

# Acme Power Plant Reclamation Project



~ A community effort to address environmental and safety concerns at the former Acme Power Plant ~  
Update Number 05 ~ Summer 2023



Photo credit: Kevin Knapp, Little Goose Multimedia

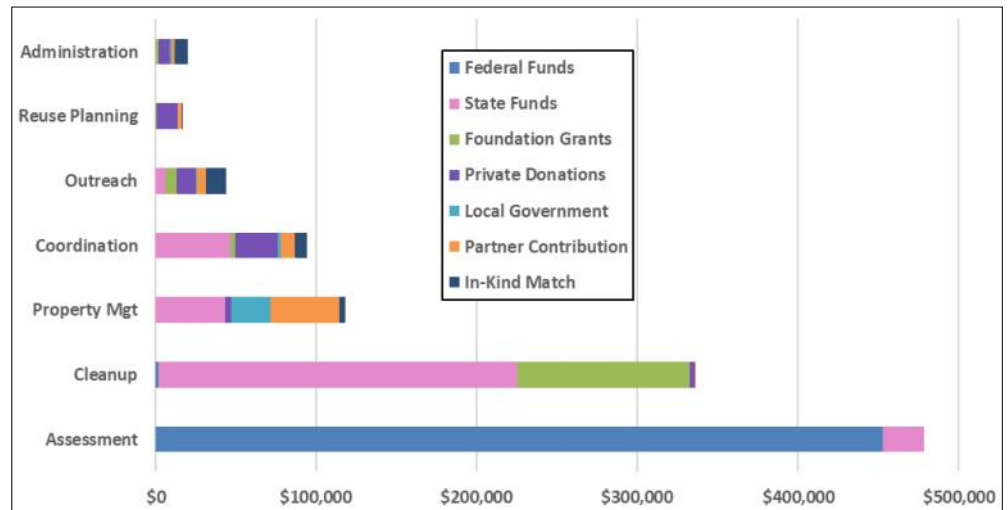
**An Island of Debris** ~ The former Acme Power Plant sits on 5.8 acres situated along the banks of the Tongue River, near the old Acme townsite. The site houses a coal-fired power plant that operated from 1910 to 1976. The surrounding area is a popular destination for outdoor enthusiasts and the Acme 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 May 2023, over \$1,107,000 has been applied from a combination of state and federal programs, grants, donations, local sources, and other partner contributions. Direct assessment and reclamation activities constitute nearly 75% of the project costs. As the project progresses, expenses associated with more 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. Input from public events heavily favors uses that enhance 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

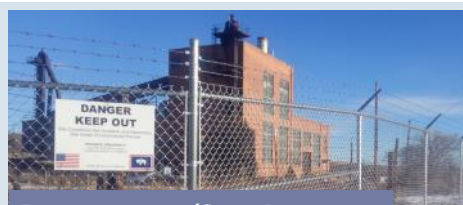
**2017-Initial assessments** completed by USEPA contractors

**2020-Structural survey of building** completed by WDEQ contractors

**2021-Hydrologic interactions study** initiated by WDEQ contractors

**2021-Soil and groundwater assessment** completed by WDEQ contractors through EPA Assessment Grant

**2022-Infrastructure assessment** in progress by WDEQ contractors



### RECLAMATION/SITE ACTIVITIES

**2018- Initial site stabilization** completed by WDEQ contractors included testing, removal, and disposal of: 51 unlabeled 55-gallon drums, 60+ cubic yards asbestos containing materials, and other items

**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

**2023-Removal of sheet pile diversion** in Tongue River completed through multiple state and foundation funding sources



### OUTREACH/OTHER ACTIVITIES

**2015-Initial Feasibility Study** completed

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

**2020-“Power of Acme’s Past” Report** completed by UW Haub School students

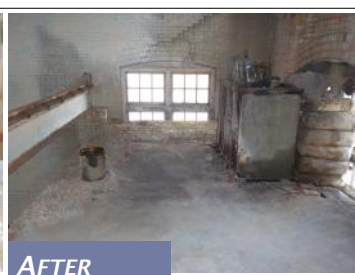
**2021-Highest and Best Use Study** completed by KSU TAB contractors

**2023-Market Study and Reuse Planning** in progress by USEPA contractors through EPA Technical Assistance Grant

Photo credits:  
WWC Engineering



BEFORE



AFTER



BEFORE



AFTER

**Moving Forward** ~ Over \$1 million in federal, state, and private grants were awarded in 2022 to initiate cleanup. SCCD contracted with WWC Engineering to provide oversight and coordinate cleanup activities. **Final completion 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 and is planned through an EPA Cleanup Grant beginning in fall 2023.
- ⇒ **Soil and Groundwater Remediation.** Soil and groundwater cleanup, including removal (or salvage) of tires and other debris, will be funded through a State of Wyoming Subgrant, beginning in summer 2023.
- ⇒ **Coal-Ash Pile Assessment.** Discussions with WDEQ and others are underway to evaluate options for addressing the adjacent coal-ash pile.
- ⇒ **Site redevelopment.** Pending future discussions, options related to site ownership and redevelopment, which may include building demolition, will be considered.

## 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**

**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.

- ~ Sheridan County Conservation District ~ Sheridan Community Land Trust ~ Sheridan County ~ Padlock Ranch ~
- ~ Wyoming Game and Fish ~ Sheridan Travel and Tourism ~ Montana Dakota Utilities ~ Museum of the Bighorns ~
- ~ Sheridan County Chamber of Commerce ~ Sheridan County YMCA ~ Black Gold, LLC ~
- ~ Sheridan Co Parks & Recreation Board ~ WY State Parks & Cultural Resources ~