

Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway – Skykomish

Notice of Public Comment Period



Public Comment on Agreement for Interim Action

**Public Comment Period:
May 1 through May 31, 2001**

Legal Agreement Finalized

The Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) is proposing an Agreed Order with the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway Company (BNSF). The purpose is to conduct an Interim Action this summer to stop petroleum (floating product only or LNAPL) that is seeping from upland areas on the railyard, through the town of Skykomish, and into the Skykomish River. The interim action is part of the site cleanup effort from activities at the former Maintenance and Fueling Facility.

An Agreed Order is a legal document between Ecology and BNSF that specifies requirements of the interim action.

Site Background

The Burlington Northern Railroad Maintenance and Fueling Facility in Skykomish was originally owned and operated by the Great Northern Railroad (GNR). GNR owned the property from the late 1890s until 1970 when GNR merged with four other railroads and became Burlington Northern Railroad (BNRR).

Over the more than 80 years the facility was in operation, its primary function was to refuel and maintain locomotives, provide electricity for

electric engines operating between Wenatchee and Skykomish, and to store snow removal equipment.

Fuel for the trains, including diesel and bunker oil, was stored in underground storage tanks at the site until 1974, when BNRR discontinued most fuel handling activities at its Skykomish facility. Currently the BNSF facility is used as a base of operations for track maintenance and snow removal crews.

Based on current available data, the site contamination consists of the following:

- **Soils** – Surface soils on the railyard contain petroleum (diesel and Bunker C), lead, arsenic and PCBs. In some areas of the site, including areas off the railyard, subsurface soils contain petroleum and its components (e.g., polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons or PAHs) to approximately 15 feet below ground surface.
- **Groundwater** – Both floating and dissolved petroleum are present in groundwater beneath the site and at the Skykomish River.
- **Surface Water** – Petroleum from upland areas is seeping into the river.
- **Sediments** – Petroleum and PAHs are present in sediments along the riverbank at seep locations.

May/June 2001

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

May 1 through May 31, 2001

PUBLIC HEARING

May 10, 2001, 6:00 – 9:00 PM
Skykomish Community Center
114 West Railroad Avenue

SEND WRITTEN COMMENTS ON THE INTERIM ACTION TO:

Louise Bardy
Ecology Site Manager
Department of Ecology
3190 160th Ave. SE
Bellevue WA 98008
(425) 649-7209
lbar461@ecy.wa.gov

INFORMATION REPOSITORIES

Documents can be reviewed at the following locations:

Skykomish Branch,
King County Library
100 5th Avenue North, Skykomish
(360) 677-2660
Weekdays only

For weekends:
Contact Michael Moore
(360) 677-2410

Department of Ecology
3190 160th Avenue SE
Bellevue WA 98008
Call Sally Perkins
Phone: (425) 649-7190

For special accommodation needs or language translation assistance, call Rebekah Padgett, Ecology's Public Information Specialist at (425) 649-7257, or (425) 649-4259 (TDD).

Ecology is an equal opportunity and affirmative action agency.

Interim Action Plan

The proposed Interim Action will be constructed in two phases. During Phase 1, BNSF will construct an underground barrier wall, west from the Skykomish Bridge along West River Road. Monitoring and recovery wells will be installed upgradient and at the ends of the wall to check where petroleum products accumulate.

The length of the underground barrier wall has been determined by groundwater modeling, surveying of seep locations, and reported seep observations. It will be about 600 feet long (see figure on page 3) and will extend from the ground surface to at least three feet below the lowest observed water level (about 15 feet deep).

Groundwater modeling indicates the wall may raise the groundwater elevation along West River Road about 0.4 feet. The method used to construct the wall will be selected to minimize community impacts and be either an injected grout curtain or a slurry wall. Both are mixtures of bentonite and cement.

It is important to note that existing petroleum products will remain in the ground (under the levee) between the wall and the river and may continue to seep into the river for some time after the wall is constructed. The wall is intended to stop further petroleum movement (floating product only) through the levee.

Phase 2 of the Interim Action (to take place 6-12 months later) will involve installing product extraction equipment in recovery wells.

SEPA Determination

Ecology has issued a State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) determination of nonsignificance (DNS). The barrier wall is not anticipated to create any adverse environmental impacts, however, mitigation measures have been included in the SEPA checklist.

Final Cleanup

Ecology and BNSF are continuing to work on the Feasibility Study. Additional soil and sediment sampling, including the former Maloney Creek channel area, will be conducted this summer to fill data gaps. Once the Feasibility Study is complete, a report will be written that will include a summary of the investigation work, as well as an evaluation of the cleanup alternatives for the site. This report and the updated

1996 Remedial Investigation will be available for public review and comment at that time. Once the Feasibility Study report is finalized, Ecology will propose a final cleanup remedy for the site (called a Cleanup Action Plan). This plan will be based on information provided in the Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study. The Cleanup Action Plan and Consent Decree (a legal document to implement the plan) will then be available for public review and comment.

Your Comments Are Needed

Ecology is holding a 30-day public comment period during which you may review the *Interim Action Basis of Design for LNAPL Barrier System* (work plan for the underground barrier wall), the *Agreed Order*, the draft *Public Participation Plan*, and the *State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) Checklist*. Your suggestions on how the underground barrier can be constructed in a way to minimize impacts to the community will be particularly helpful.

Public Meeting

A public meeting will be held on May 10, 2001, at the Skykomish Community Center. The meeting will begin with an open house from 6:00 – 7:00 p.m. The open house will include displays, documents for review, and staff from Ecology and BNSF will be available to answer questions.

Starting at 7:00 p.m., Ecology and BNSF staff will give a brief presentation, followed by a question and answer session. Verbal formal comments will be accepted and written comment forms will also be available.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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