

Brownfields and Environmental Justice, Guidance and Progress

Instructor Biographies

David Foss, MassDEP Statewide Brownfields Coordinator, MassDEP – Bureau of Waste Site Cleanup

David is a hydrogeologist with over 25-years' experience conducting and managing environmental assessment, remediation, and redevelopment at Brownfields sites. He is a Certified Professional Geologist and Licensed Site Professional. Prior to joining MassDEP in October 2022, David was an environmental consultant, who worked with a broad range of public and private stakeholders. He worked with more than 40 Massachusetts municipalities including as the principal Brownfields consultant for three Gateway Cities.

David has expertise working with Brownfield incentive programs, funding, and policy. In addition to working directly for municipalities, he has collaborated with regional planning commissions, the US EPA, and MassDevelopment to promote redevelopment with a focus on areas with Environmental Justice concerns. On behalf of MassDEP, David is a member of the Regulatory Committee of BCONE (the Brownfields Coalition of the Northeast) and is the New England (EPA Region 1) representative of the ASTSWMO (Association of State and Territorial Solid Waste Management Officials) Brownfields Focus Group. Outside of work, you can find David running and hiking the roads and trails of New England.

Karen Place, Brownfields Project Manager, US EPA Brownfields and SMM Branch

Karen Place is a Brownfields Project Manager in the Land, Chemicals, and Redevelopment Division of the Environmental Protection Agency for the Region 1 Boston Office. As a Project Manager, Karen manages contract-based technical assistance and cooperative agreements to the states, tribes, local governments, and nonprofits to assist in the assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment of Brownfields sites as well as sustainable materials and environmental justice grants throughout New England. Karen and the Brownfields Team conduct outreach, provide training, and participate in workshops and conferences to increase awareness of EPA's Brownfields and Sustainable Materials Management Programs. Karen is originally from Alabama and graduated from the University of Alabama with an undergraduate degree in Civil Engineering with minors in Environmental Engineering and Mathematics. She enjoys spending her free time traveling, skiing, and playing tennis.

Michele Paul, LSP, Director of Resilience and Environmental Stewardship, City of New Bedford

Michele Paul is New Bedford’s Director of Resilience and Environmental Stewardship. With a background in civil engineering, her passion is Brownfields redevelopment and the public policies that shape these resilience projects located largely in environmental justice communities. Under the leadership of New Bedford Mayor Jon Mitchell, Michele’s role is focused on community resilience, combining infrastructure, social, and economic development efforts in partnership with various community-led organizations.

New Bedford is a designated Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) community, and its comprehensive Climate Action and Resilience plan: NB Resilient, is guiding capital investment and program direction through the lenses of equity and community character. Michele is a member of the New England Municipal Sustainability Network where a growing number of resilience professionals share best practices and lessons learned in this emerging field. Michele represents New Bedford on the Mass Municipal Association’s Policy Committee for Energy and the Environment, is a member of MassDevelopment’s Brownfields Advisory Group, and serves on MassDEP’s Waste Site Cleanup Advisory Committee representing municipal officials. Michele is a Massachusetts Licensed Site Professional and is the past President of the Licensed Site Professional Association.