

# Acme Power Plant Reclamation Project



~ A community effort to address environmental and safety concerns at the former Acme Power Plant ~  
Update Number 03 ~ Winter 2021



Photo credit: Kevin Knapp, Little Goose Multimedia

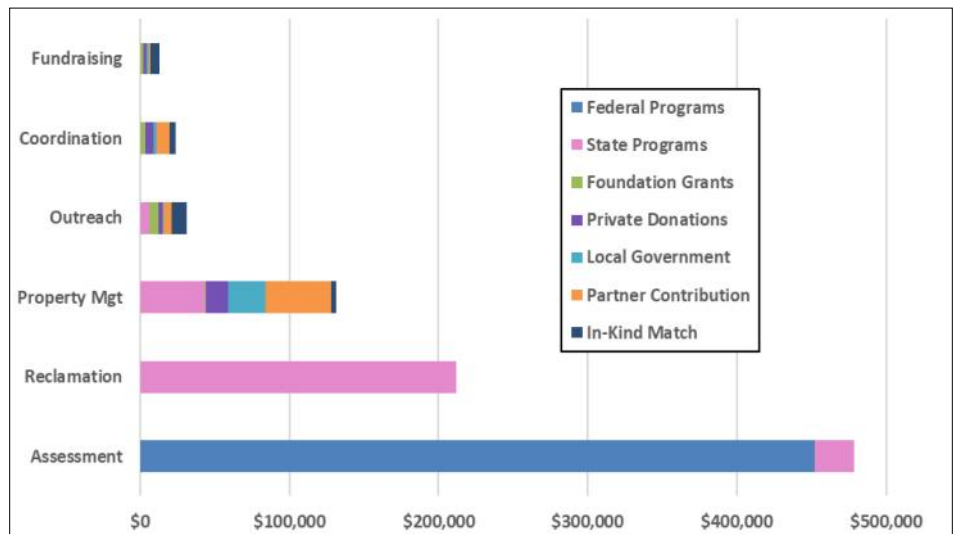


**An Island of Debris** ~ The former Acme Power Plant sits on approximately 5.8 acres situated along the banks of the Tongue River, near the old Acme townsite. The site houses a coal-fired power plant that operated from approximately 1910 to 1976. The surrounding area is a popular destination for outdoor enthusiasts and the Acme site, in particular, is an important piece of the area's mining and cultural history. Native American tribes also valued the abundant wildlife and resources provided by the Tongue River and Goose Creek. Despite being near public access and recreation areas, the site itself is unable to support any public uses.

Environmental assessments confirmed large quantities of asbestos, lead-based paint, petroleum hydrocarbons and other concerns in groundwater, surface soils, sediments, and building materials throughout the site. Exposure risks via skin contact, inhalation, and ingestion are significant.

**! PLEASE !**  
**RESPECT FENCES & SIGNS**  
Anyone accessing the site (especially illegal trespassers) has the potential to track contaminants to surrounding areas and injure themselves amid the debris.

**Project Investment** ~ As of December 2020, nearly \$890,000 have been applied from a combination of state and federal programs, grants, donations, local sources, and other partner contributions. Direct assessment and reclamation activities constitute over 75% of the project costs, all of which have come from state and federal programs. As the project progresses, expenses associated with reclamation, outreach and reuse planning will increase. Private grants and donations help leverage state and federal dollars. *Turn the page for a summary of completed activities.*



**Project Vision** ~ The Tongue River watershed provides the water resource that drives the recreational, agricultural, municipal and wildlife opportunities for the region. Restoration of the Acme site will improve wildlife habitat and enhance existing recreation opportunities within the area. The site's proximity to the Kleenburn Recreation Area, the Black Diamond Interpretive Trail, the Tongue River Water Trail, and other public access areas make it an ideal location for expansion and continuation of those uses. Participants at past public events heavily favored uses that include outdoor recreation and an appreciation of the area history.

## FUTURE USE EXPECTATIONS

- ~ Ensure Public Access/Use ~
- ~ Protect Water and Land Quality ~
- ~ Capture Historical Importance ~

**For more information** ~ The site is owned by the Sheridan County Conservation District, who is coordinating reclamation efforts with multiple other partners. The project website has information on the site, photos, and opportunities to share stories and ideas and make donations.

[www.acmeprojectwyoming.org](http://www.acmeprojectwyoming.org)





### ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES

**2017-Initial assessments** completed by USEPA contractors (Weston Solutions, Inc)

**2020-Soil and groundwater sampling** completed by WDEQ contractors (WWC Engineering) through EPA Assessment Grant; summary reports underway

**2020-Structural survey of building** completed by WDEQ contractors (WWC Engineering/American Engineering Testing, Inc.)

**2020-Hydrologic interactions study** initiated by WDEQ contractors (WWC Engineering)-completion expected in 2021



### RECLAMATION/SITE ACTIVITIES

**2018- Initial site stabilization** completed by WDEQ contractors (WWC Engineering) included testing, removal, and disposal of:

- ⇒ 51 unlabeled 55-gallon drums and their contents
- ⇒ 60+ cubic yards bulk and loose asbestos containing materials
- ⇒ 2 truckloads of various paints, greases, empty containers

**2019-Security and access improvements** with fence installation (Bockman Group) and road repairs (Sheridan County)

**2020-Site documentation work** for road easement and water rights change petition (WWC Engineering)



### OUTREACH/OTHER ACTIVITIES

**2015-Initial Feasibility Study** completed by initial partners (TriHydro Corporation)

**2017-Initial Community Visioning Session** facilitated by Kansas State University Technical Assistance to Brownfields Group

**2017-Acme Working Group** Formation

**2018- Project website launched** with assistance from Yale School of Forestry

**2020-"Power of Acme's Past" Report** completed by UW Haub School students

**Public Update Meetings** in 2019 and 2020

Photo credits:  
WWC Engineering



**BEFORE**



**AFTER**



**BEFORE**



**AFTER**

**Moving Forward** ~ Funding is currently being sought to complete specific remediation and planning actions. **Final completion of the project is expected to take up to 10 years due to the size and complexity of the site.**

- ⇒ **Asbestos Abatement.** Whether or not the building can be incorporated into future reuse alternatives, the asbestos will need to be removed.
- ⇒ **Soil and Groundwater Remediation.** Pending assessment results, some level of soil and groundwater cleanup will be necessary.
- ⇒ **Debris Removal/Salvage.** In addition to removal of tires and other debris, there may be salvage or reuse options for some materials.
- ⇒ **Coal-Ash Pile Assessment.** The adjacent coal-ash pile may contribute to existing concerns and needs to be more fully evaluated.
- ⇒ **Diversions Removal.** Hydrologic investigations are underway to identify appropriate options for removing the sheet pile diversion in the river.
- ⇒ **Focused community discussions/planning.** Specific remediation alternatives will depend on future community reuse preferences. Additional economic/marketing feasibility studies may also be needed.

**Acme Working Group** ~ Formed in December 2017, the Acme Working Group serves in an advisory capacity to the Sheridan County Conservation District, who currently owns the site and is responsible for project coordination. The group provides input and assistance for assessment and reclamation and will be expanded to include other interests as necessary.

~Sheridan County Conservation District ~ Sheridan Community Land Trust ~ The Nature Conservancy ~

~ Sheridan County ~ Wyoming Game and Fish ~ Padlock Ranch ~ Sheridan Travel and Tourism ~

~ Montana Dakota Utilities ~ Sheridan County Historical Society and Museum

## How You Can Help

Although the site is not safe for volunteer assistance, there are ways to be involved.

**Make a donation** to show support and match grant funds. Donations can be made on the project website or by sending a check with "Acme" in the memo line to:

Sheridan Co Conservation District  
1949 Sugarland Drive, Suite 102  
Sheridan, WY 82801

**Share stories** and ideas on the website:  
[www.acmeprojectwyoming.org](http://www.acmeprojectwyoming.org)

**Provide input** and feedback at update meetings and events