
Cornwall Avenue Landfill Site Bellingham



Cleanup documents available for public review

The Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology), the Port of Bellingham (Port), and the City of Bellingham (City) have negotiated a draft legal agreement (called an *agreed order*) to perform an environmental study (called a *remedial investigation/feasibility study*) at the former Cornwall Avenue Landfill site in Bellingham, Washington. The agreed order outlines the work to be performed and ensures the site investigation and cleanup activities are conducted in a timely fashion in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations. In addition to negotiating a draft agreed order with the Port and City, Ecology has developed a draft *public participation plan* outlining opportunities throughout the process for the public to provide input.

Comments Encouraged!

The draft agreed order and draft public participation plan are currently available for public comment. Your comments on these proposed documents are welcome through **October 28, 2004**. The box at the right contains information on where to view the documents and how to submit written comments. Ecology will respond in writing to all comments received and may make changes to the documents as a result of them. If these changes are significant, the revised agreed order will once again be made available for public review.

Site Background

The Cornwall Avenue Landfill site (Site) is approximately eight-acres in size and is located at the south end of Cornwall Avenue (see figure on page 3). The Site is bounded by Bellingham Bay on the south and west, the R.G. Haley International Corporation, Inc. site on the north (a former wood treatment facility), and the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad tracks on the east. The Site is currently owned by Georgia Pacific West (GP) and the state of Washington. The Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) manages the state-owned portion of the land, which is located adjacent to Bellingham Bay and leased to GP. The inner harbor line represents the boundary between state-owned land and GP-owned land.

September 2004

**Public Comment Period:
09/28/04-10/28/04**

Technical questions, written comments, or to be added to the site mailing list:

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Documents can be reviewed at the following locations:

Department of Ecology
Bellingham Field Office
1204 Railroad Avenue, Ste 200
(360) 738-6250

Bellingham Public Library
210 Central Avenue, Bellingham
(360) 676-6860

Department of Ecology
Northwest Regional Office
3190 160th Avenue SE
Bellevue, WA 98008
(425) 649-7

Ecology's Website:
http://www.ecv.wa.gov/programs/tcp/sites/blhm_bay/sites/bel_bay_sites.html

Most of the Site was originally tide flats and sub-tidal areas of Bellingham Bay. From 1888 to 1946, the Site was used for sawmill operations, including log storage and wood waste disposal. From 1946 to 1965, the Port held the lease on the state-owned land, subleasing the property to the City from 1953 to 1962. The City used the Site for municipal waste disposal. In 1962, the City entered into a lease with another Port tenant (American Fabricators) who continued waste disposal operations at the Site until 1965.

Landfill operations ended at the Site in 1965, and a soil layer was placed on top of the municipal waste. Rock boulders and broken concrete were later placed on the shoreline to prevent erosion. Despite this informal slope protection, significant shoreline erosion has occurred resulting in the exposure of landfill materials. The beach area is now largely composed of exposed and reworked landfill material, and the toe of the municipal waste fill slope extends out into Bellingham Bay some distance beyond the shoreline

Previous environmental investigations of the Site indicate the presence of hazardous substances in groundwater, surface water, soil and/or sediments above state cleanup standards including arsenic, copper, lead, mercury, silver, zinc, cyanide, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB), bis(2-ethylhexyl) phthalate, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon (PAH) compounds and fecal coliform. As a result, the Site is subject to the investigation and cleanup requirements of the Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA) and Sediment Management Standards, administered by Ecology.

The Cornwall Avenue Landfill site is one of several cleanup sites identified in the Bellingham Bay Comprehensive Strategy, a bay-wide guidance document issued in 2000. The Comprehensive Strategy integrates sediment cleanup, control of pollution sources, habitat restoration and aquatic/shoreline land use on a bay-wide scale.

Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study

The draft agreed order requires the Port and City to complete a remedial investigation/feasibility study (RI/FS). This study will summarize existing environmental conditions at the Site, present and

evaluate a range of cleanup alternatives, and identify a preferred cleanup approach. It will build on previous site investigations and will provide the information necessary for Ecology to select a preferred alternative for site cleanup. The RI/FS will detail:

- Results of previous investigations.
- The nature and extent of contamination for soil, sediment, groundwater and surface water.
- Other important Site information relevant to Site cleanup.
- Multiple alternatives for cleanup of the Site, including evaluation of those alternatives against MTCA criteria including effectiveness, implementability, and cost-effectiveness.
- Definition of a preferred alternative.

The RI/FS will be issued for public review and comment in 2005.

A Remedial Investigation is used to characterize the site and the extent of contamination.

Feasibility Studies develop and evaluate cleanup options for a given site.

How can you be involved?

Ecology encourages you to stay informed and involved in the cleanup by getting on the site mailing list (see box on page one for a contact), attending Ecology meetings, reading related documents as they become available, becoming familiar with the cleanup process, and providing feedback through public meetings and comment periods. You can provide valuable local input and knowledge that will be helpful as the cleanup plan is developed and implemented.

Location map of Cornwall Avenue Landfill site

