



DEPARTMENT OF
ECOLOGY
State of Washington

Public Participation Plan

Former Columbia Gorge Aluminum Smelter
Goldendale, WA

Washington State Department of Ecology
Industrial Section

March 2014

Introduction

Construction of what is now the Columbia Gorge Aluminum smelter site began in 1969. The smelter operated for 30 years under various owners until it closed in 2003. Beginning in 1980, owners have managed hazardous and solid waste at several locations on the site. The Department of Ecology (Ecology) is working with the potentially liable persons (PLPs) to investigate and cleanup the site under the State's Model Toxics Control Act.

Site Background

The site consists of 7,000 acres, of which 350 acres were in active use. It's located 17 miles southeast of Goldendale, Washington, one mile north of the John Day Dam on the Columbia River, in Klickitat County. All structures on the site have been demolished with the exception of one building and a small active wastewater treatment plant permitted under National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit WA0000540.

The site is also within a treaty usual and accustomed area of the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation and adjacent to the North Shore Treaty Fishing Access Site.

The PLPs – NSC Smelter, Inc. and Lockheed Martin Corporation – are in the process of completing a site-wide cleanup.

While the Site is still under investigation, typical contaminants of concern found at aluminum smelting facilities include:

- PAHs - polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons in soils from coal tar pitch and wet air emission control equipment sludge.
- Cyanide and fluoride contamination in soils and groundwater from management of spent potliner.
- PCBs - polychlorinated biphenyls in soils from transformers and high voltage electrical switching equipment.
- Petroleum hydrocarbons in soils and groundwater from spills at vehicle refueling stations.
- General industrial solid waste in old plant landfills.

Public Involvement Activities

Ecology will use a variety of methods to keep community members and stakeholders informed and involved in the cleanup of the Columbia Gorge Aluminum site. The goal of this plan is to help interested community members understand how they can access information and stay involved. We will continue to try and find new ways to effectively share project information and expand our audience and will update this plan as needed.

Public involvement activities will include the following:

Public Comment Periods

Comment periods are the main way Ecology gets feedback from the public on issues at cleanup sites. Comment periods are at least 30 days long and are required at key points during the cleanup process, prior to final decisions that are made by Ecology. During the comment periods, the public can comment and provide input on proposed studies or decisions.

For the Columbia Gorge Aluminum site, formal comment periods will be held on the:

- Agreed Order requiring the Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study
- Draft Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study
- Proposed Cleanup Action Plan and Consent Decree

Public Meetings and Hearings

If there is adequate public interest, Ecology will hold a joint meeting/hearing during the comment periods. Meetings will be held in the Goldendale, Washington community. At the public meetings members of the community can meet and speak with Ecology staff and local stakeholders and learn more about the cleanup process. The typical format of a public meeting is to hold an open house where a short presentation is given about the particular action we're seeking public input on. The public is invited to ask questions about the presentation and related documents. The meeting may be followed by a public hearing to accept formal comment on the action. The public may also submit formal comments in writing at the meeting or later by mail or e-mail.

Responsiveness Summary

After formal comment periods, Ecology reviews all written comments and responds to major issues in a responsiveness summary. The Responsiveness Summary will include all comments received. Ecology will write general responses to major issues raised during the comment period but not necessarily to each individual comment received.

Document Revisions

Ecology will consider the need for changes or revisions to the cleanup decision documents, based on input received during the comment period. If significant changes are made to the documents, then a second comment period may be held. If no significant changes are made, then the draft documents will become final.

Information Repositories

Information repositories are places where the public may review site information, including documents that are the subject of public comment. Ecology plans information repositories in Goldendale and Lacey, Washington. In addition, all documents will be available on Ecology's Columbia Gorge Aluminum cleanup website.

The two information repositories are:

Goldendale Community Library
131 W Bergen St.
Goldendale, WA

Department of Ecology
Industrial Section
300 Desmond Dr.
Lacey, WA

Ecology's Industrial Section in Lacey, Washington has regulated the site since the early 1980s and has access to environmental files. A file review can be scheduled to view the detailed site records.

Site Register

Ecology uses its bimonthly *Site Register* to announce public meetings and comment periods, as well as other cleanup related activities state wide. The *Site Register* is available at http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/tcp/pub_inv/pub_inv2.html.

Interested parties can sign-up to receive e-mail notice of new editions of the *Site Register* on the listserv at <http://listserv.wa.gov/cgi-bin/wa?SUBED1=siteregister&A=1>.

Mailing List

Ecology has compiled and continually updates a mailing list for this cleanup site. The mailing list includes individuals, groups, public agencies, elected officials, private businesses, and other known interested parties. The list is maintained by Ecology's Industrial Section and individuals can request to be added or removed from it. Please contact Angie Fritz at (360) 407-7393 or angela.fritz@ecy.wa.gov if you'd like to have your mailing address and/or e-mail added or removed from this mailing list.

Fact Sheets

Ecology will mail or e-mail fact sheets to people and organizations interested in the cleanup of this site. The fact sheets will inform interested parties of upcoming public meetings and hearings, comment opportunities, and important site milestones. Ecology uses its Industrial Section mailing list to mail fact sheets.

Website

Ecology will regularly update its website for the site and will use it as a resource for the public to access current information and electronic documents related to the cleanup project. The website includes the following resources:

- Public comment period documents
- Cleanup submittals
- Activities currently happening at the site

The website can be found at <https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/gsp/Sitepage.aspx?csid=11797>.

Ecology also advertises public comment periods and meetings and hearings on its agency-wide public calendar at <http://apps.ecy.wa.gov/pubcalendar/calendar.asp>.

Newspaper Ads

Ecology will place legal ads in The Goldendale Sentinel to announce public comment periods, meetings and hearings for the site cleanup. Ecology may also use display ads and other community publications to let the public know about upcoming public meetings and hearings.

Community Group Meetings

Ecology staff will present information about the cleanup project to interested community groups or neighborhood associations as resources allow. Residents can request an Ecology presentation for their community group or association by calling or e-mailing Angie Fritz at (360) 407-7393 or angela.fritz@ecy.wa.gov.

Coordination of Public Participation Requirements

When other laws require public notice and input, Ecology will coordinate the public notice requirements where possible. Examples of this include State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) or National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) requirements for cleanup actions.

Plan Updates

This Plan is intended to be a living document. Ecology will update this public participation plan as the project proceeds through cleanup. We're very interested in making sure the public has access to the information they need to stay involved in the cleanup process. If you have ideas on how we can improve our outreach and involvement opportunities, please let us know. If substantial changes to the Plan are made, it will be announced on the *Site Register* and website.

Points of Contact

If you have questions or need more information about this cleanup, please contact:

For information about public involvement:

Angie Fritz, Public Involvement Coordinator
Washington State Department of Ecology – Industrial Section
PO Box 47600
Olympia, WA 98504-7600
Phone: (360) 407- 7393
E-mail: angela.fritz@ecy.wa.gov

For technical information about the cleanup project:

Guy Barrett, Site Manager
Washington State Department of Ecology – Industrial Section
PO Box 47600
Olympia, WA 98504-7600
Phone: (360) 407- 6999
E-mail: guy.barrett@ecy.wa.gov