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ReScape Award Ceremony Celebrates Transformation of Sites Using Innovative Solutions to Significant Environmental Issues

SAINT PAUL, Minn. – (November 13, 2013) – Minnesota Brownfields ReScape Award was given to four projects demonstrating innovation, collaboration, and exemplary results in revitalizing formerly contaminated land. Awards were given in the categories of Economic Impact, Community Impact, Environmental Impact and Small City Impact at a ceremony that took place at Union Depot in Saint Paul on November 7, 2013, from 4:30 – 7:30 p.m. “The Mac”, an individual award named after industry visionary, Maclay Hyde, was awarded to an individual that demonstrated high ethical standards; commitment to serving the community and the environment; excellence in brownfields redevelopment; and a genuine interest in helping and mentoring others in the field.

The call for project nominations closed on September 13. From the project nominations, 12 finalists were selected and showcased at the ReScape Awards ceremony. Winning projects featured transformation of abandoned or underutilized sites using innovative solutions to significant environmental issues.

AWARD WINNERS

ReScape Community Impact Award winner: El Colegio – El Patio

In 2010, El Colegio, a Spanish-speaking charter school in the Bancroft neighborhood of Minneapolis, sought to create outdoor athletic space, gardens and an outdoor classroom. A sports grant for the project, called El Patio, was jeopardized by soil contamination and sporadic flooding. El Colegio, in partnership with many organizations, pieced together nearly \$700,000—more than half of which was for environmental cleanup—to complete construction of El Patio in August 2012. El Colegio involved students and the community in its decision-making and design process, and integrated the project into the school’s curriculum. In providing the neighborhood’s first athletic space, El Colegio has created a community gathering and athletic space for an underserved neighborhood in Minneapolis.

ReScape Economic Impact Award winner: Canal Park Brewing Company

Situated at the gateway to Duluth’s Canal Park Commercial Business District, the former 18,600 sq. foot Duluth Spring site represented not only an industrial eyesore, but also the last remaining undeveloped property in an area attracting over 3 million tourists each year. Strong partnerships between 300 Canal Park LLC, the City of Duluth, and the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development enabled a \$416K clean up grant for a new 8,500 square foot restaurant, craft beer brewery, and retail space called the *Canal Park Brewing Company* offering the highest quality locally crafted eco-conscious beer and great food. The project, completed in November, 2012, used creative design, construction, and a partnership with Minnesota Power to reduce energy consumption by 100,000 kWh each year. Malt, hops, and water are sourced locally. Canal Park Brewing Company created 102 part-time and full-time

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jobs, and feels so strongly about its love for mother earth that they named one of their beers “Clean Dirt Eco Ale.”

ReScape Environmental Impact Award winner: Robbinsdale Middle School

In 2004, Robbinsdale Middle School unexpectedly encountered a buried dump during a renovation project. With this discovery, the school district was forced to spend more than \$1 million in unbudgeted funds to appropriately dispose of approximately 8,000 tons of contaminated soil. Successful cleanup of the former dump at the Robbinsdale Middle School not only created quality outdoor athletic facilities, but most importantly resulted in safe play areas by innovatively removing near surface contamination and employing engineering controls to limit contact with remaining contamination. Strong partnerships between stakeholders, regulators and project consultants made this project work. By working closely with the MPCA and Hennepin County, a phased approach to cleanup was developed, which allowed Hennepin County to provide Environmental Response Fund cleanup grants over a period of several years and sanctioned the remediation to be completed in the summer months, when students and staff are off campus.

ReScape Small City Impact Award winner: Birch Lake Business Center

The White Bear Township EDA considered redevelopment of the blighted 9-acre former waste transfer facility a key to revitalizing the surrounding area by creating new jobs, retaining existing jobs and increasing the tax base for the community. Contamination issues at the property proved to be a significant impediment to redevelopment. Project funding included environmental cleanup grants from the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development, Metropolitan Council and Ramsey County, and tax-increment financing. Completed in 2012, the Tecweigh development features 31.5 FTE engineering, manufacturing and sales jobs, increasing the community tax base, and through removal of blight, is anticipated to trigger additional nearby redevelopment.

The Mac Hyde Individual Award of Brownfields Leadership (“The Mac”) winner: Jerry Stahnke, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.

Jerry Stahnke was selected in a competitive nominations process to receive the award for his leadership of a Minnesota Pollution Control Agency property transfer and technical assistance program set up in the 1980’s, years before state and federal brownfields regulations were in place. Jerry’s innovative and collaborative approach to working with lenders, innocent purchasers and property owners to make deals happen, as well as his creative thinking, integrity, and dedication to the needs of Minnesota citizens were all cited as reasons why Jerry was well qualified to win the initial Mac Hyde award.

About Minnesota Brownfields

Minnesota Brownfields is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization whose mission is to promote, through education, research, and partnerships, the efficient cleanup and reuse of contaminated land as a means of generating economic growth, strengthening communities and enabling sustainable land use and development. For more information about Minnesota Brownfields, visit www.mnbrownfields.org.