

THRESHOLD CRITERIA FOR BROWNFIELDS ASSESSMENT GRANTS

A. Applicant Eligibility: Prairie Hills Resource Conservation & Development, Inc. (Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc.) is a 501 (c) 3 non-profit corporation established in 1976 by the County Boards and the Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD) of the following six counties in west central Illinois: Fulton, Hancock, Henderson, Knox, McDonough, and Warren. Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. is governed by a 30 member governing council composed of representatives from the six county boards and SWCDs, as well as representatives from other local governments, development agencies, non-profit organizations, businesses, and educational institutions. Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. is one of 13 RC&D's established in Illinois, and one or more than 375 RC&D's established nationwide (as of 2004). Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. is a regional council or group of "general purpose units of local government" as that term is defined in 40 CFR Part 31 and is therefore eligible to receive U.S. EPA funds for brownfields assessment. A copy of Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. bylaws is provided in Attachment A, which documents the legal structure and rules of governance for the organization. Please note that Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. submitted similar applications to U.S. EPA as part of the Fiscal Year 2007 and 2008 Brownfields Grant Competitions. A determination that Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. met the definition for an eligible unit of local government was made by U.S. EPA following submittal of additional supporting documentation which is included in Attachment A of this application.

B. Letter from Environmental Authority: A letter of support signed and dated October 29, 2008, by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) is presented in Attachment B.

C. Site Eligibility and Property Ownership Information: Not applicable for proposals for community-wide assessment grants.

RANKING CRITERIA FOR BROWNFIELDS ASSESSMENT GRANTS

1. Community Need

a. Health, Welfare, and Environment

i) Effect of Brownfields on Targeted Community

Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. serves the following six counties in west central Illinois: Fulton, Hancock, Henderson, Knox, McDonough, and Warren. The six county area has been impacted by the effects of abandoned mine-scarred lands from historical surface and subsurface mining. The table below summarizes the statistics for mining in this area, which includes 906 mine sites.

County Name	# of Abandoned or Inactive Mines (May 2000)	# of Active Mines (May 2000)	# of Mine Tipples (May 2000)	Estimated Total Surface Area Impacted by Strip Mines (square miles)	Total County Surface Area (square miles)	Estimated Total County Surface Area Impacted by Strip Mines (percent)
Fulton	612	0	53	74.5	865.62	8.6%
Hancock	21	0	1	0.2	794.62	0.03%
Knox	116	1	6	36.0	716.28	5.0%
McDonough	122	1	0	3.5	589.27	0.59%
Warren	35	0	0	0	542.52	0.00%
Totals	906	2	60	114.2	3508.31	3.3%

Fulton and Knox Counties have been particularly impacted by mine-scarred lands. Coal mining in the area dates back to at least 1855, when David Williams established the first surface mine, north of Canton in Fulton County. Fulton County ranked second in the state for cumulative surface mine production from 1882 to 1980. Mining was mostly underground until the 1920s, when surface mining started on a large scale. By 1965, Fulton County had become the leading coal-producing area in Illinois. At one time Fulton County had the **largest area of surface-**

mined land in the world of any similar sized jurisdictional area (Soil Survey of Fulton County, Illinois, 2001, page 12).

The Illinois DNR maintains an inventory and searchable on-line database of abandoned mine lands in Illinois, the types of hazards present, and the projects completed to date (if any) to address the hazards. A related database is available on-line at the U.S. Department of the Interior Office of Surface Mining website (<http://www.osmre.gov/>). The table below summarizes the total number of problem mines per county that are presently identified on the database, as well as the number of mines that still have hazards remaining, and a summary of the specific types and numbers of hazardous conditions present at mines in each county.

Area		Fulton County	Knox County	McDon-ough Co.	Warren County	Totals
# of problem mines		78	18	4	2	102
# of problem mines with hazards remaining		28	2	3	2	35
Numbers and types of mine hazards that have been identified by IDNR but which have not been addressed as of 2006	Vertical opening	12		2	1	15
	Hazardous equipment or facilities	7				7
	Dangerous pile or embankment	5	1			6
	Dangerous highwalls	4				4
	Gob (coal mine tailings)	3		1		4
	Mine opening	3			2	5
	Portal	2		1		3
	Spoil	1				1
	Clogged stream lands	1	1			2
	Polluted water	2				2
Other	1				1	

Note: No abandoned mines have been identified in Henderson County. No “problem mines” have been identified by the IDNR in Hancock County.

It should be noted that a comprehensive survey of potential hazards associated with the 906 abandoned or inactive mines in the 6 county area has not been completed by the IDNR.

Another common but less visible hazard (not included in the table above) posed by abandoned underground mines is the risk of either gradual or sudden subsidence as old mines collapse. This can pose a threat to the safety of existing structures and their inhabitants, and can make certain areas too risky to develop because of the existence of known or potential underground mines beneath them. A major development in the City of Canton, Fulton County, construction of a Walmart Superstore, was recently cancelled due to increased development costs associated with a former coal mine underneath the proposed development site.

The negative impact of mine-scarred lands on the area extends well beyond the presence of imminent environmental or health and safety hazards at individual mine sites. According to Professor Lance Factor at Knox College in Galesburg, Illinois, more than 23,000 acres of former farmland in Knox County is off the tax rolls because of strip mining. According to Professor Factor: “The soil here is like concrete. It doesn't retain water. When it rains, water rushes over the ground and cuts through the lake banks, causing uncontrollable erosion. Reclamation of strip mined land is like icing on a stale cake. The icing tastes pretty good, but the cake is hard as a rock.” Furthermore: “Costs are passed on to the general public when farmland is lost to productivity. Townships and counties that were heavily strip mined have lost the tax base to maintain schools and roads.”

The Spoon River Basin encompasses a surface area of approximately 1,845 square miles and includes parts of nine Illinois counties. However, the approximately 70% of the area that forms the lower portion of the Basin (as well as the entire portion of the basin subject to surface mining activities) is located within four counties (Fulton, Knox, Henderson, and McDonough) that are part of the six county Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. service area. Exceptional features of the watershed as identified by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources Office of Scientific Research and Analysis’s “The Spoon River Area Assessment” for the C2000 Ecosystem program include: (a) 7.5% of the area contains contiguous areas of surface mined land; (b) only 21

stream-miles of the Spoon River Basin have been channelized, making it one of the least channelized watersheds in Illinois; and (c) the area is rich in archaeological resources with more than 2,600 sites recorded, including a major archaeological museum, Dickson Mounds State Museum. The Spoon River is an important resource for the area as well as an important component of the region’s cultural identity, partially attributable to Edgar Lee Masters famous “Spoon River Anthology” published in 1914-15, the literary significance of which has been compared to Walt Whitman’s “Leaves of Grass.” Many of the communities in the area host annual Spoon River festivals or other events. Thus, degradation of this cherished resource as a result of mine-scarred lands takes on somewhat greater significance to residents in the area.

The Illinois Section 303(d) List (April 2006) identifies the following stream segments or lakes within the Spoon River Basin as being impacted:

Priority/ # of Causes	10 Digit HUC	Segment ID	Segment Name	Miles/ Acres	Impaired Designated Use	Potential Cause	Potential Source
Medium - 7	07130-00509	IL_DJFC	Indian Cr.	8.13	Aquatic Life	Nitrogen (total)	Municipal Point Source Discharges
						Phosphorus (total)	
						Sedimentation/ siltation	Channelization
						Total suspended solids	Livestock (Grazing and Feeding Operations)
		IL_DJFCA	Dago Slough	3.23	Aquatic Life	Nitrogen (total)	Municipal Point Source Discharges
						Phosphorus (total)	
Sedimentation/ siltation	Channelization, Livestock (Grazing and Feeding Operations)						
Medium - 5	07130-00513	IL_DJB-18	Big Cr.	28.83	Aquatic Life	Phosphorus (total)	Municipal Point Source Discharges
						Sulfates	
		IL_DJBZ-01	Slug Run	3.23	Aquatic Life	Sedimentation/ siltation	Surface Mining, Impacts from AML’s (inactive)
						Sulfates	
						Total dissolved solids	
Medium - 3	07130-00510	IL_DJ-09	Spoon R.	33.25	Primary Contact Recreation	Fecal coliform	Source unknown
		IL_DJE-02	Coal Cr.	15.3	Aquatic Life	Sulfates Total dissolved solids	Surface Mining, Impacts from AML’s (inactive)
Medium - 2	07130-00508	IL_SDZA	Bracken Lake	172	Fish Consump-	Mercury	Atmospheric Deposition

Priority/ # of Causes	10 Digit HUC	Segment ID	Segment Name	Miles/ Acres	Impaired Design- ated Use	Potential Cause	Potential Source
					tion		(toxics)
						PCBs	Landfills

As shown on the table above, more than half of the surface water bodies in the Spoon River Basin that are on the Section 303(d) List have potential sources identified as surface mining and impacts from abandoned mine lands. Efforts to develop Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) are not currently underway for any of these segments or water bodies. A map showing the Category 5 Impaired Waters within the Spoon River Watershed is presented in Attachment E.

An Illinois River Ecosystem Restoration Program is being developed by the State of Illinois, the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers and others to address environmental/ecological problems affecting the Illinois River watershed, a majority of which are related to excess siltation. Eight alternatives are being considered for improving the environmental/ecological conditions over the next 50 years, with the estimated cost for the initial 10 years ranging from \$250 million to \$3.4 billion. Based on a study published in 2004 by the Center for Watershed Science at Illinois State Water Survey (Contract Report 2004-13), the Spoon River Basin had the highest average sediment yield of any of the Illinois River tributaries, delivering an average of 1,552,300 tons of sediment annually to the Illinois River (12.8% of the total sediment) from a drainage area of 1,855 square miles (6.9% of the total watershed area). A portion of the sedimentation problem is associated with the mine-scarred lands.

Discharges of contaminated water from mine-scarred lands pose a health threat to the water supply of many area residents. Most of residents living outside the larger towns depend on private water supply wells. According to the Illinois Geological Survey, within large areas of Fulton, McDonough, and Hancock counties available groundwater is limited to shallow aquifers within less than 100 feet (often less than 50 feet of the ground surface) and a deep aquifer that is more than 500 feet below ground surface. Due to limited financial resources, many residents cannot afford to drill the deep wells required to tap the deep aquifer, and are forced to rely on shallow wells for water supply. In areas near mine-scarred lands these shallow aquifers are susceptible to contamination from contaminant discharges.

Fulton County is an example of the challenges the area is facing from economic decline exacerbated linked to the creation and existence of brownfields. From 1994 to 2003 common crime indices in Fulton County increased while those of other rural Illinois counties fell (violent crime: +80% vs. -22%; property crimes: +39% vs. -7%; arrest rates: +25% vs. -17%). While drug arrest rates have increased for rural Illinois counties as a whole, Fulton's rate has increased faster. Fulton County's drug arrests tripled and arrests for the most serious drug offenses (violation of the Controlled Substances Act) increased eight-fold between 1994 and 2003. According to the Illinois Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System survey (2001-2003), there were 15.9% of the respondents at risk for binge drinking. These risk factors have been prevalent in Fulton County since 1999. (Information from: "Research and Program Evaluation in Illinois: The Extent and Nature of Drug and Violent Crime in Illinois' Counties - A Profile of the Fulton County Criminal and Juvenile Justice Systems" published by the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority; "Illinois Project for Local Assessment of Needs [IPLAN], 2005 – 2010, Fulton County, Illinois," published by the Fulton County Health Department)

ii) Health and Welfare of Sensitive Populations

Approximately 37%, or more than one-third, of the six county population is comprised of residents in age groups that are particularly susceptible to the health risks posed by environmental contamination (under 18 and over 65). All six counties contain a significantly higher percentage of residents over the age of 65 (17%) than the rest of the State of Illinois (12%). For the individual counties this percentage ranges from approximately 14% (McDonough) to approximately 19% (Hancock). Persons over 65 suffer from the greatest health-related problems of any age group making them particularly vulnerable to the effects of environmental contaminants. In addition, this age-group has fewer economic resources than most others for dealing with health-related concerns. The six county area has a slightly lower

percentage of residents under the age of 5 (5%) than the entire State of Illinois (7%) and a lower percentage of residents under the age of 18 (20%) than the entire State of Illinois (25%) due to net out-migration of adults of child-bearing age and families that are raising children. Residents under the age of 18, and particularly under the age of 5, are susceptible to developmental impacts posed by environmental contaminants. Younger children are more likely to belong to families with limited access to adequate health care. Children are particularly attracted to poorly controlled, dangerous areas, such as abandoned mine sites or mining-impacted water bodies, while playing, which places them at elevated risk from the physical and chemical hazards found on those sites.

The net out-migration of young adults and families and the consequent reduced number of children has further exacerbated potential health problems for older residents by reducing the number of available workers that can serve their needs.

The loss of mining-related jobs and the failure to redevelop these lands has contributed to other social and health problems as the result of increased economic stress. The area suffers from a high suicide rate due to economic stress and lack of jobs. Fulton County (where the greatest number and area of mine-scarred lands are located) is on the poverty watch list as demonstrated by a higher teen pregnancy rate than Illinois. In 2002, the Fulton County rate was 13.3%, however in 2003, the rate dropped to 10.3%. A six-year average rate (1997-2002) was 14.4% compared to Illinois at an average rate of 12.7%. From 2002 to 2007, Fulton County experienced a large increase in reported and indicated child abuse and neglect per 1,000 population. The rate increased for reported incidences from 39.1% (n=415) in 2002 to 59.1% (n=597) in 2007. Fulton County’s rate of increase (49%) far exceeds that for the State of Illinois (14%) over the same time period. In 2002, Fulton County had the highest rate of children in foster care (37.7%) compared to the State of Illinois at 22.5%. For indicated cases, the rate increased from 13.5% (n=134) in 2002 to 14.2% (n=131) in 2003. In 2002, Fulton County had the highest rate of children in foster care (37.7%) compared to Illinois at 22.5%. There was a 2.6% increase in domestic violence and an 85% increase for crimes against children. These risk factors have been prevalent in Fulton County since 1999. (Information from: Child Abuse and Neglect Statistics for Fiscal Years 2002 and 2007 published by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services; “Illinois Project for Local Assessment of Needs [IPLAN], 2005 – 2010, Fulton County, Illinois,” published by the Fulton County Health Department).

b. Financial Need

i) Economic Impact of Brownfields on Targeted Community

The six county area has higher poverty rates than the State of Illinois as a whole, and has experienced increases in poverty faster than the State as a whole (information from; see table below). Of particular note is the increase in children living in poverty. In 1999, only two of the six counties had child poverty rates above the State child poverty rate, while in 2005 all but one county had child poverty rates above the State child poverty rate even though the State child poverty rate had also increased.

County	All People in Poverty		Children Ages 0-17 in Poverty	
	1999	2005	1999	2005
Fulton Co.	9.9	12.1	13.3	17.6
Hancock Co.	8.3	11.0	9.9	15.3
Henderson Co.	9.5	11.8	12.8	18.3
Knox Co.	11.1	14.7	16.8	21.3
McDonough Co.	19.8	20.9	19.6	21.6
Warren Co.	9.2	13.3	11.5	18.6
Six County Area	11.7	14.4	14.7	19.3
State of Illinois	10.7	12.0	14.0	16.5

Source: USDA Economic Research Service (ERS), www.ers.usda.gov/data/

Unemployment rates for the six counties, as well as their three largest cities, are similar or slightly lower than the State unemployment rate. However, these rates would likely be much higher if it were not for significant out-migration of people and declining population in the area (see table below). Given that the overall population of the State has continued to increase the most likely explanation for this population change is a lack of employment opportunities in the six county area. Warren County was designated a “Champion Community” in 2002 by the USDA. Champion Communities meet initial requirements for Federal Empowerment/Enterprise Zones due to out-migration and economic stress.

Geographic Area Name	Population (Year 1980 Census)	Population (Year 2000 Census)	Estimated Population (July 1, 2005)	Population Growth (% Change - 2000 to July 1, 2005)	Total Number of Sites on Envirofacts Database (12/1/2006)	Unemployment Rate (Preliminary July 2008, USDA ERS)
City of Canton	14,626	15,288	14,938	-2.3%	79	7.3%
City of Galesburg	35,305	33,706	32,017	-5.0%	195	6.9%
City of Macomb	19,863	18,558	18,587	0.2%	85	6.0%
3 City Totals	69,794	67,552	65,542	-3.0%	359	Not available
Fulton Co.	43,687	38,250	37,708	-1.4%	211	7.3%
Hancock Co.	23,950	20,121	19,153	-4.8%	154	7.4%
Henderson Co.	9,114	8,213	7,972	-2.9%	48	9.1%
Knox Co.	61,607	55,836	53,309	-4.5%	304	6.9%
McDonough Co.	37,467	32,913	31,966	-2.9%	155	6.0%
Warren Co.	21,943	18,735	17,558	-6.3%	115	6.7%
6 County Totals	197,768	174,068	167,666	-3.7%	987	
State of Illinois	11,427,409	12,419,293	12,763,371	2.8%		7.4%

The lack of development of brownfields properties in the area coupled with declines in the area’s population creates a vicious cycle in that each brownfield represents un-replaced jobs which drives people from the area to look for work elsewhere. The declining population then serves to dampen or decrease property values, as well as to provide disincentives for new industrial, commercial, and/or residential construction that in many other areas of the country can serve as a significant catalyst for cleaning up and redeveloping brownfields properties. Redeveloping brownfields would help stem the net loss of jobs and population in the six county area.

Fulton County has been particularly hard hit by economic trends that have created brownfields. For the past 20 years, Fulton County (where the greatest number and area of mine-scarred lands are located) has typically been at or near the top of the state’s unemployment charts. The area was hit hard when International Harvester closed its Canton production facility and when the coal mining business in Illinois went virtually out of business. For most of this period it was nearly double the state and national average. A six-year average rate (1997-2002) was 14.4% compared to Illinois at an average rate of 12.7%. As of February 2003, the unemployment rate hovered at 11.6% second highest for all counties in Illinois. Although the unemployment rate has recently declined to near the State average, this is likely attributable to declining population. The increased poverty rate for Fulton County suggests that incomes for county residents have failed to maintain their standard of living. As of 2000, the median family income of \$41,193 in Fulton County was only 75% of the State median \$55,545.

ii) Other Limiting Economic Factors

Even though mine-scarred lands are recognized as brownfields sites, communities impacted by them tend to have difficulty competing for assistance with more traditional urban-based brownfields sites. This is often because they lack some of the characteristics of concern associated with urban brownfields, such as large minority populations and urban-redevelopment potential. In addition, the particular concerns associated with these sites may not be given as much weight when assistance is requested. These include elevated health threats to local

populations that are more likely to rely on impacted local natural resources such as water supplies and wildlife than their urban counterparts; and the difficulty in identifying and pursuing responsible parties for sites that were likely to have been abandoned decades ago, and that often lack the records of prior ownership and operation available for urban sites. Also, unlike many poor urban communities, the impacted communities in the six-county area are not part of larger richer communities, such as large cities or metropolitan areas, that can help them. For would-be developers and new businesses the smaller population, and associated worker and customer base, of these areas makes the costs and benefits of assessing, remediating, and redeveloping brownfields less attractive than in areas with larger populations.

2. Project Description and Feasibility of Success

a. Project Description

i) Description of the Project to be Funded Under this Grant

The project consists of four tasks to progressively identify and assess the brownfields with the greatest potential for redevelopment while keeping the community involved in the process.

Task 1: Mine-scarred Lands Inventory and Prioritization– The Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. will undertake an inventory of existing mine-scarred lands and facilities located throughout the six county area. Detailed maps and directories of coal mines published by the Illinois State Geological Survey (ISGS) in May 2000 are available online at http://www.isgs.uiuc.edu/servs/pubs/county-coal-maps/coalmine_for.htm. Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. will work with staff at the ISGS Coal Section to obtain updated data for each county, as the maps and directories are reportedly continually updated. Copies of the current ISGS county coal mine maps for the area are presented in Attachment C.

At a minimum, the inventory process will include:

- (a) review and incorporation of the ISGS database of more than 906 inactive and abandoned coal mines located within the six county area, including a detailed analysis of which mines and strip-mined areas predate the enactment of the Surface Mining Control and Regulation Act of 1977 (and are thereby potentially eligible for funding from the Illinois Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation Program to address mine-related environmental or other hazardous conditions;
- (b) review of Illinois and federal environmental databases for which information is readily accessible on-line (including data available through the EPA regulated facilities on the Envirofacts System, and underground storage tanks records accessible on the IEPA website), in recognition that these types of sites that coincide with mine sites may represent a greater risk to underground aquifers that have been damaged or made more susceptible to spills as a result of mining;
- (c) incorporation of the IDNR database of problem mine sites, as well as additional information that may be available from IDNR staff regarding which mines or mine areas have been comprehensively assessed for environmental or safety hazards, and which mines or areas, in their opinion, have been less thoroughly inventoried for potential problem mine features;
- (d) review of historical soil survey and topographic survey maps to better identify the dates during which strip mining occurred at various locations (which will affect eligibility for various funding sources);
- (e) conducting interviews with local municipal; or county representatives regarding potential problem mine sites in their jurisdictions that have not been addressed; and
- (f) conducting interviews with local real estate professionals, especially those most active in the areas where a majority of the mines are located, who may have knowledge of sites that are attractive for development except for mine-scarred land related concerns.

The inventory will be developed as an electronic tool that can be linked to county or area-wide geographic information systems (GIS) where available. Each potential mine-scarred land brownfields site will be assigned a unique identification number. An attempt will be made to assign accurate geospatial coordinates to each site to enable use of the inventory with GIS where

available. The inventory will make use of all geospatial and other data related to the mine-scarred lands available from State of Illinois or other agencies. Key community-based organizations will be specifically included in site cleanup and redevelopment decisions in their communities to ensure these efforts best address community needs.

Task 2: Spoon River Basin Watershed Assessment – In recognition that the U.S. EPA favors a watershed approach to addressing regional mine-scarred land issues, an assessment will be performed of the impacts of mine-scarred lands on the Spoon River Basin, which is the primary watershed in the six county area and which includes most of the areas impacted by surface mining activities. It should be noted that there is currently a very significant joint effort underway by all of the State of Illinois scientific surveys to develop an integrated approach to manage the Illinois River Basin as a whole, of which the Spoon River Basin forms approximately 7% of the total area. One of the major initiatives underway is the development of the Illinois Rivers Decision Support System (ILRDSS), which will integrate and expand existing databases and numerical models for segments of the Illinois River into an integrated decision support system (DSS) for the entire Illinois River watershed. One component of the ILRDSS is a website (<http://ilrdss.sws.uiuc.edu/default.asp>) that provides access to detailed maps, aerial photographs, GIS data, 3-dimensional visualizations, scientific studies (including out of print papers) for the watershed as a whole and for the individual subwatersheds.

In recognition of the comprehensive watershed studies currently underway by others, the watershed assessment to be performed for the Spoon River Basin using U.S. EPA brownfields grant funds will seek to avoid duplication of any efforts currently underway by others or which are scheduled to be performed in the near future related to the Spoon River Basin. The first activity to be performed as part of Task 2 will be to meet with representatives of the ILRDSS and determine the current status and schedule for their organization's studies related to the Spoon River Basin. The existing data will be evaluated to determine if there are any key data gaps that will affect decision making and prioritization efforts related to the mine-scarred land properties. If possible, the assessment will seek to identify and highlight impacts to the watershed that are being caused by the mine-scarred lands. Additional data and/or greater attention being focused on these problem areas could serve as a catalyst for additional assessments and/or funding being focused on the watershed from the State or Federal government.

Task 3: Phase I and II Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs), Site Investigations, and Remedial Planning – The Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. will contract with a qualified environmental consulting firm to perform Phase I and II ESAs, supplemental assessment activities, site investigations, and/or remedial planning on targeted parcels, subject to meeting the site-specific eligibility requirements and approval by U.S. EPA. Included in this task will be developing and obtaining U.S. EPA approval of appropriate site-specific work plans, field sampling plans, quality assurance project plans (QAPP), and health and safety plans. The scope for this task will vary from site to site, and will depend to a significant degree on the desired focus for the mine-scarred lands program as determined from meetings with the public and local stakeholders. Some of the sites that are selected for assessment may have serious safety hazards, as well as suspected or known environmental contamination. Sites that require further investigation and/or remediation will be entered either into the State Site Remediation Program for addressing contamination issues or into the appropriate State program for addressing mining-related safety issues.

Task 4: Community Outreach and Involvement – Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. will implement a comprehensive community outreach and public participation forum as described in more detail later in the grant proposal. To assure that area residents and other stakeholders are well informed and that their concerns are fully addressed throughout the project, community outreach activities will be performed and may include room rental, newspaper public notice advertisements, mailings, website development, display materials costs, printing fact sheets and various media events. The Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. may contract with a consulting firm familiar with public relations.

Further Description of Process for Selecting Sites for Assessment

Selection of Sites and Site Selection Criteria: It is anticipated that individual sites will be selected for assessment based on the following criteria: (1) potential for the site to cause

detrimental effects to human health, (2) the presence of one or more of 17 widely used categories of mine related environmental conditions or safety hazards, (3) potential for off-site impacts, in particular, impacts to groundwater in areas identified as recharge areas for water supply wells, (4) redevelopment potential, in particular, sites with actual redevelopment proposals, and (5) community concerns. Other considerations will include the potential eligibility of the site for priority funding from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation Division (AMLRD) restoration program. Also, only properties that meet the site-specific eligibility requirements and are approved by U.S. EPA will be selected for assessment. Funding will not be used to assess the two active mines in the six county area, but only to assess mine-scarred lands associated with the more than 900 abandoned and/or inactive coal and other mines.

Possible and Previous Mine-scarred Lands Inventory and Prioritization Efforts: As noted under Section B.3, the ISGS maintains detailed inventories and maps of active and historic coal mines in 72 counties in Illinois in which coal mining has occurred. As noted previously, the ISGS database contains information on 906 inactive or abandoned mines and 2 active mines located within the Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. six county area. The AMLRD restoration program, addresses abandoned mine site problems such as dilapidated mine structures, open shafts, highwalls, and water contamination problems. The current inventory identifies 102 “problem” mine sites in the six county area, of which 36 have problems that have not yet been addressed by AMLRD projects. The inventory is continuously updated, as new sites are discovered and reported, and ongoing projects are completed. Projects are addressed based on a prioritization of more than 300 eligible sites throughout the State of Illinois, and rating criteria that include degree of safety hazard, potential impact to the environment, and other factors. The inventory of problem mines is limited in certain respects, in that, by law, a comprehensive inventory was required to be performed only on sites defined as Priority 1 and Priority 2. No comprehensive inventory has been performed for sites that are problematic in one or more respects, but which only meet the definition for Priority 3. Conditions can change over time, and sites that were previously categorized as Priority 3 may now be Priority 1 or 2. The proposed inventory will be used to identify these types of discrepancies and will serve as a means to bring attention to these sites and potentially to get priority for additional AML mine reclamation funding to improve health and safety for residents of the six county area.

The inventory by the ISGS is also limited in that it includes only coal mine sites. Although coal mine-scarred lands represent by far the greatest number of mine-scarred land sites, the six county area includes some other types of mines such as shale mines that were located in the East Galesburg area, and which were at one time associated with the largest brick making facility in the world (the Purington Brickyards). The facility, which was closed and abandoned in 1974, has mine pits, kilns, and smokestacks that extend across an approximately 90 acre area and could qualify as both a mine-scarred land and an industrial/ hazardous substance brownfields site.

The proposed inventory and prioritization efforts to be undertaken using U.S. EPA brownfields grant funding will be coordinated closely with staff at the ISGS and IDNR and will utilize the existing database and inventories as the foundation for a comprehensive inventory of mine-scarred lands throughout the six county area. Any sites will be prioritized based on: (a) actual or potential threat to human health, (b) actual or potential threat to the environment, in particular, drinking water aquifers, (c) redevelopment potential, and (d) community concerns. It is anticipated that highest priority will be given to sites with highest redevelopment potential and/or existing plans for redevelopment. In general, these sites will have the highest potential for leveraging additional local, state, or federal funding for any cleanup activities that are necessary to address contamination or physical hazards found during U.S. EPA-funded assessment activities. In addition, these sites have the greatest potential to provide high-visibility local mine-scarred lands redevelopment success stories and thereby to provide a catalyst for further redevelopment or restoration of these sites.

Access Issues: As there are potentially hundreds of sites that could be appropriate targets for assessment activities to be funded by the grants, it is anticipated that funding will not be utilized to assess properties where there is an uncooperative or unwilling property owner. It is anticipated that a majority of the assessment activities will be performed on privately owned properties for which there is a buyer interested in redeveloping a property, and an owner that is

interested in selling the property. In many instances, the environmental concerns associated with the properties will be linked with former landowners who are no longer in existence or financially able to pay for any necessary environmental assessment, investigation, or cleanup activities. The City of Galesburg, which is located within Knox County, has used building inspection ordinance to access and perform environmental testing on one major brownfields site (Paintcraft Inc.) for which the current owner could not be located and for which the building was in a severely dilapidated condition. For the mine-scarred land sites, current owners may not have regulatory liability for conditions at the sites, depending on the date that mining occurred, and the reclamation laws in effect at that time. It is anticipated that it may be in the interest of these owners to provide access to their properties if the assessment activities have the potential to serve as a catalyst for attracting additional state or federal funding to address the problems.

b. Budget for EPA Funding and Leveraging Other Resources

i) Budget

Line #	Budget Categories (program costs only)	Task 1	Task 2	Task 3	Task 4	Total
		Mine-scarred Lands Inventory and Prioritization	Spoon River Basin Watershed Assessment	Phase I and II ESAs – Additional Investigations	Community Outreach	
EPA GRANT FUNDED PROGRAM COSTS						
1	Personnel	\$4,000	\$4,000		\$5,000	\$13,000
2	Travel				\$2,000	\$2,000
3	Fringe Benefits					
4	Equipment					
5	Supplies	\$3,000	\$6,000		\$3,000	\$12,000
6	Contractual	\$14,000	\$20,000	\$129,000	\$10,000	\$173,000
7	SUBTOTALS	\$21,000	\$30,000	\$129,000	\$20,000	\$200,000
IN-KIND SERVICES (TO BE PROVIDED BY THE PRAIRIE HILLS RC&D, INC.)						
8	Project Director	\$3,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$9,000
9	Admin. Staff	\$1,000	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$2,500
10	Municipal Staff	\$12,000				\$12,000
11	SUBTOTALS	\$16,000	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$23,500
12	TOTALS	\$37,000	\$32,500	\$131,500	\$22,500	\$223,500

It is acknowledged and understood by the Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. that sites assessed under Task 3 using U.S. EPA grant funds must meet the site-specific eligibility requirements and are subject to U.S. EPA approval either as part of work plan negotiation or following commencement of the overall project. Procurement of all contracted services (i.e., costs listed on line 6 of the budget table) will comply with the procedures contained in 40 CFR 31.36. U.S. EPA grant funds will not be used for administrative costs as defined in Appendix 2 of the Proposal Guidelines. Proposed use of U.S. EPA funds is shown on lines 1 through 6 of the table, with totals for each task presented on line 7. In-kind services to be provided by the Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. to implement various components of the brownfields assessment program are detailed on lines 8 through 11 of the budget table. Please note that the Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. is applying for a separate \$200,000 community-wide brownfields petroleum assessment grant. In the event that two community-wide assessment grants are awarded to the Prairie Hills RC&D,

Inc., it is anticipated that as part of work plan development, that the budget for Task 4 for both grants may be reduced in recognition that certain public outreach and community involvement activities can be performed concurrently for both grants at a reduced cost. Any reduced budget amounts will be reallocated to Tasks 2 and 3 as part of development of the work plan that will be part of cooperative agreement with U.S. EPA.

Task 1: Mine-scarred Lands Inventory and Prioritization (\$37,000) – The Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. will undertake an inventory of existing mine-scarred lands and facilities located throughout the six county area. It is proposed to use \$21,000 of U.S. EPA grant funds to conduct the inventory, including \$4,000 to partially fund work by Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. staff, \$3,000 for supplies, \$14,000 for contracted services by a qualified environmental consulting firm (contracted per CFR 31.36 procedures and guidelines). It is anticipated that Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. staff will provide in-kind services related to development of the brownfields inventory and the subsequent prioritization of sites and maintenance of the inventory through the 3-year project period. These are conservatively estimated at \$4,000. In addition, municipal or county staff are anticipated to provide approximately \$12,000 of in-kind services for Task 1.

Task 2: Spoon River Basin Watershed Assessment (\$32,500) – It is proposed to use up to \$30,000 of U.S. EPA grant funds to conduct the assessment, including \$4,000 to partially fund work by Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. staff, \$6,000 for supplies and expenses, \$20,000 for contracted services by a qualified environmental consulting firm (contracted per CFR 31.36 procedures and guidelines). It is anticipated that Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. staff will provide in-kind services related to development of the brownfields inventory and the subsequent prioritization of sites and maintenance of the inventory through the 3-year project period. These are conservatively estimated at \$2,500.

Task 3: Phase I and II Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs), Site Investigations, and Remedial Planning (\$131,500) – The budget for this task includes \$129,000 in U.S. EPA funds and an estimated \$2,500 in in-kind services to be provided by Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. staff. Assuming that the sites to be assessed have some similarity to more traditional types of brownfields sites, it is anticipated that Phase I ESAs will be completed at approximately 5 to 10 sites averaging from \$2,000 to \$3,500 per site. Phase I ESAs that are performed will meet the requirements of the All Appropriate Inquiries Final Rule or will follow the standards set forth in the ASTM E1527-05 Phase I Environmental Site Assessment Process. It is anticipated that Phase II ESAs and/or additional environmental testing or remedial assessment/planning will be performed on approximately 4 to 5 sites, at an average cost of approximately \$15,000 to \$25,000.

Task 4: Community Outreach and Involvement - \$22,500 –The budget for this task includes \$20,000 in U.S. EPA funds and at least \$2,500 in in-kind services to be performed by Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. staff for public information, education and outreach. Budget is included for travel costs for travel and training costs including continuing education activities such as attending the U.S. EPA National Brownfield Conferences and participating in environmental assessment or redevelopment workshops or training sessions.

i) Leveraging

Sources of Funding to be Used for Assessment Needs Not Met by Grant: It is anticipated that funds will be targeted primarily at brownfields sites that are smaller in size, more manageable, and where redevelopment can occur with limited public sector funding. Illinois EPA's Municipal Brownfields Redevelopment Grant Program provides financial assistance to municipalities for brownfields cleanup and redevelopment activities. The grant can be used by local governments to determine where brownfields sites are located and to determine if a specific site is contaminated and to what extent. It can also be used for actual cleanup activities. The grants are worth a maximum of \$240,000. For mine-scarred lands, any assessment activities that demonstrate that a mine has Priority 1 or 2 environmental conditions or safety hazards will make the site eligible for assessment and reclamation through the State of Illinois AML Reclamation Program.

Ability to Leverage Funds and Other Funding Sources: Since it was formed in 1976, Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. has completed more than 360 land conservation, environmental protection, or economic development projects leveraging over \$31.1 million. Economic development

programs run by the Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. include a \$2.2 million revolving loan fund that has provided loans to 48 small to medium sized businesses, resulting in creation of 256 jobs and private investment of \$9.6 million. This program has received several awards and recognition. As part of managing this revolving loan fund program, Prairie Hills has experience in evaluating and assessing business plans. This experience will be valuable in selecting sites for assessment that have the greatest prospects for successful redevelopment and leveraging additional funds. One very significant resource that Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. plans to use to address environmental and/or health and safety concerns identified as a result of the assessment activities will be the Illinois Abandoned Mine Lands (AML) program. To date, the Illinois AML program has completed over 550 projects, addressed more than 775 mine sites and reclaimed nearly 9,400 acres of land in Illinois, at a cost of approximately 146 million dollars. 1,236 mine openings have been sealed, 907 hazardous tipples removed, 5,850 acres of gob and slurry and 1,900 acres of spoil stabilized, and 1,400 acres of affected land and water restored.

c. Programmatic Capability

i) Currently or Has Ever Received an EPA Brownfields Grant

The Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. has never received an EPA Brownfields Grant

ii) Has Not Received an EPA Brownfields Grant but has received other federal or non-federal assistance agreements

History of Managing Federal Funds: It is estimated that Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. has managed approximately \$3.6 million in federal funds since being established in 1976. To date, there have been no adverse findings in any of the audits conducted regarding use of these funds. Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. is not currently and has not previously been required to comply with any high risk terms and conditions under agency regulations implementing OMB Circular A-133. The results of all audits have found no material weakness and generally classify the Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. as low risk.

Compliance with Previous EPA or Other Federal Cooperative or Assistance Agreements: The Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. has not previously been a party in any cooperative agreements with the EPA. The Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. has been a party in at least seven federal assistance agreements with the USDA Rural Development, one agreement with USDA Forest Service, and two agreements with USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service as well as numerous other state agreements. The Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. complied with all progress, financial, and other reporting requirements under those agreements. Please contact David King for further details regarding these assistance agreements.

Ability to Manage this Grant: The Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. has staff fully capable and qualified to manage and to oversee the assessment work to be funded by the grant. Mr. David King has been the Coordinator for Prairie Hills since January 1986 administrating their rural development programs. He received his Bachelors of Science Degree in Plant Science from the University of Delaware in 1976. He has been employed by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service since 1977 serving as a Soil Conservationist and District Conservationist in Florida and Virginia. He developed Prairie Hills Small Business Loan Program which has provided 48 loans that have matched \$807,000 in Prairie Hills' funds with \$1.5 million federal and \$9.6 million private funds. He was responsible for the development, start-up and management of Prairie Hills Forestry Consulting Service, a division of Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. Prairie Hills received nearly \$300,000 start-up funds grants from USDA Rural Development and for ten years Prairie Hills Forestry provided forestry consulting services to landowners. The business was spun off and sold to a private concern in 2003. Under Mr. King's tenure, Prairie Hills received their IRS 501 (c) 3 designation, received two national recognition awards for community involvement from the National Association of Resource Conservation and Development Councils, and holds \$1.43 million assets.

The governance council for the Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. includes members with diverse backgrounds who are capable to contributing additional expertise where needed to effectively implement the grants. The members include:

David Asbury, Knox Co, Independent businessman, Soil & Water Conservation District
Charles Bair, Hancock Co., Western Illinois Economic Development Area

Charles Bell, Henderson Co., Economic Development Consultant
Steve Bolton, Hancock Co., Farmer, County Board member
Robert Champlin, Fulton Co., Farmer, Fulton Soil & Water Conservation District
Clee Dixon, McDonough Co., Farmer & Treasurer Soil and Water Conservation District
Curt Eisenmayer, Henderson Co., Retired University of Illinois Ext. Leader, Co. Board
Charles Gilbert, Hancock Co., Retired, Prairie Land Conservancy, Western IL Regional Council
Jere Greuel, McDonough Co., Farmer
Jeff Harris, Fulton Co., Manager Fulton County Recreation Area
Alice Henry, McDonough Co., Environment Activist and County. Board
Mary Holmes, Hancock Co., Manager-IL Value Added Rural Development Center WIU
Bob Livingston, Henderson Co., Henderson Co. Economic Development
Doug Manock, Fulton Co, Businessman, Fulton County Board member
Karen Starbuck, Retired Teacher, Warren County Board member
Dale Parsons, Knox Co., Retail Sales, Co. Board
Mike Pearson, Warren Co., Vice-President, First State Bank of Western IL, Co. Board
Brenda Pyatt, Hancock Co., Executive Director Carthage Economic Development
Jeff Rohlwing, Fulton Co, Vice President MidAmerica National Bank
Judy Roessler, Henderson Co., Librarian
Mark Rothert, Fulton Co., Economic Development Director City of Canton
Gary Sherer, McDonough Co., Insurance business owner, Co. Board
Karen Starbuck, Warren Co., Retired Teacher, Warren County Board
Larry Sterett, Henderson Co. SWCD, Retired Teacher, Henderson Co. Board of Review
Carol Stombaugh, Warren Co., Business Consultant, Small Business Develop. Center
Jolene Willis, Warren Co., Executive Director, Western IL Econ. Development Partnership
Rick Winbigler, Warren Co., Resource Conservationist, Warren Co. SWCD.

Finally, the program will utilize qualified environmental consulting firms, selected in accordance with U.S. EPA required procurement procedures, to perform Phase I and II ESAs, site investigations, and remedial action planning. Consulting firms will be required to assist with the EPA-mandated reporting requirements. The Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. anticipates contracting separately with an environmental consulting firm to assist with preparation of Quality Assurance Project Plans and other plans required to be in place prior to the release of funds by EPA.

3. Community Engagement and Partnerships

a. Community Involvement Plan

Description of How Targeted Communities will be Notified: Notification efforts will focus primarily on the three counties (Fulton, Knox, and McDonough) where approximately 94% of the abandoned or inactive mines, and 99.8% of the strip mined lands, are located. The targeted communities will be notified through a combination of methods. At a minimum, the following types of notification will be provided to the following stakeholder groups: (a) any nonprofit organizations active in the six county area having a focus on environmental, social justice, serving disadvantaged communities, and/or economic development, (b) secondary an post secondary educational institutions, (c) local government representatives throughout the six county area, and (d) the public at large. Notification to representatives of the non-profit organizations, educational institutions, and local governments will be provided via informational circulars sent by first class mail to one or more representatives at each organization. Information summarizing the grant program, the objectives, and the schedule for public meetings to be held in three counties (Fulton, Knox, and McDonough) will be submitted to all television stations and newspapers that serve those counties. Official notices of the meeting dates in each county will be published at least one week in advance of the meetings scheduled in each county. Documents related to the grant program, including the grant application and drafts of the implementation work plan will be posted and available for viewing or downloading on the Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. website (<http://www.prairiehillsrcd.org/>). An appropriate number of hard copies of these documents will be provided and available to the public at large at the public meetings.

A PowerPoint or slideshow presentation will be made at each public meeting presenting an overview of the brownfields grant program, mine-scarred land issues in general, opportunities for the public at large and various stakeholders to be involved in both development of the final work

plan, and implementation of the program over the three year contract period. The population of non-English speaking residents is estimated to be less than 1% of the total population. However, at a minimum, a one page summary of the program goals in Spanish will be prepared and available at all public meetings. Copies in Spanish will also be provided to municipal and non-profit representatives from the three largest cities in the area (Canton, Galesburg, and Macomb) where an estimated 67.6% of all Hispanic residents in the six county area are located. If possible, Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. will solicit the participation of either U.S. EPA or Illinois EPA representatives at the public meetings.

Description of Notification Method: The goal of the notification process will be to provide an opportunity for all interested citizens in the area to provide input into the mine-scarred lands brownfields assessment program. An equally important goal will be to actively recruit participation by stakeholders that could potentially contribute significantly to the long term success of the brownfields program. These stakeholders could include economic development representatives (who could be involved with and help facilitate sustainable redevelopment of brownfields or mine-scarred lands) and educators such as university professors, who might utilize brownfields or mine-scarred lands as a topic for research or student projects. Therefore, the notification will be designed both to reach the public at large and the targeted representatives of municipalities, non-profit, economic development, and/or educational institutions. In general, people in the six county area are accustomed to receiving news and meeting announcements via their local newspapers and television. These are the two most appropriate methods to reach the public at large. It is anticipated that the vast majority of the targeted individuals will speak English. However, materials in Spanish will be provided to reach the largest non-English speaking population.

Discussion of Comment Period: It is anticipated that the public meetings will be held over a period of 3 to 4 weeks, and that at least 30 days after the final public meeting will be provided for public comments. Community comment by the public will be requested in public notices and announcements, and encouraged by posting materials for detailed review and comment on the Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. website. Comment forms will be handed out at all public meetings. The public will be encouraged to comment via public announcements in newspapers and on television, as well as during the planned public meetings.

Plans for Addressing Comments: All comments received will be compiled and reviewed. Copies will be provided to the U.S. EPA and IEPA for review and comment. Responses to comments will be prepared and posted to the Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. website. A compendium of the comments will also be provided to all members of the Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. governing council for their consideration and further distribution to the public.

Plan for Involving Targeted Community: The plans for community involvement on individual sites will be developed on a case by case basis. Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. will assure that there is the opportunity for citizens and stakeholders to participate in decision making through the public participation process of community meetings, forums, comments via website, and one-on-one. Care will be taken to invite and involve near neighbors and potentially affected citizens in the decision-making process, as well as to keep the public at large and government organizations informed.

b. Partnership Development Plan

Partnerships: Several State agencies are very actively involved in addressing mine-scarred land issues in Illinois, including the ISGS, the IDNR, and the IEPA. The Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. will seek the active participation of these agencies in implementing the brownfields grants, beginning with the inventory development and prioritization process. The Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. is exceptional compared to most brownfields grant applicants, in that its governing council includes representatives from a large number of different local governments and potential stakeholders in projects related to environmental conservation and economic development. Prairie Hills helped to form and is involved with the Spoon River Ecosystem Partnership; the LaMoine River Ecosystem Partnership; the Western Big 5 Ecosystem Partnership; the Prairie Land Conservancy; and the Prairie Hills Forestry Association. In addition Illinois State University has a program to assist rural brownfields communities in Illinois, and can provide teams of faculty and students to assist with socio-economic as well as scientific and engineering

aspects of brownfields. They have indicated an interest in working together with Prairie Hills in implementing this grant, as the RC&D type of organization is recognized as a potential a State-wide model for addressing rural brownfields.

Specific Plans for Communicating Progress: Progress on the brownfields program will be communicated to the targeted community and the community at large in several ways. (1) by posting of information on the Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. website, (2) through summaries and articles presented in the Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. quarterly newsletters and annual report, (3) by sending updates by email or mail to individuals or stakeholders that request regular updates on the project, (4) by public presentations, and (5) articles in local newspapers. Materials in Spanish will be provided to reach the largest non-English speaking population.

Working with State and Local Agencies: The plans for ensuring protection of public health and safety will be developed on a case by case process through coordination with the local health agencies. Specific mine-scarred lands to be assessed have not been identified to date and the assessment process will provide a course of action of determining health and safety procedures.

Depending on whether the mine-scarred lands have conditions that include soil and/or groundwater contamination, it may be appropriate to address the sites using the voluntary cleanup program in Illinois, which is called the Site Remediation Program (SRP) and was promulgated (35 IAC 740) in 1997. The SRP provides Remediation Applicants (i.e., any persons seeking to perform investigative or remedial activities) the opportunity to receive IEPA review, technical assistance and no further remediation determinations from the Illinois EPA. The program was designed to be flexible and responsive to the needs of the Remediation Applicants. The goals and scope of actions at these sites are normally defined by the Remediation Applicants. The Illinois EPA is authorized to issue No Further Remediation (NFR) letters to the Remedial Applicants who have successfully demonstrated, through proper investigation and, when warranted, remedial action, that environmental conditions at their remediation site do not present a significant risk to human health or the environment. The NFR letter signifies a release from further responsibilities under the Illinois Environmental Protection Act. This program's activities are paid by the parties requesting the Illinois EPA's oversight. Two key elements are that it is self-funded (participants pay for site enrollment and IEPA oversight services) and statutory deadlines exist for IEPA action on participant submittals. The program tends to be pragmatic and solution oriented.

c. Role of Key Community-Based Organizations

List of Community Based Organizations Involved: Representatives from the following community based organizations are currently members of the Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc, governance council and will represent their organizations in implementing the mine-scarred lands assessment program:

County	Organization Name	Phone Number	Contact Name	Activities
Fulton	Fulton County Camping	309-668-2931	Jeff Harris	Promotion of wildlife habitat
Fulton	Spoon River Partnership for Economic Development	309-647-2677	Mark Rothert	Economic development
Fulton	Soil and Water Conservation District	309-647-5780	Robert Champlin	Conservation of natural resources
Hancock	Carthage Economic Development	217-357-3800	Brenda Pyatt	Economic development
McDonough, Warren, Hancock, Henderson	W. IL Economic Development Authority	309-833-3137	Charles Bair	Economic development

County	Organization Name	Phone Number	Contact Name	Activities
Henderson	Soil and Water Conservation District	309-627-2255	Larry Sterett	Conservation of natural resources
Knox	County Board	309-343-0988	Dale Parsons	County governance
McDonough	Soil and Water Conservation District	309-776-3830	Clee Dixon	Conservation of Natural Resources
Warren	Soil and Water Conservation District	309-734-8569 x3	Rick Winbigler	Conservation of natural resources
Warren	W. IL Partnership for Economic Development	309-734-4253	Jolene Willis	Economic development
Hancock	Carthage Community Development	217-357-3800	Brenda Pyatt	Small business development and economic development

Letters of support for this grant application from representatives of Prairie Hills member organizations, U.S. Congressional representatives, and other stakeholders or organizations are presented in Attachment F.

4. Project Benefits

a. Welfare and/or Public Health

Residents in the area will benefit in multiple ways from the assessment grant. First, the grant will be used to help identify, prioritize and assess mine-scarred lands and facilities throughout the six county area that represent a threat to the environment or to public safety. This will better ensure that funds used for assessment under this Brownfields Assessment Grant as well as funding from other sources for site reclamation will be used to address the sites with some of the worst environmental or to public safety problems. This will lead to increased safety for the public in general and sensitive populations such as children by identifying unsafe conditions and contaminant direct contact risks that require mitigation until they can be completely eliminated by remediation and redevelopment. It will also help reduce discharges of impacted water from the sites and reduce the threat these discharges pose to critical local resources such as water supplies used by local residents, including sensitive populations such as children, woman of child-bearing age, and the elderly. Also, restoration of these sites will reduce impacts on plants and wildlife and allow the re-establishment of more vibrant ecological habitats. Improved economic conditions from brownfields redevelopment will help address social problems exacerbated by economic stress including child abuse and domestic violence, drug use, suicide, and crime.

b. Economic Benefits and/or Greenspace

Economic Benefits: Residents in the area will benefit in multiple ways from the assessment grant with respect to increased economic benefits and greenspace. By inventory and assessing existing sites, it will be easier to obtain outside funding for their restoration. The Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (Public Law 95-78) which set detailed mining and reclamation standards and regulations for all future coal mining activities, also established an Abandoned Mine Land (AML) program and fund to address the serious coal mining problems for mines that were abandoned prior to August 3, 1977. It is anticipated that the State of Illinois will receive up to \$180 million in funding from the national Abandoned Mine Reclamation Trust Fund to address abandoned mine site problems over the next 15 years. The U.S. EPA mine-scarred lands assessment funding can be used to identify additional sites within the area that are high priority sites eligible for reclamation funding, and thereby help the area to obtain a greater portion of funding from the Abandoned Mine Reclamation Trust Fund. The State of Illinois has estimated that up to 40 jobs are created for each \$1 million spent on mine-scarred land restoration. Thus increasing the six county area’s share of the reclamation funding could result in significant local job creation as well as restoration of the environment and elimination of safety and health hazards.

Previous efforts in the six county area to address mine-scarred lands have resulted in creation of significant new parks and recreation facilities on former mine-scarred lands. Examples include the 450 acre Lakeland Park in the City of Canton in Fulton County and the 2,500 acre Snakeden Hollow State Fish and Wildlife Area near Victoria in Knox County, both of which were developed on former strip mined lands. It is anticipated that the assessment funding may be used to support efforts to create similar parks and recreational facilities from mine-scarred lands. Increased parks and recreational areas will increase businesses and jobs to support tourism for recreational purposes such as hiking, camping, hunting, and fishing

Other opportunities for residents to benefit economically from mine-scarred lands include increased local jobs and income: (a) from the use of the lands for forestry, to provide services to people coming from outside the area to use the lands for recreational purposes, (b) greater agricultural activity, and (c) from potential additional mining on old sites that still contain recoverable coal reserves. Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. already has programs in place to help landowners to develop local sustainable industries such as forestry. For strip mined areas, depending on the date of mining and the type of restoration completed, if any, the lands may be suitable for reuse for agricultural purposes. Finally, there are an increasing number of applications in the “pipeline” for permits to establish new surface coal mines in the area, due to the rebound in coal prices, increased long term prospects for demand for coal use, and new technologies that allow greater use of Illinois coals with relatively high sulfur contents. In some instances, the best approach for addressing old strip mined areas may be to mine the same areas using modern methods to recover significant quantities of coal left in place by old methods. This approach could result in restoration of some of the worst old strip mined areas in accordance with current restoration requirements and also create local relatively high paying jobs. The assessment funding may be able to support one or more of these economic development alternatives focusing on mine-scarred lands in the area.

Finally improved economic conditions, environmental quality, and recreational opportunities will improve the local quality of life and stem the flow and reverse the negative consequences of out-migration while making the area more attractive to outside business owners, workers, and retirees seeking a more small town and rural living experience.

Non-Economic Benefits: As noted above one use for the grant funds will be to facilitate creation of parks or nature areas from former mine-scarred lands. There are several prominent examples of this type of reuse that have been achieved in the past. Lakeland Park in the City of Canton in Fulton County, which opened to the public in 1981, is considered a showcase of the recreational potential of reclaimed coal strip-mined lands as well as an example of positive cooperation between local, state and federal agencies and the private sector. The Consolidated Coal Company donated nearly 450 acres of land and water to the Canton Park District and the park was developed using both state and federal grants. The park contains over 5 miles of hiking trails, picnic shelters, fishing opportunities, scuba diving and natural areas. Another example is Snakeden Hollow State Fish and Wildlife Area near Victoria in Knox County, which is the largest recreation area owned by the State of Illinois within the Spoon River Basin. Snakeden Hollow was a 2,500 acre surface coal mine owned and operated by the Midland Coal Company from 1962 to 1970. The site was purchased by the State of Illinois in 1987, which worked in cooperation with the Soil Conservation Service to address environmental concerns at the site. The site contains more than 125 water impoundments covering 400 acres.

The funds will be used, where appropriate, to assess eligible properties associated with projects to create and/or preserve parks, trailways, or other types of green spaces and/or open spaces. Prairie Hills was the project lead and grant administrator for the McDonough County Trails and Greenway Comprehensive Plan and wrote a grant on behalf of the City of Macomb to obtain funding for a Pedestrian/Bike Trail. When assessment funding is used for this type of project, Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. will require, as a condition for targeting the site for use of U.S. EPA grant funds, that the local government or non-profit agency that undertakes the project have regulations, policies, or programs in place to assure the long-term management, care and preservation of the site created. As a result of being a RC&D organization, Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. has the expertise within its governing council to make this type of evaluation. Innovative stormwater runoff BMPs and/or land remediation provides opportunities for greenspace.

Enhancing the quality of greenspace in the area will have benefits beyond the area by offsetting the loss of quality greenspace in other areas, such as around growing metropolitan areas.

c. Environmental Benefits from Infrastructure Reuse/Sustainable Reuse

Restoration of mine-scarred lands will create previously unavailable opportunities to redirect these lands to sustainable uses including improved wildlife habitat, recreational activities, forestry, or agricultural uses. These uses will provide more environmental benefits, improved quality of life for area residents, and sustainable economic activities. Furthermore, due to technological limitations and the lack of regulations and standards for site reclamation during earlier time periods, some of these lands were abandoned with currently recoverable coal reserves and were not properly reclaimed. Given anticipated increases in the demand for coal, these reserves will be attractive to mining companies who will have the financial resources and obligations under current law to reclaim the land following re-mining.

Restoration and reuse of mine-scarred lands is one of the most effective ways to prevent pollution and reduce consumption by reducing storm water runoff and contamination of the runoff. This will encourage best management practices [BMPs] related to storm water runoff. This activity could delist the 303(d) waterbodies. In Fulton County, where a majority of the mine-scarred lands are located, most of the mines are located in close proximity to the major cities in the county providing an opportunity to showcase innovative storm water runoff BMPs. As mentioned previously, Prairie Hills provides loans to existing businesses for façade improvements, energy efficiency upgrades for windows, doors, insulation and HVAC systems. This goes hand in hand with the brownfields program. It is not uncommon for residents in the area to commute an hour or more to jobs in cities such as Moline, Rock Island and Peoria due to the lack of high paying jobs in the small towns or rural areas. The resulting wasted gasoline and air pollution could be reduced with more local business expansion and small business startup. Redevelopment of mine-scarred lands could help provide more local jobs and eliminate this waste

d. Describe your plan for tracking and measuring your progress towards achieving the expected project outcomes, including those identified in Section I.D.

The progress in implementing this assessment grant will be tracked and measured by Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. on a monthly basis. Progress will specifically be measured against three primary metrics: outputs, schedule and budget. The outputs will be the progress on the inventory and the number of Phase I and Phase II ESAs completed. The schedule will be completed following development of the Work Plan. Other goals for the project, such as implementation of specific community relations activities, will also be developed. Monthly reports on progress will be required by the consultant to the Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. throughout the project. These monthly reports will address schedule, budget and any other pertinent goals. Quarterly progress reports, annual financial status reports and other reporting requirements will be completed in a timely manner.

Prairie Hills RC&D, Inc. will work to achieve the outcomes intended for this Brownfield Assessment Grant as indicated in the U.S. EPA's Strategic Plan. The following will be tracked:

- Number of jobs created or leveraged,
- Other funding leveraged,
- Acres of greenspace created, and
- Acres of mine-scarred lands returned to tax base and productive use.

These outcomes will be measured and reported per U.S. EPA recommendations

ATTACHMENT A

**BY LAWS DOCUMENTING THE ORGANIZATIONAL
STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE PROCEDURES FOR
THE PRAIRIE HILLS RC&D, INC.**

ATTACHMENT B

STATE AGENCY (IEPA) LETTER OF SUPPORT

ATTACHMENT C

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

LETTERS OF SUPPORT