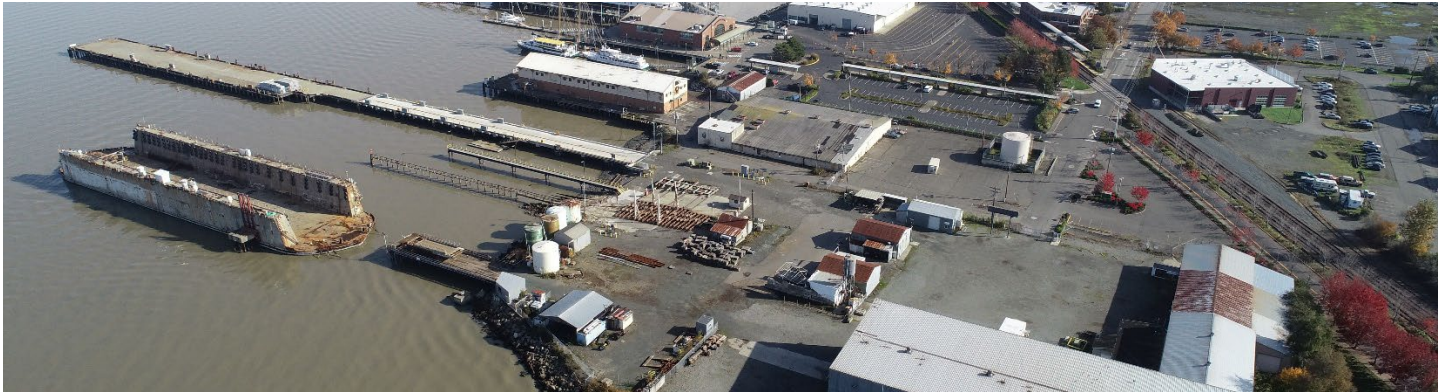


Harris Avenue Shipyard Cleanup Site



Harris Avenue Shipyard site, October 2019

Comments accepted

February 10, 12:00 a.m. –
 March 12, 11:59 p.m., 2025

Submit comments

Online:

[https://go.ecology.wa.gov/
 HarrisAveShipyardComments](https://go.ecology.wa.gov/HarrisAveShipyardComments)

By mail or email:

John Rapp, Site Manager
 WA Department of Ecology
 913 Squalicum Way, Unit 101
 Bellingham, WA 98225
 206-247-3242
John.Rapp@ecy.wa.gov

Document review

[https://go.ecology.wa.gov/
 HarrisAveShipyard](https://go.ecology.wa.gov/HarrisAveShipyard)

Bellingham Public Library
 210 Central Avenue
 Bellingham, WA 98225

For document review
 assistance, please contact:

Kristen Forkeutis,
 Outreach Specialist
Kristen.Forkeutis@ecy.wa.gov
 425-240-4353

Site info

Facility Site ID: 2922
 Site Cleanup ID: 193

Legal agreement ready for public review

The Department of Ecology (Ecology) invites you to review a legal agreement for the cleanup of the Harris Avenue Shipyard cleanup site on the Bellingham waterfront.

The legal agreement, called a **consent decree**, is between Ecology and the Port of Bellingham (Port). It requires the Port to implement the Cleanup Action Plan (CAP) for the upland area of the site. The CAP is presented as an exhibit to the consent decree. The in-water area of the site will be addressed under an amendment to the consent decree in the future.

On-site walking tour

RE Sources, a local nonprofit organization, will host an on-site walking tour. Ecology and Port staff will be there to provide project information and answer questions.

Wednesday, February 26, 2025

12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Fairhaven Shipyard, 201 Harris Avenue, Bellingham
 Meet at the entrance in the parking lot
 where Harris Avenue ends.

<https://www.re-sources.org/HarrisShipyard>



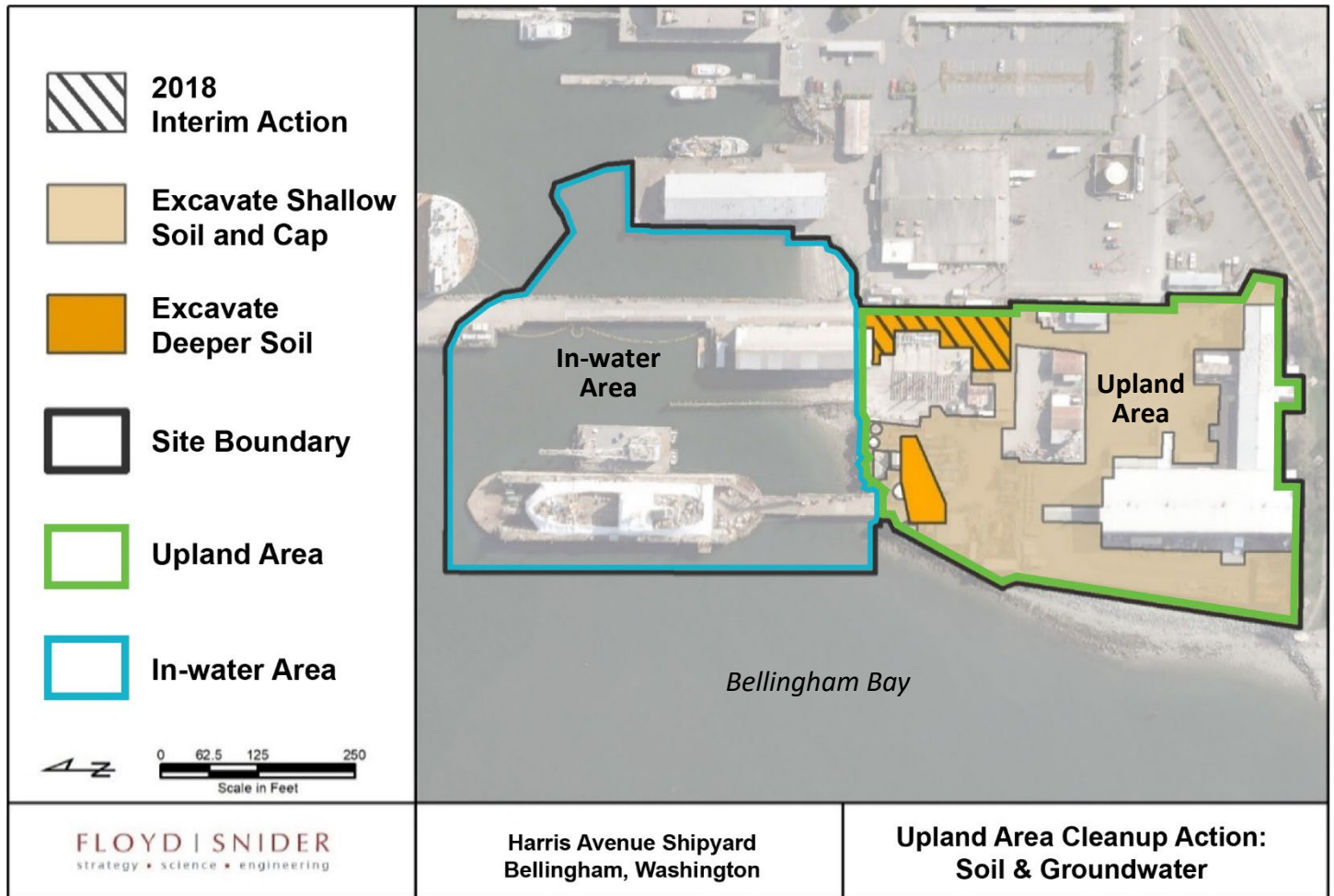
This tour is funded by a Public Participation Grant from Ecology.

En español

El Departamento de Ecología le invita a comentar sobre un reporte ambiental para el sitio que está contaminado Harris Avenue Shipyard en Bellingham. Si le gustaría recibir este documento en español, por favor llame a 425-240-4353 y espere que un intérprete se una a la llamada o envíe un correo electrónico a preguntas@ecy.wa.gov. Traducciones de avisos públicos para los sitios de limpieza de la Bahía de Bellingham se preparan bajo solicitud.

Site location

The site is located at 201 Harris Avenue in Bellingham’s Fairhaven neighborhood. The site consists of approximately 5 acres of contaminated soil and groundwater (upland area) and 5 acres of contaminated marine sediment (in-water area).



Harris Avenue Shipyard site location and Cleanup Action Plan for the upland area of the site



Harris Avenue Shipyard site on the Bellingham waterfront in the Fairhaven neighborhood, October 2019. The site boundary lines are approximate and included for illustration purposes.

Cleanup Action Plan

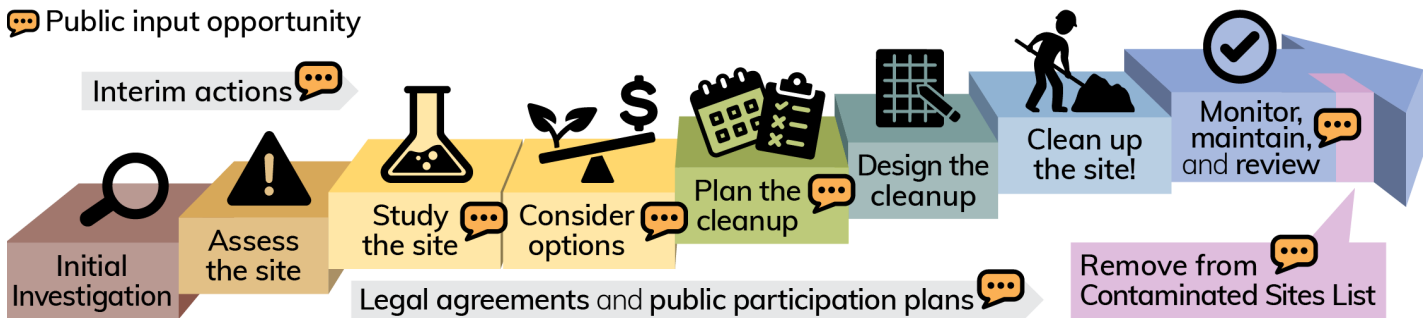
In February 2021, following public review and comment, Ecology finalized the CAP for the site (upland area and in-water area). The CAP was part of a legal agreement (agreed order) which required the Port to design the cleanup action for the site.

The legal agreement (consent decree) currently available for public review requires the Port to implement the CAP for the upland area of the site. In 2018 an interim action (early partial cleanup) removed and disposed of contaminated soil. As a result, this area meets required cleanup standards. The CAP for the remaining upland area includes the following (see map on page two for context):

Upland Area - soil and groundwater cleanup

- **Excavate shallow soil and cap:** Remove 1 to 2 feet of soil and replace with clean soil, gravel, or asphalt.
- **Excavate deeper soil:** Remove or solidify soil as deep as 3 or 4 feet.
- **Restrict land use and conduct maintenance and monitoring:** Ensure the cleanup continues to protect human health and the environment over time.

What happens next?



Washington’s formal [cleanup process](#)¹ is shown in the graphic above. The site is in the cleanup step of the process. The timeline is outlined below:

- **February 10, 12:00 a.m. – March 12, 11:59 p.m., 2025:** Hold a public comment period on the legal agreement (consent decree) for the upland area. If ten or more persons request a public meeting or hearing about the consent decree, Ecology will provide notice and hold a meeting or hearing.
- **Spring 2025:** Respond to the public comments received.
- **2025:** Clean up the upland area and obtain permits for the in-water cleanup.
- **Late 2026:** Hold a public comment period on the legal agreement (amended consent decree) for the in-water area.
- **2027:** Begin cleanup of the in-water area.

This cleanup action is expected to take about three years for the entire site.

Cost and funding

This cleanup action for the upland area of the site is estimated to cost about \$6.5 million. The remaining in-water area of the site is currently estimated at \$21.5 million.

The Port is eligible for reimbursement of up to half of their costs from Ecology through the state’s [Remedial Action Grant Program](#)², which helps pay for the cleanup of publicly owned sites. The Legislature funds the grant program with revenues from a tax on hazardous substances.

¹ <https://ecology.wa.gov/mtca-process>

² <https://ecology.wa.gov/About-us/Payments-contracts-grants/Grants-loans/Find-a-grant-or-loan/Oversight-remedial-action-grants-loans>

Background

Shipbuilding activities began in the early 1900s, and in 1966 the Port began leasing to other industrial operations.

The State of Washington and the Port own the property within the site. The Port and the Washington State Department of Natural Resources have a management agreement for the harbor-area parcels, including the aquatic and historical infill lands.

In 1998, the Port began voluntarily investigating sediment at the site. Based on this work, Ecology and the Port entered into a legal agreement (agreed order) in 2003 to complete a comprehensive sediment investigation. In 2010, Ecology and the Port entered into a second agreed order to investigate upland soil and groundwater.



Harris Avenue Shipyard facing north, January 1967;
Washington State Archives (<https://www.digitalarchives.wa.gov>)

Contamination

Investigations conducted by the Port found contamination from former shipbuilding and other historical operations. Contaminants are present in soil, groundwater, and in-water sediment at concentrations that represent a potential threat to human and ecological health. Contaminants include the following:

- **Upland soil and groundwater:** petroleum hydrocarbon compounds and metals
- **In-water sediment:** polychlorinated biphenyls, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, semivolatile organic compounds, and metals

Bellingham Bay Cleanup

The Harris Avenue Shipyard site is one of 12 [Bellingham Bay Cleanup sites](https://www.ecology.wa.gov/BellinghamBayCleanup)³ coordinated through the Bellingham Bay Demonstration Pilot. The Pilot is a bay-wide multi-agency effort to clean up contamination, control pollution sources and restore habitat, with consideration for land and water uses.

³ <https://www.ecology.wa.gov/BellinghamBayCleanup>

Toxics Cleanup Program
913 Squalicum Way, Unit 101
Bellingham, WA 98225

Harris Avenue Shipyard Site

Legal agreement ready for public review

Información en español incluida (página 1)

Public comment period

February 10, 12:00 a.m. – March 12, 11:59 p.m., 2025

<https://go.ecology.wa.gov/HarrisAveShipyard>

On-site walking tour hosted by RE Sources

Wednesday, February 26, 2025; 12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

<https://www.re-sources.org/HarrisShipyard>

See page 1 for details.

ADA accessibility

To request an ADA accommodation, contact Ecology by phone at 425-240-4353 or email at kristen.forkeutis@ecy.wa.gov, or visit ecology.wa.gov/Accessibility. For Relay Service or TTY call 711 or 877-833-6341.



Aerial view of Harris Avenue Shipyard cleanup site