



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

Southwest Region Office
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STATE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT
DETERMINATION OF NONSIGNIFICANCE

Date of Issuance: March 23, 2026

Lead agency: Department of Ecology, Toxics Cleanup Program, Southwest Region

Agency Contact: Steve Teel
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Description of proposal: The project consists of the following work on two Port of Tacoma parcels (Hylebos Marsh Interim Action):

- Capping and containing contaminated soil containing auto fluff and hazardous substances on a portion of the Taylor Way and Alexander Avenue Fill Area (TWAAFA) cleanup site (Ecology cleanup site ID 4692). This work is termed an “interim action” by Ecology as this project site is part of a larger site that requires cleanup. This interim action is being performed under the requirements of Model Toxics Control Act Enforcement Order DE 19410. The interim action will result in a protective remedy to block industrial workers coming into contact with contaminated soil containing auto fluff at the site. Auto fluff and soil containing hazardous substances above industrial cleanup levels will be capped with clean soil, gravel, and asphalt cap and will be stabilized on the sides with a retaining wall. The cap will also reduce potential infiltration that could result in leaching to groundwater. Following completion of the filling, grading, containment wall construction, and capping, the Port will install groundwater monitoring wells to be sampled and/or used for future investigation and final cleanup planning for the larger TWAAFA site.
- Eliminate viable habitat for the Mediterranean vineyard snail (*Cernuella virgata*), an invasive species located on the property, through habitat removal. Existing wetlands will be filled in, as allowed by permits, and the Property will be graded. Compensatory mitigation of the wetlands will be completed while the property is redeveloped.

Approximately 6,650 cubic yards of fill material will be used to grade and cap the auto fluff and hazardous substances in soil in the interim action area. Some minor excavation is anticipated for installation of the base of the containment wall. The excavated soil will be consolidated within the capped area.

West of the containment wall and outside of the interim action area, the Hylebos Marsh property will be graded to promote drainage away from the capped auto fluff material and is

anticipated to target a 1 percent east-to-west slope. An estimated 10,025 cubic yards of gravel is anticipated to be imported to the site and placed to form an approximately 6-inch thick layer of consolidated material over the snail eradication areas. Following authorization, the Port will grade the Property outside of the proposed containment area and will fill the wetlands to eradicate the invasive snails. In total, 15.97 acres are estimated to be graded and filled as part of the larger project.

Location of proposal: 1205 Alexander Avenue East and 1300 Taylor Way, Tacoma, WA 98409, Pierce County. Pierce County Assessor Parcels (APNs) 0321263045 and 0321352064.

Applicant/Proponent: Port of Tacoma

Project Representative: Scott Hooton
Project Manager, Environmental Programs
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Ecology has determined that this proposal will not have a probable significant adverse impact on the environment. An environmental impact statement (EIS) is not required under RCW 43.21C.030(2)(c). We have reviewed the attached Environmental Checklist, as well as the Public Review Draft Interim Action Plan.

The SEPA Environmental Checklist and Draft Interim Action Plan are available online at Ecology's TWAFA webpage. In-person review these documents are also available at two repository locations during their associated public comment period (April 15-May 15, 2026). These locations include:

Tacoma Public Library
Main Branch
1102 Tacoma Avenue
Tacoma, WA 98402

Ecology Lacey Office (by appointment)
300 Desmond Drive SE
Lacey, WA 98503
PublicDisclosureSWRO@ecy.wa.gov
360-407-6365

After May 15, 2026, please use the Ecology Lacey Office as the in-person repository location.

This determination is based on the following findings and conclusions:

- The site and adjacent properties are zoned Port Maritime Industrial. The site is undeveloped and covered with low-lying vegetation. Adjacent properties are used for transportation, truck and trailer storage, manufacturing, and a hazardous waste recycling facility.
- The cleanup action will prevent ecological and human direct contact exposure to auto fluff that contains hazardous chemicals by containing and capping these materials.
- The nonnative Mediterranean vineyard snail is extremely destructive to crops, especially grains, and its presence at the Port of Tacoma poses a significant threat to Washington's and the nation's agriculture and natural resources. Eradication efforts from 2007 to present have shrunk the range of these invasive snails from 300-acres to just a 5-acre area within the Taylor Way and Alexander Avenue Fill Area Site. However, the remaining population has been difficult to eradicate; having survived past eradication efforts.
- To verify the snails are eradicated at the Property, Washington State Department of Agriculture will conduct 3-years of monitoring after the cap is installed. Dogs trained to detect the presence of snails will verify the effectiveness of the eradication effort.
- The wetlands at the site are category III wetlands. Category III wetlands have moderate levels of functions, are disturbed in some ways, and are often less diverse or more isolated from other natural resources in the landscape. To make up for the impacts on wetlands that the cleanup and snail mitigation will cause, the Port is required to perform mitigation. The Port is proposing a combination of mitigation approaches. Due to the lack of onsite and in-kind mitigation opportunities and the existing onsite wetlands providing minimal functions, these mitigation approaches will take place at off-property locations. The benefits to the surrounding environments from the proposed mitigation will match the damage caused by filling and grading the wetlands at the site. Since we considered this balance of benefits, we conclude that the interim action cleanup will not cause significant harm.
- Filling of wetlands will be done as permitted by City of Tacoma and according to Department of Ecology administrative order. Other permits that are required include Construction Stormwater General National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES), local grading and right-of-way permits.
- Prior to ground disturbing activities, a cultural review process shall be completed. This process initiates consultation with Ecology, Tribes, and the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP).

- Construction specifications documents will be reviewed and approved by Ecology to ensure all on-site work will be performed in accordance with applicable standards and use of best management construction and erosion control practices.
- The Ecology cleanup project manager will provide oversight during project construction.

The comment period for this DNS corresponds with the comment period for the Public Comment Review Draft Hylebos Marsh Interim Action Plan. The comment period begins on April 15, 2026, and ends on May 15, 2026.

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Signature: 

Date: March 23, 2026

