

Maralco Aluminum site

Announcing interim actions.

[This is the third Ecology fact sheet updating the public on activities at the Maralco hazardous waste site, located at 7730 South 202nd Street in Kent, Washington. Other fact sheets were mailed out in June and July, 1990.]

The Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) is conducting interim actions at the Maralco Aluminum Site (Maralco). The interim actions will secure the site and prevent the spread of contamination from the site.

The public was encouraged to comment on the work-plan for interim actions during the June 15 to July 15, 1990 public comment period. The interim action work plan was presented as Task 4 of the Work Plan for RI/FS Activities that the public commented on.

An updated public participation plan is now available for public review. (See box at right for where you can to review the plan and other site documents.)

Site Background

From 1980 to 1986 the Maralco Aluminum Company, Inc. operated an aluminum recycling and refining facility on the 13-acre site. The facility produced aluminum alloy ingots from recycled aluminum cans and scrap. The facility was abandoned in November, 1986 due to financial difficulties.

Wastes produced from the operation included black dross (salt and impurities) and baghouse dusts (particulate matter). During the first year of operation, the waste products were transported off-site to a landfill. After 1981, the material was no longer accepted at off-site landfills and Maralco began storing the waste products on-site.

Maralco filed for bankruptcy in May 1986, and the property is now being managed by a bankruptcy examiner. Ecology is conducting all site investigation and cleanup activities, which are funded through the State of Washington's Model Toxics Control Account.

What the interim actions will do:

Ecology will conduct interim actions to secure the site, prevent dissolved salt from entering surface and ground water, and mitigate blowing dust. The interim actions are as follows:

- A permanent fence will be placed around the site.
- The site will be graded to direct surface water to storm drains and prevent the accumulation of standing water.
- A tarp will be placed on the black dross pile to prevent blowing dust and contaminants leaching to surface water.

These actions should be completed by the end of December, 1991.

November 1991

QUESTIONS/FACT SHEET/ MAILING LIST ADDITIONS:

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Environmental and health concerns

Results of Ecology's recent Phase I Remedial Investigation show that contamination at the site comes mostly from salt (NaCl, common table salt) contained in the black dross. The salt was used in the refining process. The black dross represents an environmental hazard to ground and surface water. In addition, air pollution is a potential hazard due to dust blowing from the waste pile.

Human health risks associated with the site are low and will be minimized by the interim actions. Contamination of soil, ground water, and surface water will be minimized by placing a tarp over the main waste pile. Other wastes, including extremely hazardous waste in the baghouse, will remain contained in the building on site until further funding for cleanup is secured.

Studies to date by Ecology

Ecology has performed a Phase I Remedial Investigation to investigate the site, and a pilot study examining recycling of the black dross.

Successful pilot study!

A pilot study was performed to determine whether recycling the black dross pile was a feasible cleanup alternative. The pilot study was successful. By washing the salt from the waste pile, and obtaining a washed aluminum oxide product (which is nonhazardous and which can be used to produce cement), the black dross was successfully recycled. Approximately 1400 tons of black dross was processed in the pilot study to produce approximately 1000 tons of washed aluminum oxide.

What Happens Next?

The next steps at Maralco will be to conduct a Phase II Remedial Investigation and to complete the assessment of environmental contamination. In addition, a buyer for the washed aluminum oxide must be identified, and a contract procured to recycle the dross.

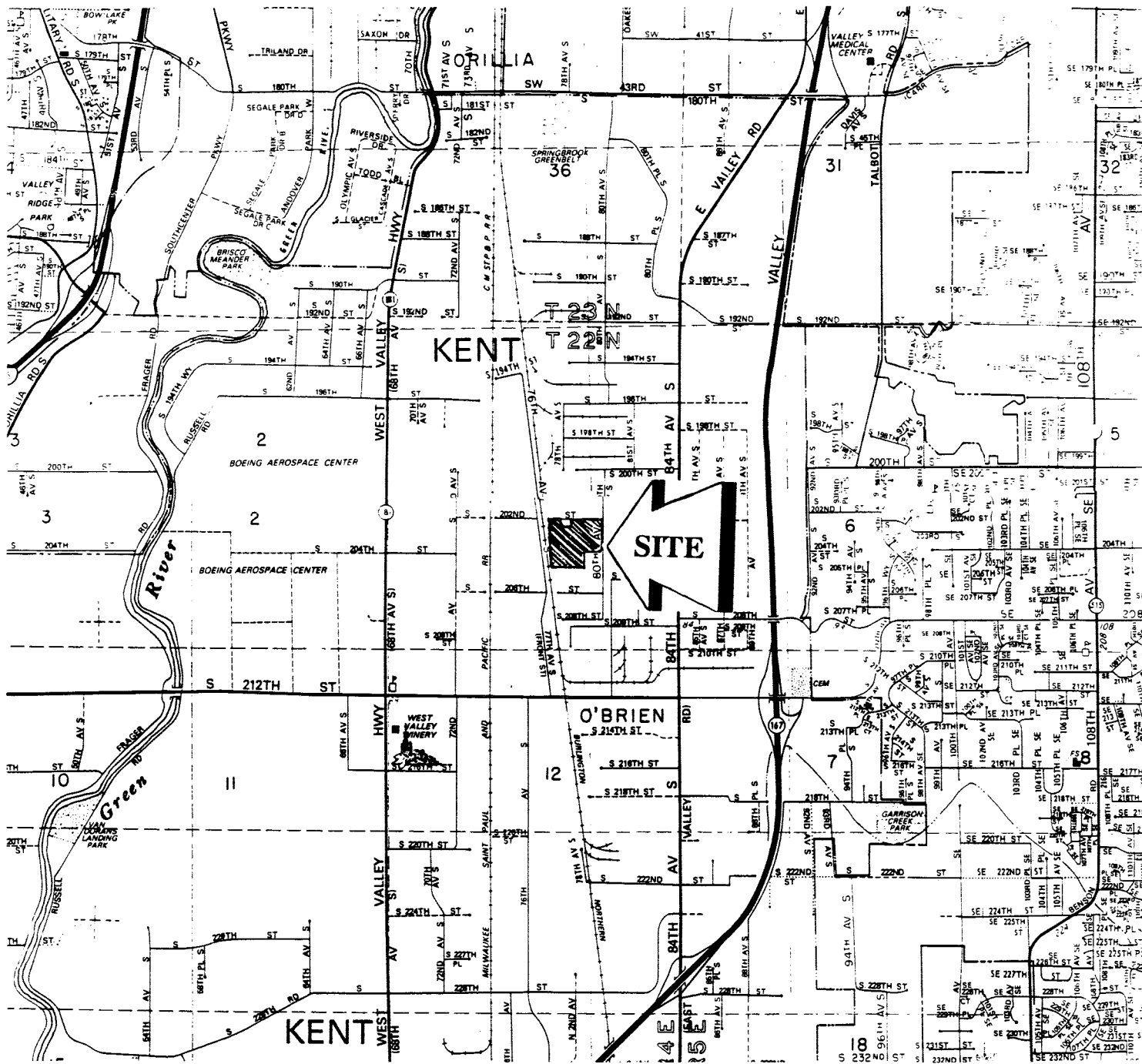
Unfortunately, the timing of the above steps is uncertain. The project will cost several million dollars to complete, and due to fiscal year budget constraint, funding at this level was not possible. At present, only the interim actions (described above) will be performed. The site will then be secure until funding can be allocated for further work.

Once phase II of the remedial investigation has been completed, a feasibility study will be prepared examining various alternatives for cleanup. There will be a 30 day public comment period associated with the completion of the feasibility study. The comment period will be announced in an Ecology fact sheet (similar to this one) sent to those on the mailing list.

Have questions?

If you have any questions about the interim actions being conducted at the site, please contact site manager David L. South.

If you have questions about public involvement opportunities, or would like your name added to the site mailing list, contact Lowell Dickson. Information for both can be found in the box on page one.



Thomas Brothers Maps, 1990.

Location of Maralco site.