

# Celebrating 10 Years of Returning Superfund Sites to Beneficial Use



## REGION 7 Success Story

### Oronogo-Duenweg Mining Belt: Joplin, Missouri



Subsidence pits and chat piles formerly covered the site.  
Source: Missouri Department of Natural Resources



The new Route 249 bypass is driving economic redevelopment.  
Source: Missouri Department of Transportation

Through the efforts of EPA, the State of Missouri, and the local community, the Oronogo-Duenweg Mining Belt Superfund site in Joplin, Missouri, is the new home of a scrap metal recycling facility, numerous residential sub-divisions, and a new highway bypass that is attracting further development. The Superfund Redevelopment Initiative (SRI) awarded the site a Pilot Grant in 2001, which Jasper County used to prepare the site for reuse.

The 240-square-mile Oronogo-Duenweg Mining Belt site was added to the Superfund National Priorities List in August 1990. Former mining activities at the site dated from the 1850s to 1970s and resulted in the contamination of ground water, surface water, and soil with lead, zinc, and cadmium. The site remedy included excavation of contaminated soils and extension of municipal water lines to affected properties. By 2000, EPA had remediated 2,339 residential properties including agricultural lands in the surrounding Joplin communities.

Since 1995, a scrap metal recycling facility has operated on 40 acres of the site, providing permanent jobs to the local community. The development plan for Route 249, a new highway bypass that crosses four miles of the site, was designed as a protocol for proper development of areas contaminated with mining wastes, and to help the community find economically feasible ways to develop the land along the new interstate highway. As part of the SRI Pilot grant, mine tailings excavated from the site were used as subsurface fill material for the construction of the Route 249 bypass. This new highway opened to traffic on October 6, 2008 and has begun to spur commercial and residential development in the area.

“The value of the property around the highway will go up, and we again will be a thriving community like it used to be. We want our town to grow and prosper. We used to be on top of a lead mine. Now, it’s a gold mine.” – Dale Davenport, Mayor, Carterville, Missouri

“That area will be great for manufacturing. You can ship product from there to anywhere in the United States. It’s near the center of the country and two major arteries, Highway 71 and Interstate 44. There’s lots of land and lots of people to work... We’re in great shape to bring somebody in here who is involved in manufacturing or distribution.” – John Biggs, Mayor, Webb City, Missouri

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