



Response to Comments

Draft Cleanup Action Plan, Draft Consent Decree, and SEPA Determination

Anacortes Former Water Treatment Plant Cleanup Site

Mount Vernon, WA

Toxics Cleanup Program

Washington State Department of Ecology

Northwest Regional Office

Shoreline, Washington

July 2021



Publication Information

This document is available on the Department of Ecology's website at:

<https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/gsp/Sitepage.aspx?csid=13264>

Cover photo credit

- Located behind the LED-lit current water treatment plant are the former plant structures that will be removed during the cleanup and demolition (Photo from City of Anacortes)

Related Information

- Clean-up site ID: 13264
- Facility site ID: 79423677

Contact Information

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ADA Accessibility

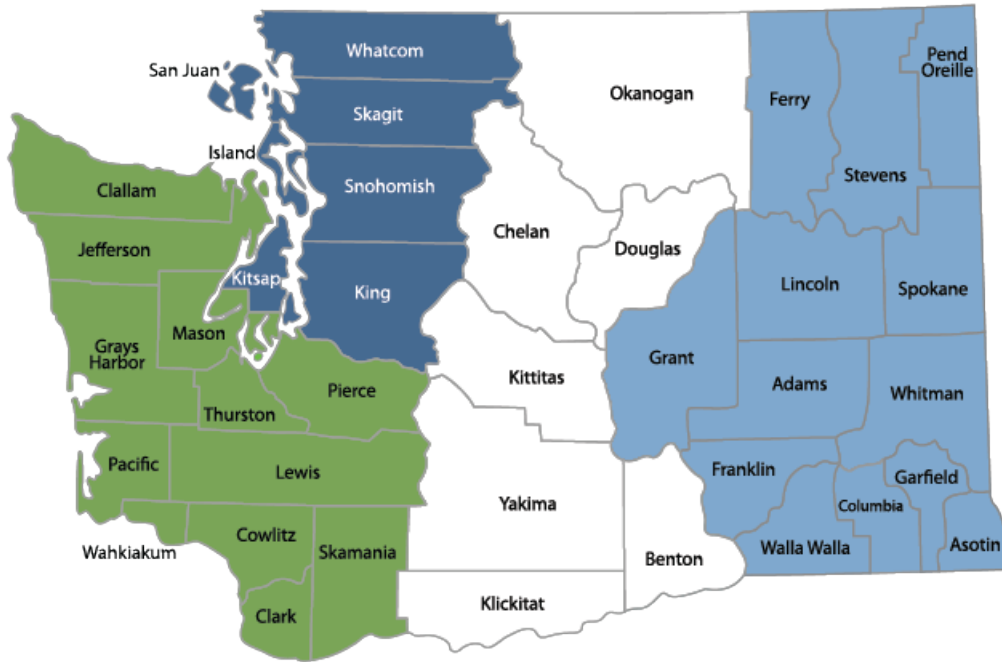
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¹ www.ecology.wa.gov/contact

Department of Ecology's Regional Offices

Map of Counties Served



Southwest Region 360-407-6300	Northwest Region 206-594-0000	Central Region 509-575-2490	Eastern Region 509-329-3400
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Region	Counties served	Mailing Address	Phone
Southwest	Clallam, Clark, Cowlitz, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, Mason, Lewis, Pacific, Pierce, Skamania, Thurston, Wahkiakum	PO Box 47775 Olympia, WA 98504	360-407-6300
Northwest	Island, King, Kitsap, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish, Whatcom	15700 Dayton Ave N Shoreline, WA 98133	206-594-000
Central	Benton, Chelan, Douglas, Kittitas, Klickitat, Okanogan, Yakima	1250 W Alder St Union Gap, WA 98903	509-575-2490
Eastern	Adams, Asotin, Columbia, Ferry, Franklin, Garfield, Grant, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, Spokane, Stevens, Walla Walla, Whitman	4601 N Monroe Spokane, WA 99205	509-329-3400
Headquarters	Across Washington	PO Box 46700 Olympia, WA 98504	360-407-6000

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DEPARTMENT OF
ECOLOGY
State of Washington

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Public Outreach Summary

The [Anacortes Former Water Treatment Plant cleanup site](#) (Site) is located next to the Skagit River in Mount Vernon and is next to the current water treatment plant, which provides the [drinking water](#)² for the City of Anacortes (City) and surrounding communities. The City and Ecology entered into an Agreed Order (legal agreement) in 2019 to address contamination at the Site. The cleanup work is continuing under Washington State's [formal cleanup process](#)³ as directed under the Model Toxics Control Act ([MTCA](#)⁴)

Ecology's public involvement activities related to this Site's 30-day comment period (June 1 – 30, 2021) included:

- **Fact Sheet:**
 - US mail distribution of a fact sheet providing information about the cleanup documents and the public comment period to approximately 730 addresses including neighboring businesses and other interested parties.
 - Email distribution of the fact sheet to approximately 120 people, including interested individuals, local/county/state/federal agencies, neighborhood associations, and interested community groups.
- **Legal Newspaper Notices:**
 - Publication of one paid display ad in *The Anacortes American* dated Wednesday, May 26, 2021.
 - Publication of one paid display ad in *The Skagit Valley Herald* dated Friday, May 28, 2021.
 - Publication of one paid legal ad in *The Whidbey News-Times* dated Saturday, May 29, 2021.
- **Site Register:**
 - Publication of 4 notices in Ecology's Toxics Cleanup Site Register:
 - Comment Period Notice:
 - May 20, 2021
 - June 3, 2021
 - June 17, 2021
 - Response Summary Notice:
 - August 12, 2021
 - Visit [Ecology's Site Register website](#)⁵ to download PDFs.

² <https://safeandcleanwater.com/>

³ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Spills-Cleanup/Contamination-cleanup/Cleanup-process>

⁴ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Spills-Cleanup/Contamination-cleanup/Rules-directing-our-cleanup-work/Model-Toxics-Control-Act>

⁵ <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/UIPages/PublicationList.aspx?IndexTypeName=Program&NameValue=Toxics+Cleanup&DocumentTypeName=Newsletter>

- **Media Coverage:**
 - Ecology sent a media notice on Thursday, May 20, 2021 to *The Anacortes American*, [Anacortes Now website](#)⁶, KAPS 102.1 FM, KBRC 102.0 FM, KSVR 91.7 FM, *The Skagit Valley Herald*, *Cascadia Weekly*, and *The Whidbey News-Times*.
 - *Skagit Publishing* runs two stories online on Saturday, May 22 on their [gorskagit.com webpage](#)⁷ and their [goanacortes.com webpage](#)⁸.
- **Social Media:**
 - **Blog:** On Thursday, May 27, 2021, Ecology’s Northwest Regional Office posted an Anacortes Former Water Treatment Plant story on [Ecology’s blog](#)⁹, which has approximately 1,200 email subscribers.
 - **Twitter:** Ecology – Northwest Region @ecyseattle posted a [tweet on Thursday, May 27, 2021](#)¹⁰ connecting readers to the comment period including the cleanup site webpage, online meeting, blog, and how to submit comments.
- **Websites:**
 - Announcement of the public comment period and posting of the fact sheet and associated documents for review on [Ecology’s Anacortes Former Water Treatment Plant webpage](#)¹¹ and Ecology’s [Public Inputs & Events webpage](#)¹².
- **Document Repositories:**
 - In consideration of public health and safety, Ecology could offer only coordinated in-person review options during the 30-day comment period. Outreach materials and websites directed the public to contact Ian Fawley, Outreach Specialist, for document review assistance.
- **Online Public Meeting:**
 - In consideration of public health and safety, Ecology held an online public meeting on Monday, June 7, 2021 at 4 p.m.
 - Ecology, City of Anacortes and their consultants, Anchor QEA, presented about the Anacortes Former Water Treatment Plant’s Cleanup Action Plan and answered questions throughout the presentation.

⁶ <https://www.anacortesnow.com/news>

⁷ https://www.gorskagit.com/townnews/industry/draft-plan-released-for-anacortes-water-plant-cleanup/article_9f2ca1f5-e759-539f-9955-b8b93ed94708.html

⁸ https://www.gorskagit.com/anacortes/news/ecology-seeks-comment-on-plan-to-cleanup-former-treatment-plant/article_6d8e43b4-b9ba-11eb-859f-6f77cc06182b.html

⁹ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Blog/Posts/May-2021/Cleaning-up-An-outdoor-cleanup-plan-inside-a-river>

¹⁰ <https://twitter.com/ecyseattle/status/1397998541855805441?s=20>

¹¹ <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/gsp/Sitepage.aspx?csid=13264>

¹² <https://ecology.wa.gov/Events/Search/Listing>

Comment Summary

From June 1 – 30, 2021, Ecology invited public comments on three documents for the Anacortes Former Water Treatment cleanup site:

- **Cleanup Action Plan:** Ecology’s plan that describes the cleanup work to address contamination at the Site.
- **Consent Decree:** Legal agreement between Ecology and the City of Anacortes requiring design and implementation of the work described in the Cleanup Action Plan.
- **State Environmental Policy Act-Determination of Non-Significance:** Ecology determination that the cleanup work is not likely to harm the environment.

Ecology received one anonymous comment during the 30-day comment period.

Table 1: List of Commenters

	First Name	Last Name	Agency/Organization/Business	Submitted By
1	Anonymous	Anonymous		Individual

Next Steps

Ecology has reviewed and considered the public comment received on the Cleanup Action Plan, Consent Decree, and SEPA Determination. Based on Ecology’s evaluation of the comment, no changes were necessary in the documents, and they are being finalized.

Work will begin on the engineering design. See graphic below and visit Ecology’s [cleanup process webpage](#)¹³ to learn more about Washington’s formal cleanup process.

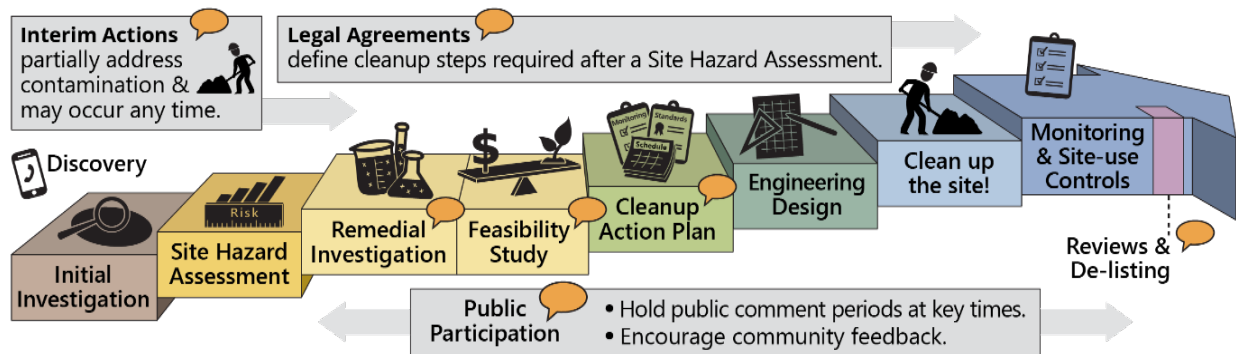


Figure 1: Washington's formal cleanup process

¹³ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Spills-Cleanup/Contamination-cleanup/Cleanup-process>

Comments and Responses

Below is the one public comment received during the 30-day comment period.

Comment from: Anonymous

What steps are you taking to ensure the safety of the environment throughout this project?

Response:

The overall goal of this and any cleanup is to pursue best and effective protection of human health and the environment. For purposes of this cleanup, contaminated material exceeding established regulatory standards will be physically removed, transported off-site, and disposed in a permitted waste facility. These measures address potential future exposure risk and provide net benefit to the environment.

While work is underway, special effort will be made to avoid possible recontamination or further release to the environment. Best management practices (BMPs) will be incorporated to avoid or minimize the potential for environmental impacts. Environmental hazards will be limited to those encountered during construction and will be controlled through project construction plans, for example, the Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasures Plan. Demolition of on-site structures, excavation of contaminated material, transport, and disposal will be performed in compliance with applicable permit and legal requirements intended to prevent releases of potentially contaminated material. BMPs will be used during activities to reduce and control environmental hazards, including fugitive dust control measures.