasks on schedule, and submitted twelve required quarterly and financial reports, including MBE/WBE forms, on time, with all site data regularly updated in the ACRES database. Through this effort, NMDC completed nine Phase I and four Phase II Environmental Site Assessments covering nearly 55 acres, resulting in two properties being sold and reused and three entering Maine's Voluntary Response Action Program for cleanup.

In 2012, NMDC received \$400,000 combined hazardous substances and petroleum assessment grant. NMDC completed nine Phase I and six Phase II ESAs assessing approximately 125 acres, with five properties sold and redeveloped and all entering the VRAP program. All project activities were managed in compliance with EPA requirements and documented in the ACRES database.

Threshold Criteria for Assessment Grants

1. Applicant Eligibility

Northern Maine Development Commission (NMDC) is a Regional Council or group of General Purpose Units of Local Government and is eligible to apply for Brownfields Assessment funding from the EPA Brownfields Grant Program. NMDC's authority as a Regional Council is established in Maine law (30-A M.R.S.A §2311, et. Seq.).

Northern Maine Development Commission (NMDC) established in 1969 and located in Caribou, Maine, is a public, non-profit 501 (c) (3) organization with a mission of assisting communities in northern Maine in economic development, comprehensive planning, housing, code enforcement officer training and certification, transportation planning, and the implementation of strategies for regional solid waste programs. NMDC, as part of the Aroostook/Washington Economic Development District (AWEDD), serves municipalities in both Aroostook and Washington counties. NMDC provides numerous services to communities including technical assistance with state contracts for local and regional planning, technical assistance to communities in applying for Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), the development of Comprehensive Plans, Comprehensive Plan updates, the development of zoning and land use ordinances, and other plans. NMDC also serves as the regional clearing house for the review of proposed projects and programs. State funding has also been provided to prepare region wide Tourism Development, Solid Waste Management, Transportation, Water Quality, and Growth Management programs. NMDC recently authored a successful United States Bicycle Route application and two (2) National Scenic Byway applications. NMDC was also recently recognized by the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) for its work with the Community Resilience Pilot Project.

2. Community Involvement

NMDC's well-established community engagement strategy for Brownfields Assessment activities will be used to ensure community involvement for this grant. This strategy uses a wide range of communication channels, both digital and in-person, and operates at the regional and community levels. Project updates are shared regularly through NMDC's social media platforms and may also be shared by participating municipalities. Information is communicated directly with partner organizations (such as Aroostook County Action Program, Aroostook Partnership, and Southern Aroostook Development Corporation) and through printed notices posted at community gathering places, including libraries and grocery stores.

Project meetings, presentations, and events are promoted through both print and social media. Community members may participate in events either in person or remotely using virtual meeting platforms such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams, which are commonly used by municipalities for remote town meetings. Community feedback is also gathered through online surveys distributed via NMDC's website and social media channels.

NMDC's Brownfields Steering Committee oversees community engagement efforts and works closely with municipal governments and community organizations to ensure information is widely shared and community input is effectively collected. In addition, NMDC staff have established strong relationships with municipal boards and councils, regional economic development organizations, and downtown associations, enabling them to identify potential

brownfield sites and coordinate directly with property owners.

Community input will be collected, documented, and incorporated into Brownfields project decisions. Input will be gathered through meeting summaries, written comments, surveys, and steering committee recommendations and reviewed by the project team on an ongoing basis.

Community feedback will be reviewed and applied as follows:

- **Site Prioritization:** Community input will be used to help prioritize Brownfields sites for assessment and cleanup based on community concerns, redevelopment potential, health impacts, and neighborhood revitalization goals.
- **Assessment and Cleanup Planning:** Feedback will inform the scope of Phase I and Phase II assessments, identification of contaminants of concern, cleanup approaches, and risk communication strategies.
- **Reuse Planning:** Community-identified needs (e.g., affordable housing, green space, community facilities, workforce development, or commercial uses) will guide redevelopment and reuse planning to ensure sites are returned to productive use in ways that benefit the community.
- **Review and Response:** The project team will regularly review community input with the Brownfield Steering Committee and provide clear responses through public updates, fact sheets, and meetings. When suggestions cannot be incorporated due to regulatory, technical, or funding constraints, the rationale will be communicated transparently.

Community input will directly inform key project decisions and any necessary course corrections throughout the Brownfields process. By maintaining a clear feedback loop, documenting input, explaining decisions, and demonstrating how community perspectives shape outcomes, the project will promote transparency, accountability, and community trust, consistent with EPA Brownfields program goals.

3. Expenditure of Existing Grant Funds

NMDC does not have an open EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant.

4. Contractors and Named Subrecipients

Not applicable. NMDC has not selected contractors, consultants, or subrecipients. Following award of the grant, NMDC will select contractors in compliance with the fair and open competition requirements in 2 CFR Part 200 and 2 CFR Part 1500, and the EPA's Best Practice Guide for Procuring Services, Supplies, and Equipment Under EPA Assistance Agreements. We do not anticipate subrecipients as part of this grant.