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For Immediate Release

## **EPA awards Duluth \$850k for clean up of brownfield sites**

[Duluth, MN] – Today, Dr. Susan Hedman, the Region 5 Administrator for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency was in Duluth to announce grant awards to the City of Duluth and the Duluth Economic Development Authority (DEDA). Dr. Hedman is also delivering the keynote address later today to economic development professionals from across Minnesota at the Economic Development Association of Minnesota (EDAM) Summer Conference held at the Duluth Entertainment Convention Center. Mayor Don Ness, Dr. Hedman, DEDA Commissioners, Lt. Governor Prettner Solon and City officials held a news conference to highlight projects funded in Duluth at the Duluth Heritage Sports Center, a former beneficiary of EPA grant assistance.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has awarded the City of Duluth and the Duluth Economic Development Authority two grants that will significantly impact redevelopment of brownfield sites. DEDA will receive a \$200,000 grant to clean up the 12 acre Bayfront Lot D for potential development as a transient boat facility and future commercial development. The City has been awarded a \$650,000 grant to establish a revolving loan fund program to clean up brownfield sites for redevelopment.

"EPA's brownfield grants will be used to clean up contaminated sites along the St. Louis River and Lake Superior shoreline in Duluth," said EPA Region 5 Administrator Susan Hedman.

"These grants will help to expand recreational opportunities and create jobs."

A \$650,000 Revolving Loan Fund brownfield grant was awarded to the City of Duluth to provide loans to support cleanup of hazardous substances in the city. This grant will be used to clean up brownfield sites throughout the city, with special emphasis on the St. Louis River/Lake Superior Shoreline Corridor Project Area. More than half of Duluth's industrial brownfields are in the corridor, which extends from downtown to the western end of the city and northwest to Skyline Parkway. The St. Louis River flows into Lake Superior in the corridor, forming the world's largest freshwater estuary. Ten of the streams that flow into the estuary within the Corridor are designated trout streams.

“Properties along the St. Louis River Corridor hold some of the greatest potential in the City for redevelopment that will result in the growth of jobs, tax base and population. There is also potential for increased recreational access to the St. Louis River. But assessment and cleanup of brownfield properties is complex and costly; we constantly strive to have as many “tools” in the toolbox to address these challenges, and the two grants announced today will be effective tools,” said Heidi Timm-Bijold, Acting Director for Business and Economic Development.

A \$200,000 brownfield grant was awarded to DEDA to clean up hazardous substances at Bayfront Lot D on the 900 to 1000 block of Railroad Street. The site, which once housed freight depots, warehouses and manufacturing businesses, has been abandoned and is contaminated with polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons, heavy metals and petroleum waste. DEDA has

proposed to redevelop the site as part of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Safe Harbor system for recreational boaters, which would help stimulate redevelopment and investment in the area.

“Our partnership with the EPA has been critical to DEDA’s ability to prepare sites for productive development. This grant will serve as a catalyst to significant private sector investment,” said Nancy Norr, Vice President of DEDA.

Duluth is the only recipient outside of the Twin Cities to receive the clean up grant and the only Minnesota entity to receive the revolving loan fund grant.

The Duluth grants are part of the EPA’s \$69.3 million 2012 nationwide brownfields grants to clean up and redevelop contaminated properties, boost local economies, create jobs and protect public health. Since 2002, EPA has allocated more than \$2 million of brownfields grant funding to Duluth.

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