

# COMPENDIUM OF STATE LAND REVITALIZATION INDICATORS



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## STATE RESPONSE AND BROWNFIELDS PROGRAM OPERATIONS TASK FORCE

MAY 2009

Association of State and Territorial  
**ASTSWMO**  
Solid Waste Management Officials

# **ASTSWMO STATE RESPONSE AND BROWNFIELDS PROGRAM OPERATIONS TASK FORCE**

## **COMPENDIUM OF STATE LAND REVITALIZATION INDICATORS**

### **Acknowledgements**

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Cover Photos: Before and After of a Heavy Industrial Site and Resulting Greenspace, Provided by Ohio EPA

## COMPENDIUM OF STATE LAND REVITALIZATION INDICATORS

### Introduction

As States and Territories continue efforts to develop sustainable programs to address land revitalization issues, some States have been required, or found it beneficial, to demonstrate the clear economic, social, and environmental benefits of their programs. The State Response and Brownfields Program Operations (SRBPO) Task Force has undertaken an effort to compile a list of Land Revitalization indicators utilized by States and Territories throughout the country. While some States have always collected program data, the results of our research show that more than half of the States and Territories have not initiated efforts to collect data relative to the return on investment from redeveloping vacant or underutilized contaminated sites, including brownfields. This compendium illustrates the types of land revitalization indicators, including socio-economic data, being collected by State and Territorial programs relative to the investigation, remediation, and redevelopment of contaminated sites. The Task Force has compiled this information for use by States to establish or enhance their ability to track, analyze and represent the significant benefits that can be realized by land revitalization projects.

### Research Methodology

Through a series of meetings, teleconferences and email communications, the SRBPO Task Force developed a series of questions regarding the types of land revitalization indicators and methods used to collect data. Appendix A of this document contains responses as supplied by each responding State. Research questions used are listed below.

1. Is your State collecting these types of data, or if not, is your state thinking of collecting these types of data to illustrate the effectiveness of your Response Programs or other land revitalization programs? If yes, please consider the following questions.
2. What types of data does your State collect during and following the cleanup process (e.g., jobs created, return on investment)?
3. What universe of sites does your State focus these data collection efforts on (e.g. does the State solicit input from the entire list of cleanup sites, from all programs, or is an audit done of the cleanup universe)?
4. How does your State go about collecting the data (e.g., Does the party performing the cleanup report to the State? (Does the State call on the remedial party to obtain the information on a selective basis)?
5. Which State agencies or State program(s) is/are responsible for collecting information?
6. How frequently does your State collect the data (e.g., once, monthly, etc...)?
7. Does your State validate and ensure quality of the data collected? If so, how?
8. For what purpose does your State collect the data (e.g., is the data reported to your State legislature)?

The Task Force members contacted 50 States, and the Territories of Guam, American Samoa, Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the District of Columbia to ascertain what types of data and information they were collecting and how they collected the information. If no response was received, the Task Force member then followed up with the

contact to assure that a response was received. Also note that because all States collect consistent information per EPA funding guidelines, that information was not considered in this compendium unless it was reported to another entity e.g., the State legislature.

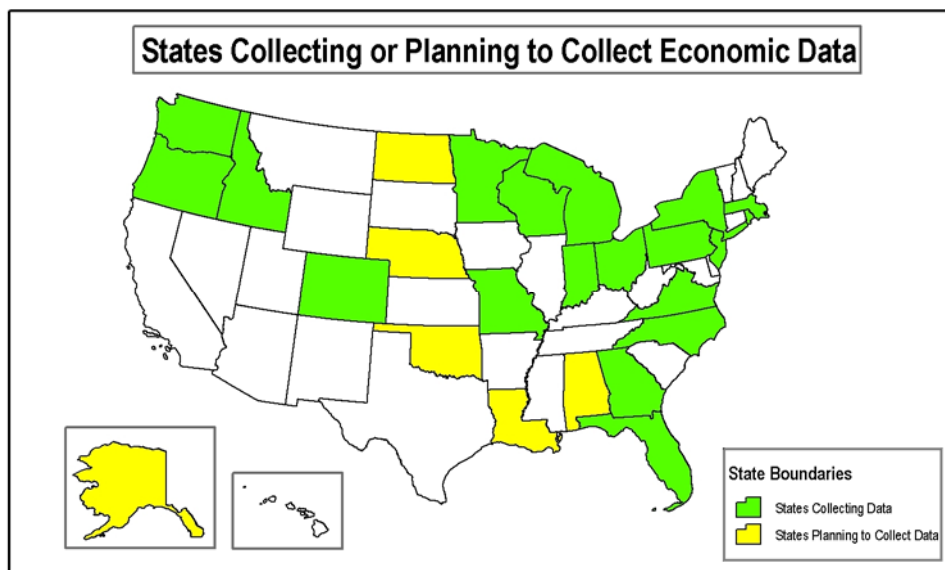
Information collected by the individual Task force members was then compiled into a table (Attachment A) so that the most common responses could be determined and categorized. The SRBPO Task Force then convened to review and discuss compiled information.

## **Results**

In this section, you will find the questions asked of respondents followed by the SRBPO Task Force’s interpretation of their responses.

### ***Do the States and Territories collect land revitalization data?***

Responses indicated 20 States and Territories are collecting land revitalization data, and six are planning to collect data in the future.



### ***What types of data are the States and Territories collecting?***

Responses revealed the most common types of data collected were information on jobs created or retained, and the total number of acres remediated. A total of 15 States reported that jobs created, or those that were retained as a result of the project, are tracked. For example, information on the number and types of job created, as well as wages, is collected in the State of Indiana. States such as Idaho and Virginia collect data on the full-time and temporary/part time jobs created. In Oregon, the number of cleanup and construction jobs created during the cleanup process is tracked. The total number of acres remediated by a project is actively tracked too. For example, States such as Missouri, Rhode Island, and Colorado collect this information on sites that have been remediated and are ready for re-use.

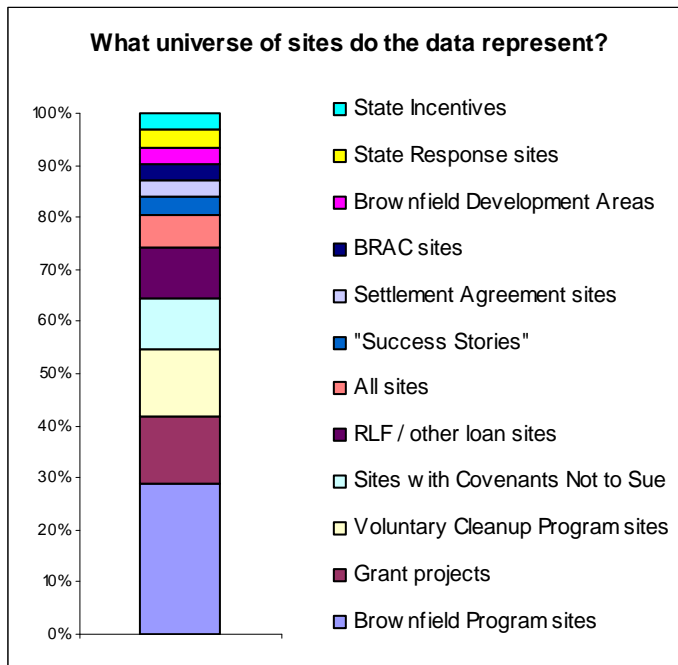
Most states collect this information in support of performance measures reporting requirements under U.S. EPA's 128(a) program.

Other predominant data sets included private or public sector investment in the project and the type of site use (former vs. redeveloped). Ten States reported that public and/or private sector investment is actively tracked. For example, information such as grants, loans, other incentives used (public sector investment), and information on cleanup and construction costs (private sector investment) are collected by States such as Massachusetts, Virginia, Florida, and Idaho. Several States, such as Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin, collect information only on the estimated private investment, while Oregon and Washington collect information only on public investment. Site use is actively tracked also. In Massachusetts, information on the historic, current, and planned post-cleanup site usage is collected. In New York, information is provided on whether the property is acceptable for unrestricted, commercial, industrial, or residential use.

Beyond those data sets identified above, a wide variety of categories of data were reported. Attachment A illustrates these categories on a State-by-State basis. The hyperlink in Attachment A opens an electronic spreadsheet to allow interested parties to access and analyze existing data and generate customized outputs.

***What is the universe of sites on which States and Territories focus their data collection efforts? How is it collected?***

Many of the States that collect land revitalization data gather/record it for a subset of sites that are being cleaned up and redeveloped, rather than their entire universe of sites. For many



of these States, such as Indiana, Oregon, New York, and New Jersey, data is collected on those Brownfield or Voluntary Cleanup Program (VCP) sites that have received financial incentives from the State. These incentives may be in the form of grants, low-interest loans, tax credits, and abatements. Because applications and reports are generally required in order for the site to be awarded financial incentives, many of these States use this required documentation as a convenient tool to collect land revitalization information.

Another mechanism whereby States obtain data is through the use of applications and required reporting.

This mechanism is similar to the previously mentioned financial incentive data, but focuses on those sites seeking liability release or comfort. States such as Rhode Island, Virginia, and

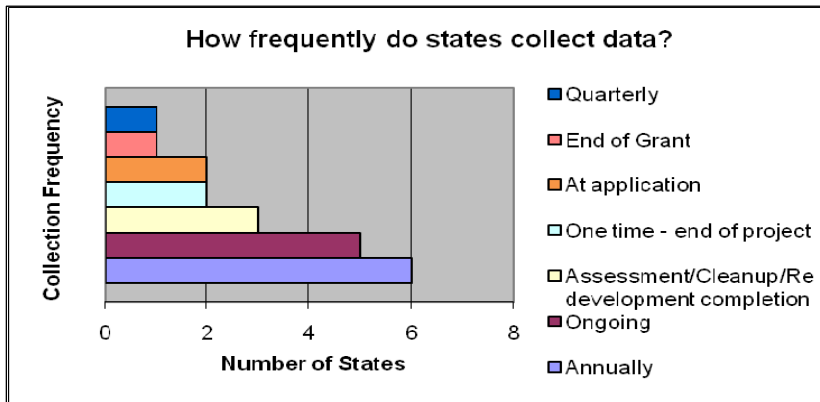
Georgia require that sites applying for liability release or comfort provide information about certain land revitalization measures.

States, such as Missouri, Colorado and Idaho collect land revitalization data from all of the brownfield and/or VCP sites in their State. The State of Washington is the only State to report that they collect data from all of their State response sites. Regardless of the universe of sites, data collection obviously takes a significant amount of effort. Data collection is often hindered when the data is not required by some external process, such as a financial incentive report or application. All of the States that collect data from their entire Brownfield, VCP, or state response programs universe do so by actively soliciting the data. In some cases, employees or interns call or visit the site owner, program participant, or developer to acquire the information. In other cases, staff searches web sites, newspapers, and county records for data.

***Do States and Territories collect land revitalization data once for a site or is it collected periodically?***

For approximately one-third of the reporting States collect the data only once. Slightly less than one-third collect some data only once and other data on a periodic basis. Slightly more than one-third collect all of their data periodically.

States such as Colorado and Virginia, which collect data only once, typically collect it via an application for a grant or loan or in a report submitted at the end of the cleanup. These are one time only events that are required in order to qualify for an incentive or receive a liability release or comfort.



States such as Michigan and Missouri that collect different data with different frequencies will generally collect certain data one time if it is fairly certain that no change will occur. These types of data are: historic site usage data, acreage information, and current use. The

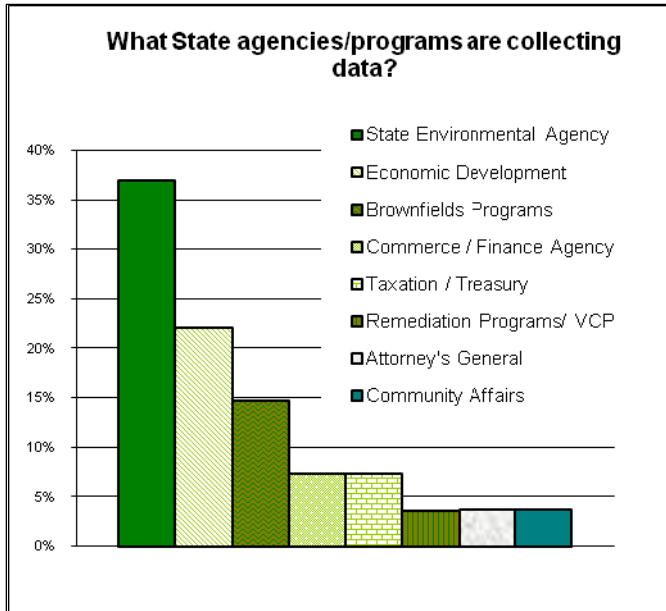
attention and resources needed to collect data periodically were focused on data such as jobs created, redevelopment status, private sector investment, and property tax increase. These are generally the data where changes can occur as time progresses, and those changes provide very valuable information as to the success of land revitalization and the programs that promote revitalization.

Of the States that collect all their data on a periodic basis, such as Maryland and Indiana, most of them collect this information annually. In most cases, periodic data collection is associated with an annual progress report to their state legislature or governor. Two States, North Carolina and Idaho, collect data periodically as the project progresses. This type of

collection not only provides a history of the site’s redevelopment but is also a good way to quality check the past data when the new data is collected.

***Which State and Territorial agencies or programs collect land revitalization data?***

For the vast majority of the States that collect land revitalization data (80%), some or all of the data is collected by the State environmental agency. In some cases a specific program within the State’s environmental agency, such as the state’s brownfield program, is responsible for collecting the data.



Eight States rely upon their commerce, economic development, or financial agencies to collect at least some of the data relating to land revitalization measures. In some of these States, such as Wisconsin, Oregon, and Ohio, the economic development or commerce department administers some of the financial incentive programs available for site cleanup and redevelopment. Therefore it is convenient for that agency to collect certain data, such as return on investment and public dollars leveraged, for grant and loan applications.

One State, New York, relies upon its taxation department to collect some of its land revitalization data. New York has a very successful tax credit incentive for brownfield redevelopment and recently reformed its program to include data reporting requirements (e.g., local taxes generated). As projects continue to enter the program, a large pool of cleanup sites will eventually exist from which information can be drawn.

***Are States and Territories validating or conducting quality checks on the land revitalization data collected?***

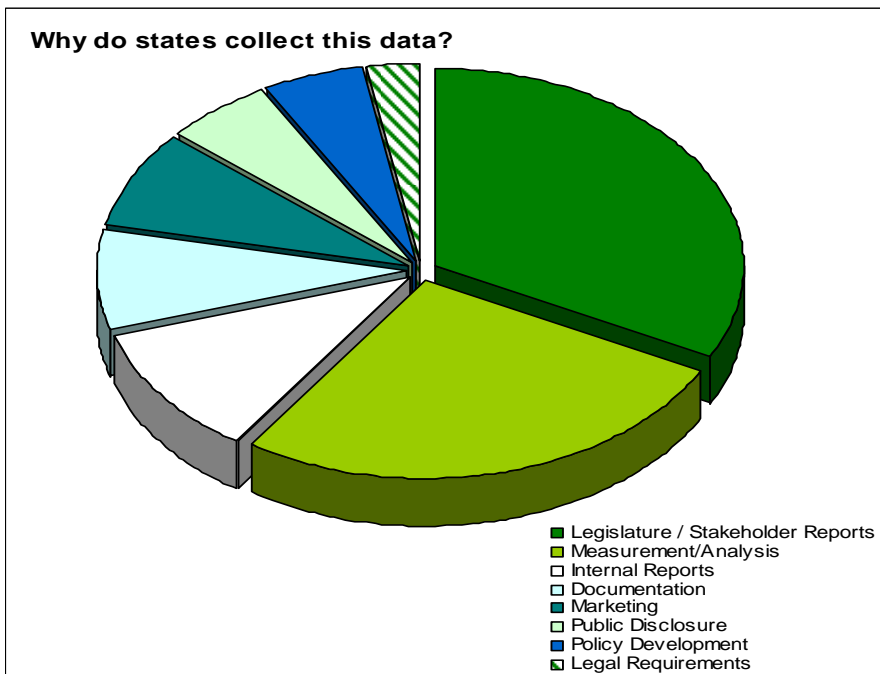
Of the States that are collecting data, nine are conducting QA/QC on key aspects of the data. The methods used to check the quality of their data vary considerably. Some States confirm the accuracy of the land revitalization information they collect by auditing a percentage of the sites that receive grants, loans, or tax benefits. In doing so, they are able to correct mistakes that materialize from the audit and identify and correct systematic errors in the collection process. Other States compare information provided at the beginning of the project (e.g., data collected in an assessment grant application) to the same information provided at the end of a project (e.g., in the application for a liability release) to confirm the data’s accuracy. As noted in the previous question, States that collect data during different phases of the project can quality check the data at each successive reporting phase. The State of North

Carolina hired a compliance coordinator to lead their institutional control inspection effort, as well as verify land revitalization data.

States that do not conduct QA/QC of their data generally rely upon the accuracy of the data provided by the applicant. Applicant provided data is usually gathered from loan, grant, and tax incentive applications; documents which are not likely to contain falsified or inaccurate figures. The Task Force found that a common reason for States taking data at “face value” is simply the lack of resources to properly confirm the data.

### ***Why are States and Territories collecting this data?***

Of the States that responded to this question, over 60% collect the data for the purpose of reporting it to their state legislature, usually in the form of an annual report. Several States are also required to report to other political entities, such as the governor or a board of directors for their agency or cleanup program.



The State of New Jersey collects and compiles land revitalization data to use when they are asked to testify to their State legislature. Several other States use the data for marketing purposes. Not all States that prepare legislative

reports indicated that they used the data and/or the reports for marketing. However, based on the descriptions of their reports, many States could be using the information to market the success of their programs and the benefits of cleanup and redevelopment. A few States use their data to demonstrate program success and goal achievement to their agency director, the U.S. EPA or their governor.

### Observations

- Approximately half of the States collect land revitalization data in addition to what is required by U.S. EPA.
- Aside from data commonly reported in support of 128(a) grants, “jobs created” is the most frequently collected indicator.
- Data is primarily collected for sites that are being cleaned up for redevelopment and generally not on sites where there are no redevelopment plans.



- Financial incentive documentation is an effective tool for States to collect land revitalization information.
- The State environmental program is the entity that most often collects land revitalization data.
- There were no observable trends in the frequency of data collection.
- Of the responding States, roughly half performed QA/QC on the data collected.
- The most frequent reason for collecting data was to address the need for reporting to respective State legislatures.

The Task Force believes that, as States build and maintain sustainable response programs, the need to collect information that measures the immediate and extended benefit of removing environmental barriers to redevelopment will become increasingly important. To this end, the Task Force has compiled this information for use by States to establish or enhance their ability to track, analyze, and represent the significant benefits that can be realized by land revitalization projects.

The Task Force thanks all States and Territories that contributed to this compendium. The detailed information provided valuable insight regarding the scope of this issue. Contact information for the States that provided information for compilation can be found in Appendix B.

#### Data Limitations

This project was intended to gather information about whether and how States are collecting land revitalization data. It was not intended to be a statistically valid data tool. The SRPBO Task Force members sought to collect consistent information in response to the questions posed. However, inherent differences between State programs resulted in minor data variations.

# Appendix A: Table of Land Revitalization Measures Utilized by States

|        | Jobs Created/<br>Retained     | \$\$ Leveraged                | Type of<br>Redevelopment /Use<br>(Former/ Current/<br>Planned) | Taxes<br>Assessed | Est.<br>Annual<br>State<br>Income<br>Tax | Acres<br>Remediated | Property<br>Tax<br>Increase | Zoning<br>Status | Total<br>Assessed<br>Value | Assessment/<br>Cleanup Status | Tax Credits<br>Granted/<br>Claimed/<br>Earned | Private<br>/Public Sector<br>Investment | Taxes<br>Generated | Remediation/<br>Redevelopment<br>Cost | Other/Misc.                             | TIF<br>Tracking | ROI | Parks/<br>Greenspace<br>Created or<br>Preserved | Market<br>Value | Redevt<br>Status |
|--------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|-------------------|--|---------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|---|---|--------------------|---------------------------------------|---|-----------------|-----|---|-----------------|------------------|
| MA     | x                             |                               | Historic/ Current/<br>Planned                                  |                   |  | x                   | x                           | x                |                            | x                             |   | x                                       |                    |                                       |   |                 |     |   |                 | x                |
| RI     | x                             |                               |  | x                 | x  | x                   |                             |                  | x                          |                               |   |   |                    |                                       |   |                 |     |   |                 |                  |
| NY     |                               |                               | End use<br>(commercial/industrial/<br>residential)             |                   |  |                     |                             |                  |                            |                               | x   |   | x                  |                                       |   |                 |     |   |                 |                  |
| NJ     | x                             |                               |  |                   |  | x                   |                             |                  |                            |                               | x   |   |                    | Redevt                                |   |                 |     |   |                 |                  |
| VA     | x                             |                               |  |                   |  | x                   |                             |                  |                            |                               |   | x                                       |                    |                                       |   |                 |     |   |                 |                  |
| PA     | x                             |                               | x (land designation)   |                   |  | x                   |                             |                  |                            |                               |   |   |                    |                                       |   |                 |     |   |                 |                  |
| AL     | x                             |                               |  |                   |  | x                   |                             |                  |                            |                               |   |   |                    | Remediation                           | x                                       |                 |     |   |                 |                  |
| FL     | x                             |                               |  |                   |  |                     |                             |                  |                            |                               |   | x                                       |                    |                                       |   |                 |     |   |                 |                  |
| GA     |                               |                               |  |                   |  | x                   |                             |                  |                            |                               |   |   |                    |                                       |   |                 |     |   |                 |                  |
| NC     |                               |                               |  |                   |  | x                   |                             |                  |                            |                               |   |   |                    |                                       |   |                 |     |   |                 |                  |
| MI     | x                             |                               |  |                   |  |                     |                             |                  |                            |                               |   | Used to<br>Private                      |                    |                                       |   | x               |     |   |                 |                  |
| MN     | x                             |                               |  |                   |  | x                   | x                           |                  |                            |                               |   | Private                                 |                    |                                       | # of units of<br>affordable<br>housing  |                 |     |   |                 |                  |
| WI     |                               | x                             | Planned  |                   |  |                     | x                           |                  |                            | x                             |   | Private                                 |                    | Remediation                           | Impact to<br>community                  |                 |     | x   |                 |                  |
| OH     | x                             | x                             |  |                   |  | x                   |                             |                  |                            |                               |   |   |                    |                                       | No. of<br>communities<br>served         |                 | x   |   |                 |                  |
| IN     | x (jobs and<br>wages)         |                               | Planned  |                   |  |                     |                             |                  |                            |                               |   |   |                    |                                       | Econ/redevt &<br>impact to<br>community |                 |     | x   |                 |                  |
| NM     |                               |                               |  |                   |  | x                   |                             |                  |                            |                               |   |   |                    |                                       |   |                 |     |   |                 |                  |
| MO     | x                             | x                             | x (former/ current)  |                   |  | x                   |                             |                  |                            |                               |   |   |                    | Remediation                           | Historic tax<br>credits/ CDBG           |                 |     |   |                 |                  |
| CO     | x                             |                               | x (count number of<br>units)                                   |                   |  | x                   |                             |                  |                            |                               | x   |   |                    |                                       |   |                 |     |   |                 |                  |
| OR     | x<br>(redvt/constru<br>ction) | x<br>(redvt/constru<br>ction) |  |                   |  |                     |                             |                  |                            | x                             |   | Public                                  |                    |                                       |   |                 |     |   |                 | x                |
| WA     |                               |                               |  |                   |  |                     |                             |                  |                            |                               |   | Public                                  |                    |                                       |   |                 |     |   |                 |                  |
| ID     | x (temp/full-<br>time)        | x                             | Structures &<br>infrastructure<br>developed/remodeled          |                   |  | x                   | x (pre-post)                |                  | x (pre-<br>post)           |                               |   | x                                       |                    | Remediation                           | Non-profit and<br>social use            |                 |     | preserved                                       | x               |                  |
|        |                               |                               |  |                   |  |                     |                             |                  |                            |                               |   |   |                    |                                       |   |                 |     |   |                 |                  |
|        |                               |                               |  |                   |  |                     |                             |                  |                            |                               |   |   |                    |                                       |   |                 |     |   |                 |                  |
|        |                               |                               |  |                   |  |                     |                             |                  |                            |                               |   |   |                    |                                       |   |                 |     |   |                 |                  |
| Totals | 15                            | 5                             | 8  | 1                 | 1  | 14                  | 4                           | 1                | 2                          | 3                             | 3   | 10                                      | 1                  | 4                                     | 7                                       | 1               | 1   | 3   | 1               | 2                |

TIF - Tax Increment Financing  
 ROI - Return on Investment  
 Most Reported

[Click here to open the Excel file.](#)

# State Response and Brownfields Programs Operations Project

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May 27, 2009

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# State Response and Brownfields Programs Operations Project

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May 27, 2009

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No States Collecting Data at This Time

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