

King County Denny Way CSO Public Participation Plan

**3165 Alaskan Way
Seattle, WA**

Toxics Cleanup Program

Washington Department of Ecology
Shoreline, Washington

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Publication Information

This document is available on the Department of Ecology's [King County Denny Way CSO](#) cleanup site page.¹

Related Information

- Cleanup site ID: 2582
- Facility site ID: 4455938

Contact Information

[Toxics Cleanup Program](#)²

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ADA Accessibility

The Department of Ecology is committed to providing people with disabilities access to our information and services by meeting or exceeding the requirements of state and federal laws.

To request an ADA accommodation, email meredith.waldref@ecy.wa.gov, call (425) 229-3683, or call Ecology through the Washington Telecommunication Relay for services including text telephone (TTY) at 711 or through your preferred relay service provider. Visit [Ecology.wa.gov/ADA](https://ecology.wa.gov/ADA) for more accessibility information.

Language Access

The Department of Ecology offers free translation and interpretation services. If you need help in your preferred language, please call Meredith Waldref at 425-229-3683 and request an interpreter, or email meredith.waldref@ecy.wa.gov.

¹ <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/cleanupsearch/site/2582>

² <https://ecology.wa.gov/About-us/Who-we-are/Our-Programs/Toxics-Cleanup>

Department of Ecology's Region Offices

Map of Counties Served



Southwest Region 360-407-6300	Northwest Region 206-594-0000	Central Region 509-575-2490	Eastern Region 509-329-3400
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Region	Counties served	Mailing Address	Phone
Southwest	Clallam, Clark, Cowlitz, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, Mason, Lewis, Pacific, Pierce, Skamania, Thurston, Wahkiakum	PO Box 47775 Olympia, WA 98504	360-407-6300
Northwest	Island, King, Kitsap, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish, Whatcom	PO Box 330316 Shoreline, WA 98133	206-594-0000
Central	Benton, Chelan, Douglas, Kittitas, Klickitat, Okanogan, Yakima	1250 W Alder St Union Gap, WA 98903	509-575-2490
Eastern	Adams, Asotin, Columbia, Ferry, Franklin, Garfield, Grant, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, Spokane, Stevens, Walla Walla, Whitman	4601 N Monroe Spokane, WA 99205	509-329-3400
Headquarters	Across Washington	PO Box 47600 Olympia, WA 98504	360-407-6000

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Public Involvement in Contamination Cleanup

The Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) developed this Public Participation Plan in collaboration with King County, the party responsible for cleanup costs. The goal of this plan is to ensure meaningful community involvement throughout the cleanup of the King County Denny Way CSO site.

This plan outlines how Ecology will keep the public informed about contamination investigations and cleanup options at each stage of the process. Please review the Appendix for more information about the cleanup process. The plan also details when and how the community can participate in the cleanup process. We encourage the public to engage with the decision-making opportunities and provide input.

Site contacts

To be included in the site record, comments about the cleanup process must be submitted during comment periods. Questions and informal comments or information about the site's history are welcome anytime.

Ecology

Northwest Region Office

15700 Dayton Ave N
Shoreline, WA 98133

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(425) 229-3683

Potentially Liable Persons (PLPs)

King County

Department of Natural Resources
Wastewater Treatment Division
King Street Center

201 South Jackson Street

Seattle, WA 98104-3855

Jeff Stern

Sediment Management Program Manager

jeff.stern@kingcounty.gov

(206) 477-5479

If you are unable to reach these contacts, please visit the [cleanup site page](https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/cleanupsearch/site/2582)³ for up-to-date contact information.

³ <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/cleanupsearch/site/2582>

Public Participation Activities

Members of the public may ask questions, submit informal comments, or share site information at any time. Interested parties do not need to wait for a formal public comment period to contact Ecology.

However, to be included in the formal site record, comments about the site investigation, cleanup alternatives, or cleanups must be submitted during formal comment periods. In addition, the public is invited to review site documents before they become final. This is the most direct and influential way to learn more about the site and be involved in the cleanup's decision-making.

How we share information with the community

During specific stages of the cleanup, Ecology will mail notices about public comment periods to addresses surrounding the site. The mailing list area will vary depending on the type of contamination and where it's located. However, the list will include at least addresses within a 1/4-mile radius of the site and other interested organizations and individuals. These notices will provide general information about the site, contact information for submitting comments, and times and locations of public meetings or hearings, or how to request one if not yet scheduled.

Comment period notices will be available online and at document repositories (for example at the library closest to the site). Notices may also be posted in various locations throughout the community (for example, local businesses, schools, or post offices).

Ecology may also develop documents outside of comment periods to keep the community updated on the site's status. These informational documents will be available online and print copies may be mailed to the nearby community if we feel the message warrants the associated cost and resources.

Postal mailing list

Ecology maintains a mailing list that includes addresses within a 1/4-mile radius of the site and relevant local, state, and federal government contacts. These routes may include 98109-C004, 98109-C014, 98109-C043, 98119-C001, 98119-C002, 98119-C003, 98119-C011, 98119-C021, 98121-C042, 98121-C051, 98121-C052, 98121-C064, 98121-C072, 98121-C082, 98121-C093, 98121-C094 (see Figure 1). Due to the density of the area and the way the USPS postal routes are designed, Ecology may use a mailing vendor to create a custom list that extends a 1/4-mile radius around the site to better reach the targeted audience (see Figure 2). When a site is along a water body, Ecology may mail to a ½ mile radius around the cleanup site to reach more community members.

People on the mailing list receive public comment notices when draft documents are available.

We will add additional individuals, organizations, and other interested parties to the mailing list as requested. If you would like to be added to the mailing list for this site, please contact Meredith Waldref at 425-229-3683 or meredith.waldref@ecy.wa.gov.

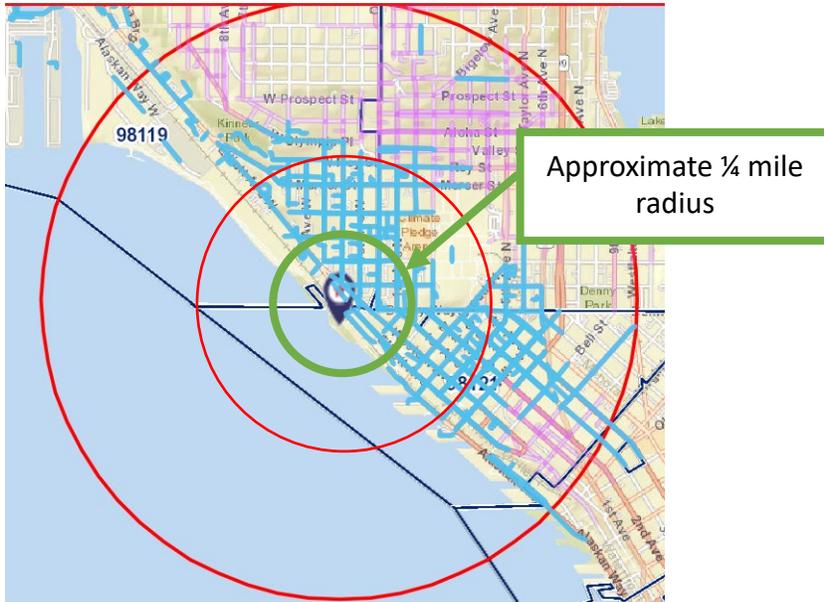


Figure 1: The [approximate 1/4 mile area](#)⁴ where fact sheets may be mailed to announce public comment periods. The blue highlighted routes are postal routes that are located within that 1/4 mile area. However, to ensure that people within the 1/4 mile area around the site receive mailers, all the selected routes must be used despite reaching a far wider audience.

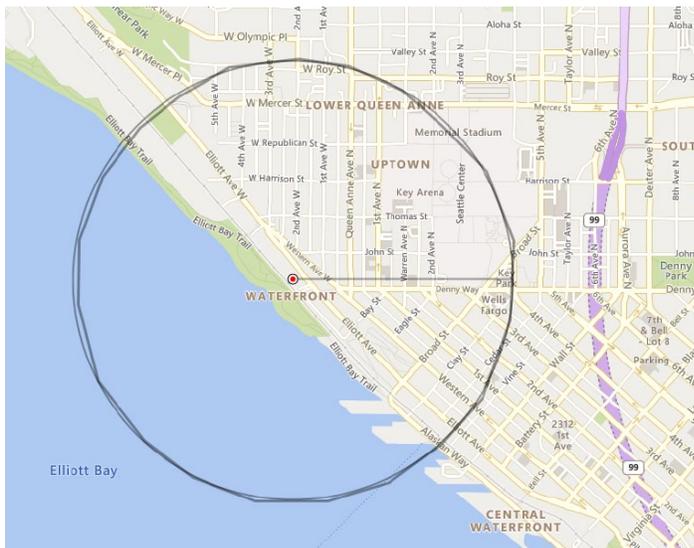


Figure 2: A 1/2 mile radius from the cleanup site that was used to generate a mailing list for the 2026 public comment period.

⁴ <https://eddm.usps.com/eddm/select-routes.htm>

Contaminated Site Register

Public comment periods, events, and other cleanup notices are published in Ecology's [Contaminated Site Register](#).⁵ To receive the *Contaminated Site Register* by email, please [subscribe online](#),⁶ or contact Sarah Kellington at sarah.kellington@ecy.wa.gov or 360-280-3167.

Newspaper display ads or legal notices

We announce public comment periods and events for this site in ads or notices published in *The Seattle Times*. We will also publish notice on our [Public Input & Events Listing](#).⁷

Email lists

Ecology maintains an email list to update interested persons about this site. If you would like to be added to the email list for this site, please [subscribe online](#),⁸ or contact Meredith Waldref at 425-229-3683 or meredith.waldref@ecy.wa.gov.

Ecology's website and social media platforms

We maintain a website for the [King County Denny Way CSO site](#).⁹ The website provides site information, and you may download cleanup documents.

We may also share information about cleanup sites through [news releases, our blog, and social media](#).¹⁰

Automatic site updates

You can subscribe to this site from our [King County Denny Way CSO](#) webpage. You'll receive a weekly email if we change the site's status, add documents to the site's webpage, or open a comment period.

Places to see print documents

During public comment periods, you can find print documents at the following locations:

Seattle Public Library – Central Branch
1000 Fourth Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104
(206) 386-4636

Washington Department of Ecology
Northwest Region Office
15700 Dayton Ave N.
Shoreline, WA 98133

⁵ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/Guidance-technical-assistance/Site-Register-lists-and-data>

⁶ <https://ecology.wa.gov/site-register>

⁷ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Events/Search/Listing>

⁸ <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/cleanupsearch/site/2582>

⁹ <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/cleanupsearch/site/2582>

¹⁰ <https://ecology.wa.gov/About-us/Get-to-know-us/News>

To schedule an appointment with the Dept of Ecology, please contact Michael Hart at 206-833-8973 or michael.hart@ecy.wa.gov.

If you would like to be mailed print documents, please contact Meredith Waldref at 425-229-3683 or meredith.waldref@ecy.wa.gov.

Signs around the cleanup site

We may also install signs displaying information about project status, traffic impacts, and health risks around the cleanup site.

How you can share information with us

We hold public comment periods and sometimes public events to learn your thoughts, opinions, and concerns about cleanup at a site. We may also identify public concerns and cleanup goals by meeting with and soliciting information from interested community members and organizations. To collaborate with us about this site, please contact Meredith Waldref at 425-229-3683 or meredith.waldref@ecy.wa.gov.

Public comment periods

At a minimum, the Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA, see page 12 for more information) requires 30-day comment periods to allow interested members of the public to comment on draft documents, legal agreements, and proposed cleanup actions. If there is significant interest, Ecology may extend the public comment period.

When Ecology oversees State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) determinations (see page 12 for more information), we hold comment periods for at least two weeks and may extend to 30 days or more when other cleanup documents are concurrently available for review.

Following a comment period, we publish all the input we received and respond to significant comments and questions, as appropriate. If the comments result in significant changes to the cleanup documents, then the documents will be revised and re-issued for public review. If the comments do not result in significant changes, the documents will become final.

Public events

We hold public meetings, workshops, open houses, and hearings based on community interest. At meetings, workshops, and open houses, attendees can ask questions, learn more about the site, and submit written comments when a comment period is open. At a public hearing, verbal comments are transcribed for the record, and Ecology responds to them after the comment period in our response to comments.

If we have not scheduled an event, we will hold one if 10 people request it. This may cause us to extend a public comment period, so the event occurs during it.

Events are held at locations close to the site that meet Americans with Disabilities Act standards. Public events are always announced in advance using a variety of methods.

Public Participation Grants

Grants may be available to neighborhood committees, non-profits, and other groups interested in the site. For contaminated sites, these funds can be used to:

- Hire an expert to help interpret technical information
- Conduct activities that enhance the public’s understanding of, and participation in, the cleanup process

For more information about public participation grants, please contact Laura Busby at 360-280-5088 or laura.busby@ecy.wa.gov and Wendy Kovach at 564-250-2909 or wendy.kovach@ecy.wa.gov. You may also visit the [Public Participation Grant webpage](#).¹¹

Site Information

Background

From the late 1800s to the mid-1900s, sewers discharged raw sewage and stormwater to an outfall at Denny Way. After decades of untreated discharges caused concerns about high fecal bacteria levels in Elliot Bay, major construction projects eventually eliminated all untreated wastewater flows into the bay.

In the 1960s, the Municipality of Metropolitan Seattle (now King County) built the present system that included treatment plants which collected, transported, and treated wastewater in the greater Seattle area. This helped reduce the amount of wastewater and stormwater discharges to the Denny Way outfall area but did not eliminate them. In the 1970s and 1980s, improvements were made to reduce pollutants entering the combined sewer from sewage and stormwater.

In the early 2000s, a joint effort between King County and Seattle Public Utilities to further control Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) discharges resulted in construction of two new outfall pipes in the Denny Way CSO area (see Figure 3). One of the new outfall pipes handles treated



Figure 3: Approximate location of the in-water cleanup site and CSOs.

¹¹ <https://ecology.wa.gov/PPG>

discharges (on average eight times a year) and the other outfall pipe handles untreated discharges (on average once per year) when there is too much stormwater in the system.

Contamination

The following contaminants were found in sediment above state cleanup levels, caused by discharges from the CSO:

- Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs)
- Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs)
- Cadmium
- Copper
- Silver
- Lead
- Mercury

Previous Cleanup Work

Over the past 35 years, King County has performed many investigations and several cleanup actions to understand and decrease sediment contamination levels at this site.

- **1990:** King County and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) capped three acres of contaminated sediment at the site with three feet of clean sand. The cap was monitored for 10 years, and monitoring results showed that some areas around the cap required additional cleanup.
- **2007:** Ecology and King County entered into a legal agreement called an Agreed Order to perform a partial cleanup called an interim action. This interim action was completed in 2008 and removed contaminated sediment which was then replaced by a mixture of clean sand and gravel. This cleanup was purposely scheduled to happen after the [2005 removal of the shoreline outfall](#).¹²
- **2007-Present:** King County has conducted detailed monitoring of the site to determine next steps.



Figure 4: Placing clean sand and gravel during a previous cleanup.

¹² <https://kingcounty.gov/en/dept/dnrp/waste-services/wastewater-treatment/programs/sediment-management/plan-implementation/denny-way>

Area community

Neighborhood and zoning

The King County Denny Way CSO site is in central Seattle along the shoreline of Elliott Bay at Myrtle Edwards Park. The area is along a popular walking and cycling path near the Olympic Sculpture Park called the Elliott Bay Trail. The area is cut off from the nearby Uptown and Belltown neighborhoods by railroad tracks, however the park and trail remain heavily used.

According to the City of Seattle zoning map, the area is [zoned](#)¹³ II U/85 (see Figure 5) for industrial and maritime. This generally allows only industrial and certain commercial uses, providing limited opportunities for workforce housing that supports industrial uses (City of Seattle, 2025).



Figure 5: The City of Seattle zoning map. The blue polygons around the site are mostly II U/85 zoning. For more detailed information visit the zoning map linked above.

Area demographics

Seattle is a city in Washington located in King County. According to the United States Census Bureau, the population of Seattle in 2024 was estimated to be 780,995 people. These data illustrate Seattle as a fast-growing area with a population growth rate over double the national

¹³ <https://data-seattlecitygis.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/SeattleCityGIS::current-land-use-zoning-detail/explore?location=47.618825%2C-122.349615%2C15.00>

rate. Around 10% of the population lives in poverty and the median household income of the city is \$121,984. The cleanup site sits on the edge of the highly dense downtown area and the low density Interbay area (see Figure 6). The housing density reflects this population density trend (see Figure 7). Racially, the area around the cleanup site leans slightly Asian not Hispanic or Latino and White not Hispanic or Latino (see Figure 9). More demographics are available on the [US Census Bureau QuickFacts webpage](#)¹⁴ (US Census Bureau, 2025).

The in-water cleanup site is located where [three Seattle neighborhoods](#)¹⁵ come together: Belltown, Queen Anne (specifically the Uptown area formerly known as Lower Queen Anne), and Interbay (see Figure 8). This downtown area is popular with locals, tourists, and recreationalists utilizing the Elliott Bay Trail and viewing the nearby Olympic Sculpture Park.

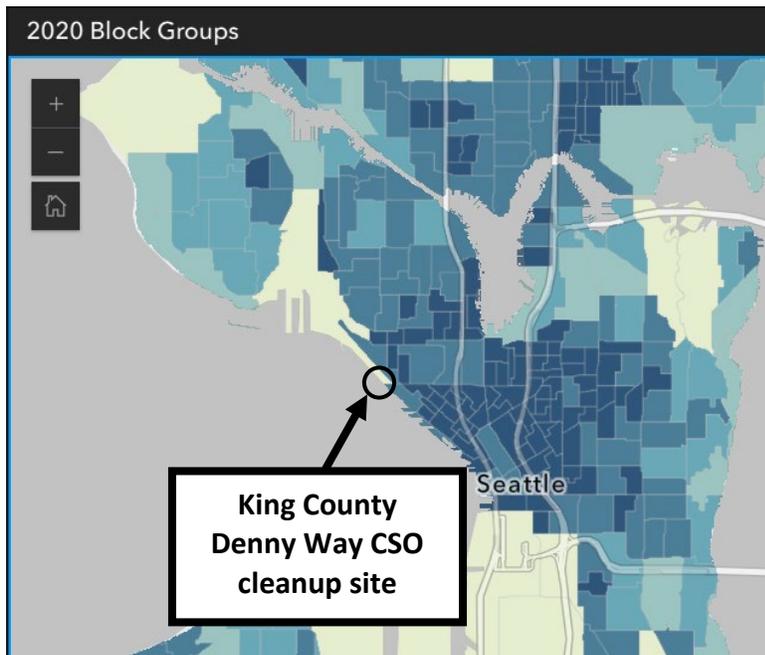


Figure 6: Population density around the cleanup site. The darker the blue, the denser the population. The lighter the area, the less dense the area.

¹⁴ <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/seattlecitywashington,US/PST045216>

¹⁵

<https://www.seattle.gov/documents/Departments/OPCD/Demographics/AboutSeattle/2010CensusSeattleCommunityReportingAreasandCensus2010Tracts.pdf>

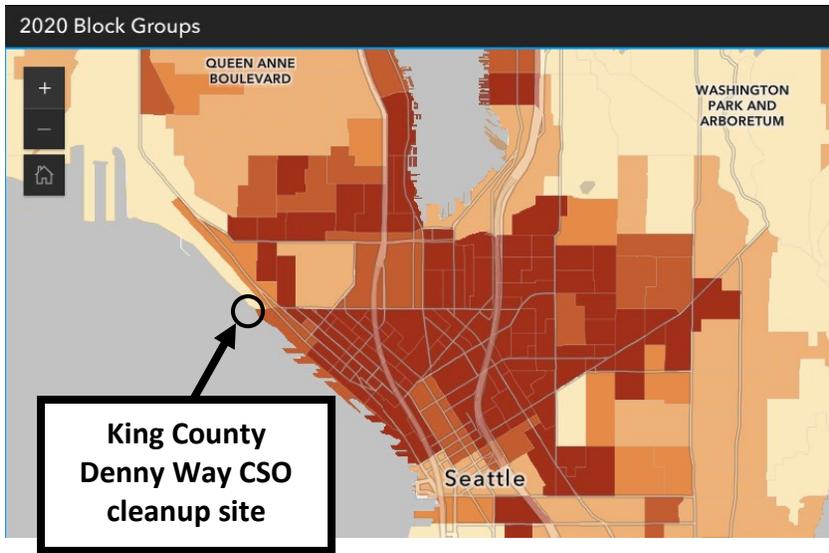


Figure 7: Housing unit density. The darker the orange/red color the denser the housing.

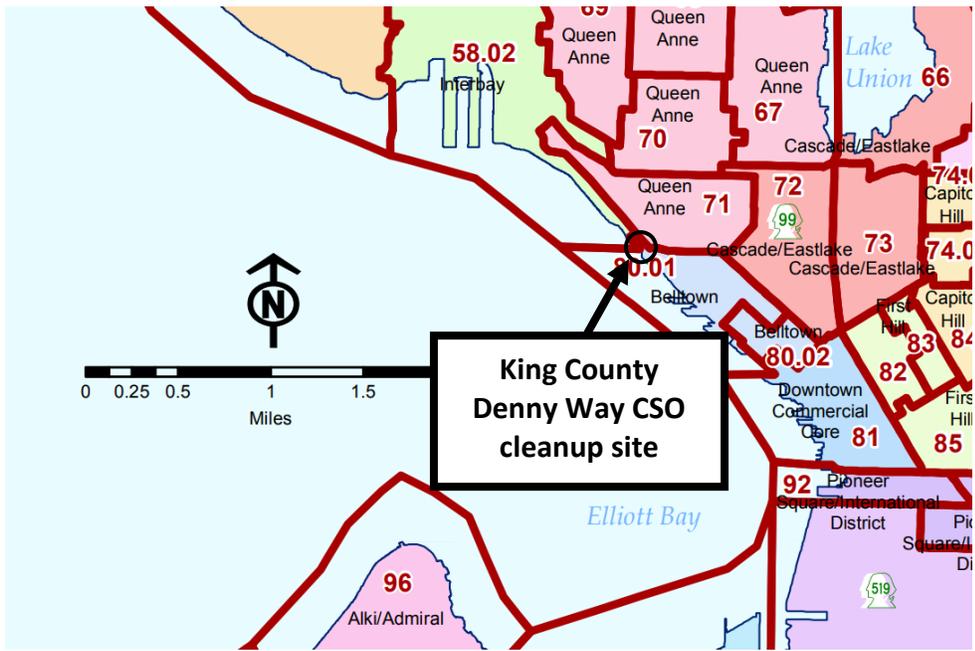


Figure 8: Seattle's neighborhood map.

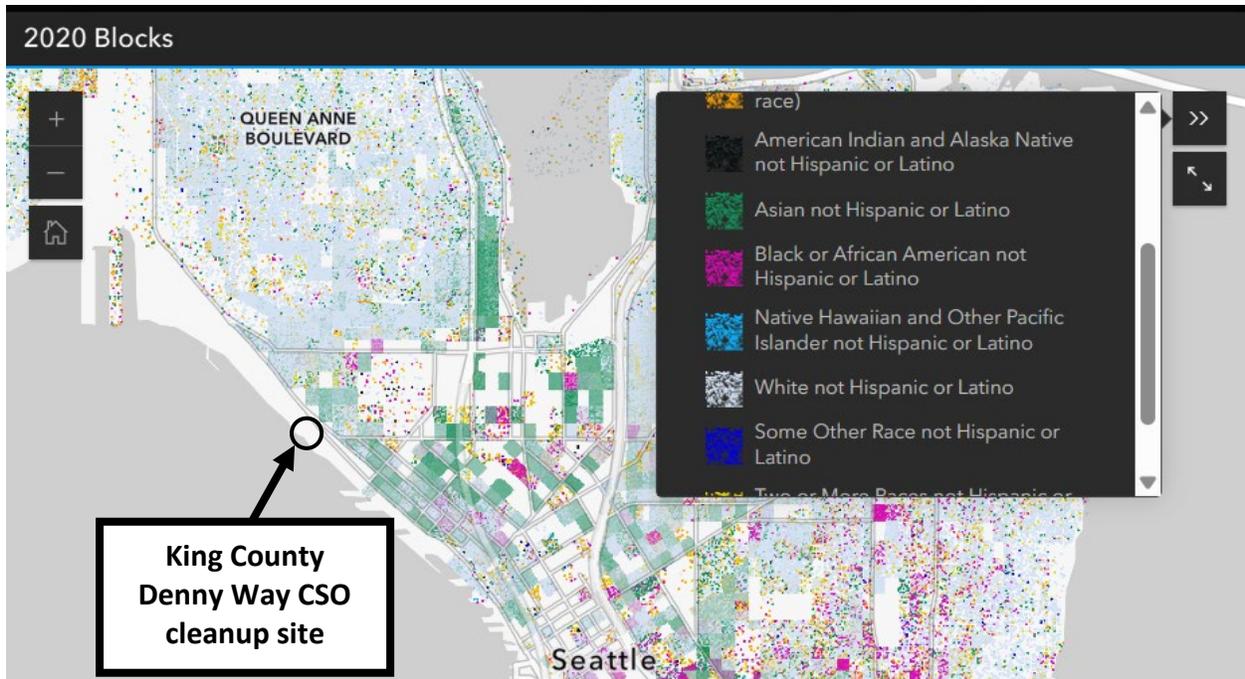


Figure 9: 2020 Census Map Viewer results for race for Seattle. Each dot represents one person on this map.

Language services

The Safe Harbor provision recommends translating vital documents for any limited English proficiency group that is 5% or more of the population served, or 1,000 people, whichever is less. The one language that met the translation threshold for the area around the site is Chinese (see Figure 10). If you would like to request the fact sheet in an additional language, you may reach out to Meredith Waldref at meredith.waldref@ecy.wa.gov or 425-229-3683.

Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Application

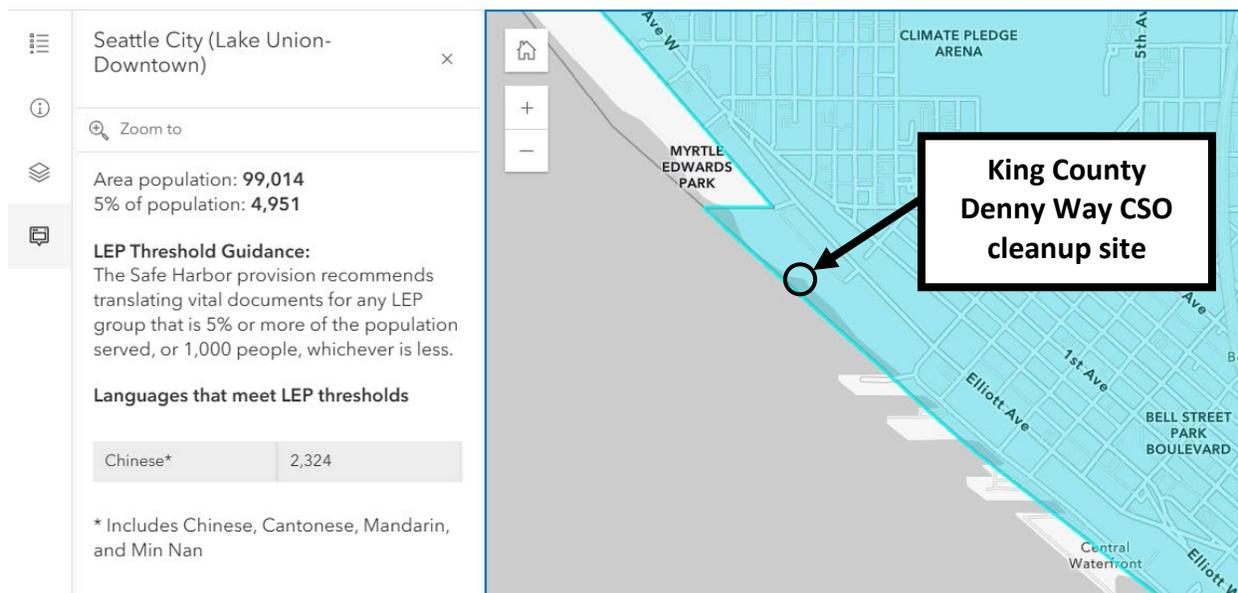


Figure 10: Ecology's [Limited English Proficiency map](#)¹⁶ shows the ¼ mile area around the site as having one language that meets the translation threshold.

Ecology will reach out to cultural community organizations as part of our outreach and provide information in other languages according to [federal guidance](#).¹⁷ The non-English language most widely spoken in the ¼ mile area is Chinese. When appropriate, Ecology will provide outreach in Chinese. To request information in another language, call Meredith Waldref at 425-229-3683, and wait on the line while we connect an interpreter.

We strive to make our public participation efforts as inclusive as possible and welcome your input about how to best reach the nearby community.

Tribal engagement

The Stillaguamish, Snoqualmie, Suquamish, Muckleshoot, Tulalip, and Squaxin Tribes' area of [interest overlay with the location of the cleanup site](#)¹⁸ and could be affected by the contamination (see Figure 11). The cleanup process may also uncover cultural resources.

The Suquamish and Muckleshoot Tribes have requested involvement on the project team.

We will reach out to Tribes to offer opportunities to engage in the cleanup process that are separate from the public involvement process. This engagement is described in a site-specific

¹⁶

<https://gis.ecology.wa.gov/portal/apps/instant/sidebar/index.html?appid=c0a212e59e1643c79f0631c29864d71d>

¹⁷ <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2004/06/25/04-14464/guidance-to-environmental-protection-agency-financial-assistance-recipients-regarding-title-vi>

¹⁸ <https://dahp.wa.gov/archaeology/tribal-consultation-information>

Tribal Engagement Plan, as required by [WAC 173-340-620](#).¹⁹ We invite Tribal members and other indigenous peoples to engage in the public involvement process as well.



Figure 11: Map showing screening results from the Department of Archeology and Historic Preservation for Tribes' area of interest in this site's area.

Washington's Cleanup Laws

Ecology uses the [Model Toxics Control Act \(MTCA\)](#)²⁰ and accompanying regulations for cleanup activities. Passed in 1989, MTCA provides guidelines for contaminated site cleanup in Washington state. This law sets standards to ensure the cleanup protects people and the environment. MTCA requires the creation of this plan.

¹⁹ <https://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=173-340-620>

²⁰ <https://www.ecology.wa.gov/mtca>

Model Toxics Control Act

MTCA began in 1988 as a citizen-led effort to clean up contaminated sites in Washington state. The law holds property owners or operators responsible for cleaning up contamination on, or coming from, their property.

Ecology carries out MTCA, making sure cleanups happen according to state rules and regulations. These rules are found in [Chapter 173-340 Washington Administrative Code \(WAC\)](#).²¹ Ecology investigates reports of contamination, and the property is placed on the [Contaminated Sites List](#)²² if the pollution is determined to pose a serious risk to human health or the environment. This starts the cleanup process at the site.

The cleanup process under MTCA includes several steps (see Appendix). Public involvement is a key part of MTCA's [cleanup process](#).²³ Nearby residents, businesses, community groups, and other interested parties can review and comment on documents related to steps that make crucial decisions or plans about the cleanup.

State Environmental Policy Act

MTCA cleanups also require evaluation under the [State Environmental Policy Act \(SEPA\)](#).²⁴ Under SEPA, the potential for significant adverse environmental impacts from a project or action must be evaluated by state and local agencies when making decisions. This evaluation is subject to public review and comment in parallel with cleanup documents.

²¹ <https://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=173-340>

²² <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/cleanupsearch/reports/cleanup/contaminated>

²³ <http://www.ecology.wa.gov/MTCA-process>

²⁴ <https://app.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?cite=197-11>

Plan Amendments

Ecology developed this plan following MTCA regulations (WAC 173-340-600). We review it as the cleanup progresses and amend it as necessary. You may suggest amendments to Meredith Waldref at 425-229-3683 or meredith.waldref@ecy.wa.gov.

We intend for this plan to provide the public with information on opportunities for public involvement and comment. The outreach activities discussed reflect Ecology's current plans to keep the public informed. It also provides ways for those interested in the site to communicate their concerns and questions to us.

If you feel the planned outreach activities and mechanisms found in this plan are insufficient or would like to modify them in some way, please contact us. We will work to find solutions. We can implement new activities or outreach tools right away, with or without amending this plan.

Appendix

Steps in the MTCA cleanup process

The cleanup process is defined in the Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA), Washington’s cleanup law. See the accessible PDF on the next page for details.

Washington's Cleanup Process



Public participation plans and comment periods are only required for cleanups under a legal agreement with Ecology. Otherwise, all cleanups follow the same steps. The steps are defined by Washington's cleanup law, the Model Toxics Control Act.

