



ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

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EPA BROWNFIELDS GRANTS HELP ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN VALLEY, ALABAMA

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(ATLANTA – March 26, 2010) As a direct result of federal dollars, Valley, AL will soon have jobs at Langdale Mill, a closed textile facility previously operated by WestPoint Pepperell. Fifteen workers will begin work producing tote bags and purses using scrap carpet material provided by InterfaceFLOR, a global manufacturer of modular carpet tile, located in nearby West Point and LaGrange, GA. EPA provided Valley with \$453,000 in Brownfields Assessment and Cleanup Grants to help the community reuse the mill for office space and a new sewing operation.

“Brownfields initiatives demonstrate how environmental protection and economic development work hand-in-hand,” said Stan Meiburg, EPA Acting Regional Administrator in Atlanta. “Brownfields Grants can be used to not only clean up contaminated eyesores, but also create jobs for local residents.”

“We’re very excited about the opportunity to partner with EPA and Valley to ensure these scrap materials are recycled and put to good use,” said InterfaceFLOR’s David Gerson, Director Customer Relations. “This is a win-win for everyone involved.”

After manufacturing, the tote bags will then be purchased by InterfaceFLOR to be distributed to its customers. These tote bags have been used by InterfaceFLOR and its customers in the past – demonstrating Interface’s commitment to sustainability and lessening waste by recycling materials. Additional bags created by Valley will be for sale publically – each bag will be “one of a kind.” All profits from the bags will be reinvested in the business to create new jobs.

Valley received EPA Brownfields Grants that paid for necessary environmental assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment planning activities. Valley cleaned up three 15,000 gallon industrial tanks with the funds. Valley is also partnering with other agencies and academic institutions to complete redevelopment of the Langdale Mill. Final plans include a conference center with retail and restaurants along the Chattahoochee River. The United States Department of Agriculture and the Appalachian Regional Commission have also contributed federal funds to this economic development project.

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