



Environmental report for Cornwall Ave. Landfill cleanup site available for review and comment

An environmental report that details contamination and a preferred cleanup option for the Cornwall Avenue Landfill site on Bellingham's waterfront is available for review and comment.

Extensive sampling across the site found potentially harmful levels of hazardous substances in the groundwater, soil and sediment.

To prevent people, plants and animals from being exposed to contaminants, four cleanup options were evaluated.

See inside for more details about how to review documents and submit comments.

Site: Cornwall Avenue Landfill
Location: Bellingham waterfront

Ecology seeks public comment on the investigation into contamination, as well as a preferred cleanup option.

Public comment period:
Aug. 22 to Sept. 20, 2013

Public meeting:
6:30-8:30 p.m. Aug. 28,
Bellingham Public Library

Facility Site ID #: 2913



Environmental report out for review

The Port of Bellingham, with Ecology oversight, has investigated contamination, evaluated cleanup options, and identified a preferred option for the Cornwall Avenue Landfill cleanup site on the Bellingham waterfront. This info is available for public review in a draft report known as a remedial investigation and feasibility study.

Contamination

Extensive sampling across the site found potentially harmful levels of hazardous substances in the groundwater, soil and sediment. The contaminants are associated with historic municipal and wood waste disposal practices.

Cleanup options

To prevent people, plants and animals from being exposed to contaminants, four cleanup options were evaluated. Three of the options considered containing contaminants through various methods. The fourth option considered removing the contaminants.

A cost benefit analysis of the cleanup options identified a preferred option that includes: Low-permeability cap with reinforced liner; shoreline stabilization system; thin-layer sediment cap; and monitored natural recovery.

Review and comment

We are asking for your review and comments on the draft environmental report.

Comments accepted

Aug. 22 to Sept. 20, 2013

Submit comments

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Review documents

Ecology website
www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/tcp/sites
Search site name:
Cornwall Avenue Landfill
Cleanup ID: 220
Facility ID: 2913

Bellingham – Ecology office
1440 10th St., Suite 102
Bellingham, WA 98225-7028
By appointment: 360-715-5200

Bellingham Public Library
210 Central Ave.
Bellingham, WA
Phone: 360-778-7323

Public meeting

6:30-8:30 p.m., Wed., Aug. 28
Bellingham Public Library
Presentation starts at 7 p.m.

Cornwall Avenue Landfill cleanup site

Site history

- 1888-1946: The site was used for sawmill operations, including log storage and wood disposal.
- 1953-1965: The site was used as a municipal waste landfill.
- 1965: Upon closure of the landfill, the site was covered with a layer of soil.
- 1971 to 2005: The site was used for log storage and warehousing operations.
- 2011: Interim action



Environmental investigation

The site investigation found an estimated 295,000 cubic yards of municipal waste and 94,000 cubic yards of wood waste. Some of the contamination associated with this waste includes:

Groundwater contamination

The investigation found tannins and lignins associated with wood waste breakdown products; elevated nitrogen compounds like ammonia; elevated dissolved metals like manganese; and volatile organics like benzene in the ground water.

Sediment contamination

The investigation found phthalates, PCBs (polychlorinated biphenyls), PAHs (polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons), phenols, and diesel and oil-range petroleum hydrocarbons in the sediment.

Contamination from neighboring sites

Contamination from two neighboring cleanup sites overlaps with contamination at the Cornwall site. Petroleum hydrocarbons, pentachlorophenol, carcinogenic PAHs, and other contaminants associated with former wood treating operations at the adjacent R.G. Haley site are present in the soil, sediment and groundwater. And mercury associated with the Whatcom Waterway site is present in the sediment.

Interim work

In 2011, the port dredged and stabilized 47,000 cubic yards of fine-grained sediment from the Squalicum Marina improvement project and placed it on part of the Cornwall site. The material is covered with a thick, white, waterproof membrane. A landfill gas-collection system was installed beneath the material to safely collect and vent gas.

We approved this work because it helps reduce the amount of rain-water flowing through the buried municipal waste and carrying contaminants into the bay. Plus, it was anticipated that the future site-wide cleanup could include containment.

Analysis of the dredged material found metals (chromium, copper, mercury, nickel, zinc), PAHs, phthalates, dioxins and furans, and ammonia.

Preferred cleanup option

The preferred cleanup option protects human health and the environment through a variety of containment and control features. The preferred option has been coordinated with cleanup work planned for the Whatcom Waterway and R.G. Haley sites.

Upland portion of the site

For the upland portion of the site, improvements include a liner and layer of soil (known as a cap), an improved stormwater drainage system, a system to control gas from the landfill, and a legal covenant that protects the area in perpetuity.

The material that was placed on the site in 2011 as part of the interim action will become part of the cap, buried beneath the liner and layer of clean material.

Marine portion of the site

For the marine portion of the site, improvements include stabilizing the shoreline to prevent erosion, a sand filter system along the shoreline, a layer of sand (known as a cap) over sediment near the shoreline, and monitored natural recovery further out in the bay.

Cost and funding

The cleanup of the Cornwall Avenue Landfill site is expected to cost about \$9.1 million.

Ecology will reimburse up to half the port's costs through the state's remedial action grant program, which helps pay to clean up publicly owned sites. The state Legislature funds the grant program with revenues from a tax on hazardous substances.

Future land use

The site is located within The Waterfront District redevelopment area, which is currently undergoing extensive planning efforts to facilitate a transition from historical industrial activities to a mixed-use urban neighborhood. Current plans call for the site to be developed primarily as a waterfront park.

Project location



Project timeline

- Aug. 22—Sept. 20: Public comment period
- Fall 2013: Publish final RI/FS
- Early 2014: Public review of draft cleanup action plan
- 2014: Design and permitting
- 2015: Begin cleaning up site

Next steps

Once the public comment period ends, we will review and respond to all comments received. Based on your comments, we may modify the documents. If there are significant changes, we will issue the documents again for public review. If there are no significant changes, the document will be finalized.

We will use information in the final document to select a cleanup action for the site. This will be described in a draft Cleanup Action Plan, which is part of a legal agreement called a consent decree.

Contacts

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Project website

www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/tcp/sites
Search site name: Cornwall Avenue Landfill

Información en Español

Los resultados de la investigación sobre la contaminación del sitio de limpieza de Cornwall Ave Landfill, ubicado en la parte de Bellingham que da al mar, están disponibles para revisión y comentario. Las opciones potenciales para la limpieza del sitio han sido revisadas y también están disponibles para considerar y comentar.

Ecología tendrá una reunión pública el 28 de agosto, desde las 6:30 a las 8:30 de la noche, en la biblioteca pública de Bellingham, sucursal del centro, el 28 de agosto para proveer detalles sobre los contaminantes presentes, tanto como a explicar las opciones para la limpieza. Se dará una presentación a las 7 de la noche.

Ecología solicita comentarios del público sobre estos documentos. Para más informaciones en español, favor de comunicarse con Gregorio Bohn a (509) 454-4174 o por correo electrónico a gboh461@ecy.wa.gov. Haga referencia al sitio de limpieza de Cornwall Ave Landfill.

Help with other formats?

If you need this document in a format for the visually impaired, call Dustin Terpening at 360-715-5205.

Persons with hearing loss, call 711 for Washington Relay Service. Persons with a speech disability, call 877-833-6341.

Preferred cleanup option

The preferred cleanup option protects human health and the environment through a variety of containment and control features, including: Low-permeability cap with reinforced liner; shoreline stabilization system; thin-layer sediment cap; and monitored natural recovery.

