

Acme Power Plant Project Summary



An Island of Debris ~ The site of the former Acme Power Plant is approximately 5.8 acres situated along the banks of the Tongue River, near the old Acme townsite. The plant was a coal-fired power plant that operated from approximately 1910 to 1976. Later, the site was used for other activities including automobile salvage and crushing services, and battery recycling. The area surrounding the site is a popular destination for outdoor enthusiasts and the Acme site, in particular, is an important piece of the area's mining history. The surrounding area is frequently used for hunting, fishing, floating, and other recreation. Many Sheridan residents still feel a strong attachment to the area because of a direct connection with people that used to live and/or work in the Acme community.

Current Condition~ In 2017, as part of a Targeted Brownfields Assessment by the US Environmental Protection Agency, a Phase II Environmental Assessment was conducted to characterize potential contaminants across the site. Contamination was identified in surface soils, groundwater, sediments, and building materials throughout the site. The extent of contamination has not been fully defined. Anyone accessing the site (especially illegal trespassers) has the potential to track contaminants to surrounding areas and/or injure themselves amid the debris.



Asbestos: Significant volumes of friable and non-friable asbestos, some of it damaged, were identified. Examples include pipe insulation, plaster, building insulation, roofing tar and coatings, fire brick, linoleum, boiler gaskets, and pipe joints. Trace amounts of asbestos were found in soils outside of the building.

Lead-Based Paint: Large quantities of lead-based paint were found on walls, ceilings, doors, and window components. Poor condition and deterioration has led to flaking paint scattered throughout the buildings and outside surfaces.

Unknown Drum Contents: Multiple areas of unlabeled drums are present across the site. Many of the drums are in poor condition. Drum assessments identified: oxidizers, flammables, combustibles, and non-combustibles. Multiple drums were unable to be assessed and present unknown hazards.

Other Contaminants: Various metals, PCBs, petroleum hydrocarbons and other known carcinogens were identified in soils, bank sediments, coal-ash piles and groundwater. While much of the contamination was present in low concentrations and mainly in shallow and surface soils, exposure risks via skin contact, inhalation, and ingestion are still present for anyone accessing the site.



The contamination present, in particular the friable asbestos and unlabeled drums, are the most significant known hazards to anyone accessing the site.

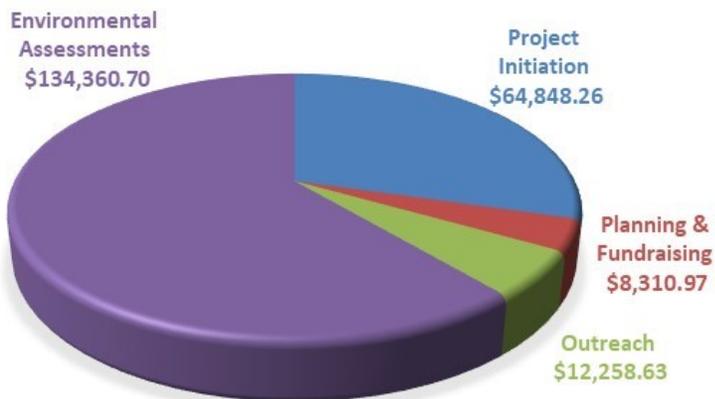
For more information~ The site is currently owned by the Sheridan County Conservation District, who is coordinating reclamation efforts with multiple other partners. A project website is being developed; in the meantime, please contact the District (www.sccdwy.org or 672-5820) for additional information or to provide input.

Project Vision~ The Tongue River watershed provides the water resource that drives the recreational, agricultural, municipal and wildlife opportunities for the region. Restoration of the Acme site will improve wildlife habitat and enhance existing recreation opportunities within the area. At an August 2017 visioning session facilitated by Kansas State University Technical Assistance to Brownfields group, participants heavily favored uses that included some sort of outdoor recreation and an appreciation of the area history. Although architecturally and technologically innovative for its time period, the building itself is one of the primary sources of contamination. No decisions have been made on whether it can be incorporated into future uses.



Photo credit: Blase Leven, KSU TAB Facilitator

Project Investment~ Over \$200,000 have already been invested in the project from a combination of state and federal programs, foundation grants, private donations, local government sources, and other partner contributions. Initial assessments and project initiation constitute approximately 90% of the project costs. As the project progresses, expenses associated with reclamation, outreach, and reuse planning will increase.



While no specific future uses have been determined, project partners identified expectations that must be maintained:

- ~Ensure Public Access/Use
- ~Protect Water and Land Quality
- ~Capture Historical Importance

Next Steps~ To realize the Project Vision, the site must be reclaimed to be safe and suitable for use. Final completion of the project is expected to be achieved within a 5 to 10 year timeframe, depending on the level of contamination and reclamation needed. Considerable cost is anticipated to coordinate and complete all of the necessary activities. Fortunately, programs exist to guide and assist with these efforts.

State Program Enrollment. The site has been enrolled in the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality (WDEQ), Voluntary Remediation Program. This program provides guidance throughout the process so that a release of liability can be issued when reclamation is complete. Being registered in the program provides multiple options for reclamation, depending on specific future uses.

Site Stabilization. Initial and limited site stabilization work is planned to begin in the summer of 2018 with funding through the State of Wyoming. This work will include removal and disposal of the drums and their content, removal of some of the most accessible asbestos and PCB containing materials outside of the building, and identification of yet unknown significant hazards at the site. Following this initial site work, debris salvage operations are anticipated to remove the significant amount of debris and physical hazards.

Additional assessments. Comprehensive site reclamation of soil, groundwater, and the building require further assessment to determine the extent of contamination and develop a remediation plan. Funding for additional assessments is expected to come from an EPA Assessment grant (pending approval). Site reclamation will be funded by programs through the WDEQ, EPA and various public and private partners.



Acme Working Group~ Formed in December 2017, the Acme Working Group serves in an advisory capacity to the Sheridan County Conservation District, who currently owns the site and is responsible for overall project coordination. The purpose is to provide input and assistance for the technical aspects of the reclamation; the group will be expanded to include other interests as the project progresses.

- ~Sheridan County Conservation District ~Sheridan Community Land Trust ~The Nature Conservancy
- ~Sheridan County ~Wyoming Game and Fish ~Padlock Ranch ~Sheridan Travel and Tourism
- ~Montana Dakota Utilities ~Sheridan County Historical Society and Museum