

Alcoa – Intalco Aluminum Corporation



Landfill Closure Program (FS ID# 16)

Proposed Consent Decree

The Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) proposes to enter into a Consent Decree with Alcoa – Intalco Aluminum Corporation (Intalco). The Consent Decree lists tasks Intalco must perform to cleanup and close four of five landfills found on its property (site) in Blaine, Washington. Ecology invites you to read and comment on the proposed Consent Decree by the close of business August 25, 2006. The box at the right shows where copies of the Consent Decree are available for review, as well as where to send comments.

The Consent Decree requires Intalco complete the following actions:

- Remove all waste from the Beach I and Beach II bluff landfills and place the material in one of the two on-site lined landfills (Action completed in summer of 2005).
- Close Construction Debris Landfill using a double lined cap.
- Close the facility solid waste landfill using a double lined cap.
- Close the on site dangerous waste landfill in five to seven years when the landfill reaches capacity.

Intalco must complete the construction work defined in the Consent Decree by 2008 and close the Dangerous Waste Landfill in 6 to 8 years when it reaches capacity.

What is a Consent Decree?

The Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA, Chapter 70.105D RCW), governs all aspects of site pollution investigation and cleanup. Under MTCA, the owner is presumed to be responsible for the contamination of the site, and must pay the costs of removing or containing the pollution to minimize risks of human exposure and to prevent further environmental damage.

The proposed consent decree is a legal document approved and issued by a court, formalizing a cleanup agreement reached by Ecology and Intalco regarding closure of the five on-site landfills.

Site Background

The Intalco Aluminum smelting facility is located at 4050 Mountain View Road, at Ferndale, WA. The three inactive landfills— Beach I, Beach II and the Construction Debris landfill—are located west of the smelter, on the bluff overlooking the Strait of Georgia. The two on-site active landfills are located on the north side of the facility. There is no direct public access to this property.

Bechtel, Inc. disposed construction debris in the inactive landfills during the 1960s, while building the aluminum plant. Intalco continued disposing waste in the three landfills on the bluff, from 1966 through 1984. Intalco stopped using these landfills in 1984 (before state law established landfill liner requirements) and closed them by placing a soil cover over the debris.

Landfill Contamination

Seeps located in the hillside below the closed inactive landfills have been monitored since 1985. Water from these seeps originates in those unlined landfills. Monitoring results show that the water has elevated levels— compared with concentrations found in a background monitoring well—of fluoride, cyanide, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and total suspended solids. Levels of fluoride, cyanide and PCBs are greater than the state clean up law standards that require action. Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) have also been found in soil samples taken from the Beach I and Beach II landfills.

July 2006

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

July 26 to August 25, 2006

PUBLIC MEETING

Ferndale Senior Center
(Located in Pioneer Park)
1998 Cherry Street
Ferndale, WA

7:00 p.m., August 16, 2006

SEND WRITTEN COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT CONSENT DECREE TO:

Paul Skyllingstad
Department of Ecology
PO Box 47706
Olympia, WA 98504-7706
(360) 407-6949

E-mail:
psky461@ecy.wa.gov

INFORMATION REPOSITORIES

Consent Decree are available for public examination at the following locations:

Industrial Section
Department of Ecology
300 Desmond Drive
Lacey, WA

Department of Ecology
Bellingham Field Office
1204 Railroad, Suite 200
Bellingham, WA 98225

Ferndale Public Library
2222 Main Street
Ferndale, WA 98249

Internet Information
Repository
Ecology Home – Toxics
Cleanup Program – Sites.

http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/tcp/sites/intalco/intalco_hp.htm

PUB # 06-09-047

Ground Water Considered Non-potable

The ground water at Beach I, Beach II, and the Closed Construction Debris Landfills was determined to be non-potable. The aquifer is non-potable because it is not used as a current source of drinking water, has a potential yield as a drinking water source of less than ½ a gallon per minute and the bluffs of the Strait of Georgia that surround the landfills prevent the drilling of a domestic water well. There are no affected property owners other than Intalco that could use the non-potable aquifer as a drinking water source.

Current Site History and Actions

During the 1990's, minor landslides on the bluff near the closed landfills exposed waste material from the site. Some of the landfill debris fell onto the beach and into the intertidal zone. An Intalco independent site investigation confirmed the presence of contaminated seeps, along with the exposed construction debris and plant waste. Intalco removed landfill debris from the lower bluff slope and beach. In December 1999, Intalco surveyed the three closed landfills. In 2000, Intalco presented the initial 1999 fieldwork results to Ecology and offered its plan to conduct a remedial investigation and feasibility study to start the clean up of all three of the inactive landfills. In 2001, Intalco and Ecology signed an Agreed Order that directed Intalco to finish the data collection, complete a feasibility study, and develop construction plans to clean up the site. In 2005, Intalco began the project and completed the removal of waste from Beach I and Beach II Landfills.

What is Being Done?

The proposed Consent Decree will require Intalco to complete the removal of Beach I and Beach II Landfills, close the Closed Construction Debris Landfill using a cap with an impermeable liner, and close the existing on-site solid waste landfill in accordance with the site solid waste permit. In 2005 Intalco removed the waste from the two bluff landfills, Beach I and Beach II. PCB contaminated waste was placed in the plant dangerous waste landfill. The remaining debris and waste was placed in

the on-site solid waste landfill. The solid waste landfill is now filled and will be closed in 2006/7. The Closed Construction Debris Landfill will also be closed during 2006/7.

The solid waste landfill closure plan calls for construction of a double lined cover consisting of drainage layers, an impermeable layer, and soil cover. The Closed Construction Debris Landfill also will have a double lined cover. Ground water monitoring will continue at the Beach I Landfill, Closed Construction Debris Landfill, Solid Waste Landfill and the Dangerous Waste Landfill.

What Happens Next

Ecology will weigh the merits of all comments received on or before August 25, 2006. If persuaded by those comments, Ecology will modify the proposed Consent Decree and issue the final version.

Ecology Wants Your Comments

Please visit one of the three places (repositories) listed on the lower half of the text box on page 1. There you will find the proposed Consent Decree, a Fact Sheet, and tips for preparing your formal comments. We must receive your comments by the close of business on August 25, 2006.

If you want to see the files that contain detailed background (the reasons behind) this proposed Decree, call project manager Paul Skyllingstad at Ecology's Lacey building (360) 407-6949 or psky461@ecy.wa.gov. You may also attend the public meeting scheduled on Wednesday evening 7 PM, August 16, 2006 at Ferndale Senior Center, located in Pioneer Park, Ferndale, WA. Attend to learn about cleanup that has already occurred and about what work is still needed. You may also voice any concerns about the proposed Decree.

Ecology will send updates of Intalco site activities to anyone who submits comments or who asks to be placed on the site mailing list.
