
I&J Waterway Site Bellingham



Cleanup Documents Available for Public Review

The Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) and the Port of Bellingham (Port) have negotiated a draft legal agreement (called an *agreed order*) to perform an environmental study (called a *remedial investigation/feasibility study*) at the I&J Waterway 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, 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 **November 26, 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 I&J Waterway site (Site) is located between Hilton Avenue and Bellwether Way on the Bellingham waterfront (see map on page 3). The Site consists of contaminated marine sediments located within the I&J Waterway and the nearby ship berthing areas. The Port owns the berth areas on the south side of the waterway and the surrounding uplands, and the state of Washington owns the aquatic lands within the I&J Waterway. A federal navigation channel is located within the I&J Waterway which was authorized in 1965 and constructed in 1966.

Between the early 1900's and 1940, Whatcom Falls Mill Company owned the upland and berth areas and operated a lumber mill in that location. In 1944, the Port acquired ownership of the upland and berth areas and began leasing the property to a variety of industrial tenants. Bayshore Lumber operated a lumber mill at the head of the waterway

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**Public Comment Period:
10/26/04-11/26/04**

**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) 649-7190

Ecology's Website:
[http://www.ecv.wa.gov/programs/
tcp/sites/blhm_bay/sites/bel_bay
sites.html](http://www.ecv.wa.gov/programs/tcp/sites/blhm_bay/sites/bel_bay_sites.html)

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from 1947 to 1962, and H&H Products managed the same mill from 1963 to 1972. From 1963 to 1992, Olivine Corporation operated a rock crushing plant for the mineral olivine which periodically released dust and wastewater into the waterway. North Pacific Frozen Products managed a frozen foods processing plant between 1946 and 1959, and between 1959 and the present, Bornstein Seafoods has operated a seafood processing facility. The Bornstein building was destroyed by a fire in 1985 and rebuilt in the same location.

Previous environmental investigations of the Site indicate the presence of hazardous substances in the surface sediments above state cleanup standards including phthalate compounds, polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbon compounds, and phenol compounds. Elevated levels of mercury associated with the Whatcom Waterway site and elevated levels of methylphenol compounds associated with on-site or off-site activities are also present in the Site subsurface sediments. As a result, the Site is subject to the investigation and cleanup requirements of the Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA) and Sediment Management Standards (SMS), administered by Ecology.

The I&J Waterway site is one of several cleanup sites being addressed as part of the Bellingham Bay Demonstration Pilot; a bay-wide, multi-agency initiative integrating sediment cleanup, control of pollution sources, habitat restoration and aquatic/shoreline land use.

Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study

The draft agreed order requires the Port 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 the Site cleanup. The RI/FS will detail:

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

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

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.

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Location Map of I&J Waterway Site

