



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

SEP 21 2015

OFFICE OF
SOLID WASTE AND
EMERGENCY RESPONSE

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Response to Office of Inspector General Final Report No. 15-P-0198
"Benefits of EPA Initiative to Promote Renewable Energy on Contaminated
Lands Have Not Been Established," dated July 16, 2015

FROM: Mathy Stanislaus
Assistant Administrator

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mathy Stanislaus".

TO: Arthur A. Elkins, Jr.
Inspector General

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the final report associated with the subject evaluation. In May 2015, the Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response (OSWER) provided extensive comments on the issues and recommendations contained in the draft report and believe that those comments still apply.

As a tenet of its implementation, RE-Powering America's Land solicits and responds to the input and perspective of a diverse set of stakeholders. Responsiveness to stakeholders is a critical element of the Initiative and stakeholder input is fundamental to the design of our products and tools. It benefits the Initiative and advances the land remediation and reuse aspects of OSWER's mission. OSWER continues to find ways to obtain additional feedback from our stakeholders on the tools and other assistance the Initiative provides.

OIG's Response #6 asserts that "Our report does not state that the Agency is not 'responsibly and efficaciously' spending funds to develop outputs for the Initiative." However, the report implies such notions prominently in its title, its "At a Glance," and other sections of the report. We have provided a number of examples of projects that were directly and indirectly influenced by the Initiative, which has led to myriad environmental and economic benefits realized in communities across the country. Over the course of our discussions, OSWER forwarded alternative conclusions which we believed were more reflective of the Initiative's status, its contribution and

the areas for improvement (for example, “EPA Needs to Move Forward on Plans to Measure the Benefits and Effectiveness of its RE-Powering America’s Land Initiative”). Our experience with the OIG on this evaluation, however, has reinforced a need to communicate more clearly the Initiative’s progress and benefits. We will work towards those ends.

AGENCY’S RESPONSE TO REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

As noted in the final report, OSWER provided corrective actions that the OIG agreed met the intent of the recommendation. OSWER committed to publicly share information on the economic or environmental benefits realized at sites, establish an accomplishment section of the RE-Power website, and provide additional references to issues of human health and the environment as they relate to siting renewable energy on potentially contaminated lands, landfills and mine sites. The actions are ongoing.

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have any questions regarding this response, please contact Brigid Lowery, Director of the Center for Program Analysis on (202) 566-0198.

cc: Brigid Lowery
Adam Klinger
Marc Thomas
Kecia Thornton