

# Planning for Revitalization of Petroleum Brownfields Along the National Historic Voting Rights Trail, Selma to Montgomery, Alabama

Since 2009, EPA and Alabama's Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) have engaged local communities in planning for revitalization of numerous former gas stations and petroleum-contaminated brownfields along the Selma to Montgomery National Historic Voting Rights Trail in Alabama. The 54-mile trail commemorates events, people, and the route of the 1965 Voting Rights March. It begins in Selma and continues along U.S. Highway 80 to the State Capitol in Montgomery.

Many active and former gasoline stations along the trail have the potential to cause contamination from petroleum releases. The goal of the Historic Voting Rights Trail project is to assess, clean up, and implement community revitalization plans for these sites that are consistent with community needs and national historic site goals. EPA Region 4 provided 18 Targeted Brownfields Assessments for sites along the trail. In 2010, EPA awarded a Brownfields petroleum assessment grant to ADEM to continue assessment of former industrial and commercial sites along the trail. Developing green jobs also is an important part of the project.

Community engagement is at the heart of this effort. Combining community desires with leveraged federal and state resources, ADEM and EPA are facilitating community-based revitalization, environmental benefits, and economic development activities along the trail. Since spring 2010, EPA, ADEM, and other federal partners (including the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, National Park Service, Department of Housing and Urban Development, Department of Agriculture, Federal Highway Administration, the U.S. Geological Survey, and Maxwell Air Force Base) have been meeting with local communities to offer technical assistance and share information. With funding from EPA's Land Revitalization program, Region 4 and ADEM conducted outreach meetings to gather input from community groups on their visions for redevelopment and revitalization in Hayneville, West Montgomery, Selma, and Selmont.

In fall 2010, EPA sponsored a sustainability conference in Selma that brought together representatives from ten federal agencies and stakeholders from many of the communities along the trail. These sessions were a positive experience that allowed citizens to work together with local, state, and federal agencies to identify recycling programs, reuse options, and plans for the affected communities. Stakeholders are continuing to work together on other development projects in many communities, including improvements to water resources, transportation, and education.



*Rendering of a daylighted stream along the Civil Rights Trail in Montgomery created for the EPA/U.S. Army Corps of Engineers community visioning process*

One important project involves "daylighting," or returning to a more open, natural state, a stream along the Civil Rights Trail near the intersection of I-65 and the Fairview Avenue exit, one of the important gateways to the Civil Rights Trail in Montgomery (see rendering). ADEM recently was awarded Clean

Water Act funds from EPA for the daylighting project. ADEM will work with the City of Montgomery to help realize the community's vision for the area. This involves making the area along the stream attractive and accessible to residents and tourists. The City of Montgomery purchased the properties involved, including brownfields and petroleum brownfields. The project will involve a host of other federal, state and local partners.