



R02-26-A-015

Narrative Information Sheet

1. Applicant Identification

Lewis County
7660 North State Street
Lowville, NY 13367

2. Website URL

<https://lewiscountyny.gov/>

3. Funding Requested

- a. Assessment Grant Type: Community-Wide
- b. Federal Funds Requested: \$500,000

4. Location

- a. City – NA
- b. County – Lewis
- c. State – New York

5. Target Area and Priority Site/Property Information

- Target Areas: Village of Lyons, Village of Croghan, NY
- Census Tract Numbers: 9501, 9502, 9506, 9507
- Address of Priority Sites:
 - i. Belfort Road site: 7011 Belfort Road, Croghan, NY 13327
 - ii. Beaverite Mill: 9801 Bridge Street, Croghan, NY 13327
 - iii. Bush's General Store: 9740 State Route 812, Croghan, NY 13327
 - iv. 9780 Main Street, Croghan, NY 13327
 - v. Former Agway: 6819 McAlpine Street, Lyons Falls, NY 13368
 - vi. Former Train Station: 6819 McAlpine Street, Lyons Falls, NY 13368
 - vii. Former Alaskan Oil: 6793 McAlpine Street, Lyons Falls, NY 13368
 - viii. Lyons Falls Pulp and Paper Mill: 4010 Center Street, Lyons Falls, NY 13368
- Map attached

6. Contacts

- a. Project Director
Cassandra Buell, AICP



PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

P: 315-376-5422 | F: 315-377-3137

Cassandra Buell

Director

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Director of Planning and Community Development

7660 North State Street

Lowville, NY 13367

(315) 376-5919

casandrabuell@lewiscounty.ny.gov

b. Chief Executive/Higher Ranking Elected Official

Timothy Hunt

County Manager

7660 North State Street

Lowville, NY 13367

(315) 376-5354

timhunt@lewiscounty.ny.gov

7. Population

Lewis County: 26,618

Village of Lyons Falls: 570

Village of Croghan: 642

8. Other Factors

Other Factors	Page number
Community population is 15,000 or less.	5
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 the 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.	n/a
The reuse of the priority site(s) will facilitate renewable energy from wind, solar, or geothermal energy.	4
The reuse of the priority site(s) will incorporate energy efficiency measures.	4
The proposed project will improve local resilience to the impacts of extreme weather events and natural disasters.	4
At least 30% of the overall project budget will be spent on eligible reuse/area-wide planning activities, as described in Section I.B., for priority site(s) within the target area(s).	9
The target area(s) is located within a community in which a coal-fired power plant 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 – n/a



Department of
Environmental
Conservation

KATHY HOCHUL
Governor

AMANDA LEFTON
Commissioner

January 8, 2026

Casandra Buell
Director of Planning & Community Development
Lewis County
7660 N State St
Lowville, NY 13367

Dear Ms. Buell:

This is to acknowledge that the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) received a request from C&S Companies, on behalf of Lewis County, dated January 6, 2026, for a state acknowledgement letter for a Federal Year 2026 United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) Brownfields grant.

I understand that Lewis County plans to submit a Brownfield Community-Wide Assessment grant application for hazardous substances and petroleum in the amount of \$500,000. Focus of the funding will be to conduct Phase I and II Environmental Site Assessments at targeted sites throughout Lewis County. Suspected contamination includes VOCs, SVOCs, and metals. Funding will also be allocated for reuse planning and community engagement. Please note that the USEPA criteria for an assessment grant specifies that, if selected, Lewis County may only expend up to \$200,000 of the grant on a specific site.

DEC encourages initiatives to redevelop brownfields with the goal of mitigating any environmental and health impacts that they might pose.

Sincerely,

Karen Diligent
Director, Bureau of Program Management

ec: N. Azzam, USEPA Region 2
S. Mitchell, USEPA Region 2
J. Pelton, DEC Albany
D. Storandt, DEC Region 6
J. Smith-Gagnon, DEC Region 6
G. Metzler, Lewis County
J. Berti, C&S Companies
S. Stewart, C&S Companies

1. PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION

Target Area and Brownfields

1.a Overview of Brownfield Challenges and Description of Target Area: Lewis County lies in the New York State’s iconic North Country region, known for its natural beauty and rural landscapes. Located in the Black River Valley, the County’s eastern edge sits within the Adirondack Park, a long-established Forever Wild Forest Preserve, and its western end in the Tug Hill Plateau. Lewis County has enormous recreational opportunities and natural resources that fuel a strong tourism economy. However, it has faced numerous economic challenges that have resulted in job loss, pockets of poverty, and a slew of properties that sit unused and deteriorating. Throughout its history, Lewis County has been home to cheese factories; saw, paper, and grist mills; tanneries, iron foundries, and even bowling pin manufacturing, which drove the economy in the early to mid-1900s. Technology advancements, globalization, and a push to move into more urban areas led to one closure after another, some as recent as 2001 (i.e., the Lyons Falls Pulp and Paper Mill). Many of these sites were simply abandoned, leaving behind vacant, blighted, and contaminated lots that contribute to disinvestment in the rural communities throughout the County. Large closures also had a cascade effect on local economies, causing small businesses to shutter, not only adding to economic decline, but creating vacant and potentially contaminated sites.

Throughout Lewis County, there is a mix of areas with well-documented known or suspected brownfields and those with little information. That said, there is no question that in several municipalities, half or more usable commercial or industrial space is vacant, underutilized, or abandoned. This includes infrastructure which was historically used for paper mills such as in Lyons Falls, but also extends to other regions of the county such as vacant buildings in the Village of Lowville’s commercial or mixed-use zoned areas, vacant sites in New Bremen including a former cheese factory, the Town of Croghan-Beaver Falls Hamlet former ‘Beaverite’ paper mill site, and the former ‘Geiter Done’ waste management site in Harrisville. There are several closed gas stations that are likely to have some level of petroleum contamination.

To address potential brownfield sites, Lewis County is developing a strategy that focuses on communities faced with economic hardships and sites with the most beneficial reuse opportunities. The target areas for this assessment grant are the Villages of Croghan and Lyons Falls, which contain potential and well-known brownfields sites that are prominent and whose reuse could have transformative effects on the small, rural villages. Priority sites, listed in the following section, range from large former industrial properties and landfills to small auto shops and gas stations. The EPA grant will launch Lewis County’s concerted efforts to address blighted and vacant properties, putting the County on a path to revitalization and reflecting the EPA’s first Pillar, that “every American should have access to clean air, land, and water.”

1.b Description of the Priority Brownfield Sites: Through community planning efforts to date, the County has identified a number of brownfield, abandoned, and/or underutilized sites (totaling over 70 acres) in the target areas and other locations in the County, including:

Property Address/Description	Acres	Former Use	Current Use	Potential/Known Contaminants
<i>Village of Croghan</i>				
Belfort Road site	5	Dump site for paper mill sludge	Vacant	VOCs, metals, PFAS
Beaverite Mill	8	Paper mill dump site	Vacant	VOCs, metals, PFAS
Bush's General Store	0.2	Gas station	Candy confectioner	VOCs, SVOCs, lead

9780 Main Street site	0.5	Grist mill	Storage	Metals, PCBs
<i>Village of Lyons Falls</i>				
Former Agway	2	Fueling station	Vacant	VOCs, SVOCs, lead
Former train station	1.1	Train station, Agway	Vacant	Metals, PAHs
Alaskan oil	0.2	Gas station	Vacant	VOCs, SVOCs, lead
Lyons Falls Pulp and Paper Mill	9.4	Paper mill	Vacant	VOCs, metals, PCBs, PFAS
<i>Other Sites in Lewis County</i>				
AMF Trinity Avenue, Lowville	1	Bowling pin manufacturing	Vacant	VOCs
Geiter Done site, Harrisville	40.6	Waste management	Waste management	VOCs, SVOCs, PCBs, metals, PFAS
Former TooBro Dairy, New Bremen	4	Dairy operations	Vacant	Mercury, HBM

A site critical for redevelopment is the former Beaverite Paper Mill in Croghan. This site lies at a prominent location on Beaver River near the center of the village and has historic significance as an old sawmill. However, Beaverite Products, Inc. used a portion of property as a dump site for potentially hazardous waste, which could include VOCs and heavy metals, likely causing contamination and public health risks. The Village and County see this site as an area that could be transformed into a light industrial or commercial operations, which could bring good-paying jobs and increased economic activity to the center of this rural Village.

For 100 years, the Lyons Falls Pulp and Paper Mill was in operation, until its closure in 2001. This large and prominent site along the Black River was the economic driver of the village, employing hundreds of people at its peak. The closing of the mill was detrimental to Lewis County, as it was the largest employer in that area. Not only did hundreds of residents lose jobs, but small businesses closed, leaving the main streets of Lyons Falls empty and abandoned. The facility had a history of handling, using, and disposing of various organic materials such as chlorinated and non-chlorinated solvents, pesticides, PCBs, and inorganic compounds, leaving behind legacy contamination. A Phase II assessment was completed on this site in FY14; however, it may need additional assessment to determine soil and groundwater status and what remediation work needs to be completed. The site is currently being marketed to developers, but the unknowns related to contamination are hindering its reuse.

1.c Identifying Additional Sites: The County received a County-wide Brownfield Inventory grant through the NYS Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) program in late 2025. This 2-year grant project will work in tandem with the EPA Assessment Grant, providing a comprehensive list of vacant, underutilized, and potential brownfield sites. A brownfield advisory committee, consisting of municipal, business, non-profit, and resident stakeholders, will be formed under the BOA grant, which will also inform the EPA grant. Therefore, the County will have information from the BOA work to draw from for consideration of additional sites as the EPA grant progresses. Final prioritization and selection of additional sites for assessment will lie with the EPA grant team, who will consider public recommendations, potential community benefits of redevelopment, avoidance of resident/business displacement, extent of potential contaminants, BOA and town/village planning recommendations, economic benefits of reuse options, and property owner commitment.

Revitalization of the Target Area

1.d Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans: Many of the known vacant, underutilized, and suspected brownfields represent opportunities to advance community revitalization goals throughout Lewis County. Each area has a unique set of needs and values, and these sites provide opportunities to invigorate economic development in ways that fit within the context of each community. Beginning to formally identify and address brownfields in communities like Croghan is intended to attract employers. There is an opportunity for light industrial operations at some known sites, like the Beaverite Mill which could bring jobs to the communities in these areas. Lyons Falls completed a NYS-funded BOA Study in 2012 to help address its vacant and potentially contaminated sites and to catalyze redevelopment. This study outlined community priorities for potential brownfield sites, including the advancement of four-season tourism and identification of businesses/industries with the strongest potential to expand or relocate to the Village and offer the best prospects for employment and enhanced tax revenue. While the BOA provided crucial information and planning to move many sites towards assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment, there is still significant work to be done. More recently, the Village completed a NY Forward Strategic Investment Plan (2023) that prioritized the activation of the Lyons Falls Pulp and Paper Mill site (a priority site for the EPA Assessment Grant), as well as other sites in its downtown core.

At the regional level, the County's brownfield strategy aligns with several goals laid out in NYS's North Country Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) 2023 Strategic Plan. Placemaking is a key strategy, with an aim to "preserve and reimagine viable historic, underutilized, and vacant buildings, especially residential and mixed-use buildings, to enhance the character, livability, and sense of place." The plan identifies redevelopment as "an opportunity to address blight, a lack of housing stock, and stimulate the economy with new businesses while preserving the character of an area," throughout the 7-county North Country region.

Finally, Micron, a global chip manufacturer, has just broken ground on a \$100 billion investment in a new facility just 60 miles south of the County's border. This project, along with the region's recent federal designation as a technology hub, has the potential to significantly change its economic landscape, bringing in thousands of new jobs in the next 20 years. Lewis County recognizes the need to prepare for a potential influx of new residents, supply chain facilities, and other new businesses that will result from the major investment. To honor the community's wishes to protect its rural character, the EPA grant will ensure development stemming from Micron will be concentrated in previously developed areas, focusing on vacant and abandoned sites.

1.e Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy: Addressing brownfields and determining strategic reuse plans will bring a multitude of benefits to Lewis County. Reuse planning paired with the potential for tax credits and additional grants will allow for increased economic opportunities on sites that currently do not provide services or amenities to community members. Brownfield assessments will also help to pull these properties back onto tax rolls which will contribute to the economic base of the County. Brownfield sites redeveloped into manufacturing or light industrial properties have the potential to provide dozens or more jobs and therefore an increased demand for housing and services within the communities. And, redevelopment that results in new retail, commercial, and housing within downtown areas or near popular locations will boost local economies in several small towns and villages.

For example, both the Beaverite Mill site in Croghan and the Lyons Falls Paper Mill site are located in their respective Village centers. Their redevelopment into light manufacturing has the

potential to bring living wage jobs to the area, helping to address the high incidence of poverty in the Village, as well as catalyzing new small businesses and amenities in downtown cores, like eateries and shops. Reactivation would put the sites back on tax rolls, generating revenue for the municipality.

Further, climate resilience is of high importance to Lewis County, as it regularly experiences extreme weather, such as snowstorms, flooding, and high winds. The County is a Bronze-certified NYS Climate Smart Community and has made resilience measures a priority in decision-making. Redevelopment of vacant and abandoned sites, particularly those along the Black River and other waterbodies, will incorporate the potential for increased flooding and extreme weather into plans, which will enhance resiliency of structures. Redevelopment plans of brownfield sites will also reflect NYS's electrification goals, which require zero emissions electricity, through energy efficiency measures like LED lighting, and renewable energy such as solar and geothermal.

This EPA Assessment project, coupled with the NYS-funded brownfield inventory, is an initial step towards a county-wide strategy that will address vacant, potentially contaminated sites, spurring redevelopment such as new industry, commercial operations, mixed use buildings, and housing. This renewed economic development will create attractive jobs and diverse housing options that will retain and draw new residents to the area.

Strategy for Leveraging Resources

1.f Resources Needed for Site Reuse: The intent of this grant and the coinciding BOA funding is to bring sites closer to reuse. To get there, additional funding and resources will be leveraged, depending on the redevelopment strategies. This EPA grant will stimulate the availability of those additional funds, including:

- **NYS BOA Program:** This program can go beyond inventories, funding delineation of target brownfield areas and further planning and engineering analyses identified in existing BOAs.
- **EPA Cleanup Grant:** The County and other municipal/non-profit entities can leverage assessments conducted under this grant to remediate sites to acceptable condition for reuse using EPA funds.
- **NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Brownfield Cleanup Program (BCP):** Private developers can obtain substantial tax credits and liability protection for the remediation and reuse of brownfield sites.
- **National Grid Brownfield Redevelopment Grants:** Developers are eligible for grants up to \$300,000 from National Grid to fund utility-related costs for the redevelopment of brownfields.
- **NYS Homes & Community Renewal (HCR):** HCR has funding programs available for private developers and municipalities to develop and improve housing, mainly for low- and mid-income level families.
- **NYS Empire State Development (ESD):** Projects that will lead to job creation and direct investment are able to apply for competitive grants from ESD.
- **NY State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA):** NYSERDA funding is available to support renewable energy initiatives, including solar, geothermal, and wind.
- **NYS Downtown Revitalization Initiative/NY Forward:** These planning and implementation programs provide funding for transformative site redevelopment.

1.g Use of Existing Infrastructure: Priority sites currently have access to existing infrastructure, including gas, electric, municipal sewer and water, roads, internet access, and cellular service to support reuse. For any sites lacking infrastructure or that is in need of repair, the County will work

with developers and the Development Authority of the North Country (DANC) to ensure the most efficient path forward, adhering to NYS's Smart Growth Principles.

2. COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community Need

2.a The Community's Need for Funding: Despite its expansive land area (1,274,000 square miles), Lewis County is one of the least populous counties in NYS (number 59 of 62 counties), with 26,570 residents. The population has been in decline for the last decade, and the County's daytime population is less than its actual population, which indicates that people are leaving the County during the day to work. The target areas of Lyons Falls and Croghan have small populations; 570 and 642, respectively. Lyons Falls has a median household income (MHI) of \$58,906 versus \$82,095 in NYS, and 15% of its housing units are vacant. Croghan's MHI is drastically lower than NYS, at \$49,583, with a poverty rate of 17.4% (compared to 14.2% in NYS and 12.2% Lewis County as a whole). Twelve percent of housing units in Croghan are vacant.¹ Small populations, low income, and housing vacancies in the target areas have put strain on municipal budgets, impacting the ability to fund projects such as brownfield redevelopment. EPA Assessment Grant funds will catalyze the revitalization of small villages, in turn promoting further private investment and additional economic activity in these rural communities.

2.b Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations: Compared to NYS and Lewis County as a whole, Lyons Falls and Croghan have higher percentages of several populations that are more sensitive to environmental hazards and economic stressors. More than half of Lyons Falls' population is age 65 years and older or under 18 years of age (27.8% and 26.4%, respectively). In the Village of Croghan, 22% are 65 years and older and 24% are under 18. This indicates that a large proportion of the villages' populations are vulnerable to environmental hazards, based on age. Further, 13.2% live with a disability in Croghan, while 14.2% live with disability in Lyons Falls, both higher than the NYS average of 12.2%. The target areas also have large veteran populations compared to NYS (at 3.9%); Lyons Falls at 7.1% and Croghan at 10.5%.² According to County records, almost 50% of housing in the Lewis County was built before 1970 and only 7% of housing stock was built after 2010, indicating the potential for housing with lead paint and aging/inadequate electrical, plumbing, and HVAC. Lyons Falls and Croghan have even older housing stock, with 65% and almost 50% of housing units that were built in 1939 or earlier, respectively. The NYS Department of Health (DOH) also indicates that a high percentage of County residents with low income have limited access to supermarkets and fresh foods due to the rural nature of the County and low walkability. This grant will help identify environmental conditions at the priority and other sites that are un- or under-investigated that may pose threats to the sensitive populations. Additionally, the planned reuses of the sites will focus on economic development and resiliency, which will provide the target areas with more resources and services for the sensitive populations.

2.c Greater Than Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions: Compared to NYS and surrounding counties, the target areas and Lewis County see higher rates of certain diseases. Lyons Falls' and Croghan's asthma rates, 11.3% and 11.1%, respectively, are higher than the US average (9.8%). This is also true of cancer rates, at 10.7% and 10.5%, respectively, compared to the US average of 7.9%.³ According to the Lewis County 2022-2024 Community

¹ Data from 2023 1-Year ACS Estimates, US Census Bureau.

² Data from 2023 1-Year ACS Estimates, US Census Bureau.

³ CDC Places. <https://places.cdc.gov/?view=place&locationIds=3619070,3644006>

Health Assessment, adult and childhood obesity rates are among the highest in the state, with Croghan at 39.7% and Lyons Falls at 41.2%, compared to 32.8% in the US and 29.1% in NYS.⁴

Other health data is only available at the County level. Lung and bronchus cancer incidence are comparatively high in Lewis County (81.3 per 100,000 vs. 67.6 per 100,000 in NYS). According to the NYSDOH, there are “high concern” levels for incidences of colon/rectum and breast cancer. Chronic lower respiratory disease mortality is also more prevalent in Lewis County than NYS (48.9 per 100,000 vs. 31.3 per 100,000).⁵ Cancers and respiratory illnesses can be linked to exposure to a variety of toxic chemicals suspected at the priority sites, such as metals, VOCs, and SVOCs.

Lewis County has a greater incidence than surrounding counties of high blood lead levels (at 5 and 10 micrograms) in children less than 72 months old, more than double the NYS rate (6.6 per 1,000 children tested vs. 3.1 in NYS). According to NYSDOH, this has worsened in recent years. Brownfield strategies can address lead levels by identifying, investigating, and remediating sites with lead present in soils and groundwater, which are suspected in a number of priority sites, and spurring redevelopment of new housing, which will provide residences without lead-based paint.

2.d Economically Impoverished/Disproportionately Impacted Populations: Despite its small population, throughout much of the 20th Century Lewis County was home to a number of industrial operations, including dairies and paper mills, that provided good-paying jobs for many of its residents. From the mid- to late 1900s, the majority of these closed, leaving behind pockets of poverty that have struggled to rebound to this day. For example, the Village of Croghan has one of the highest poverty rates in the County, having lost major industries in the last several decades, such as the Beaverite Mill. The County’s rural nature makes recovery from the loss of major employers difficult, as job prospects are often limited and may require residents to travel long distances or even relocate outside of the County to find work. This is reflected in the steady decline of population in Lewis County, as well as the fact that its population decreases each day as residents leave the County for work.

Redevelopment of potential brownfield sites, catalyzed by EPA Assessment funding, will serve to reinvigorate local economies by attracting employers. There are a number of opportunities to support the tourism economy by transforming sites into commercial and retail centers, bringing in businesses like coffee shops, eateries, and boutique stores in the target areas.

Community Engagement

2.e Project Involvement & 2.f Project Roles: Lewis County and its local municipalities have conducted a wide range of outreach activities with residents, local businesses, and community organizations, which indicate public support for identifying and expanding investment opportunities which offer new industry, increased tourism, and employment possibilities for residents. The County will continue to foster these relationships as well as develop new partnerships for this EPA project. Groups with an active role will include:

Partner Name	Contact	Specific Role in the Project
DEC		Purpose: Remediation oversight Role: Technical assistance, cleanup strategy review, and hazard assessment

⁴ CDC Places. <https://places.cdc.gov/?view=place&locationIds=3619070,3644006>

⁵ NYSDOH Community Health Indicator Reports Dashboard.

https://apps.health.ny.gov/public/tabvis/PHIG_Public/chirs/reports/#county

Naturally Lewis	Joanne Witt, Executive Director, (315) 376-3014	Purpose: Economic development in Lewis County Role: Community outreach, site selection, reuse planning
Development Authority of the North Country	Carl Farone, Executive Director, (315) 661-3200	Purpose: Works with partners to meet the region's infrastructure needs Role: Site selection, infrastructure planning
Lewis County Public Health Department	Ashley Waite, Director, (315) 376-5453, ashleywaite@lewiscounty.ny.gov	Purpose: Protection of public health in Lewis County Role: Environmental health insight, site selection, and community health outreach
Village of Lyons Falls	Donna Dolhof, Mayor, (315) 608-0816, mayor@lyonsfallsny.gov	Purpose: Target area municipality Role: Community outreach, site selection, reuse planning
Village of Croghan	Keith Bush, Mayor, (315) 346-1979	Purpose: Target area municipality Role: Community outreach, site selection, reuse planning

2.g Incorporating Community Input: Community input is crucial for Lewis County's brownfield strategy. Public engagement will include:

- *Public Meetings:* Two public meetings per year will be held to gather community input on sites and reuse alternatives, as well as inform the community of progress. Meetings will be offered virtually and in-person, at locations like senior centers, schools, and libraries, and will be scheduled at varying times of the day to encourage participation. Target area municipalities will assist in scheduling and facilitating meetings specific to their municipality.
- *Webpage:* The County will work with its selected qualified environmental professional (QEP) to create and maintain a webpage for the project, intended to share project information, potential sites and reuse options, meeting information, a site nomination form for the public to recommend additional sites, and contact information for residents to provide feedback and suggestions. The Project Manager will monitor feedback, provide responses as warranted, and summarize comments monthly.
- *Press Releases:* Lewis County will use local and regional news outlets and the project website to keep the public informed on project progress and upcoming meetings, as well as ask for feedback and additional site suggestions.
- *Social Media:* Press releases and notifications of public meetings will be posted on various social media outlets such as municipalities' Facebook and Instagram accounts.

Minutes will be recorded during all public engagement activities. Materials will be posted on the County's grant webpage. All feedback gathered will be summarized on an ongoing basis and discussed at monthly project team meetings. The County and its team will incorporate all feedback as appropriate, with updates posted on the project webpage.

3. TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES, AND MEASURING PROGRESS

Description of Tasks/Activities and Outputs: The following table outlines the tasks (3.a), schedule (3.b), responsible parties (3.c), and outputs (3.d) for the project. The County is proposing a 4-year work plan. Note that the need for health monitoring is not anticipated, but the County will work with the Lewis County Public Health Department if needed.

Task 1 – Project Management, Reporting, and Other Eligible Activities
3.a Project Implementation: EPA-funded activities: The County will manage all aspects of the project in accordance with the terms and conditions established in the Cooperative Agreement (CA) with EPA. At the County’s direction, the QEP will assist with compliance reporting and other eligible project activities. The County will facilitate monthly check-in meetings with the QEP and partners to ensure the project progresses as planned. One County staff member will attend two national brownfields conferences.
3.b Anticipated Project Schedule: Activities will be ongoing throughout the 4-year project period.
3.c Task/Activity Lead: Lewis County, with support from QEP
3.d Outputs: 16 Quarterly Reports, 1 Final Report, 4 Federal Financial Reports, ACRES updates, 2 brownfield conferences attended by County personnel, and monthly meetings
Task 2 – Site Prioritization and Community Outreach
3.a Project Implementation: EPA-funded activities: Community engagement includes establishing/maintaining a project webpage, holding public meetings, generating press releases and social media content, and summarizing/discussing feedback during monthly meetings. The County, with the QEP’s support, will review and prioritize sites nominated for assessment based on site prioritization criteria.
3.b Anticipated Project Schedule: The project webpage will be established in Q1. Community outreach will occur 2 times per year throughout the 4-year project. Site prioritization will begin in Q1 and is expected to be revised and adapted throughout the grant period.
3.c Task/Activity Lead: The County will lead outreach to residents and site prioritization, with support from the consultant and project partners (e.g., local municipalities).
3.d Outputs: Project webpage, 8 community engagement activities, summaries of public feedback, list of all sites nominated/approved for funding
Task 3 – Phase I/II ESAs, Cleanup/Reuse Planning
3.a Project Implementation: EPA-funded activities: The County estimates 19 sites will be assessed. The QEP will prepare Eligibility Determination (ED) requests for prioritized sites and will conduct Phase I ESAs for ~19 sites in accordance with the AAI Final Rule and the ASTM E1527-21 and E1527-13 Phase I ESA Process. The QEP will complete Phase II ESAs for ~7 sites. Prior to field investigation, the QEP will prepare a Master Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) for EPA approval, Sampling and Analysis Plans (SAPs) and Health and Safety Plans (HASPs) for each site selected for a Phase II ESA, and 4 Analysis of Brownfield Cleanup Alternatives (ABCAs).
3.b Anticipated Project Schedule: The County anticipates that the QEP will complete the following: <i>Year 1:</i> Master QAPP, 5 Phase I ESAs, 1 Phase II ESA/SAP; <i>Year 2:</i> 6 Phase I ESAs, 3 Phase II ESAs/SAPs, 1 ABCA; <i>Year 3:</i> 4 Phase I ESAs, 2 Phase II ESAs/SAPs, 2 ABCAs; <i>Year 4:</i> 4 Phase I ESAs, 1 Phase II ESAs/SAP, 1 ABCA
3.c Task/Activity Lead: The QEP will lead technical activities at the direction of the County.
3.d Outputs: 19 ED requests; 1 Master QAPP; 19 Phase I ESAs; 7 Phase II ESAs/SAPs, 4 ABCAs
3.e Cost Estimates: The County is requesting \$500,000 to complete this 4-year assessment project. The table below provides a breakdown of estimated costs by task. An average rate of \$175/hour was used for contractual services.
Task 1 – Project Management, Reporting, and Other Eligible Activities: \$30,400
Personnel: \$3,515 Project Administration: \$3,515 (3 County employees @ \$46.47/hr x 25 hrs; \$30.19/hr x 50 hrs; \$24.11/hr x 35 hrs)
Fringe: \$1,477 Project Administration: \$1,477 (Actual rates: \$46.47 @ 61%; \$30.19 @ 33%; \$24.11 @ 32%)
Travel Total: \$2,578 2027 National Brownfields Conference: \$1,345 (\$1,345/person x 1 person) 2029 National Brownfields Conference: \$1,413 (\$1,413/person x 1 person)
Contractual Total: \$21,700

48 monthly check-in meetings: \$8,400 (48 hours x \$175/hr) Compliance Reporting: \$13,650 (78 hours x \$175/hr) Other Total: \$600 Conference Registration Fees: \$600 (\$300 x 2 conferences)	
Task 2 – Site Prioritization and Community Outreach: \$18,550	
Contractual Total: \$16,450 Community engagement support: \$2,800 (8 events x 2 hours x \$175/hr) Webpage development/maintenance support: \$4,200 (24 hrs x \$175/hr) Site prioritization support: \$11,550 (66 hours x \$175/hr)	
Task 3 – Phase I/II ESAs, Cleanup/Reuse Planning: \$451,050	
Contractual Total: \$451,050 Master QAPP development: \$7,550 Phase I ESAs: \$114,000 (19 sites x \$6,000/site)	Phase II ESAs: \$280,000 (7 sites x \$40,000/site) SAPs: \$17,500 (7 sites x \$2,500/site) ABCAs: \$32,000 (4 sites x \$8,000/site)

A summary of the proposed budget is provided below:

Budget Categories	Task 1 Project Management	Task 2 Outreach and Planning	Task 3 Assessments and Planning	Total
Personnel	\$3,515	\$0	\$0	\$3,515
Fringe	\$1,477	\$0	\$0	\$1,477
Travel	\$2,758	\$0	\$0	\$2,758
Contractual	\$22,050	\$18,550	\$451,050	\$491,650
Other	\$600	\$0	\$0	\$600
Total	\$30,400	\$18,550	\$451,050	\$500,000

3.f Measuring Environmental Results: The County expects to finalize a prioritized list of assessment sites, as well as complete a Master QAPP, 19 Phase I ESAs, 7 Phase II ESAs/SAPs, and 4 ABCAs. The amount of budget utilized, timeline of the project, and the number of community members reached will be tracked and recorded on a biweekly basis by the Project Manager. She and the QEP will track metrics and outcomes using a shared system, like Google Docs, as well as the EPA’s ACRES system. The County will lead monthly conference calls with team members to ensure all components are accomplished. Outcomes will include assessment results on 19 sites, the protection of human health by minimizing exposure to hazardous substances, redevelopment of properties, new housing units developed, and jobs created. Should the project deviate from its expected schedule or financial track, the County will work with the EPA and QEP to create a corrective measures plan that outlines specific spending and timeline goals, and may result in a revised workplan.

4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE

Programmatic Capability

4.a Organizational Capacity, 4.b Organizational Structure & 4.c Description of Key Staff:

Lewis County has extensive experience administering grant projects. From housing and multi-use structure rehabilitation to microenterprise and broadband infrastructure, to administering planning and design phase projects, the County’s Planning & Community Development Department has directly managed and completed projects and collaborated with subrecipients to deliver programs. Since 2020, Lewis County has developed and implemented Standard Operating Procedures for grant administration, ensuring each awarded grant has a clearly defined timeline and task list for compliance and program success.

To support the project efforts and ensure the project’s timely completion, Lewis County’s Director of Planning and Community Development, Casandra Buell will serve as Project Manager

(joined the planning department in 2017, working as director since 2020). She will be supported by Grant Coordinator, Grace Metzler (joined the planning department in 2024, with previous project management experience from 2023-2024 while working in a federal representative's regional office), who will administer the project, with assistance from the Lewis County Purchasing Director Brian Hanno; and Community Development Specialist, Lauryn Tabolt.

4.d Acquiring Additional Resources: If additional expertise is required outside of the selected QEP's scope and/or expertise, the County will use a competitive procurement process, consistent with 40 CFR 31.36, which will include public advertisement of Request for Qualifications and evaluation of proposals based on qualifications and prior experience, to select a consultant.

Past Performance and Accomplishments

4.f Has Not Received an EPA Brownfields Grant but has Received Other Federal or Non-Federal Assistance Agreements: Lewis County has been awarded and successfully administered a number of state and federal grants, including, but not limited to Water Infrastructure Planning (grants up to \$5M), Lewis County Comprehensive Plan Update (NYS DOS), NY Main Street Lyons Falls Elementary School Stabilization (\$1.724M, NYS HCR), NY Main Street Stevens Building Mixed-Use Downtown Stabilization for building abatement and roof replacement (\$494,000, NYS HCR), Lowville Downtown Stabilization Project at Tug Hill Artisan Roasters (\$900,000, Empire State Development), and Lewis County Microenterprise Program (CDBG).

(1) Purpose and Accomplishments: Lewis County utilized New York Main Street funds to assist in the environmental remediation of the vacant Stevens Building in downtown Lowville, as well as a combination of New York Main Street, RESTORE NY, and National Grid funds to address hazardous building materials and roof stabilization of the former Lyons Falls School. Grant work resulted in the cleanup of the Stevens Building, priming it for redevelopment into a mixed-use space, and a successfully secured and abated Lyons Falls School, resulting in its sale to a developer who has begun renovations to transform it into 20 apartments.

(2) Compliance with Grant Requirements: For each grant listed, all timelines were met, reporting deliverables were completed and there were no adverse findings.

Threshold Criteria

1. **Applicant Eligibility:** Lewis County is a municipal government in New York State and is an eligible entity for the EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant.
2. **Community Involvement:** Community input is crucial for Lewis County's brownfield strategy. Public engagement will include:
 - *Public Meetings:* Two public meetings per year will be held to gather community input on sites and reuse alternatives, as well as inform the community of progress. Meetings will be offered virtually and in-person, at locations like senior centers, schools, and libraries, and will be scheduled at varying times of the day to encourage participation. Towns and villages in the County will assist in scheduling and facilitating meetings specific to their municipality.
 - *Webpage:* The County will work with its selected qualified environmental professional (QEP) consultant to create and maintain a webpage for the project, intended to share project information, potential sites and reuse options, meeting information, a site nomination form for the public to recommend additional sites, and contact information for residents to provide feedback and suggestions. The Project Manager will monitor feedback, provide responses as warranted, and summarize comments monthly.
 - *Press Releases:* Lewis County will use local and regional news outlets and the project website to keep the public informed on project progress and upcoming meetings, as well as ask for feedback and additional site suggestions.
 - *Social Media:* Press releases and notifications of public meetings will be posted on various social media outlets such as municipalities' Facebook and Instagram accounts. Minutes will be recorded during all public engagement activities. Materials will be posted on the County's grant webpage. All feedback gathered will be summarized on an ongoing basis and discussed at monthly project team meetings. The County and its team will incorporate all feedback as appropriate, with updates posted on the project webpage.
3. **Expenditure of Existing Grant Funds:** Lewis County, NY does not currently have an open EPA Brownfields Assessment or Multipurpose grant.
4. **Contractors and Named Subrecipients:** On July 7, 2025, Lewis County released a Request for Proposals (RFP) entitled *RFP 2025-108 EPA Brownfield Grant Application and Implementation Assistance* (attached) to solicit firms for assistance with EPA grant preparation and environmental services to be conducted with grant funds upon award. The RFP was posted on the County website and in the New York State Contract Reporter (ad attached) and was published in the Watertown Daily Times on July 11, 2025. The RFP was posted for 24 days and proposals were accepted until July 31, 2025. Bids were evaluated based on completeness of bid, cost effectiveness, and qualifications.

Four proposals were received and considered. After review and evaluation, Lewis County selected C&S Engineers, Inc. based in Syracuse, NY, to assist with grant application preparation and implementation of environmental assessment, remedial planning, community outreach and other environmental or planning components of the EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant. The contract was fully executed on November 7, 2025 (attached).