

# Public Comment Period: Beginning the Cleanup Process at TransAlta Centralia

Address: 913 Big Hanaford Rd, Centralia  
 Facility Site ID: 94772166    Cleanup Site ID: 17302

We are accepting comments from  
**Tuesday December 30<sup>th</sup>** at 8:00 AM to  
**Monday February 2<sup>nd</sup>** at 11:59 PM.

## Submit your comment:

### Online (preferred):

Scan the QR code or go to  
[go.ecology.wa.gov/comment17302](https://go.ecology.wa.gov/comment17302)

### By mail or email:

Tom Middleton  
 Toxics Cleanup Program  
 PO Box 47775  
 Olympia, WA 98504-7775  
[thomas.middleton@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:thomas.middleton@ecy.wa.gov)



## You're invited to an open house!

Come meet our staff, look at posters about the site, and ask any questions you may have about cleanup. There will not be a presentation – this is a drop-in, casual event.

**When?** Thursday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 3:30 – 5:30 pm

**Where?** Centralia Timberland Library Meeting Room

**Who?** All are welcome!

Please email [carolyn.subramaniam@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:carolyn.subramaniam@ecy.wa.gov) if you have any questions about this event. We hope to see you there!

## Summary

TransAlta Centralia is a power plant about 5 miles away from Centralia. The plant generated electricity from coal, which may have caused contamination in air, soil, groundwater, and sediment at the facility. TransAlta is legally required to clean up the site, regardless of the plant's future.

### 2 documents available for public review:

**Agreed Order No. DE 24235** is a legal agreement between Ecology and TransAlta. It requires TransAlta to clean up the site under Ecology oversight.

**Public Participation Plan** is Ecology's outreach plan. It describes how we will contact the public about this site, and opportunities for public input.

### Note: This comment period is only about cleanup.

Separate from cleanup, Ecology is also conducting an environmental review of the proposed plant conversion from coal to natural gas. Ecology will hold an additional comment period about the conversion, under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), starting in early 2026. Notice will be sent via email, mail, and posted online.

## More Information

**Project Website:** [go.ecology.wa.gov/17302](https://go.ecology.wa.gov/17302)

**Questions?** Please reach out to Tom Middleton, site manager, at 360-999-9594 or [thomas.middleton@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:thomas.middleton@ecy.wa.gov).

**Join our email list for this site:** Please email [carolyn.subramaniam@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:carolyn.subramaniam@ecy.wa.gov).

### Read Documents In Person:

Centralia Timberland Library  
 110 S. Silver Street  
 Centralia, WA 98531

Ecology Lacey office \*by appointment only  
 300 Desmond Drive SE  
 Lacey, WA 98503  
[PublicDisclosureSWRO@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:PublicDisclosureSWRO@ecy.wa.gov)  
 360-407-6365

## Contamination at the site

The plant was constructed in 1968. The first boiler was installed in 1971, and the second boiler was installed in 1972. TransAlta Centralia Generation LLC (TransAlta) bought the plant in 2000. In 2011, the Washington Legislature required TransAlta to stop using both coal-fired boilers by 2025. TransAlta retired the first coal-fired boiler in 2020 and plans to retire the second coal-fired boiler in December 2025. In addition, the Legislature required TransAlta to clean up all hazardous substances from the site, as part of their transition away from coal.

Running a coal-fired power plant can cause several different types of contamination. For example, coal ash has metals in it, such as mercury and arsenic. The plant used fuels like diesel which could have leaked out of tanks or pipelines. Burning coal in a boiler makes smoke, which might have toxic chemicals in it. The plant released smoke outside through tall smokestacks, where it could have drifted away from the plant.

TransAlta has started collecting data to understand contamination at the plant. They collected samples from soil, groundwater, and sediment (dirt at the bottom of the ponds). So far, they have found contamination from metals, fuels, and solvents.

Ecology is now requiring TransAlta to complete these studies under a Model Toxics Control Act agreed order. More information will be available for public comment when a draft report is ready.



**Figure 1.** A view of the site from Big Hanaford Road. TransAlta is legally required to investigate contamination in soil, groundwater, sediment, and air. Photo from Google Earth (2013).

## Legal Agreement Available for Public Comment

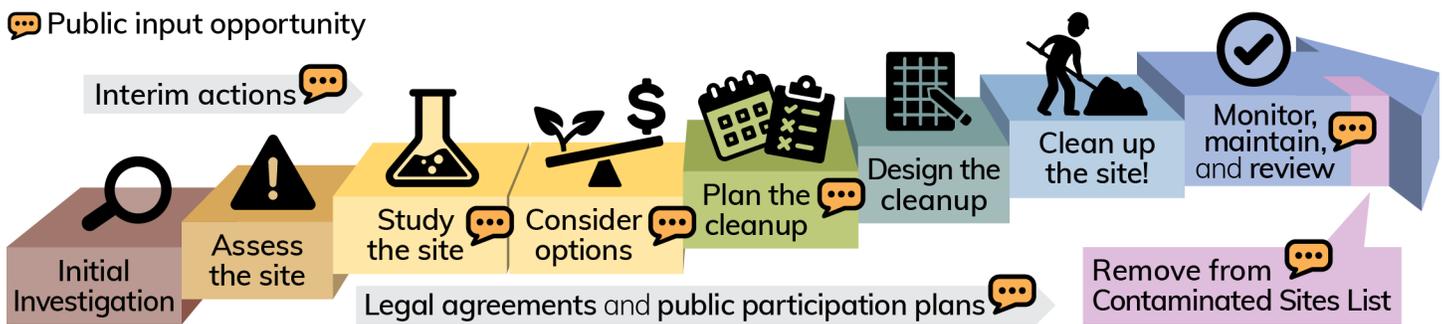
The new legal agreement, Agreed Order DE No. 24235, requires TransAlta to:

- Study contamination at the site, and write a report called a **remedial investigation**.
- Compare different options for how to cleanup the site in a **feasibility study**. After that, TransAlta will suggest an option to clean up the site in a **preliminary draft Cleanup Action Plan**.
- Clean up contamination following Ecology’s **Cleanup Action Plan**.

## Public Participation During Washington’s Cleanup Process

The Model Toxics Control Act is Washington’s environmental cleanup law. It works to protect people’s health and the environment, and to preserve natural resources for the future.

State law requires 30-day public comment periods throughout the cleanup process (Figure 2). **Currently, we are accepting comments on a legal agreement and a public participation plan.**



**Figure 2.** Public input is required at several steps in the cleanup process, marked with speech bubbles on the graphic.

## What’s Next?

Ecology plans to sign the agreed order on December 29<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

However, your feedback is still very important. We will read and respond to all comments. The legal agreement requires TransAlta to investigate and clean up the site, but specifics about cleanup will come later in the process.

## Stay in the loop!

- If you would like to be added to our email list for this site, please contact Carolyn Subramaniam at [carolyn.subramaniam@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:carolyn.subramaniam@ecy.wa.gov). We send emails about public comment periods or other important updates.
- To receive automatic updates from our system, please go to the cleanup site webpage ([go.ecology.wa.gov/17302](http://go.ecology.wa.gov/17302)) and click the blue “Subscribe” button in the top right. The system will email you when a new document is uploaded (such as a technical report), or when a public comment period is open.
- Please check the cleanup site webpage for future updates: [go.ecology.wa.gov/17302](http://go.ecology.wa.gov/17302).



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Tuesday, December 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at 8:00 AM  
to Monday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2026, at 11:59 PM.

Ecology is requiring cleanup at TransAlta Centralia. A legal agreement and outreach plan are available for public comment.

**ADA Accessibility:** To request an ADA accommodation, call (564)-250-0563, email [carolyn.subramaniam@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:carolyn.subramaniam@ecy.wa.gov), or dial 711 to call through the Washington Telecommunications Relay for services like text telephone (TTY). Visit [ecology.wa.gov/ADA](http://ecology.wa.gov/ADA) for more accessibility information.

