

Burlington Northern - Skykomish



Important Update on Site Study

This newsletter, prepared by the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology), contains important information about the on-going study and cleanup of contamination associated with the Burlington Northern former maintenance and fueling facility in the town of Skykomish. This project is nearing the point when decisions will be made about how the contamination will be cleaned up. The cleanup cannot be conducted without some impact to individual property owners and the town. We need the community's input and involvement now. Please read this notice completely and contact the Department of Ecology at (206) 649-7254 if you have any questions or comments.

Ecology to Contact Property Owners in Area of Contamination

After several years of studying the contamination in Skykomish, Burlington Northern Railroad (Burlington Northern) and the Department of Ecology now have a better understanding of the extent of the contamination.

We have confirmed that the petroleum contamination extends beyond Burlington Northern's property boundaries and has migrated beneath both private and public properties. Over the next several weeks, in order to help people understand how their property may be impacted by the contamination and eventual cleanup, the Department of Ecology will be contacting individual property owners and residents within and near the known area of contamination.

Beginning next week, Ecology will:

- Mail letters and information packets to more than 70 property owners and residents who we believe are within or near the area of contamination as it is now defined.
- The following week, on September 24th and 25th between the hours of 10 a.m. and 8 p.m., Ecology staff will be in Skykomish going door-to-door, with representatives from the Skykomish Environmental Coalition (a local citizens group), in an attempt to speak with people in person about the situation.
- If we cannot reach people on those days, we will attempt to contact people by phone later in the week.

If you receive a letter from Ecology, please feel free to contact us directly (see the box on the right for contact names and numbers). Our goal is to speak with everyone who receives a letter.

Where is the Contamination?

Please see the map on page three which shows the approximate boundaries of the area of contamination. By looking at the map, you may be able to determine whether your property or residence is potentially impacted by the contamination.

It is important to note that the boundaries on the map are approximate.

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Ecology's Site Manager is:

Barbara Trejo
Department of Ecology
3190 160th Avenue S.E.
Bellevue, WA 98008
(206) 649-7206

Review Documents at:

Skykomish Library
119 4th Avenue North
Skykomish, WA 98288

Department of Ecology
Northwest Regional Office
3190 160th Avenue S.E.
Bellevue, WA 98008
(206) 649-7190

More Information?

Call Marianne Deppman,
Ecology's Public Involvement
Specialist at:
(206) 649-7254 or leave a
message at: 1-800-828-7716

*If you have special accommodation
needs call Marianne Deppman at
the number above or at
(206) 649-4259 (TDD)*

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Because the contamination lies largely beneath the ground surface, it is difficult to determine exactly where the contamination is and is not. Burlington Northern will be collecting additional samples of soil and ground water in the future to more fully define the extent of contamination.

Washington State Department of Health Assists in Drinking Water Testing

While there has been no evidence that the petroleum contamination in Skykomish has impacted the town's drinking water, people in the community told us they would feel more comfortable if the water supply was specifically tested for petroleum contamination. In response to this request, Ecology and the Washington State Department of Health are working together and will be conducting two rounds of drinking water tests, one this summer and one during a high water period in the winter. The first round of samples were collected in August. These samples are now being analyzed by a laboratory.

You will be notified of the results of the drinking water testing. A description of how the testing is being done will be available at the Skykomish Library in the near future.

Project Schedule Update

Burlington Northern has prepared and submitted to Ecology a draft report summarizing the findings of the study of contamination (this report is known as the Remedial Investigation Report). Ecology is currently in the process of reviewing this report. In order to be sure that BN's report is adequate, Ecology has asked the State and the Seattle-King County Health Departments as well as the Skykomish Environmental Coalition (a local citizens' group) to review the draft report. Once a final draft of the report is complete, it will be released for general public review and comment. Ecology expects this report to be available this fall.

Next on BN's list of things to do is to complete its evaluation of possible cleanup techniques or cleanup scenarios for the site. This evaluation is called a Feasibility Study. For the Feasibility Study, Burlington Northern will develop a range of cleanup options for the site. These options could range from maintaining or expanding the recovery wells that were installed by Burlington Northern earlier this year, to removing large volumes of contaminated soil for treatment. *It will be critical for the community to participate in discussions about cleanup options because all of the options have the potential to impact individual property owners and the town as a whole for many years to come.*

Once the Feasibility Study is approved, Ecology, in consultation with the community and Burlington Northern, will draft a cleanup plan for this site. This plan should be complete in 1997. Once a cleanup plan is developed, a system will be designed and installed. Operation of an actual cleanup system may continue for many years.

Other Site Activities

In addition to wrapping up the site study and looking at cleanup options, Burlington Northern reports that other on-going site activities include:

- An average of 20 gallons of petroleum are being collected per month from the recovery well system installed last year along West River Drive.
- In response to a request from the community, four signs were placed near the River informing recreational users of the petroleum seeps in the area.
- Oil containment booms have been placed along the bank of the Skykomish River where oil seeps have been observed.

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Skykomish Environmental Coalition

You may be aware that a number of Skykomish residents have come together to form the Skykomish Environmental Coalition. The Coalition's primary goal is to provide input on behalf of the Skykomish community on the work that Burlington Northern and Ecology are doing. The group received a grant from the Department of Ecology and hired an independent environmental consultant to review reports and translate the contents for the community. The Coalition is now leading the community meetings related to the cleanup. The group

welcomes additional volunteers. The primary contacts for the group are: Michael Moore, Lorna Goebel and Anne Sekor.

Need More Information?

If you have questions, please call Ecology's Public Involvement Specialist, Marianne Deppman, at (206) 649-7254 or leave a message for her at 1-800-826-7716. **Please note:** To ensure that we are contacting all property owners and residents, we are expanding our mailing list. It is possible you will receive two copies of the next several mailings. To avoid duplications in the future, please call or write the Department of Ecology (our address and phone number are in the box on page one) and tell us the best way to reach you.

Site Map

