

May 13, 2020



Notes from the Environmental Workforce Professional Learning Community (PLC)—Cycle 22.

This series of bi-weekly phone calls examines effective Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training (EWDJT) strategies from experienced grantees. PLC calls share ideas among successful grantees and prepare interested organizations for the next EPA Request for Proposals. Calls will be a mix of open discussion, workforce development news, resources, and presentations from current grantees.

Topics:

1. News from Washington
2. News from HMTRI
3. Questions from PLC participants
4. Today's CCLR webinar reviewing federal efforts to assist Brownfields programs
5. A "sneak peek" at this year's virtual All-Grantee Meeting
6. Enhancing e-learning effectiveness from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC)
7. Coronavirus and COVID-19 Resources
8. Webinars and presentation PowerPoints
9. Conferences, workshops, and meetings
10. Funding and leveraging opportunities
11. Contact EPA Regional Coordinators
12. Join us on future Professional Learning Community calls

Today, the PLC moved aside for a special Center for Creative Land Recycling (CCLR) webinar "Preparing for the Cascade of Federal Funding" Featuring David Lloyd, Director OBLR, US EPA.

We hope you found the session informative. The session spotlights federal grants, loans and technical assistance to support brownfield activities throughout all stages of the redevelopment process. If you missed the webinar, check out section 4 of these post session notes for slides and reference links.

1. NEWS FROM WASHINGTON

EPA Happenings:

Our latest update from EPA indicated that the anticipated environmental workforce Request for Applications (RFAs) has been moved up and will likely be issued in June rather than later this summer. The new schedule puts new urgency on planning and preparation for the FY21 grant cycle. If an RFA is issued in June, applicants might anticipate the following schedule for application submission, award, and program implementation:

- Proposal planning and team building - ongoing
- Community relationship and partnership development - ongoing
- EPA request for proposals – June-July, 2020
- Proposals due – August – September, 2020
- Proposal evaluations – Fall - Winter, 2020
- Awards, finalization of work plans and authorization to spend funds –Spring, 2021
- Community awareness, student recruitment, and screening – Summer, 2021
- First year training cohorts – Summer, Fall, 2021

As in the past, this is our “best guess schedule” (nothing official) based on information received just this week. Dates may move forward or slip depending on short term and longer term impacts of the coronavirus pandemic on EPA operations. The new updated schedule sends the following message to organizations interested in submitting a proposal for FY21 training assistance:

- Now is the time to begin preparing for an EWDJT grant writing effort this summer.
- Assemble a proposal development team with commitments to work on the project.
- Begin developing partnership and employer relationships
- Tune into the PLC every other Wednesday. In addition to discussing the latest status of workforce development during the COVID-19 pandemic, the PLC will be exploring strategies to successfully deliver EWDJT programs and prepare for the next EPA Request for EWDJT funding.

2021 National Brownfields Training Conference

EPA is going ahead with the next National Brownfields Training Conference. Offered every two years, the event will be held on April 26-30, 2021, in Oklahoma City. This conference is the largest gathering of stakeholders focused on cleaning up and reusing former commercial and industrial properties. EPA co-sponsors this event with the International City/County Management

EPA Announces Grant Awards for 155 Brownfields ARC grants

The USEPA just announced the selection of 155 grants for communities and tribes totaling over \$65.6 million in EPA brownfields funding through the agency’s Assessment, Revolving Loan Fund, and Cleanup Grant (ARC) program. Funds will expand the ability of communities to recycle vacant and abandoned properties for new, productive reuses. Additional FY 2021 Multipurpose, Assessment, and Cleanup (MAC) Grant solicitations will be issued in late August.

- [Assessment Grants](#) provide funding for brownfield inventories, planning, environmental assessments, and community outreach.
- [Revolving Loan Fund \(RLF\) Grants](#) provide funding to capitalize loans that are used to clean up brownfield sites.
- [Cleanup Grants](#) provide funding to carry out cleanup activities at brownfield sites owned by the applicant.

For a complete list of the new ARC grant awards, go to <https://www.epa.gov/brownfields/applicants-selected-fy-2020-brownfields-assessment-revolving-loan-fund-and-cleanup-0>

For more information about these grant programs and other resources go to <https://www.epa.gov/brownfields/types-brownfields-grant-funding>

2. HMTRI NEWS:

2020 Annual All-Grantee Meeting

HMTRI is in the process of planning the 2020 All-Grantee Meeting during the second week of August. During today’s PLC we had an open discussion requesting input and ideas regarding the feasibility of a face to face meeting in Alexandria or a virtual conference. Given public health concerns, travel restrictions and the safety of participants, it is clear that the 2020 Annual All-Grantee Meeting will need to be a virtual “Zoom like” workshop. The virtual workshop will include EPA Headquarters staff, Regional Coordinators, PLC members, past and current grantees including prospective EWDJT grantees. In the coming weeks, we will be asking for ideas regarding workshop presentations, topics, session facilitators

and volunteer mentors. Heather will be sending out updated invitations and registration forms to get a feel for those attending. Feel free to express your thoughts Heather at hkballou@eicc.edu.

Call for Photos

HMTRI is in the process of updating the brownfields-toolbox.org website, and we are in search of photos to post on the website. We would love to see the following:

- Students receiving training
- People performing on-the-job employment activities
- Students in work environments
- Photos that demonstrate impact

If you currently have access to those types of photos and are willing to share, please send them to Heather Ballou at hkballou@eicc.edu.

3. PLC QUESTIONS

Can EPA require EWDJT grantees to cancel events due to the COVID-19 public health emergency?

No. However, grantees are subject to their organizations policies and are subject to federal, state, tribal or local government directives, guidelines and recommendations relating to event cancellations, social distancing and other health and safety measures taken in response to COVID-19. You can find out more on this topic and other EPA COVID-19 policies on the following webpage.

<https://www.epa.gov/coronavirus/can-epa-grant-recipients-continue-compensate-employees-whose-work-epa-financial>

Questions?

Still have unanswered questions? Send them to hkballou@eicc.edu.

4. TODAY'S TAB WEBINAR REVIEWING FEDERAL EFFORTS TO ASSIST BROWNFIELDS PROGRAMS

For those PLC members who did not receive this week's notices and those not able to attend the CCLR webinar on federal resources for Brownfields, we have attached links to the session recording, slides, and resource guides. The title of the webinar was "Preparing For The Cascade Of Federal Funding: Catch The Wave". Speakers included Toby Rittner (CDFA), David Lloyd (USEPA) and Matt Ward (Sustainable Strategies).

The session spotlighted federal grants, loans and technical assistance to support brownfield activities throughout all stages of the redevelopment process. Presentations included how EPA is working to leverage brownfields redevelopment by coordinating with other federal agencies. An introduction to how Opportunity Zones, layered funding with other federal agencies and programs including EDA, HUD, USDA, USDOT, Community Development Block Grants, and Clean Water Funds can leverage EPA resources.

[View the Recording Here>>>](#)

Webinar slides and resources:

["Preparing for the Cascade of Federal Funding" Complete Slide Deck](#)
[EPA Brownfields Redevelopment Resources and Guides](#)

5. A “SNEAK PEEK” AT THIS YEAR’S ALL-GRANTEE MEETING TOPICS

Here is a first look at possible topics HMTRI is considering for this year’s Annual All-Grantee Meeting. Heather will be sending out a scan asking your advice and preferences in prioritizing the importance of these topics and asking for additional suggestions.

- Selecting a target community – Enlarging the pool of potential employers – types of labor market assessments - How to conduct a comprehensive labor market assessment – locating remediation and PLA projects – working with EPA assessment and cleanup grantees – using EPA tools - community assessments – working with City Hall – scanning redevelopment, opportunity and EZ zones – environmental justice considerations – brownfield and remediation projects
- Community acceptance and support - Social media strategies that work – working with faith-based organizations – selling EWDJT to the community – program marketing - enlarging the pool of program applicants - developing applicant awareness – program marketing – open house events –current participants and alumni as ambassadors - traditional media strategies – social media platforms – radio – open house events – formal presentations – brochures and fact sheets – effective websites
- Partners, supporters and Advisory Boards- Partners and supporters that can sustain a workforce development program - engaging partners effectively – program supporters, sub-grantees, contractors and trainers as partners – selection and recruitment of partners – establishing an Advisory Board - recruiting Advisory Board members – expectations of the Advisory Board - using Advisory boards wisely - working with faith based and other nonprofits – locating nonprofits with common interests – nonprofits as sub-grantees
- Workforce Investment Boards, one-stops and social service agencies – Using WIBs to recruit, screen and place participants – case management opportunities – working with health and human services agencies - qualifying students for benefits – leveraging social service opportunities – identifying governmental agencies with common interests
- EWDJT, substance abuse and other program killers – Drug testing as an acceptance criteria- random drug testing - testing as a condition of graduation – selecting the appropriate drug testing protocol – rehabilitation programs – harassment policies – gender neutrality – anger management –attendance and tardiness
- Applicant recruitment, selection and assessment methods- Recruitment strategies - finding and recruiting students most likely to succeed - student screening, assessment and testing - student contracts and expectations - covering the costs of assessment tests – selecting the appropriate assessment tools – student physicals – working with diverse populations - ex-offenders - women - youth - special populations – working with educational and cultural disparities
- Curriculum development and training strategies - Techniques for keeping students interested and engaged – core curriculum offerings - certifications - distance learning – self - directed instruction – digital platforms - classroom safety – technology in the classroom – training configurations and student distancing

- Training and support services not supported by EWDJT - Remedial education - life skills training – unsupported environmental training – sources of in-kind training – supplemental funding from program supporters – student support services – community service
- Health and safety training – Mandatory training, popular courses – supplemental health and safety training – recruiting and vetting qualified instructors - working with OSHA – training liability – classroom safety - recent developments - OSHA compliance for trainers - training records - participant physicals - instructor credentials
- Increasing student retention – Effective case management - Teambuilding strategies – social events – stipends – scholarships – work study programs – community service projects – pre apprenticeship programs – student networking – peer to peer coaching
- Leveraging and program sustainability - Partnerships with organized labor – fund raising events – in-kind assistance – employer assistance – local grants and foundation support – private/public partnerships – synergistic grant opportunities – faith based and community support - sources of in-kind support – MOUs and commitment agreements – recruiting potential leveraging partners
- Graduation, placement and tracking– Employer and community participation - keeping alumni engaged after graduation – work study and internships – employer incentives - using employers as advisors and instructors – graduates as employers and advocates – employer attendance at social events - Overcoming employment barriers – Expunging criminal records – special employment programs – surety bonds –mitigating employer concerns – drug testing prior to graduation
- ACRES refresher –ACRES overview and update - How is the data used – ACRES Issues- using ACRES -questions
- Program Tune ups and grant writing strategies –Learning from past mistakes - Critical issues that lead to program failure – incomplete labor market assessments - recruitment failures – inadequate attention to participant needs-revising work plans – preparing for the next grant proposal –proposal tune ups and checklist
- Grant administration for program managers - Allowable and un-allowed program costs, sub-awards, contractors, consultants and vendors – common mistakes made by program managers – regulations and debarment
- Virtual field trip – A virtual visit to one or more EWDJT grantee training facilities
- Feedback from EWDJT participants – Positives and negatives of the EWDJT program from a student’s perspective - presentations from current and former program participants
- Program Evaluation – Program Evaluation instruments and types of evaluations

6. ENHANCING E-LEARNING EFFECTIVENESS FROM THE CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL (CDC)

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, CDC has issued resources that may be of interest during a transition from face to face to more digital instruction.

Public Health Education and Training Development E-learning Design

Public health educators can enhance training effectiveness by applying the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Quality Training Standards for e-learning and classroom training and learning from successful examples. These tools and resources assist e-learning developers in creating quality products and will help those new to e-learning understand the basics. There is a new Quality E-learning Checklist for quality assurance of e-learning.

[CDC E-learning](#)

[CDC Guide for Instructors](#) 

[CDC Quality Standards](#) 

7. Coronavirus and COVID-19 Resources

The Center for Construction Research and Training (CPWR) has guidance to protect construction workers from exposure to coronavirus. These standards and best practices would also be applicable to the environmental remediation workforce.

Standards for Construction Sites

Construction Clearinghouse

The Center for Construction Research and Training (CPWR) and North America's Building Trades Union have released the COVID-19 Standards for U.S. Construction Sites. The guidance has been updated since early March and identify what steps should be taken to reduce construction worker exposure to the virus on the job. To access the CPWR construction clearinghouse go to the following site.

[CPWR](#)

8. WEBINARS AND PRESENTATION POWERPOINTS



This Brown Bag Brunch webinar brings together women innovators in development who are running businesses that are expanding the frontiers of brownfield redevelopment. Both have tackled challenging redevelopment projects in urban and rural settings and advocated for updates to brownfield policy and funding to move the field forward in important and durable ways. They will relay personal stories about challenges and successes and share insights into leadership styles and best practices that promote better development.

Shannon Morgan’s Renovare, (Latin for “to renew, restore or revive”) focuses on mixed-income and mixed-use redevelopment projects in Opportunity Zones, primarily in Michigan. Mary Hashem’s RE | Solutions, LLC has a 30 year track record of taking on challenging redevelopment projects across the country. Additionally, Shannon was awarded CCLR’s [Lifetime Achievement: Excellence in Redevelopment award](#) and Mary is the Chair of CCLR’s Board of Directors.

We look forward to bringing their energy and inspiration into your home in a conversational format designed to engage, educate and empower.
AICP CM #9199206

[Register Now!](#)

9. CONFERENCES, WORKSHOPS, AND MEETINGS

[2020 Georgia Environmental Conference](#)

August 26-28, 2020

Jekyll Island, GA

The Annual Georgia Environmental Conference is the largest and most comprehensive professional environmental education conference serving Georgia and the Southeast region – across the public and private sectors.

Mission: To meaningfully and significantly present Georgia Environmental Conference’s diverse slate of topics and featured speakers focusing on providing fresh, new, high value, well-balanced, diverse, and

relevant educational content with a positive impact on current and future practitioners and the environment of Georgia and the Southeast region.

The Conference hosts an elite group of environmental professionals seeking knowledge and sharing ideas around environmental concerns in Georgia and the Southeast region. GEC anticipates an estimated 700 attendees, including Attorneys, Consultants, Engineers, Business, Industry, Federal, State, and Local Government Officials, Planners and Developers, Landowners and many, many others with a strong interest in environmental programs in Georgia and the Southeast. Sponsorships enable more diverse groups and individuals to participate at the Annual Georgia Environmental Conference. Through continued participation in this program, we may continue to offer course registration fees far below that charged for comparable events and learning opportunities, while providing a top-notch Conference experience.

[The WV Brownfields Conference](#)

September 15-17

Huntington, WV

The WV Brownfields Conference & Main Street/ON TRAC Training is West Virginia's premier redevelopment event that combines educational programs with networking opportunities between communities, local governments, development professionals, and service providers. The conference features expert panels, interactive workshops, technical training, and project case studies.

The Conference Planning Committee is currently seeking mobile workshop and breakout session ideas to fill limited slots for the 2020 Conference in Huntington, WV on September 15-17. We are looking for session ideas focused on downtown development, remediation and site preparation strategies, re-use planning approaches, and redevelopment funding opportunities. Creative session formats, such as town hall or roundtable discussions and interactive workshops, as well as traditional panel presentations, are encouraged.

The deadline for session ideas is March 16, 2020. Interested entities can submit up to two presentation proposals. Speakers will be required to register at the reduced speaker rate of \$50 by August 3, 2020. Questions can be directed to Carrie Staton at carrie.staton@mail.wvu.edu.

[The 6th Annual GBA Brownfield Seminar](#)

Rescheduled for Oct. 12, 2020

Out of an abundance of caution and sensitivity to coronavirus COVID-19 concerns, the Georgia Brownfield Association has rescheduled the Brownfield Seminar to Oct. 12, 2020 to better serve attendees, speakers and sponsors of this important conference and conversation. The event will proceed on this new date in its originally planned format, as a full-day conference at Georgia Power.

Those who submitted abstracts - thank you, we will be in touch with you directly regarding your submission.

[Registration](#) is open and sponsorships are still available! If you're already registered, don't worry - we have transferred your registration to the new event date on Oct. 12, 2020.

Thank you for your continued commitment to supporting brownfield redevelopment in Georgia. We look forward to seeing you there!

10. FUNDING AND LEVERAGING OPPORTUNITIES

[USDA: National Institute of Food and Agriculture](#)

Community Food Projects Program

Submission Deadline: June 3, 2020

The primary goals of the Community Food Project are to: Meet the food needs of low-income individuals through food distribution, community outreach, and improving access to food; Increase the self-reliance of communities in providing for the food needs of the communities; Promote comprehensive responses to local food access, farm, and nutrition issues; and more. For the grants.gov solicitation go to:

[Develop and Implement National Environmental Education Training Programs](#)

As directed by the National Environmental Education Act of 1990, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is pleased to announce the availability of approximately \$11 million in funding for a multi-year cooperative agreement to develop and manage the National Environmental Education Training Program. Applications must be submitted no later than May 29, 2020.

“Training environmental educators on the latest science, technology, and engineering is crucial not only to their engagement on the issues, but also to inspiring the next generation of environmental educators,” said EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler. “Through this cooperative agreement, we hope to increase the availability and understanding of scientific information to improve environmental decision making and promote a cleaner, healthier environment for all Americans.”

The purpose of the program is to develop and deliver environmental education training and long-term support to education professionals across the U.S. Applications must include proposals for national programs that will: Help train environmental educators.

- Increase distribution of quality materials.
- Improve non-formal education programs.
- Enhance coordination among environmental education organizations to help reduce duplication and costs.
- Increase the number of environmental educators.
- Increase public knowledge of the environment.

Only one cooperative agreement will be awarded to a U.S. institution of higher education, a not-for-profit institution, or a consortium of such institutions. Applicants must provide non-federal matching funds or in-kind contributions of at least 25% of the total cost of the project.

Background

In 1991, EPA established the Office of Environmental Education to implement programs mandated by the National Environmental Education Act, including the National Environmental Education and Training Program. Since 1992, the program has trained more than 4,400 formal and nonformal educators by building infrastructure through leadership clinics, developing state certification programs, and using technology to expand access to resources to enhance the value of environmental education, among other initiatives.

Information on how to apply for the National Environmental Education and Training Program for 2020 is available at <https://www.epa.gov/education/national-environmental-education-and-training-program-solicitation-notice-2020-rfa>.

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<https://www.epa.gov/education/national-environmental-education-and-training-program-solicitation-notice-2020-rfa>

Information about the teacher training program:

<https://www.epa.gov/education/national-environmental-education-training-program>

EPA Provides Grant Funding to Support Environmental Justice Communities Impacted by COVID-19

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is working to improve the environment and public health conditions of low-income and minority communities through our daily efforts to ensure all Americans have clean air, safe water, and access to information to make decisions to protect personal and public health. In response to the COVID-19 public health emergency, EPA is making \$1 million in grant funding available to states to help local environmental justice communities address COVID-19 concerns faced by low-income and minority communities. Through the State Environmental Justice Cooperative Agreement Program, EPA will provide funds to states, local governments, tribes and U.S. territories to work collaboratively with environmental justice communities to understand, promote and integrate approaches to provide meaningful and measurable improvements to public health and the environment.

“Environmental justice grants aim to support public education, training, and emergency planning for communities across the country impacted by COVID-19, regardless of their zip code,” said EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler. “These grants are part of EPA’s effort to actively fight the COVID-19 pandemic that is having a disproportionate impact on low-income and minority communities.”

The grant funding will be used to support public education, training, and emergency planning for communities impacted by COVID-19. Projects could include sharing information related to EPA-approved disinfectants to combat COVID-19; addressing increased exposure of residents to in-home pollutants and healthy housing issues; and training community health workers.

EPA anticipates awarding five grants of approximately \$200,000 each for up to a two-year funding period. The agency encourages applicants to develop innovative plans and processes to conduct effective outreach to underserved communities, especially in places where Internet access may not be readily available to all residents.

Interested applicants must submit proposal packages on or before June 30, 2020 to be considered for the available funding.

To apply for funding go to:

<https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/state-environmental-justice-cooperative-agreement-program>

For more information on EPA’s Environmental Justice program go to:

<https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/state-environmental-justice-cooperative-agreement-program>

[Guide to Finding Federal Assistance and Resources for Environmental Justice Efforts](#)

This EPA guide offers general guidance and tips on searching for funding opportunities, as well as information on tools, trainings and other relevant resources that are available to help address community needs. The Federal Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice (EJ IWG) includes several federal agencies and White House offices that increase local community capacity to promote and implement innovative and comprehensive solutions to environmental justice issues.

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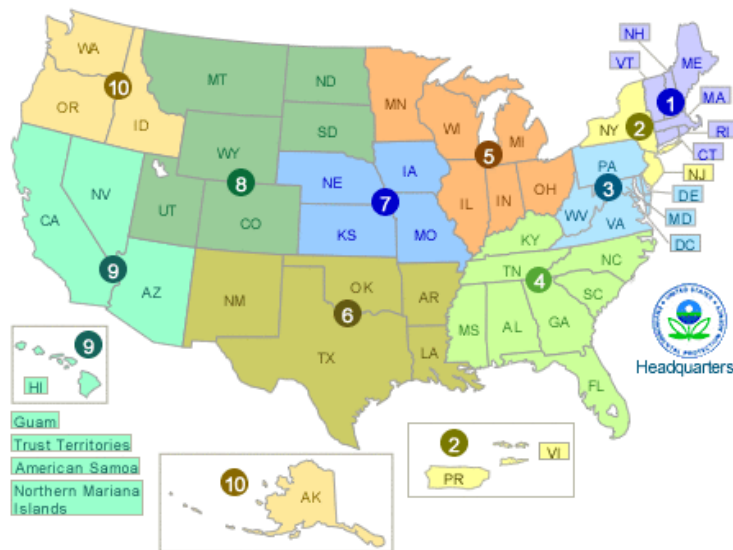
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11. EPA REGIONAL JOB TRAINING COORDINATORS

EPA Region 1 Danny Rodriguez	CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, VT	Phone: (617) 918-1060 E-mail: rodriguez.danny@epa.gov
EPA Region 1 Myra Schwartz		Phone: (617) 918-1696 E-mail: schwartz.myra@epa.gov
EPA Region 2 Schenine Mitchell	NJ, NY, PR, VI	Phone: (212) 637-3283 E-mail: mitchell.schenine@epa.gov
EPA Region 3 Gianna Rosati	DE, DC, MD, PA, VA, WV	Phone: (215) 814-3406 E-mail: rosati.gianna@epa.gov
EPA Region 4 Wanda Jennings	AL, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN	Phone: (404) 562-8682 E-mail: jennings.wanda@epa.gov
EPA Region 5 Linda Morgan	IL, IN, MI, MN, OH, WI	Phone: (312) 886-4747 E-mail: morgan.linda@epa.gov
EPA Region 5 Craig Mankowski		Phone: (312) 886-9493 E-mail: mankowski.craig@epa.gov
EPA Region 6 Rita Ware	AR, LA, NM, OK, TX	Phone: (214) 665-6409 E-mail: ware.rita@epa.gov
EPA Region 7 Alma Moreno Lahm	IA, KS, MO, NE	Phone: (913) 551-7380 E-mail: moreno-lahm.alma@epa.gov
EPA Region 8 Christina Wilson	CO, MT, ND, SD, UT, WY	Phone: (303) 312-6706 E-mail: wilson.christina@epa.gov
EPA Region 9 Nova Blazej	AZ, CA, HI, NV, AS, GU	Phone: (415) 972-3846 E-mail: blazej.nova@epa.gov
EPA Region 9 Noemi Emeric-Ford		Phone: (213) 244-1821 E-mail: emeric-ford.noemi@epa.gov
EPA Region 10 Susan Morales	AK, ID, OR, WA	Phone: (206) 553-7299 E-mail: morales.susan@epa.gov



Map of EPA Regions

Credit: epa.gov

12. JOIN US ON FUTURE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING CALLS

Upcoming PLC calls

- May 13
- May 27
- June 10

Missed a few of our PLC sessions? Post session notes are available on the brownfields-toolbox.org. Join our 30-minute discussion with EPA EWDJT grantees, alumni and new interested stakeholders. PLCs give grantees a chance to highlight their programs and an opportunity for others to learn from their experience. For questions or to be placed on the PLC register, send your contact information to hkballou@eicc.edu.

Visit our HMTRI Brownfields Toolbox website for more information on Brownfields Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training programs. All [PLC session notes and recordings](#) are also located on the website. For those interested in providing content or suggestions, please contact Heather Ballou at hkballou@eicc.edu.

NOTE: The PLC brings together ideas and opinions of individuals interested in environmental workforce development and job training. Ideas and opinions are not those of EPA or its policy and should not be taken as official guidance.

