Thanks to early planning and active participation from responsible parties, portions of the 13-acre Landia Chemical Company Superfund site are now revitalized ecological habitats for native plants, wildlife and pollinators.

The site includes two industrial properties located in Lakeland, Florida. The Landia Chemical Company and Florida Favorite Fertilizer used the site for pesticide and fertilizer blending operations for many years beginning in the 1930s. These operations, as well as storage of various chemicals on site, led to contaminated soil, ground water and sediments. EPA added the site to the National Priorities List in May 2000. By 2001, the potentially responsible parties (PRPs), under EPA oversight, had removed 4,760 tons of contaminated soil and sediments as an early action to address the most pressing contamination issues. In 2011, the PRP group removed an additional 14,800 cubic yards of soil and sediment as a part of the long-term soil cleanup. While conducting the long-term cleanup, the PRPs took the extra step of removing neighborhood “eyesores” by demolishing vacant, abandoned buildings.

The PRP group worked with EPA to develop ecologically sustainable cleanup approaches that enhanced the selected soil remedy to have a greater impact on the eventual ground water cleanup. In order to help reduce soil and ground water acidity, the PRP group filled excavated areas with crushed limestone. The PRPs then placed a cover made of clay and native vegetation on top of the clean fill that would reduce stormwater infiltration. The vegetative cover offers dual benefits of aiding remediation work and revitalizing the site’s natural ecology. Over 1,000 individual plants, including 30 varieties of grasses, sagebrush, maple trees, slash pines and poplar trees, now populate the site. These trees will remove contaminants through ground water uptake and phytoremediation, as well as reducing the amount of water that infiltrates into the water table beneath the cover. Ecological revitalization provides habitat for native animals, as well as migratory birds and pollinators that add biological diversity to the area. To date, members of the PRP group have successfully created ecological spaces like this at other similar sites along the East Coast with the intention of creating viable habitats for migrating birds and other wildlife. They continue working with EPA to design effective solutions that transform these formerly contaminated sites into ecological assets.

In 2013, EPA Region 4 selected the site for an “Excellence in Site Reuse” award to recognize the extensive revitalization and ecological reuse work performed by the site’s proactive PRP group.