

**What is a Brownfield?** – A Brownfield is a property - the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminate.

The Seneca Nation, along with its Environmental Protection Department remains committed to promote the health and well-being of our people, and to maintain our tribal role as caretaker's of the environment in which we live. In conjunction with this is the desire to improve the quality of life for the next generations, provide increased economic stability, and to advocate for awareness of healthy environmental stewardship.

The past 75 years has seen a restructuring of the Territories economic base from agriculture to retail. Economic development on our territories has moved from our agrarian past to almost exclusively retail. The Nation owns business ventures on each territory, along with the Bingo Hall's, Casino's, and other endeavors. Within this economic surge has been the growth of small business' owned by individual Seneca's with the main focus on gasoline and cigarette enterprises.

The city of Salamanca has the unique status of having approximately 50% of the city proper within the confines of the Allegany Territory. Salamanca's history since the 1800's have been associated with railroad and other factory operations. The Seneca Nation has reason to believe that our communities will have adverse affects resulting from Brownfield sites and other identified sites of contamination. Accidental surface and groundwater contamination, illegal dumping, and other environmental damaging activities remain a very real concern to the Nation.

Environmental risks associated with Brownfield sites constitute a direct threat to the Seneca land base, the Allegany watershed, and water supply wells for the general populace. The Seneca culture is tied close to the land and its resources. Therefore, prevention and mitigation of the threat that Brownfield sites represent is required for our culture to thrive.

A Tribal Response Plan Project should be a high priority for our people as it will allow for the remediation and reuse of identified Brownfield sites. The goal of reuse of identified sites works well in combining the greatest benefit to both our economic and our cultural objective. Clean up and redevelopment of identified sites will open them up so that private investments in the neighborhood can continue. Cleaning up and reinvesting in these properties increases job growth, utilizes existing infrastructure, takes development pressures off of undeveloped land, and improves and protects the environment.

The Seneca Nation Environmental Protection Department has been awarded a Brownfield's Tribal Response Program Grant. Within the scope of this Grant is the identification of possible or probable Brownfield sites. As work progresses and positive sites are identified, long range goals are the cleanup, remediation, and reuse of these sites.

Work in progress, updates, site specific committee formation, or other pertinent news regarding the Brownfield grant work may be found at this website. If you have further questions that this website does not answer, you may call the Seneca Nation Environmental Protection Department's office at (716) 532 2546 and a staff person will be happy to assist you.

The Seneca Nation of Indians is one of six Indian Nations that occupy portions of New York State, holding title to three distinct areas of western New York. These areas encompass portions of Chautauqua, Allegany, Cattaraugus, and Erie County. Lands occupied by the Seneca Nation of Indians are known and recognized as Cattaraugus, Allegany, and Oil Spring Territories. The total acreage that these three Territories inhabit is approximately 52,602 acres.

The Seneca Nation of Indians Environmental Protection Program is involved in a process whereby areas of our Territories that either through neglect, mismanagement, or abandonment have degraded to the point where intervention is necessary. Identification of these areas is key to begin the process of revitalization and remediation so that the areas identified can once more have a viable future.

As part of the identification process, the following areas have been preliminarily acknowledged as "possible" Brownfield sites.

- 1.) Former Penzoil Lease Site, Nine Mile Road, Carrollton, New York, located in Cattaraugus County.
- 2.) Former Railyard, 20 Atlantic Street, Salamanca, New York, located in Allegany County.
- 3.) Former Salamanca Hospital, 150 Parkway Drive, Salamanca, New York, located in Allegany County.

Keeping within the Seneca Nation of Indians commitment to the people and the environment on which they live, and in accordance with the guidelines of the CERCLA 128(a) for identification of Brownfield sites, the following is preliminary pictures of the aforementioned sites and a brief biography of each.

**1) Old Penzoil Lease Site** - The Pennzoil lease site was an area leased to Pennzoil for operation. In later years, it was determined to be an area with visible petroleum contamination and petroleum contaminated soil from individual oil wells, tank farms, and tank drains at the oil field. Area has since been abandoned with no remediation done to date.

**2) Former Old Erie Rail Yard** - The site includes approximately 99.7 acres of narrow stretches of railway. Community voiced complaints of diesel odor emanating from the rail yard led to suspicions of contamination. Potential environmental contamination with contaminants entering into the groundwater is possible as site is in a prime location to leach into the Allegany River and residential wells. Asbestos is a concern also, with torn and ruptured insulation apparent.

**3) Salamanca District Hospital** - The hospital's accreditation expired in 1991. Since closing the facility has fallen into disrepair. Public concern about the possibility of asbestos and lead contamination remains a real concern. Building's have fallen into disrepair and exposure to the elements have degraded electrical systems, tiles, and other components.



Salamanca Railway



Salamanca Hospital

