

# Portfields

*A Coordinated Approach  
to Revitalizing Ports*





*"The Portfields Initiative represents a multi-agency Federal effort to partner with local communities to help revitalize their ports and improve our nation's marine transportation system while restoring and protecting our coastal resources."*

*—NOAA Administrator Vice Admiral Conrad Lautenbacher, Jr.,  
U.S. Navy (Ret.)*

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## hat is Portfields?

- Portfields is a federal interagency partnership addressing brownfields in and around port communities, with an emphasis on the development of environmentally sound port facilities.
- The Ports of Bellingham, Washington, New Bedford, Massachusetts, and Tampa, Florida are designated as Portfields Demonstration Pilot Ports.
- Portfields, through increased federal, state, and local coordination, assists the Pilot Ports in leveraging resources to revitalize waterfront areas, improve marine transportation, and protect and restore critical habitat.

## Why Portfields?

- Ninety-five percent of U.S. foreign trade travels through our nation's ports, contributing \$780 billion to the economy and employing 16 million people.
- Maritime trade is expected to double in the next 20 years.
- Many underutilized brownfields are located in and around our nation's port communities.
- Brownfields redevelopment is a critical solution to the many challenges facing ports, and can be a catalyst for enhancing port capacity and infrastructure, and waterfront and community revitalization.
- There is a need for better coordination among federal, state, and local agencies to leverage resources and support port revitalization.

## What are the goals of Portfields?

- Expedite the redevelopment of port communities in a manner that enhances port infrastructure, protects human health, protects and restores critical habitat, ensures homeland security, and provides economic opportunity and a better quality of life for community residents.
- Focus and leverage the combined resources of federal, state, local, and private partners to support redevelopment and revitalization efforts.
- Actively transfer best practices and lessons learned to other port communities.

## Who are the Portfields Federal Partners?

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Environmental Protection Agency

Economic Development Administration

Army Corps of Engineers

Maritime Administration

Department of Housing and Urban Development

Department of the Interior

Department of Labor

# Why Revitalize Port Communities?

## **To sustain and enhance our nation's economy...**

America's coasts and waterways play a vital role in our nation's economy and high quality of life. The benefits that ports bring to the communities they serve extend far beyond the boundaries of the waterfront. Our ports serve as gateways to domestic and international trade, connecting the U.S. to the global marketplace. According to the American Association of Port Authorities, 95 percent of U.S. foreign trade travels through the nation's ports, contributing \$780 billion annually to the national economy and employing 16 million people.

## **To protect human health and the environment...**

Our coastal areas and associated waterways represent some of the nation's most valuable environmental resources, providing habitat for almost one-half of the nation's protected, threatened, and endangered species. The location of ports within these rich and sensitive environments generates a variety of environmental and human health challenges, such as contaminated sediments, habitat degradation, storm water runoff, air quality, oil spills, and potential introductions of non-native species. Environmental quality is essential for sustaining coastal and marine ecosystems, commercial and recreational fisheries, and the economic vitality of port communities.

## **To promote smart growth and clean up urban shorelines...**

As undeveloped land in ports becomes increasingly scarce, ports must look toward revitalizing abandoned or underutilized properties. Approximately 10 to 15 percent of the estimated 500,000 brownfields nationwide are located along waterways and within coastal communities. Cleaning up and redeveloping these brownfields can put land back into productive use, enhance the economy, and create jobs. The benefits of smart growth planning and brownfields revitalization include air quality improvements, as well as protection of coastal habitat, watersheds, and greenspace.

## **To ensure public access...**

With nearly one-half of the country's population living near a coast, communities benefit from having access to waterfront areas for recreation and leisure activities. Redeveloping urban waterfronts improves the quality of life for citizens, and is an important strategy for community revitalization.

## To provide for increased maritime trade...

The capacity of many ports is strained by increased maritime trade and the increasing size of cargo and cruise vessels. Maritime trade is expected to double over the next 20 years. Ports must increase their capacity, deepen and maintain channels, and enhance infrastructure to allow for the efficient movement of goods from the water to highway, air, and rail.

## To enhance homeland security...

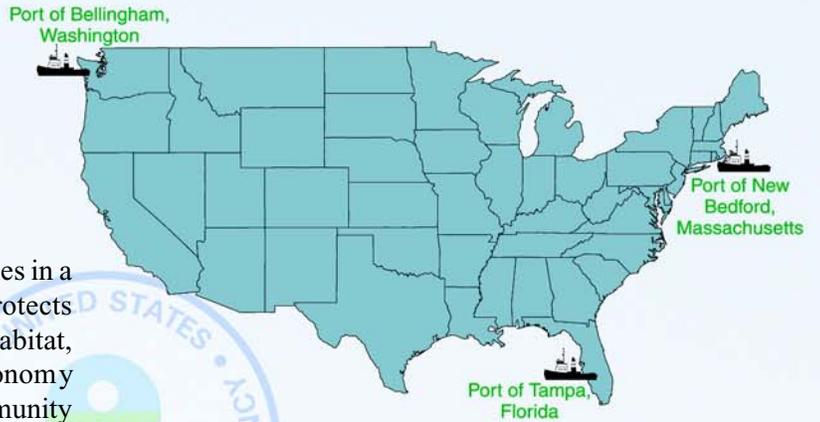
As gateways to the global marketplace, port communities play a key role in homeland security. Ensuring the security of cargo, including more than seven million containers moving through U.S. ports each year, is a considerable challenge borne by ports. Ports also support the mobilization, deployment, and supply of the U.S. military forces.



# Working Together to Revitalize Port Communities



Portfields is a federal interagency partnership addressing brownfields in and around port communities, with an emphasis on the development of environmentally sound port facilities. Through the Brownfields Federal Partnership, the Department of Commerce's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is leading Portfields. Seven other federal agencies—the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA), the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), the Department of Transportation's Maritime Administration (MARAD), the Department of Labor, the Department of the Interior (DOI), and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)—are committed to working together on Portfields. Other vital stakeholders participating in Portfields include port authorities, local governments, state governments, private businesses, local communities, and non-profit organizations.



## The goals of Portfields are to:

- Expedite the redevelopment of port communities in a manner that enhances port infrastructure, protects human health, protects and restores critical habitat, ensures homeland security, and provides economy opportunity and a better quality of life for community residents.
- Focus and leverage the combined resources of federal, state, local, and private partners to support redevelopment and revitalization efforts.
- Actively transfer best practices and lessons learned to other port communities.

Portfields builds upon the successes of brownfields cleanup and redevelopment efforts over the past decade. Port communities face a number of unique challenges that require strong partnerships at all levels of government and the private sector. Portfields brings together federal, state, and local agencies committed to working together to redevelop ports, both environmentally and economically. By applying a collaborative, integrated approach, Portfields aims to coordinate and leverage resources, provide more efficient delivery of services, and develop creative solutions to support port revitalization.

The Ports of Bellingham, Washington, Tampa, Florida, and New Bedford, Massachusetts are designated as Portfields Demonstration Pilot Ports. The Pilot Ports were selected due to their commitment to implementing innovative approaches to waterfront planning and revitalization, the unique set of needs they represent, and the overall value that federal assistance will add to the ports' successful redevelopment. Each of the Pilot Ports identified high priority projects to focus on through the Portfields initiative. The Portfields partners are providing targeted resources to enhance local efforts, and support the planning and implementation of projects to revitalize waterfront areas, improve marine transportation, and protect and restore critical habitat. Portfields is demonstrating this cooperative and integrated approach at the three Pilot Ports, and will then transfer these tools, best practices, and lessons learned to other port communities.

### **EPA's Brownfields Program and Portfields**

EPA's Brownfields Program empowers states, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together to assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. Brownfields grants to local governments are the foundation of the program and support community-based revitalization efforts. Of the more than 1,000 brownfields assessment, cleanup, revolving loan fund, and job training grants awarded by EPA, more than 140 communities include waterfront revitalization as a redevelopment goal. These EPA-assisted port communities have leveraged more than 13,000 cleanup- and redevelopment-related jobs and nearly \$3 billion in cleanup and redevelopment funding. EPA and the other Portfields partners will work closely with the three Pilot Ports to leverage resources to revitalize idle and underused properties, further leverage jobs and funding, and redevelop precious waterfront areas.

<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields>

### **NOAA Coastal Brownfields and Portfields**

NOAA facilitates the conservation and management of the nation's coastal and marine resources. NOAA's brownfields-related activities focus on the redevelopment of coastal brownfields properties and the protection and restoration of coastal resources. These activities are primarily carried out by the Coastal Zone Management Program, the Office of Response and Restoration, and the Office of Education and Sustainable Development. NOAA provides technical assistance on cost effective cleanup, risk assessment and restoration solutions, training, and support to states and communities to strengthen local and regional capabilities to restore or redevelop contaminated properties. NOAA also provides funding to coastal states for brownfields redevelopment.

<http://www.brownfields.noaa.gov>



# Port of Bellingham

Washington

The Port of Bellingham is located on the northern edge of Puget Sound between Seattle, Washington, and Vancouver, British Columbia. More than 1,500 acres comprise the Port, including waterfront, commercial, and industrial areas, as well as commercial airports. More than 200 companies operate on port properties—major industries include marinas, industrial manufacturing, ship building and repair, break bulk cargo, seafood processing, cold storage, and passenger ferries.



The Port of Bellingham and the community are engaged in a coordinated economic revitalization and environmental restoration effort within Bellingham Bay. Through Portfields, the Port will build on its existing planning efforts to address significant environmental contamination and revitalize idle and abandoned waterfront properties. The Port will use innovative ideas and resources from the participating federal agencies to bolster its efforts in implementing a comprehensive redevelopment strategy.



## Portfields Projects

- **Central Waterfront:** The Port of Bellingham is working towards an agreement to acquire 137 acres of waterfront property that previously operated as a pulp and paper mill. Through the Waterfront Futures Group, the Port and the community are creating a new vision for their central waterfront, with a goal of improving public access to the waterfront, enhancing the natural environment, and revitalizing the economy. The acquisition of this property will give the community the opportunity to shape the future of the waterfront. Revitalization activities will include assessing and cleaning up contaminated properties, addressing sediment contamination in Bellingham Bay, and preparing the site for reuse in an environmentally sustainable way. The cleanup and monitoring of contaminated properties is also an opportunity to investigate streamlined approaches to permit review and approval.
- **Squalicum Creek:** Squalicum Creek is an important salmon-bearing creek that empties into a federal navigation channel. The Port is interested in improving the navigation channel, redeveloping the surrounding property, restoring the mouth of Squalicum Creek, and possibly creating a new waterfront park. This will expand local industry through improved cargo facilities, restore estuarine functions, support recovery of the endangered salmon, and provide waterfront access to local residents.
- **Coast Guard Base Expansion:** The Port is working with the U.S. Coast Guard to support the Guard's need to expand local security operations, located near the U.S.-Canadian border. The Port's efforts will facilitate enhanced border patrols and homeland security.
- **Fusion Institute:** The Port is working with federal, state, and local partners, and Western Washington University to form the Fusion Institute, that will demonstrate Portfields concepts of brownfields cleanup and reuse and economic revitalization. The Institute will function as a regional center for sustainable development, consultation, education, research, and stewardship. The Institute would be built on the Bellingham waterfront.



*The Port of Bellingham is "hoping new attention from federal agencies will help bring new ideas and resources into our effort to implement a comprehensive redevelopment strategy."*

—Mike Stoner, Director of Environmental Programs  
Port of Bellingham, Washington

### Successes:

#### **Planning the Squalicum Creek Restoration Project**

Local industry, the State of Washington, and the Portfields partners provided \$25,000 for the conceptual design of the Squalicum Creek restoration and redevelopment project.

#### **Envisioning the New Fusion Institute**

NOAA provided \$30,000 for a feasibility analysis for the Fusion Institute. NOAA and the Port of Bellingham are creating a team comprised of Portfields partners, tribes, state agencies, non-government organizations, the Washington State Governor's Panel on Sustainability, and local universities, to develop the conceptual vision of the new Fusion Institute.

#### **Central Waterfront Revitalization**

The Waterfront Futures Group, sponsored by the Port of Bellingham, completed a \$500,000 project to create a new vision and multi-year action plan for revitalizing the city's waterfront. The plan will help the community respond to significant losses in heavy industry and increasing demand for commercial and recreational opportunities.

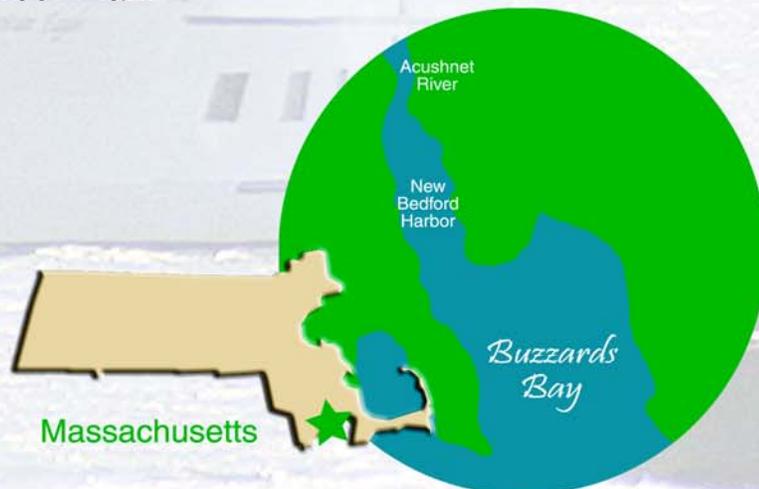


# Port of New Bedford Massachusetts

The Port of New Bedford is located on Buzzards Bay in southeastern Massachusetts. The city has a rich maritime heritage, and served as the location for Herman Melville's famous novel, *Moby Dick*. The city's strong seafaring legacy continues today. Home to one of the largest active fishing fleets on the east coast, the Port of New Bedford also provides passenger ferry service and cruise ship docks, and is a center for recreational boating on Buzzards Bay. The Port of New Bedford is a state Designated Port Area, which protects the industrial uses in the lower harbor. New Bedford was also designated a Brownfields Showcase Community, serving as a national model that demonstrates the benefits of focused, coordinated attention on brownfields.



Through Portfields, New Bedford seeks to improve the overall health of the harbor environment and the public's ability to use the resource, while facilitating economic revitalization. New Bedford and the Town of Fairhaven will focus on high-priority projects identified in the New Bedford/Fairhaven Harbor Plan.



## Portfields Projects

- **Navigation Dredging:** New Bedford/Fairhaven Harbor includes one of the most complex Superfund sites in the country. Due to high levels of polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) contamination in the harbor, navigational dredging has not occurred in 30 years. Channels are shoaled to levels above authorized depths, limiting the size of ships and volume of cargo that enters the harbor, negatively impacting the local economy. New Bedford will apply a simplified procedure mechanism known as the state enhanced remedy under the Superfund cleanup program, to streamline the dredging process by linking cleanup of a Superfund site to navigational dredging.
- **Waterfront Brownfields Cleanup and Reuse:** Hicks Logan is a 130-acre waterfront neighborhood that includes many brownfields. New Bedford seeks to revitalize Hicks Logan into a mixed-use area that will create needed housing and job opportunities as well as open space, waterfront access, and recreational boating. Through a collaborative planning process and the application of smart growth principles, New Bedford plans to develop a 10-year revitalization plan for Hicks Logan.
- **Public Access to the Water:** The Reliable Truss property, a former lumberyard and truss manufacturing center, contains lead-contaminated soil. The city's plan includes cleaning up contamination, restoring habitat, and turning the property into a waterfront park. The new park will provide waterfront access to a nearby neighborhood that has been without it for 30 years. New Bedford also plans to improve the Gifford Street and Pease Street boat ramps and restore habitat at Palmers Cove.

*"National designations such as Portfields... prove that we are developing innovative practices that not only allow us to complete our projects here at home but become models nationwide."*

—Mayor Frederick M. Kalisz, Jr.,  
New Bedford, Massachusetts  
March 29, 2004 State of the City Address



### Successes:

#### **Cleanup of Reliable Truss/River End Park**

The City of New Bedford received a \$200,000 Brownfields Cleanup Grant from EPA in June 2004 to remove lead contaminated soil at the Reliable Truss property. The city is also seeking state funds earmarked for recreational projects in New Bedford to develop design plans for the park, and intends to seek New Bedford Harbor National Resource Damage Assessment settlement funds to restore filled tidelands.

#### **Planning Hicks Logan Revitalization**

NOAA provided \$20,000 to the New Bedford Economic Development Council (NBEDC) to assist in the creation of a 10-year revitalization plan for the waterfront Hicks Logan neighborhood. The City of New Bedford, NOAA, and NBEDC are working closely with the Economic Development Administration to secure technical assistance and Economic Adjustment Act funds. The partners are also working to secure EPA Brownfields and Smart Growth funding.

#### **Navigational Dredging**

The City of New Bedford received \$5 million from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for the construction of a confined aquatic disposal (CAD) site—when dredged material is deposited in a trench and then capped—and navigational dredging. A team that will implement dredging under the state enhanced remedy (SER) includes New Bedford and the Town of Fairhaven, Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries, Massachusetts Coastal Zone Management, EPA, USACE, and NOAA.

<http://www.ci.new-bedford.ma.us/ECONOMIC/HDC/index.htm>



# Port of Tampa Florida

Located on Florida's Gulf Coast, Tampa is the gateway for nearly half of all seaborne commerce in the state. Lying at the northeast corner of Tampa Bay, an estuary of national significance, the Port of Tampa strives to ensure that its large-scale diversified enterprises operate safely and responsibly within this fragile ecosystem. As one of the largest tonnage ports in the U.S. and the largest in Florida, the Port of Tampa annually handles 3,700 vessels and up to 50 million tons of cargo with phosphate, petroleum, and coal as the top three commodities. The Port accounts for 108,000 jobs and \$13 billion in spending with more than 11,000 trucks entering and exiting the Port daily. The Port is also a major cruise ship homeport, with more than 830,000 passengers expected to arrive and depart in 2004.



The Tampa Port Authority controls 2,500 acres of port-owned lands and has the responsibility for managing the sovereign submerged lands of Tampa Bay within Hillsborough County, including some of the most important migratory bird nesting islands in the state. In addition, the American Association of Port Authorities has recognized the Port for excellence in environmental mitigation improvements. Tampa seeks the opportunity to work with federal agencies and other partners to facilitate environmentally responsible redevelopment and to improve economic conditions in and around the Port.

<http://www.tampaport.com>

## Portfields Projects

- **Priority Brownfields Redevelopment:** Tampa will facilitate environmentally responsible redevelopment and revitalization of the Port's three State of Florida-designated brownfields properties and continue to assess additional port properties within the city's designated brownfields area.
- **Habitat Protection and Enhancement:** The Port seeks to implement habitat protection and enhancement, including shorebird habitat protection and fish habitat creation, on several dredge spoil islands adjacent to the main channel.
- **Bulkhead and Wharf Improvement:** Tampa seeks to (1) improve existing properties to accommodate expanded container and other cargo trade; (2) repair and improve existing petroleum transfer operations and expand the Port's petroleum business; (3) improve and expand container facilities infrastructure; and (4) enhance existing deepwater berth access.
- **Innovative Stormwater Treatment:** The Port will serve as a national model for innovative stormwater management by designing and building a network of drainage ditches, retention ponds, and filtration wetlands that will greatly improve water quality at the Port.
- **Community and Workforce Development:** Tampa will work with local community colleges and maritime industries to develop a technical training program to prepare workers for positions in traditional industries, such as ship repair, environmentally sound land maintenance, and seaport construction.

### Successes:

#### **Innovative Stormwater Management**

NOAA provided \$45,000 to the Port of Tampa for planning and design of stormwater improvements at the Port. This project will involve development of a Geographic Information System, which will collect and convert property boundary and topography data layers. This will help the Port identify properties best suited for installation of stormwater management improvements.



*"Portfields gives us a greater opportunity to further revitalize our Port in an environmentally and economically responsible manner working with federal partners and other stakeholders."*

—Dave Parsché, Environmental Director, Tampa Port Authority



## *Looking Ahead*

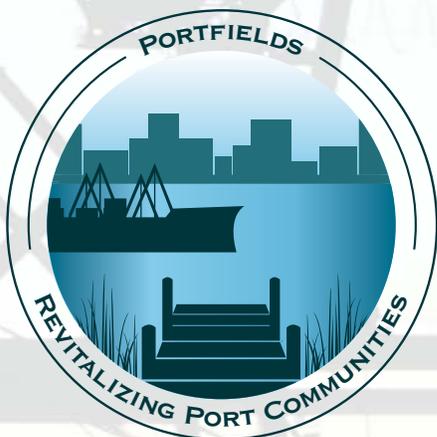
Applying a collaborative, results-oriented approach through increased federal, state, and local coordination, Portfields will focus on issues specific to brownfields restoration and community revitalization in and around our nation's ports. Portfields, specifically through on-the-ground work in the three Pilot Ports, will serve as a platform for creative solutions, productive partnerships, and innovation. The scope of Portfields activities will involve restoring all environmentally sound uses of port and harbor areas that benefit the economic, ecological, social, and security conditions of the port community.

The Portfields partners will work in conjunction with the three Pilot Ports to leverage both public and private investment in the port communities' priority needs. Learning from both the successes and hurdles encountered over the next year, the Portfields partners will actively transfer best practices and lessons learned to other port communities. As progress is continually made, new tools and techniques will be made available through the Portfields Web site at <http://www.brownfields.noaa.gov>.

## Federal Agency Contacts

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EPA 560-R-04-001  
August 2004  
[www.epa.gov/brownfields/](http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/)