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**Community Based
Supplemental
Environmental Projects**
*Suncor Denver Refinery
(Formerly Conoco)*



US EPA Region 8



Colorado Department
of Public Health
and Environment

**University of Colorado at Boulder
CU Science Discovery**



General Category: Environmental Education
Funding: \$19,000 (CDPHE)
Location: Northeast Denver/ Commerce City

The goals of the project are to connect economically disadvantaged and minority students to the natural world through ongoing outdoor experiences, to instill respect for the planet and to gain individual and community skills to work more effectively with each other. This project will engage fifth grade classes from North Denver public schools in outdoor learning and environmental education. Students will participate in day trips to Bluff Lake, Echo Lake, a local park, an overnight trip to Highlands Camp and the high adventure ropes course at Exempla West Pines Training Center.

Colorado Energy Science Center



General Category: Pollution Prevention/Energy Efficiency

Funding: \$30,000 (CDPHE)

Location: Northeast Denver

CESC has partnered with Cross Community Coalition to increase energy efficiency education in the schools and perform home energy audits in the Clayton, Swansea, Elyria and Globeville neighborhoods. Professional auditors will be assisted by individuals and organizations in the community to perform the audits. The home occupant will receive a consultation with the auditor regarding ways to save energy in their home. This will result in lower home energy costs and lower environmental impacts resulting from the energy consumption. Additionally, they will support energy education in the schools in the area.

What are Supplemental Environmental Projects?

A Supplemental Environmental Project (SEP) can be part of an enforcement settlement when there is a violation of an environmental law or regulation.

As part of the enforcement settlement, a violator voluntarily agrees to contribute funding to an environmentally beneficial project in exchange for a reduction in the monetary fine for the violation. This reduction is decided on a case-by-case basis, and is equal to a percentage of the voluntary contribution.

The Goal of a SEP is to further the ability of the EPA and CDPHE to protect and enhance public health and the environment, by encouraging violators to invest in community based projects that benefit affected environments. SEPs do not include any activities that a violator must carry out in order to return to compliance with the law.

SEPs can be external or internal. External SEPs are those that focus on communities surrounding the area affected by a violation. Internal SEPs are carried out within the violating organization, and are typically modifications to equipment or procedures that go above and beyond the required level of compliance.

How did these SEPs happen?

These SEPs came into existence because of

- (1) The willingness of Suncor Inc. (Formerly Conoco) to direct a part of its monetary settlement to the projects described in this booklet.
- (2) The commitment of the Region 8 and Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment Air Enforcement staffs.
- (3) The efforts of the Region 8 Environmental Justice Program. The Environmental Justice Program is committed to providing assistance to Technical and Legal enforcement staffs, to State partners, to companies and to affected communities to implement community-based SEPs in the settlements resulting from enforcement actions.

If you are interested in exploring SEPs as part of your settlements, please contact the staff of the Region 8 Environmental Justice program.

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Commerce City Community Enterprise



General Category: Pollution Prevention/ Environmental Education
Funding: \$25,926 (CDPHE)
Location: Commerce City

Commerce City Community Enterprise will perform environmental education and outreach projects with the Holly Park Youth Council, a group of youth residents, in Holly Park apartments. Holly Park apartments are low-income housing with approximately 300 youth. This is an avenue to get them involved in their community while learning valuable skills for the future. The projects that will be carried out are: a tree-planting project, a clean hallway project, a recycling center, community and property clean-up days, creation of a community garden/compost project and outreach to the community.

YouthBiz



General Category: Pollution Prevention/ Environmental Education
Funding: \$41,600 (CDPHE)
Location: Cole Neighborhood

YouthBiz will use the funds to initiate the “77 Alleys” project, which recognizes the correlation between cleanliness of alleys and larger social issues, and seeks to organize community youth to clean up the alleys of the Cole Neighborhood. The project is supervised by a program manager. However, it is run completely by Northeast Denver inner city youth. The goals of the project are to create a self-sufficient program within two years and to provide ongoing education to Cole residents on environmental issues associated with recycling.

This Settlement...

In 2000, as part of a national refinery initiative under the Clean Air Act, EPA contacted Conoco, Inc. regarding violations of the Act. In the spirit of cooperation, Conoco agreed to seek a quick resolution of the allegations and settle with EPA and the four States in which they have refineries: Colorado, Louisiana, Oklahoma and Montana. Pursuant to these settlements, Conoco agreed to make changes to their facilities and pay penalties. They also agreed to perform Supplemental and Beneficial Environmental Projects in all four states. They agreed to spend \$400,000 on SEP(s) and BEP(s) in Louisiana, \$400,000 in Oklahoma, \$1,225,000 in Montana and \$2,075,000 in Colorado.

The State of Colorado and Region 8 agreed to take all of its penalty money in the form of SEPs, thus increasing the amount of funds directed to SEPs in Colorado. SEPs normally allow companies to put penalty money back into facility operations to make upgrades to pollution devices that go beyond requirements of the law. In this instance Conoco, the State and EPA agreed that approximately 25% of the SEP funds could be placed directly with community groups working on pollution prevention activities that directly benefit the communities most affected by the pollution from the facility. The Colorado facility in Commerce City, Colorado has since been purchased and is operated by Suncor Inc. In accordance with a revised consent decree, Suncor Inc. is now responsible for the SEPs.

Eight Steps to Creating Community-Based (SEPs)

If SEPs are a possibility in a settlement:

1. Meet with both the legal and technical enforcement staffs handling the settlement to secure agreement on a process and coordinate activities.
2. Meet with company staff to discuss how they would like to proceed.
3. Reach out to community organizations to invite participation in the development of SEPs.
4. Work with the company to help in soliciting the proposals.
5. Work with regional enforcement staff, Headquarters OECA staff and the Department of Justice to determine which of the projects comply with the EPA SEP Guidance.
6. Make adjustments in project budgets and descriptions to match the total amount of the SEP settlement.
7. Meet with the company periodically to assess progress on each project and contact each community organization to assure that progress is being made as scheduled.
8. At the end of the process, meet to determine *Lessons Learned* and integrate these lessons in future processes.

(Note: The language in these steps is directed toward a federal process. However, you can easily apply these steps to a state-level process by simply substituting equivalent state agency references.)

Northeast Denver Housing Center Household Lead Hazard



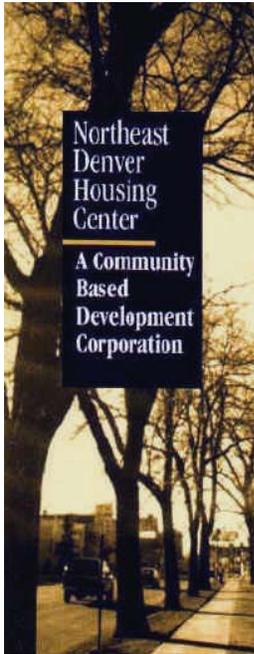
General Category: Environmental Health and Education

Funding: \$50,000 (CDPHE)

Location: Clayton Neighborhood

The SEP funds will fill the gap left by a HUD grant for lead abatement and other lead hazard control work in homes. This project will target homes in the Clayton Neighborhood that are at risk but that do not qualify for the HUD grant. This includes: pre-1940 homes of senior citizens who baby sit young children and other pre-1940 homes with young children not yet poisoned. Additionally, 100 homes will be investigated and each family educated about lead. The investigation will include a survey, a visual inspection, the collecting of five dust or paint samples and general education of the resident. If results are positive, families will receive a cleaning kit and instructions on how to control lead safely.

**Northeast Denver Housing Center
Asthma Outreach and Education**



General Category: Environmental Health and Education
 Funding: \$13,325 (CDPHE)
 Location: 5 schools in Northeast Denver

Presentations will be made to the students about asthma and asthma triggers found in the home in middle school art classes in Commerce City and the surrounding NE Denver neighborhoods. NDHC will also provide information on asthma to send home to parents and for teachers in other classes to use as activities. After the presentation the art teachers will ask students to make a drawing depicting something they learned about asthma. The winning 13 pictures will be made into a calendar to be given to each participating class and be available to schools for fundraisers.

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Groundwork Denver



General Category: Parks
 Funding Amount: \$20,000 (CDPHE)
 Location: Northeast Denver

Groundwork is an initiative to empower the community to take control and redevelop brownfields and abandoned lands in Denver in order to make them community assets. It supports citizens being in control of the process. Groundwork Denver serves as a catalyst, the glue and the keeper of the vision. Communities participate in determining Groundwork projects, including increasing open green space, affordable housing, daycare centers and commercial areas. Green space is always included as a component of the project if not the major purpose.

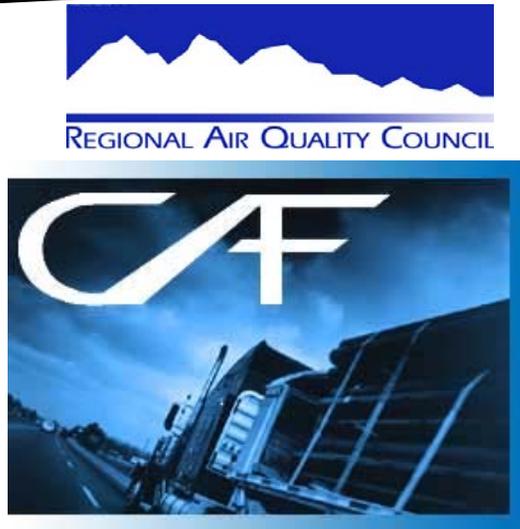
Commerce City Community Health Services



General Category: Environmental Health/Asthma Supplies
 Funding: \$16,000 (CDPHE)
 Location: Adams County 14 Schools

CCCHS is a non-profit organization providing health care to children and adolescents. They have a contract with the Adams County School District 14 to assist schools with their health needs. The school nurses have identified the need for nebulizers and peak flow meters to assist the students in managing their asthma. The funds will be used to purchase 1000 peak flow meters, which are hand held instruments that a student blows into to measure lung capacity, and 10 nebulizers, which are machines that are used to give breathing treatments to a student with an asthma attack when their standard inhaler is not working.

Regional Air Quality Council



General Category: Poll Prevention, Outreach and Awareness
 Funding: \$50,000 (CDPHE)
 Location: Denver Metro

These funds will be used for a Fleet Outreach and Awareness Program, which will encourage initiatives by diesel fleet operators to reduce emissions. The program will launch a collaborative outreach and awareness effort with private and public fleets in the Denver region and will recognize fleet operators that undertake voluntary programs to reduce emissions from their fleet of diesel vehicles. This will be accomplished through workshops, one-on-one meetings with fleet owners, distribution of educational materials and retrofitting projects.

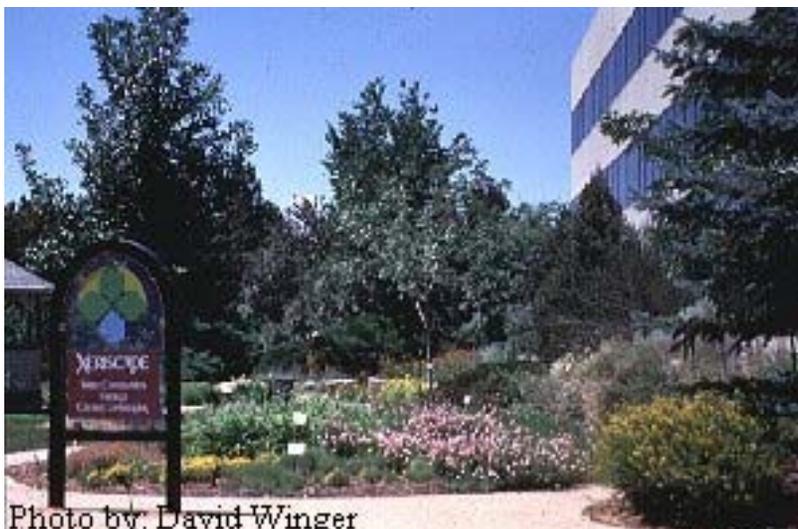
Sand Creek Regional Greenway



General Category: Parks
 Funding Amount: \$50,000 (CDPHE)
 Location: Sand Creek Wetland Park

The Sand Creek Urban Trail is a 13-mile long trail that passes through Commerce City, Denver, Aurora and Stapleton Redevelopment Corporation. The trail gives urban residents greater access to nature and wildlife via access from several trailheads. The wetland park is a parcel of land just over 19 acres. The funds will be used to create an interpretive trail system, to purchase plantings for the site and to support volunteer efforts. The proposed final use of the site is natural open space with educational opportunities through select access of the restored riparian habitat area.

NEMPPA



General Category: Xeriscape – water conservation
 Funding Amount: \$20,000 (CDPHE)
 Location: Cole, Clayton and Elyria Swansea Neighborhoods

Northeast Metro Pollution Prevention Alliance (NEMPPA) is a community partnership that promotes pollution principles in Northeast Denver. Funds will be used to educate community members about water conservation. Information will be shared about xeriscaping and demonstration yards in the area will be created. The project will build a program that will be capable of providing further reduction in water use beyond the life of this project.

University of Colorado and Cross Community Coalition



General Category: Environmental Health Study
 Funding: \$24,525 (CDPHE)
 Location: Northeast Denver and Commerce City

The goal of the project “Speciation of Airborne Carbonaceous Particulate Matter Samples Collected During 2001 in Adams County, Colorado” is to better understand the composition and origin of the PM present in north Denver/Adams County. This will be accomplished by analyzing particulate matter samples collected at regulatory sites in North Denver/Adams County from an entire year. The chemical composition of the samples will be determined and then quantitatively compared.

Cross Community Coalition



General Category: Environmental Education
 Funding: \$50,000 (CDPHE/EPA)
 Location: Northeast Denver

The funds will contribute to the “green building” elements of the new Family Resource Center facility, which will serve the Elyria, Globeville, Swansea and Cole neighborhoods. The current building is underneath I70 and relocation will facilitate an increase in children’s programs. The activities in the Center include, but are not limited to: social services applications and certification, tax preparation for low-income families, computer training, English as a Second Language classes, GED classes, training in hazardous materials removal, Youth Pollution Prevention Corps and Estoy Listo (I am Ready) school program.

Adams City High School Environmental Club



General Category: Environmental Education/ Recycle
 Funding: \$1,000 (CDPHE)
 Location: Commerce City

The Environmental Club at Adams City High School is only three years old and is trying to start a school wide recycling program. They see all of the waste that the school is creating and want to do something about it. The project will provide them money to purchase proper recycling containers to collect cans, bottles, paper, cardboard, glass, plastic bags and print cartridges. Additionally the funds will be used to create fun activities to encourage students to get involved in the club.

Adams School District Green City Project



General Category: Environmental Education
 Funding: \$10,000 (CDPHE)
 Location: Commerce City

Students from Adams City High School and Kearney Middle School will participate in the Green City Project. Green City is an innovative, field-based science education which bridges what students are learning in school to the real world. The Green City Project's mission is to foster an understanding and stewardship of local ecosystems by involving students with nature in their own communities. The students will take monthly excursions to a local natural area where they apply lessons learned in the classroom.

Earth Force at Cole Middle School



General Category: Environmental Education
 Funding: \$20,000 (CDPHE)
 Location: Cole Middle School

Funds will be used to develop an Earth Force program at Cole Middle School. Earth Force is a year-round effort to engage youth in environmental problem solving in their community through: an intensive summer literacy and leadership program for incoming 6th graders and a weekly 3-hour Wednesday block of environmental service learning for the entire 6th grade class during the school year. The Community Action and Problem Solving (CAPS) program will be used to provide students with skills needed to make long term sustainable change to a local environmental issue that the youth identify.

Adams 14 Educational Foundation

ADAMS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT 14



General Category: Environmental Education
Funding: \$10,000 (CDPHE)
Location: Commerce City

The foundation is trying to improve the science curriculum in Adams County School District #14. The foundation currently awards mini-grants to teachers to implement innovative approaches to improving student achievement and literacy. With this grant they will increase the mini-grants to \$1,000 each for Environmental Education Projects.



CAEE



General Category: Environmental Education
Funding: \$30,000 (CDPHE)
Location: Colorado

CAEE will coordinate the more than two hundred organizations in the Denver Area involved in Environmental Education in a state wide web-based database. The database will be a “one stop shopping” for busy teachers who may be unaware of materials which could supplement classroom content. It will also increase the usability of these resources by encouraging providers to link their programs to the Colorado academic standards and also review them according to national quality guidelines.



Earth Force School Program



General Category: Environmental Education
 Funding: \$20,000 (CDPHE)
 Location: Northeast Denver/ Commerce City

The project will provide exemplary after-school and summer environmental leadership programs in Commerce City and Northeast Denver communities, working with at least 200 youth who will accomplish at least 10 environmental projects. It will engage the students in environmental issues where they live and give them the opportunities, skills and support needed to participate in their solutions.

Breathe Better Foundation



General Category: Environmental Health and Education
 Funding: \$16,337 (CDPHE)
 Location: Commerce City School District #14

On behalf of the American Lung Association the Breathe Better Foundation will provide the following educational services: Breathe Better Bus, Open Airways for Schools, Smoke-free Home Pledge Initiative, Community Education Sessions and Lung tests. The program will be offered to seven elementary schools in Adams County. The Open Airways for Schools program will consist of six 40-minute sessions to these students.