
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

NORTHERN PORTION OF THE FORMER SCOTT PAPER MILL SITE ANACORTES, WASHINGTON

MARCH 2003



Prepared by
Washington State Department of Ecology

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INTRODUCTION

The Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) has developed this Public Participation Plan pursuant to the Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA) to promote meaningful community involvement during the investigation and cleanup of contaminated soils, groundwater, and the marine area at the northern portion of the Former Scott Paper Mill site in Anacortes, Washington. This plan describes the tools that Ecology uses to inform the public about site activities and identifies opportunities for the community to become involved.

The northern portion of the site includes currently-owned Port of Anacortes property, as well as property owned by Shared Healthcare Systems, Inc. Ecology and the Port of Anacortes have negotiated a legal agreement (called a Consent Decree) for this northern portion of the site.

The southern portion of the site, owned by MJB Properties, Inc. since 1989, will be covered under a separate legal agreement, which is currently being discussed between Ecology and the Kimberly-Clark Corporation (a successor to Scott Paper Company).

LOCATION AND SITE BACKGROUND

Location

The area of the site covered under the Consent Decree is located north of an extension of 17th Street, east of Q Avenue, on the west shore of Fidalgo Bay, and south of Cap Sante Boat Haven marina in downtown Anacortes, Washington (see figure). This area is presently the location of Seafarers' Memorial Park, office buildings, and a vacant lot along the Q Avenue frontage. Both upland and marine environments are included in the site.

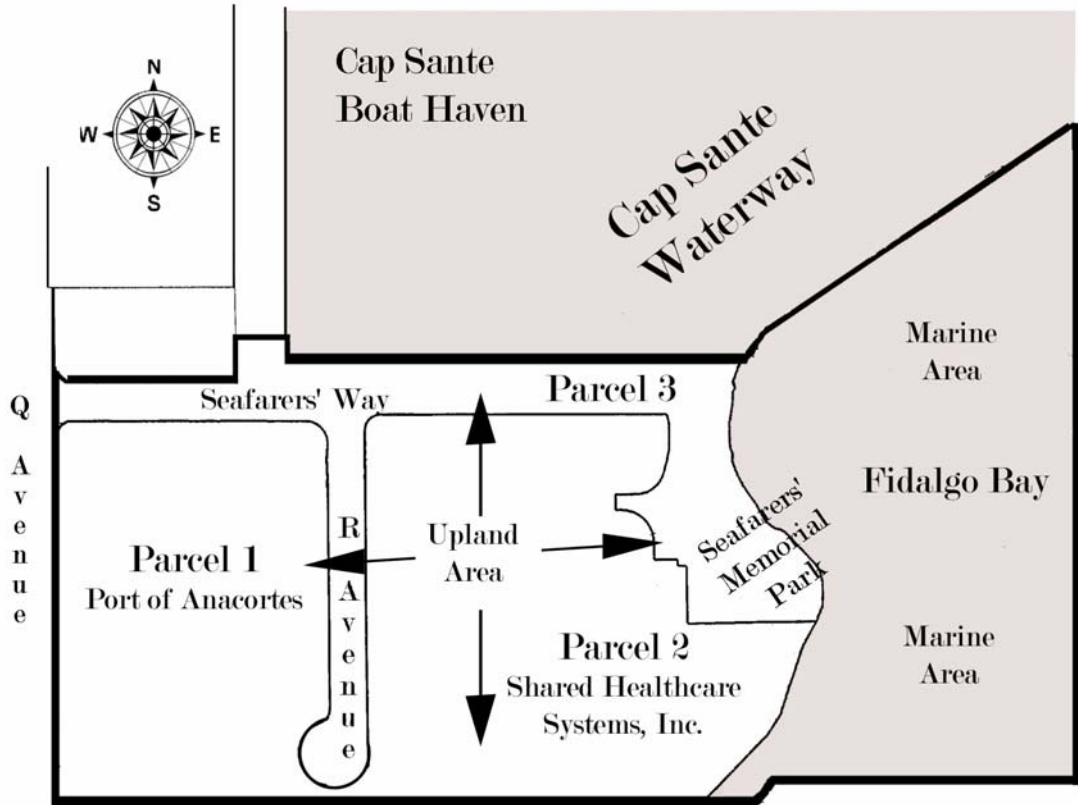
Site Background

The Scott Paper Company and other former owners operated lumber mills and a pulp mill from approximately 1925 until 1978. During this period, numerous buildings, sheds, piers, tailings ponds, boilers, fuel storage tanks, a smokestack and burners were located on the northern portion of the site. The pulp producing plant was located on the southern portion of the mill site.

In 1979, the Port of Anacortes purchased the northern portion of the former mill site from the Scott Paper Company. The Port of Anacortes used the property as a log yard from 1991 to 1993. In 1998, this northern portion was replatted into what are currently referred to as Parcels 1, 2, and 3 (see figure):

- Parcel 1 is the vacant lot along Q Avenue;
- Parcel 2 was sold to Shared Healthcare Systems, Inc. in 1998; and
- Parcel 3 was dedicated as Seafarers' Memorial Park.

Consent Decree Area: Northern Portion of the Former Scott Paper Mill



Boundary between northern and southern portions of the site

Site Location Map: Northern Portion of the Site

In 1999, the Port of Anacortes and Shared Healthcare Systems, Inc. conducted an independent cleanup action in Parcel 2 for the soils in the area of the former aboveground fuel storage tanks and tailings ponds for the pulp mill. The cleanup included the removal of petroleum-contaminated soil and wood debris. The independent cleanup action also included installation of a two-foot thick soil cover and storm water controls for the remainder of Parcel 2. Ecology reviewed the cleanup results and determined that no further soil cleanup is needed as long as the cover and controls are maintained.

In 2000, Ecology notified the following that they are potentially liable persons for the Former Scott Paper Mill site: Port of Anacortes, Kimberly-Clark Corporation, Shared Healthcare Systems, Inc., and MJB Properties, Inc.

Remaining contaminants of concern to be investigated in the area of the site covered under the Consent Decree include: petroleum; carcinogenic polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (cPAHs); dioxins/furans; metals; polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs); and deleterious substances (e.g., wood), brick, metal, and slag in the marine environment.

Current Activity

The proposed actions conducted under the Consent Decree will be coordinated with remedial actions under a separate legal agreement for the southern portion of the site. The Consent Decree for the northern portion of the site includes:

- Completion of a Remedial Investigation (a study of the extent of contamination) for soils and groundwater on the uplands (Parcels 1, 2, and 3) and the marine area;
- Development of a Feasibility Study (cleanup alternatives) for soils and groundwater on the uplands (Parcels 1, 2, and 3) and the marine area; and
- If necessary, for Parcel 1 only, preparation of a Cleanup Action Plan and completion of remedial actions for soil.

The Consent Decree may be amended to cover additional actions for Parcels 1, 2, and 3, as well as the marine area.

COMMUNITY MEMBER CONCERNS

Most of the community members interviewed over the telephone by Ecology in October/November 2002 expressed concerns about the site; those concerns are summarized below. A few people did not realize that there is any contamination at the site. One individual had no concerns about the site. Ecology will work to respond to community concerns through the cleanup process and coordination with any other agencies that may become involved.

Additional public concerns may be identified over the course of the cleanup through: public comment periods; further community interviews; surveys; meetings; and other contacts with individuals, community groups, or organizations.

Health risks: Some people expressed concern about potential health risks present at the site, including the public park. Cancer concern was raised in connection with sandblasting and spray-painting that may have occurred at the site.

Community awareness and involvement: Most people interviewed were aware of the contamination at the site while a few were not. Concern was expressed that the community needs to be made aware of the site and why it needs to be cleaned up. Most of those interviewed expressed a desire to receive information promptly and that the cleanup process, especially public involvement, be open and accessible. Some concern was expressed that public involvement activities occur early in the process.

Marine environment: Most people expressed a concern for the health of the marine environment. There is concern about impacts to the coastal habitat (e.g., eelgrass beds) as valuable spawning and feeding areas for herring and other wildlife. Impacts to a local oyster bed also were mentioned. Residents described specific concerns such as: a black line of hydrogen sulfide on the beach which is believed to be leaching to Fidalgo Bay, the toxicity associated with hydrogen sulfide and its anaerobic effects on habitat, the smell of hydrogen sulfide under certain conditions at the public park, the toxicity of creosoted pilings, the effects of heavy metals from possible on-site sandblasting and spray-painting, and the impacts of wood waste and other debris on the beach and in the water.

Public access: One person was concerned about how public access to the waterfront will be affected by the cleanup and wondered whether access will be taken away or limited.

Future development: Two people expressed concern about growth development issues at the site, including upland development and responsible development of the waterfront. One individual expressed concern about how long it will take to get the site cleaned up and back to productive use.

Cleanup: There was interest in how the extent of contamination will be determined, what remedial actions will be taken to clean up the site, and how future contaminated materials will be disposed. Some people interviewed were concerned about how clean the site will be and what follow-up will be done (e.g., monitoring) to ensure that the cleanup was effective. One person expressed concern that the wood waste be removed from the intertidal area and replaced with clean material graded as the original profile of the beach. There was some interest in cumulative impacts of this and other nearby sites on the environment.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ACTIVITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The purpose of this Public Participation Plan is to promote public understanding and participation in the MTCA activities planned for this site. This section of the plan addresses how Ecology will share information and receive public comments and community input on the site activities.

Public Involvement Activities

Ecology uses a variety of activities to facilitate public participation in the investigation and cleanup of MTCA sites. Ecology will implement input provided by the community whenever possible.

The following is a list of the public involvement activities that Ecology will use, their purposes, and descriptions of when and how they will be used during this site cleanup.

Formal Public Comment Periods

Comment periods are the primary method Ecology uses to get feedback from the public on proposed cleanup decisions. Comment periods usually last 30 days and are required at key points during the investigation and cleanup process before final decisions are made.

During a comment period, the public can comment in writing. Verbal comments are taken if a public hearing is held. After formal comment periods, Ecology reviews all comments received and may respond in a document called a *Responsiveness Summary*.

Ecology will consider the need for changes or revisions based on input from the public. If significant changes are made, then a second comment period may be held. If no significant changes are made, then the draft document(s) will be finalized.

Ecology held a 30-day public comment period on the draft Consent Decree from December 23, 2002, through January 21, 2003. Additional public comment periods will be held for draft Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Studies, for any draft Cleanup Action Plans that are developed for the site, and for any future legal agreements between Ecology and the Port of Anacortes regarding this site.

Public Meetings and Hearings

Public meetings may be held at key points during the investigation and cleanup process. Ecology also may offer public meetings for actions expected to be of particular interest to the community. These meetings will be held at locations convenient to the community.

A public meeting regarding the proposed Consent Decree was held on January 7, 2003, at the Municipal Building (City Hall), 6th Street and Q Avenue, Anacortes. After a brief presentation, Ecology staff responded to questions from the public.

Information Repositories

Information Repositories are places where the public may read and review site information, including documents that are the subject of public comment.

Ecology has established two repositories for the Former Scott Paper Mill site:

- Anacortes Public Library, 1220 10th Street, Anacortes, (360) 293-1910
- Washington State Department of Ecology, 3190 160th Avenue SE, Bellevue, WA 98008, (425) 649-7190. Please call for an appointment.

Some site information also will be posted on the Ecology web site at http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/tcp/sites/sites_information.html

Site Register

Ecology's Toxics Cleanup Program uses its bimonthly *Site Register* to announce all of its public meetings and comment periods, as well as many other activities. To receive the *Site Register*, contact Sherrie Minnick at (360) 407-7200 or by e-mail at shan461@ecy.wa.gov. It is also available on Ecology's web site at http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/tcp/pub_inv/pub_inv2.html

Mailing List

Ecology, with assistance from the Port of Anacortes, has compiled a mailing list for the site. The list includes individuals, groups, public agencies, elected officials, private businesses, potentially affected parties, and other known interested parties. The list will be maintained at Ecology's Northwest Regional Office and will be updated as needed.

Please contact Rebekah Padgett at (425) 649-7257 or rp461@ecy.wa.gov if you would like to have your address added to or deleted from this mailing list.

Fact Sheets

Ecology will mail fact sheets to persons and organizations interested in the Former Scott Paper Mill site to inform them of public meetings and comment opportunities and important site activities. Ecology also may mail fact sheets about the progress of site activities.

Newspaper Ads

Ecology may place ads in the *Anacortes American* and *Skagit Valley Herald* to announce public comment periods and public meetings or hearings for the site.

Plan Update

This Public Participation Plan may be updated as the project proceeds. If an update is necessary, the revised plan will be submitted to the public for comment.

Points of Contact

If you have questions or need more information about this plan or the Former Scott Paper Mill site, please contact one of the following persons:

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GLOSSARY

Cleanup: Actions taken to deal with a release, or threatened release of hazardous substances that could affect public health and/or the environment. The term "cleanup" is often used broadly to describe various response actions or phases of remedial responses such as the remedial investigation/feasibility study.

Cleanup Action Plan (CAP): A document that explains which cleanup alternative(s) will be used at sites for the cleanup. The Cleanup Action Plan is based on information and technical analysis generated during the remedial investigation/feasibility study and consideration of public comments and community concerns.

Comment Period: A time period during which the public can review and comment on various documents and proposed actions. For example, a comment period may be provided to allow community members to review and comment on proposed cleanup action alternatives and proposed plans.

Consent Decree: A legal document, approved and entered by a court, formalizing an agreement between Ecology and potentially liable persons (PLPs). Once signed, a Consent Decree relieves liability of a PLP for known contamination once the cleanup is complete.

Feasibility Study: This study develops and evaluates cleanup options for a given site.

Groundwater: Water found beneath the earth's surface that fills pores between materials such as sand, soil, or gravel. In some aquifers, ground water occurs in sufficient quantities that it can be used for drinking water, irrigation and other purposes.

Information Repository: A file containing current information, technical reports, and reference documents available for public review. The information repository is usually located in a public building that is convenient for local residents such as a public school, city hall, or library.

Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA): Legislation passed by the State of Washington in 1988. Its purpose is to identify, investigate, and clean up facilities where hazardous substances have been released. It defines the role of Ecology and encourages public involvement in the decision making process. MTCA regulations became effective March 1, 1989 and are administered by the Washington State Department of Ecology.

Potentially Liable Person: Any individual(s) or company(s) potentially responsible for, or contributing to, the contamination problems at a site. Whenever possible, Ecology requires these PLPs, through administrative and legal actions, to clean up sites.

Public Participation Plan: A plan prepared to encourage coordinated and effective public involvement designed to the public's needs at a particular site.

Remedial Investigation: This study characterizes the site and defines the extent of contamination.

Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study: Two distinct but related studies. They are usually performed at the same time, and together referred to as the "RI/FS." They are intended to:

- Gather the data necessary to determine the type and extent of contamination;
- Establish criteria for cleaning up the site;
- Identify and screen cleanup alternatives for remedial action; and
- Analyze in detail the technology and costs of the alternatives.

Responsiveness Summary: A summary of oral and/or written public comments received by Ecology during a comment period on key documents, and Ecology's responses to those comments. The responsiveness summary is especially valuable during the Cleanup Action Plan phase at a site when it highlights community concerns.

Site: Any building, structure, installation, equipment, pipe or pipeline (including any pipe into a sewer or publicly owned treatment works), well, pit, pond, lagoon, impoundment, ditch, landfill, storage container, motor vehicle, rolling stock, vessel, or aircraft; or any site or area where a hazardous substance, other than a consumer product in consumer use, has been deposited, stored, disposed of, or placed, or otherwise come to be located.