



DEPARTMENT OF
ECOLOGY
State of Washington

Public Participation Plan

**BNSF Track Switching Facility
(aka Wishram Railyard)
500 Main Street, Wishram**

Facility/Site ID: 1625461
Cleanup Site ID: 230

January 2022

Publication Information

This document is available on the Department of Ecology's BNSF Track Switching Facility¹ website.

Related Information

- Cleanup site ID: 230
- Facility site ID: 1625461

Contact Information

Toxics Cleanup Program

Central Regional Office

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Phone: 509-575-2490

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To request an ADA accommodation, contact Ecology by phone at 360-407-6831 or email at ecyadacoordinator@ecy.wa.gov. For Washington Relay Service or TTY call 711 or 877-833-6341. Visit Ecology's website³ for more information.

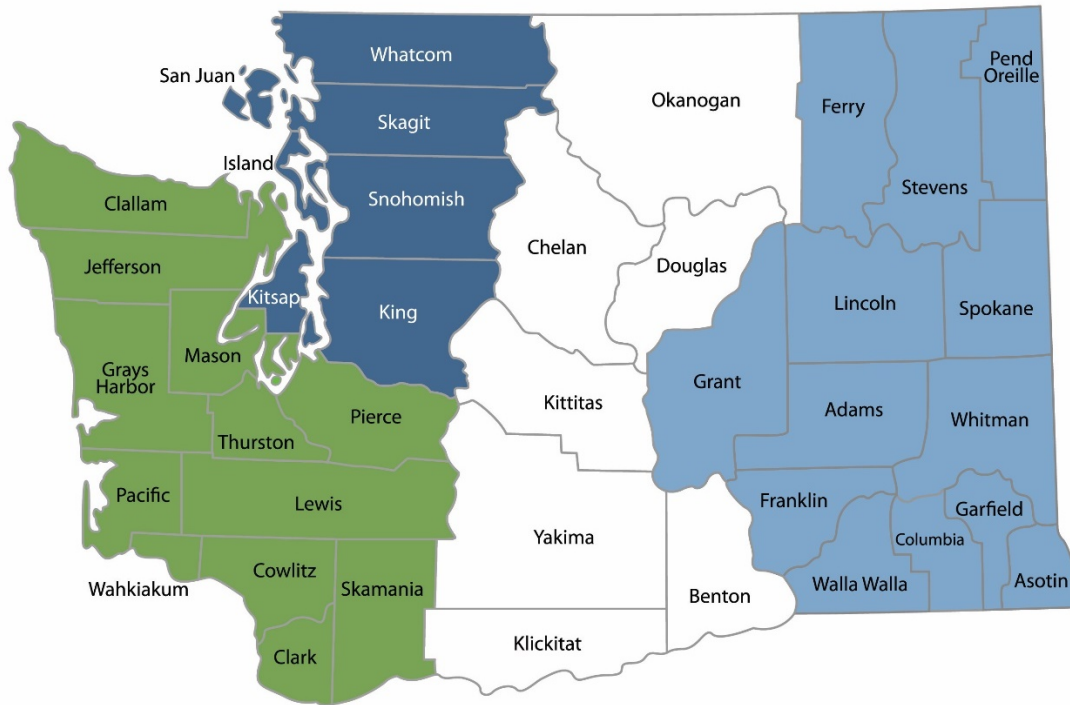
¹ <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/gsp/Sitepage.aspx?csid=230>

² <https://ecology.wa.gov/About-us/Contact-Us>

³ <https://ecology.wa.gov/About-us/Accessibility-equity/Accessibility>

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	PO Box 330316 Shoreline, WA 98133	206-594-0000
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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Public Involvement in Contamination Cleanup

The Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) developed this public participation plan (plan) in cooperation with BNSF Railway Company (BNSF), the party responsible for cleanup costs. The purpose of the plan is to promote meaningful community involvement during cleanup.

The plan describes ways Ecology will inform the public about contamination investigations and cleanup options throughout the cleanup process. Ecology encourages the public to learn about and get involved in decision-making opportunities. This plan identifies how and when the public can get involved during different stages of the investigation and cleanup of contamination.

This plan is for the Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study (RI/FS), and Cleanup Action for the BNSF Track Switching Facility (site). A Remedial Investigation (RI) uses data to see how far contamination has spread. A Feasibility Study (FS) outlines options to clean up contamination.

Site Contacts

To be included in the site record, comments about the cleanup process must be submitted during comment periods. Questions and informal comments or information about the site's history are welcome anytime.

Ecology

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Public Participation Grants

Grants may be available to neighborhood committees, non-profits, and other groups interested in the site. For contaminated sites, these funds can be used to:

- Hire an expert to help interpret technical information⁴
- Conduct activities that enhance the public's understanding of, and participation in, the cleanup process

⁴ Ecology currently does not have a citizen technical advisor for providing technical assistance to citizens on issues related to the investigation and cleanup of the site.

For more information about public participation grants, please contact Lynn Gooding at 360-407-6062 or Lynn.Gooding@ecy.wa.gov. You may also visit the Public Participation Grant website.⁵

Washington's Cleanup Laws

Ecology uses the Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA) and accompanying regulations for cleanup activities.

This plan is required under MTCA, a law that passed in 1989. MTCA provides guidelines for contaminated site cleanup in Washington State and sets standards to ensure the cleanup protects human health and the environment.

Model Toxics Control Act

MTCA began as a grassroots citizen's initiative in 1988, and started the process of systematically cleaning up contaminated sites in Washington. Under MTCA, a current or past property owner or operator may be held responsible for cleaning up contamination on, or coming from, their property to standards that are safe for human health and the environment.

Ecology enacts MTCA and oversees cleanups in the state and issues regulations and guidance governing those cleanups. The regulations are found in Chapter 173-340 Washington Administrative Code (WAC).⁶ Ecology investigates reports of property contamination, and if the contamination is seen as a significant threat to human health or the environment, the contaminated property is placed on the Hazardous Sites List, and the cleanup process begins.

Public participation is an important part of cleanup under the MTCA process. Participation needs are assessed at each cleanup site according to the level of public interest and the degree of risk posed by the contamination. Individuals who live near the site, community groups, businesses, government, other organizations, and interested parties have the opportunity to get involved by commenting on the cleanup process.

Under MTCA, the cleanup process generally includes five phases. Each phase includes an opportunity for the public to review and comment on cleanup documents.

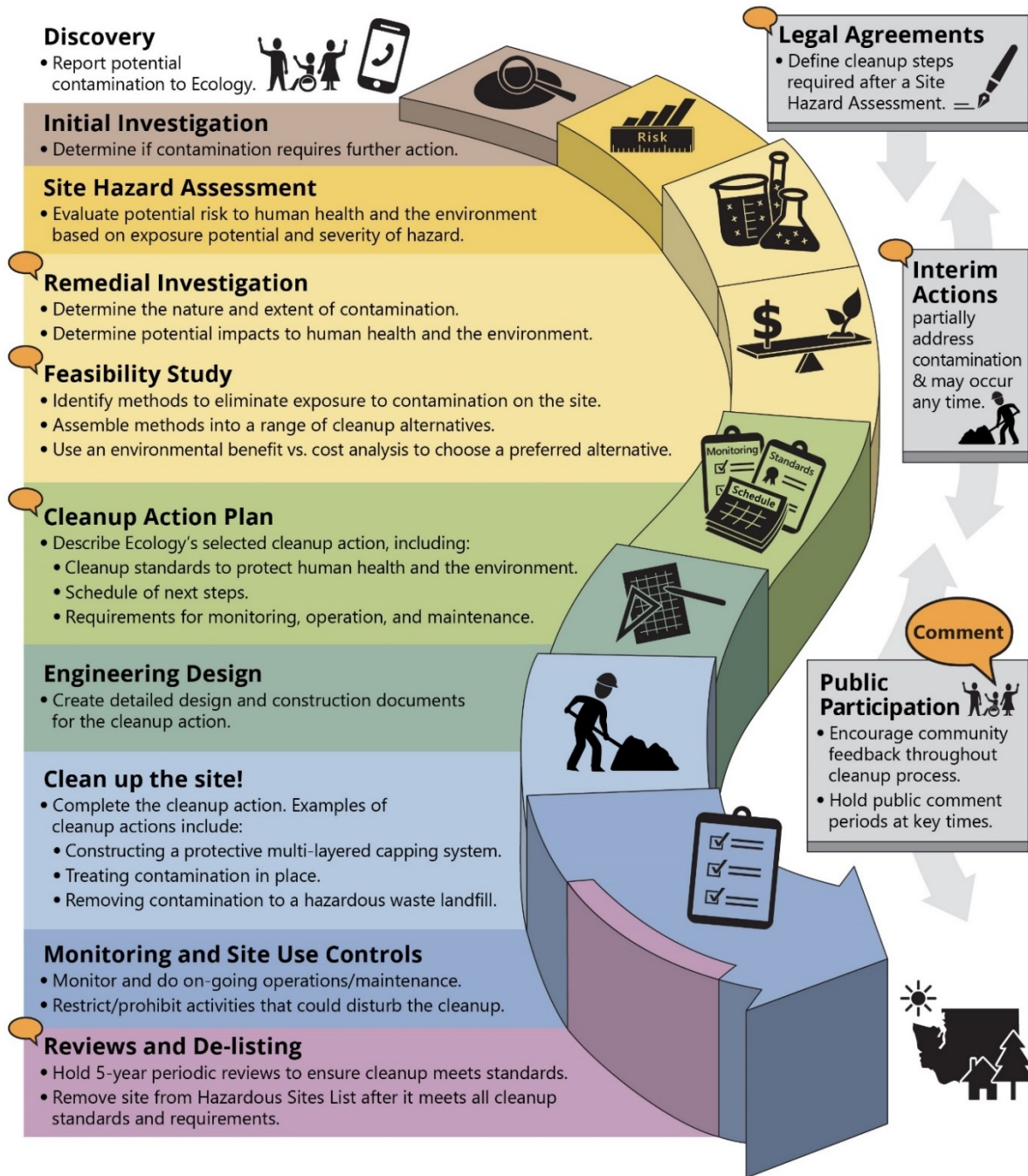
State Environmental Policy Act

The State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) is followed during review and development of cleanup plans.

⁵ <https://ecology.wa.gov/About-us/Payments-contracts-grants/Grants-loans/Find-a-grant-or-loan/Public-participation-grants>

⁶ <https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/publications/publications/9406.pdf>

Washington's Formal Cleanup Process



Washington's Cleanup Law

Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA)

MTCA defines the cleanup process. This public-initiated environmental law directs upland cleanups (on land or in groundwater) and sediment cleanups (in freshwater or marine environments). Ecology enacts MTCA and regulates the cleanup process.

September 2019
Ecology Publication 19-09-166

Figure 1: Steps in Washington's Cleanup Process⁷

⁷ <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/SummaryPages/1909166.html>

Site Information

Land Use

The Site was originally developed by the Spokane, Portland, and Seattle (SP&S) Railway between 1910 and 1912. SP&S merged with several other railroads in 1970 to become the Burlington Northern Railroad, which subsequently merged with Santa Fe in 1995 to form BNSF Railway.

The primary historical use of the Wishram Railyard was railcar switching, conducted on approximately 35-yard track spurs that extended from the far eastern end of the site to the former Engine House. Additional uses included locomotive fueling and watering and locomotive engine and car repairs, occurring in the westernmost portion of the railyard (i.e., the site).

Current facility operations include Amtrak passenger service at the depot and railcar switching on track spurs located just south of the Depot. Railcar fueling and maintenance activities are no longer performed at the railyard. The former Signal Office (former Store House) was removed in 2018.

BNSF began conducting voluntary remedial activities at the site in 2002. These initial investigations demonstrated the presence of hazardous substances, including petroleum, in the soil and groundwater at concentrations above state cleanup standards. As a result, the Site is subject to the investigation and cleanup requirements of the Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA) administered by Ecology.

In 2016, BNSF entered into an agreed order with the Department of Ecology (Ecology) to investigate the nature and extent of contamination during the Remedial Investigation (RI). The scope of investigation expanded after an oil sheen was observed in the water offshore from the uplands site. In 2018, an initial investigation of the sediments in the nearshore area adjacent to the uplands portion of the site was conducted and petroleum impacts to the sediments were confirmed. In 2020, Ecology called for a more extensive investigation of the sediments.

How The Site Became Contaminated

The contamination in the uplands soil and groundwater is generally related to the historical fueling operations associated with the petroleum storage and distribution system, including the underground and above-ground storage tanks. Uplands contamination is also associated with historical maintenance activities in process areas such as the former Engine House and the Car Repair Shops.

The currently known sediment contamination is linked to a historical release from the Bunker C fuel distribution system. At the time of release, the petroleum contamination was likely confined to the upland portion of the facility. After completion of the Dalles Dam in 1957, the low-lying area near the shoreline was inundated by the surface water impoundment.

Portions of the facility wastewater and sewer conveyance system were evaluated during the uplands RI. Assessment of any outfalls associated with the historical facility will be completed in the Sediments RI to determine if the sediments have been impacted by any contaminant transported with the effluent.

Contamination

Due to historic land use and industrial practices, soil, groundwater, and sediments are contaminated with one or a combination of the following:

- Total petroleum hydrocarbons (TPH) from diesel, gasoline, and oil;
- Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), including carcinogenic PAHs (cPAHs);
- Arsenic, as a secondary contaminant that is naturally occurring and mobilized due to changes in geochemistry from the degradation of organic chemicals.

Cleanup Plans

Initial work at the Site will focus on completing a remedial investigation and a feasibility study (RI/FS) for the uplands site. The RI will determine the type, level, location and sources of contamination at the site. The FS will evaluate a range of remedial alternatives that address the contamination and minimize or eliminate the human health and environmental threats. Implementation of this work will lead to the generation of a draft RI/FS report. Ecology will solicit public comment on the draft RI/FS prior to finalization.

The sediments investigation will follow a parallel track to the remedial process that will occur for the uplands site.

After the RI/FS is finalized, a draft Cleanup Action Plan (CAP) will be completed that describes the remedial alternative selected by Ecology for the uplands portion of the site. The CAP will be an exhibit to a legal agreement that compels cleanup of the site. The legal agreement and CAP will be issued for public review and comment prior to finalization. Actual cleanup will begin when the CAP is implemented. This includes design, construction, operation, and monitoring of cleanup actions.

Likewise, for the sediments portion of the site, a draft CAP will be completed and the process will generally follow that described for the upland portion of the site.

Area Community

The upland portion of the site is situated entirely on property that is zoned by Klickitat County as Industrial Park. The City of Wishram is located directly adjacent to the north with associated property zoned as Rural Center. The uplands surrounding the Industrial Park and the City of Wishram are zoned as Open Space.

A portion of the site exists in water. Its designated uses are established per federal, state, and other law including by treaty. Per WAC 173-201A, the designated uses for this portion of the Columbia River (from latitude 46.2502, longitude -124.0829 to latitude 46.0002, longitude -118.9809) include aquatic life uses (salmonid spawning/rearing and migration), recreation uses (primary contact), all water supply uses (domestic water, industrial water, agricultural water, and stock water), and miscellaneous uses including wildlife habitat, harvesting, commerce/navigation, boating, and aesthetics.

The demographic indicators as described by the USEPA's Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tools (EJSCREEN⁸) show the following, compared to the rest of Washington State:

- Percentage of people of color = 20% of the population
- Percentage of low-income population = 84%
- Percentage of people who are linguistically isolated = 43%
- Percentage of people with less than a high school education = 81%
- Percentage of people who are under age 5 = 62%
- Percentage of people who are over age 64 = 86%

See EJSCREEN Technical Documentation (September 2019)⁹ for a description of each category of demographic indicators.

Ecology will reach out to cultural community organizations as part of our outreach and provide information in other languages as appropriate following federal guidance.¹⁰ The non-English languages most widely spoken in the Wishram area are Spanish and Sahaptin. When appropriate, Ecology will provide outreach in Spanish. We strive to make our public participation efforts as inclusive as possible and welcome your input about how to best reach the nearby community.

The Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation, the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, and the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation are federally recognized tribes that rely on resources that could be affected by the contamination. Ecology will ensure that these Tribes will be engaged with any decision-making process for this site and has ample opportunity to be involved throughout the process on a government-to-government basis.

⁸ <https://www.epa.gov/ejscreen>

⁹ https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2021-04/documents/ejscreen_technical_document.pdf

¹⁰ <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2004/06/25/04-14464/guidance-to-environmental-protection-agency-financial-assistance-recipients-regarding-title-vi>

Public Participation Activities

Members of the public may ask questions, submit informal comments, or share site information at any time. Interested parties do not need to wait for a formal public comment period to contact Ecology.

However, to be included in the formal site record, comments about the site investigation, cleanup alternatives, or cleanups must be submitted during formal comment periods. In addition, the public is invited to review site documents before they become final. This is the most direct and influential way to learn more about the site and be involved in the cleanup's decision-making.

How We Share Information With The Community

During specific stages of the cleanup, Ecology will mail notices about public comment periods to addresses surrounding the site. The mailing list area will vary depending on the type of contamination and where it's located, but the list will at least include addresses within a 1/4-mile radius of the site and other interested organizations and individuals. These notices will provide general information about the site, contact information for submitting comments, and times and locations of public meetings or hearings or how to request one if not yet scheduled.

Ecology may also develop documents outside of comment periods to keep the community updated on the site's status. These informational documents will be available online and at document repositories. Print copies may be mailed to the nearby community if we feel the message warrants the associated cost and resources.

Comment period notices and other site announcements may also be posted in various locations throughout the community (for example, local businesses, schools, libraries).

Postal Mailing List

Ecology maintains a mailing list that includes addresses within a ½-mile radius of the site and relevant local, state, and federal government contacts.

These people receive public comment notices when draft documents are available.

We will add additional individuals, organizations, and other interested parties to the mailing list as requested. If you would like to be added to the mailing list for this site, please contact Rhonda Luke at 509-406-6931 or Rhonda.Luke@ecy.wa.gov.

Site Register

Public comment periods, events, and other cleanup notices are published in Ecology's Site Register.¹¹ To receive the Site Register by email, please contact Sarah Kellington at 360-407-7466 or Sarah.Kellington@ecy.wa.gov, or subscribe online.¹²

Newspaper Display Ads or Legal Notices

We announce public comment periods and events in ads or notices published in The Goldendale Sentinel. We will also publish the notice on our Public Input & Events Listing.¹³

Ecology's Website and Social Media Platforms

We maintain a website for the BNSF Track Switching Facility site.¹⁴ The website provides site information, and you may download cleanup documents.

We may also share information about cleanup sites through news releases, our ECOconnect blog, and social media.¹⁵

Document Repositories

During public comment periods, you can find print documents at the following locations:

Goldendale Community Library
131 West Burgen Street
Goldendale, WA 98620
(509) 773-4487 or 1-888-546-2707

Washington Department of Ecology
Central Regional Office
1250 W. Alder Street
Union Gap, WA 98903-0009

To schedule an appointment, please contact Jackie Mengarelli at (509) 575-2027 or Jackie.Mengarelli@ecy.wa.gov.

Signs Around The Cleanup Site

We may also install signs displaying information about project status, traffic impacts, and health risks around the cleanup site.

¹¹ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/Guidance-technical-assistance/Site-Register-lists-and-data#SiteRegister>

¹² https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/WAECY/subscriber/new?topic_id=WAECY_118

¹³ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Events/Search/Listing>

¹⁴ <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/gsp/Sitepage.aspx?csid=230>

¹⁵ <https://ecology.wa.gov/About-us/Who-we-are/News>

How To Share Information With Us

At a minimum, MTCA requires 30-day public comment periods for draft cleanup documents and 14-day comment periods for SEPA documents. SEPA documents are often made available for public review with other cleanup documents. In that case, we combine the comment periods, and they last at least 30 days. We may hold comment periods longer than 30 days.

We may also identify public concerns and cleanup goals by meeting with and soliciting information from interested community members and organizations. To collaborate with us about this site, please contact Rhonda Luke at (509) 406-6931 or Rhonda.Luke@ecy.wa.gov.

Public Comment Periods

Formal 30-day comment periods allow interested members of the public to comment on draft documents, legal agreements, and proposed cleanup actions. If there is significant interest, Ecology may extend the public comment period. When Ecology oversees SEPA determinations, we hold comment periods for at least two weeks and may extend to 30 days or more when other cleanup documents are concurrently available for review.

Following a comment period, we publish all the input we received and respond to significant comments and questions. If the comments result in significant changes to the cleanup documents, then the documents will be revised and re-issued for public review. If the comments do not result in significant changes, then they become final.

Public Events

We hold public meetings, workshops, open houses, and public hearings based on community interest. If we have not scheduled a meeting, we will hold one if 10 or more people request it, and this may cause us to extend a public comment period so the meeting occurs during it.

Events are held at locations close to the site that meet Americans with Disabilities Act standards. Public meetings, workshops, open houses, and hearings are always announced in advance using a variety of methods.

Americans With Disabilities Act

To request ADA accommodation for disabilities, or printed materials in a format for the visually impaired, contact Ecology's ADA Coordinator at 360-407-6831, ecyadacoordinator@ecy.wa.gov, or visit Ecology's website.¹⁶ People with impaired hearing may call Washington Relay Service at 711. People with speech disabilities may call TTY at 877-833-6341.

¹⁶ <https://ecology.wa.gov/accessibility>

Plan Amendments

Ecology developed this plan following MTCA regulations (WAC 173-340-600). We review it as the cleanup progresses and amend it as necessary. You may suggest amendments to Rhonda Luke at (509) 406-6931 or Rhonda.Luke@ecy.wa.gov.

This plan includes information for the public regarding opportunities for public involvement and comment. The outreach activities discussed in this section reflect Ecology's current plans for keeping the public informed and providing ways for those interested in the site to communicate their concerns and questions to us.

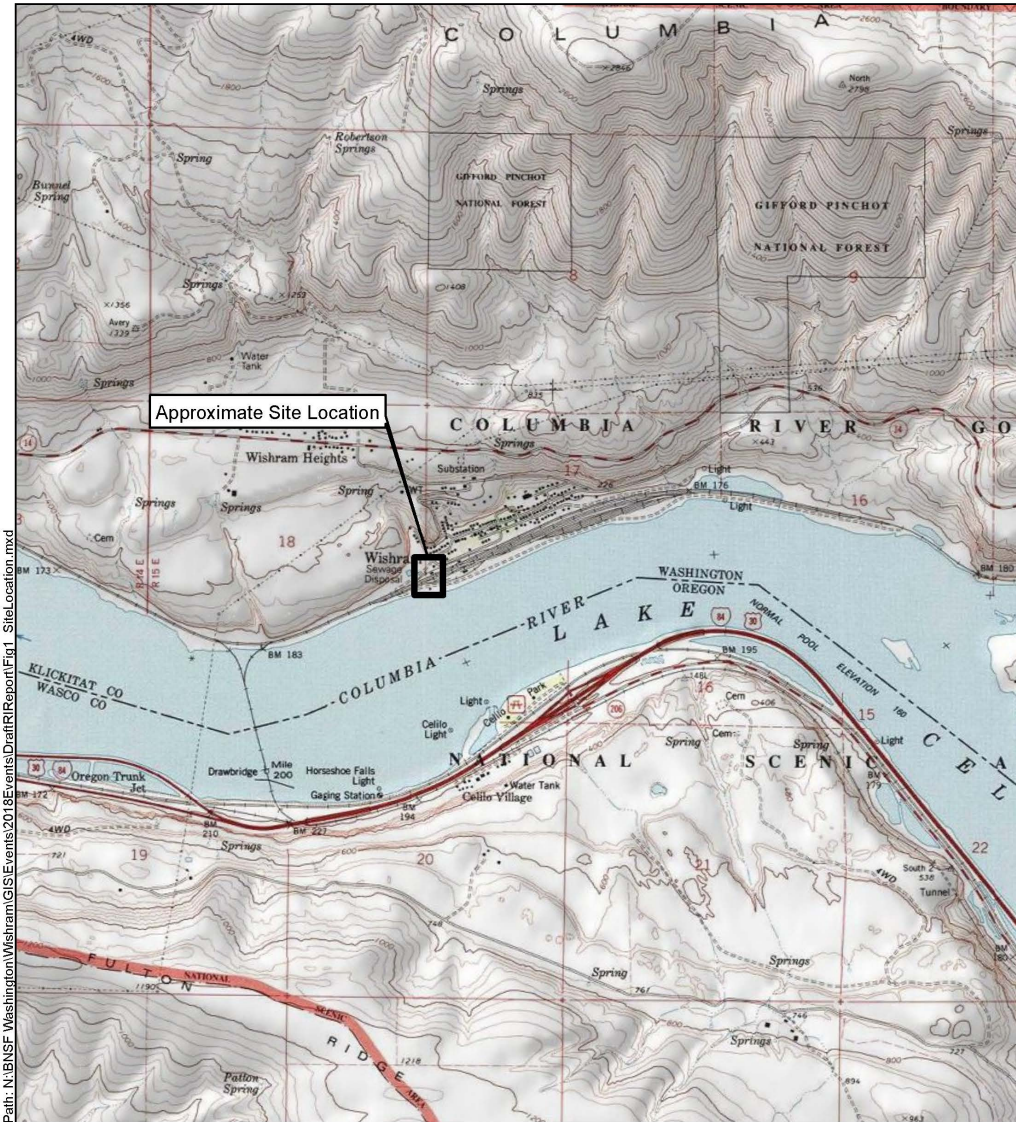
If you feel the planned outreach activities and mechanisms described in this plan are insufficient, or should otherwise be modified, we will work to find solutions. New outreach activities or outreach tools established as a result can be implemented right away, with or without amending this plan.

Appendix A: Diagrams

Site Location Map

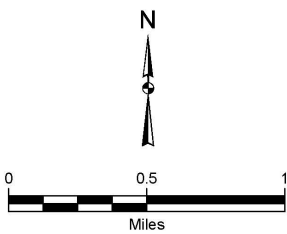
General Location of Upland Site and Sediment Cleanup Unit

Site Location Map



Path: N:\BNSF Washington\Wishram\GIS\Events\DraftRIR\Report\Fig1_SiteLocation.mxd

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Note:
1. Locations are approximate.

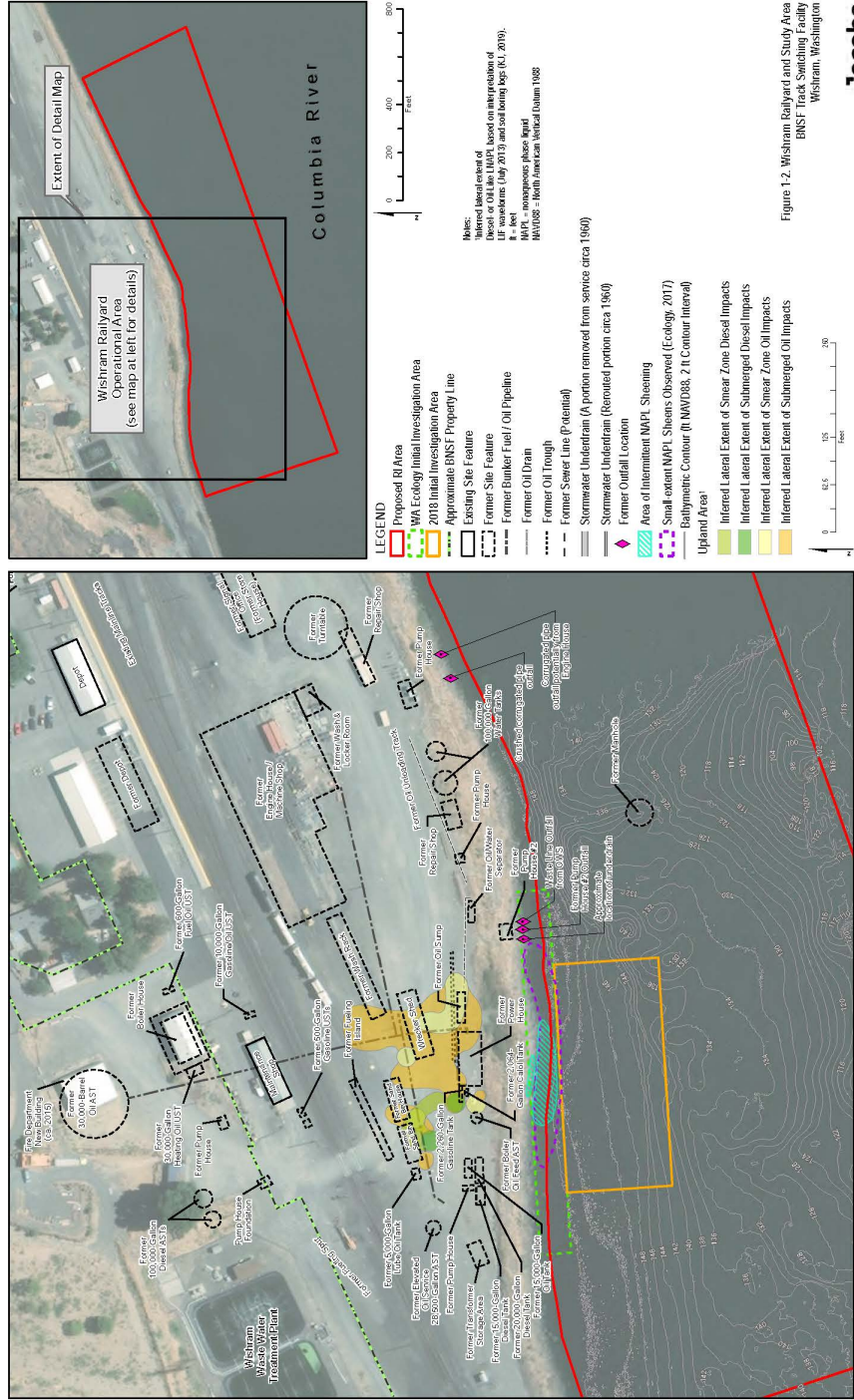
Kennedy/Jenks Consultants
BNSF Wishram Railyard
Wishram, Washington

Site Location Map

1896120*04
November 2018

Figure 1

General Location of Upland Site and Sediment Cleanup Unit



Jacobs