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Sediments to be Removed from Black Sand Beach - Public Invited to Comment on Proposed Work

Teck American Incorporated (Teck) entered into a voluntary agreement with the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) to remove contaminated sediment from Black Sand Beach in the Fall of 2010. The beach is located about 3 miles south of the Canadian border near Northport.

The public is invited to comment on a Draft Work Plan, 60 percent engineering design, State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) Checklist and Determination of Non-Significance (DNS) documents that will guide the work. **Comments will be accepted January 4, 2010 through February 5, 2010. (See page 3 for contacts, where to submit comments, and locations to review documents.)**

A public meeting will be held on January 14, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. at the Northport High School, 408 10th Street in Northport. Ecology and Teck will provide an overview of the project and answer questions from the public.



Removal of Slag at Black Sand Beach is Important

Teck Cominco's metal smelting operations in Trail, British Columbia, Canada discharged sand-sized slag to the Columbia River from the 1930s until the practice was discontinued in 1995. The industrial slag moved downstream and some of it settled along portions of the river bank now known as Black Sand Beach.

The beach is located along land owned by the State of Washington and managed by the Department of Natural Resources. The State of Washington believes it is in the public's best interest to remove the slag from Black Sand Beach and replace it with clean fill material for the following reasons:

- Slag is an industrial waste and contains hazardous substances including zinc, lead, copper, and other metals that cannot be removed from the slag in normal processing.
- Certain metals in slag harm the health of the river and aquatic life. Removing slag will be protective of the ecological environment - the health of the river and aquatic life.
- The beach is a popular spot for swimming, fishing, camping and other recreational activities. Removal also provides a cleaner beach for recreation.

Slag Removal to Begin Fall 2010

Prior to beginning the work, all required permits and necessary coordination between various agencies in the United States will be completed. Teck also will comply with Canadian laws for transportation, disposal, and recycling of the slag materials.

In the fall of 2010 Teck will prepare the site and remove approximately 5,000 cubic yards of slag from the beach, down to the waterline (see Figures 1, 2 and 3). Work will take place when the river levels are seasonally low and create easier access to the sediments. Precautions will be taken to minimize impacts to people and the river system. Ecology will coordinate closely with Teck during the construction activities to verify the project objectives are met.

Transportation, Disposal, and Fill

Teck will haul the slag by truck to Trail, British Columbia for recycling. The unpaved Black Sand Beach access road intersects the Northport-Waneta Road. However, the alignment of the access road prohibits trucks leaving the site from turning north toward Canada. Trucks will exit the site toward Northport and use a designated turnaround area located about 1½ miles southwest (see Figure 4). An active, single-track BNSF railroad line runs adjacent to the Black Sand Beach. No off-track siding is available nearby to allow railcar staging and slag loading.

Teck will place clean, natural fill material where contaminated sediments were removed. The new beach will contain a combination of sand, gravel, and a coarser cobble-sized material. The uppermost layer of replacement fill will consist of a mixture of coarse sand and fine gravel. This material will be slightly coarser than the existing sand-sized slag. This slightly coarser-grained fill material will provide enhanced stabilization and less potential for erosion. Details about the proposed replacement fill may be found in the Work Plan.

State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA)

The State Environmental Policy Act, known as SEPA, requires government agencies to consider potential environmental impacts of a project before beginning the cleanup. A Determination of Non-Significance indicates the proposed actions will not have a probable significant adverse impact on the environment.

After review of an environmental checklist and other site-specific information, Ecology determined that removing slag and replacing it with clean fill material will not have a probable significant adverse impact on the environment. This action will benefit the environment by reducing exposure pathways. Therefore, Ecology has issued a Determination of Non-Significance.

Preparing the Site

Several steps will be taken to prepare the site before and during construction. Preparations include:

- Consideration of cultural resources in the area.
- Temporarily improving the access road to allow for trucks and equipment.
- Setting up temporary job-site operations and health and safety facilities.
- Providing erosion and sediment control measures.
- Monitoring and controlling dust e.g., covering stockpiled materials and providing potable water to spray if necessary.
- Providing safety flaggers where needed.
- Providing 24 hour security for the site.
- Providing construction fencing and signs.

Other measures will be taken as outlined in the Work Plan.

Beach Closed During Construction

Construction is being scheduled in the fall when river levels are seasonally low, and there is less recreational use. Access to the beach will not be available during construction.

Work is estimated to take 3-5 weeks. It is anticipated to begin in early September 2010 and be completed in October 2010.

What Happens Next?

Comments received from the public by February 5, 2010 will be reviewed and considered. The documents may be modified if necessary.

**WA Department of Ecology
Contacts**

**Mailing Address for all Ecology
Contacts:**

WA Department of Ecology
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Spokane WA 99205-1295

**Written Comments and Technical
Questions**

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SEPA Questions

Mary Ausburn 509/329-3474
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Public Involvement Questions

Carol Bergin 509/329-3546
e-mail: cabe461@ecy.wa.gov

Public Disclosure Requests

Kari Johnson, Public Disclosure
Call for an appointment 509/329-3415
e-mail: kajo461@ecy.wa.gov

Ecology's Toxics Cleanup Website

[http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/tcp/
sites/blackSandBeach/blackSandBeach_
hp.html](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/tcp/sites/blackSandBeach/blackSandBeach_hp.html)

Comments Accepted

January 4, 2010 through February 5, 2010

Public Meeting

January 14, 2010 7:00 p.m.
Northport High School
408 10th Street
Northport, WA 99157

Locations to Review Documents

WA Department of Ecology

4601 North Monroe
Spokane, WA 99205-1295
Contact: Kari Johnson 509/329-3415
e-mail: kajo461@ecy.wa.gov

Ecology's Website

[http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/tcp/sites/
blackSandBeach/blackSandBeach_hp.html](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/tcp/sites/blackSandBeach/blackSandBeach_hp.html)

Northport Community Library

311 Columbia Avenue
Northport, WA 99157
509/732-8928

Kettle Falls Public Library

605 Meyers Street
Kettle Falls, WA 99141
509/738-6817

Colville Public Library

195 South Oak Street
Colville, WA 99114
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**WA Department of Health
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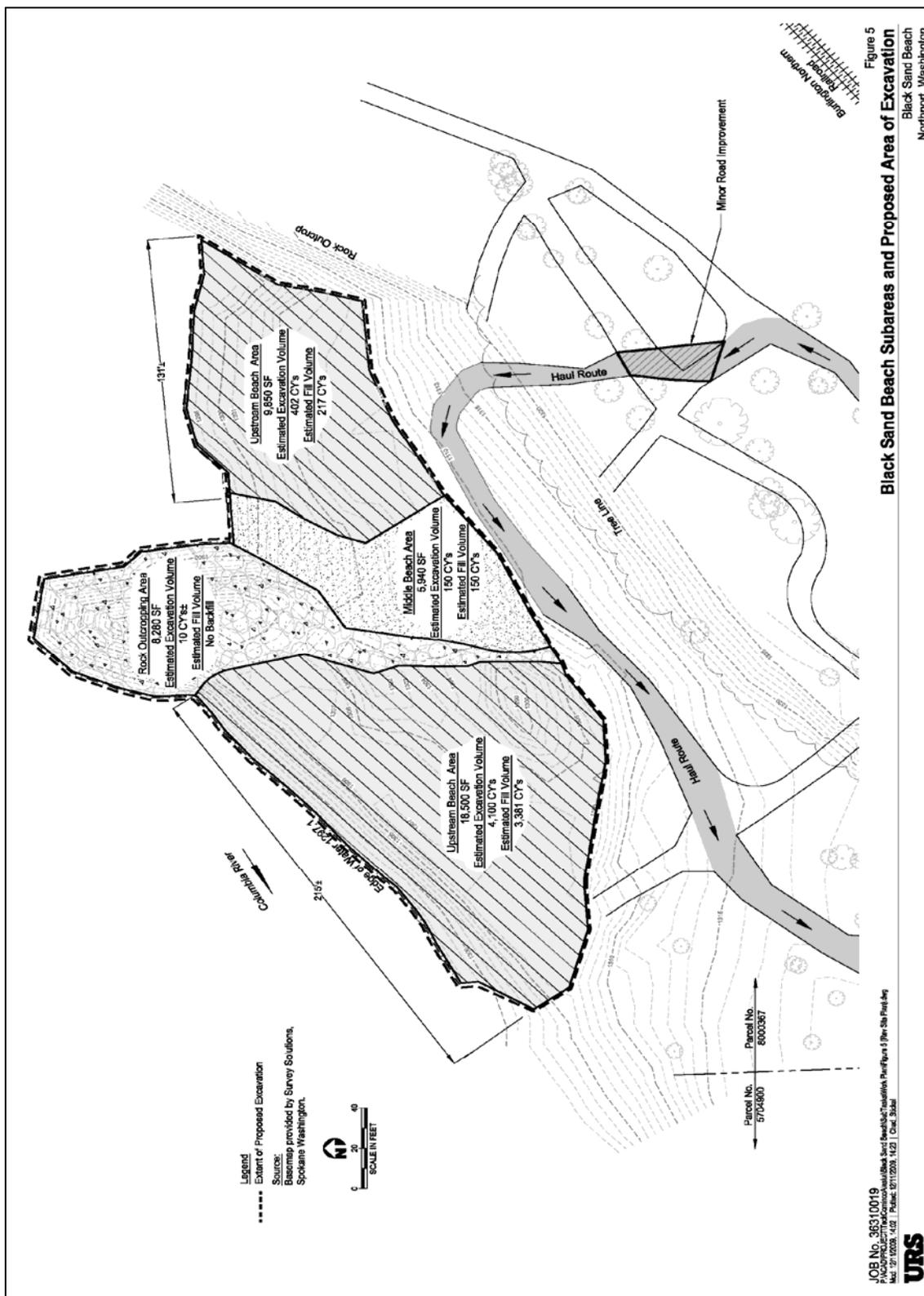


Figure 5
Black Sand Beach Subareas and Proposed Area of Excavation
 Black Sand Beach
 Northport, Washington



Figure 2
Black Sand Beach Before Slag Removal
(drawing courtesy of URS)

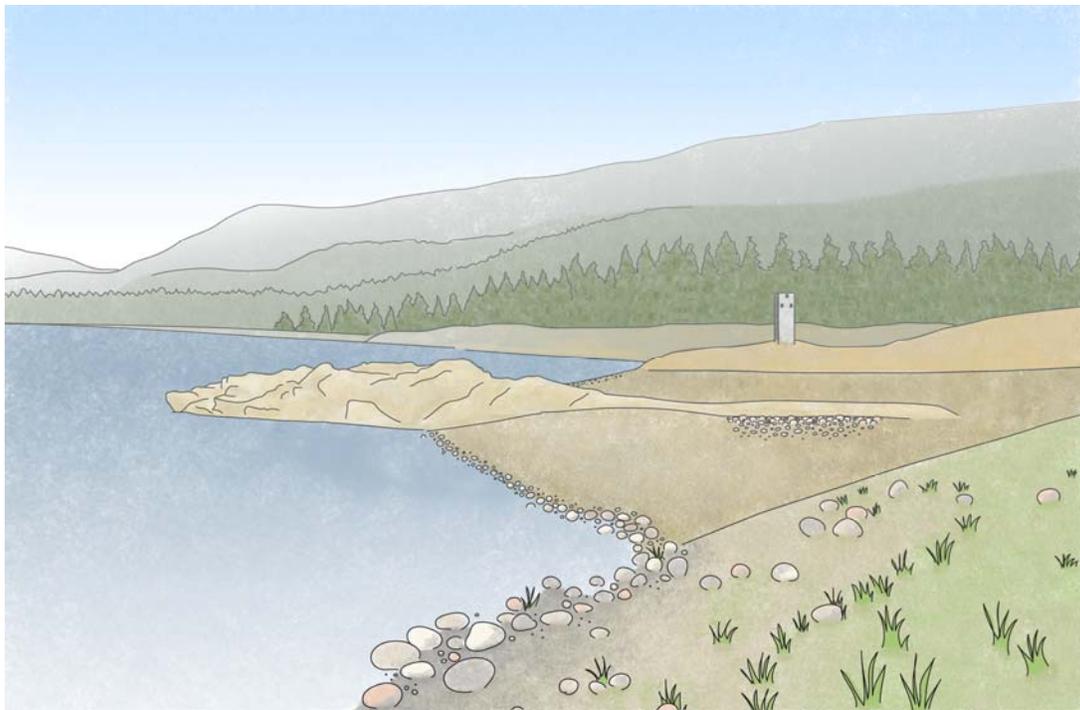


Figure 3
Black Sand Beach After Slag Removal
(drawing courtesy of URS)



Source: Google Earth Pro



Detail

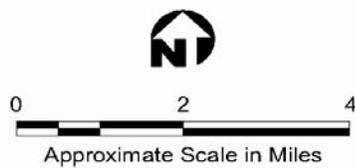


Figure 4
Transportation Routes
(courtesy of URS)

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