

# Roadrunner Lake Resort Site Assessed by SRPMIC Brownfields Program

By **Chris Picciuolo** - January 5, 2023



*Lily Bermejo on site. Photo provided by Lily Bermejo.*

Through the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community's Brownfields Program, from November 8 to December 7, 2022, the Roadrunner Lake Resort site was assessed (Phase II) for asbestos, and soil sampling and lead-based paint testing were completed.

The Community Development Department's (CDD) Environmental Protection & Natural Resources Division (EPNR) has a Brownfields Program that works to find brownfield sites within the Community and clean them up.

Brownfields are real property, the expansion, redevelopment or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant or contaminant.

The end goal for the Community is to have clean land and redevelopment, whether it be a home site, park, open space or business.

According to Lily Bermejo, senior environmental specialist—Tribal Brownfields, the historical knowledge of the Roadrunner Lake Resort and its mismanagement led the CDD-EPNR Brownfields Program to submit a proposal for U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Brownfields Multipurpose Grant funds.

In October 2021, the CDD-EPNR Brownfields Program was awarded \$800,000 from the U.S. EPA and a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment and Phase II Environmental Site Assessment at the Roadrunner Lake Resort were completed in 2022.

The next phase of work for the Roadrunner Lake site is to complete a report from the Phase II findings and analyze the alternatives for cleanup. The Brownfields Program will continue to do Community outreach as the project progresses, and new sites are often added to the Brownfields inventory.

Bermejo said that it is important for the program to have Community input about the past and historical uses of SRPMIC land.

"It is the Community members who have all the historical knowledge of past contamination or practices that may have left blighted sites behind," said Bermejo. "Helping the Brownfields Program find these sites helps the Community have cleaner and healthier land."

A Brownfields Multipurpose Grant presentation about the Roadrunner Lake site was presented at the Senior Breakfast on December 7. A survey about the program and site was handed out to attendees who were able to complete it on the same day, and Bermejo said that an adequate number of surveys were received.

"The Brownfields Program hopes to reach Community members of all ages to bring awareness of environmental dangers and provide best environmental practices for the SRPMIC," said Bermejo.

Bermejo, who is originally from Peru and is fluent in four languages, has worked in her current position in the Community since 2010. She has a bachelor's degree in wildlife habitat management and ecological restoration and a master's degree in international environmental management. Before working at SRPMIC, Bermejo worked for the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality doing inspections and compliance and provided outreach to citizens.

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