

**Site Cleanup:**

**CUSTOM PLYWOOD MILL SITE**

35<sup>th</sup> Street and V Avenue  
Anacortes, Washington

**DRAFT PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN**

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**Prepared by:**

Washington State Department of Ecology



**Revised February 2011**

## **This plan is for you!**

This Public Participation Plan (Plan) is prepared for the Custom Plywood Mill Site cleanup as part of the requirement of the Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA). The Plan provides information about MTCA cleanup actions and requirements for public involvement, and identifies how Ecology and GBH Investments LLC will support public involvement throughout the cleanup. The Plan is intended to encourage coordinated and effective public involvement tailored to the community's needs at the Custom Plywood Mill Site.

For additional copies of this document, please contact:

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If you need this publication in an alternate format, please call the Toxics Cleanup Program at (360) 407-7170. Persons with hearing loss can call 711 for Washington Relay Service. Persons with a speech disability can call (877) 833-6341 (TTY).

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# 1.0: Introduction and Overview of the Public Participation Plan

This Public Participation Plan (Plan) explains how you can become involved in improving the health of your community. It describes public participation opportunities that will be conducted during cleanup of a site in Anacortes, the Custom Plywood Mill Site. These opportunities are part of a cooperative agreement between the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) and GBH Investments LLC (GBH), the site owner. This agreement, called an Agreed Order, is a legal document in which GBH and Ecology agree that GBH will conduct a remedial investigation of the site and a study of cleanup alternatives in preparation for deciding on a cleanup action at the Custom Plywood Mill Site. The Custom Plywood Mill Site is located at 35<sup>th</sup> Street and V Avenue, in Anacortes.

Cleanup actions and the public participation process that helps guide them are established in Washington's Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA).<sup>1</sup> Under MTCA, Ecology is responsible for providing timely information and meaningful chances for the public to learn about and comment on important cleanup decisions before they are made. The goals of the public participation process are:

- To promote understanding of the cleanup process so that the public has the necessary information to participate.
- To encourage involvement through a variety of public participation opportunities.

This Public Participation Plan provides a framework for open dialogue about the cleanup among community members, Ecology, cleanup site owners, and other interested parties. It outlines basic MTCA requirements for community involvement activities that will help ensure that this exchange of information takes place during the investigation and cleanup, which include:

- Notifying the public about available reports and studies about the site.
- Notifying the public about review and comment opportunities during specific phases of the cleanup investigation.
- Providing appropriate public participation opportunities, such as fact sheets, to learn about cleanup documents, and if community interest exists, holding meetings to solicit input and identify community concerns.
- Considering public comments received during public comment periods.

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<sup>1</sup> The Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA) is the hazardous waste cleanup law for the State of Washington. The full text of the law can be found in Revised Code of Washington (RCW), Chapter 70.105D. The legal requirements and criteria for public notice and participation during MTCA cleanup investigations can be found in Washington Administrative Code (WAC), Section 173-340-600.

In addition to these basic requirements, the plan may include additional site-specific activities to meet the needs of your community. Based upon the type of the proposed cleanup action, the level of public concern, and the risks posed by the site, Ecology may decide that more public involvement opportunities are appropriate.

These opportunities form the basis for the public participation process. The intent of this plan is to:

- Provide complete and current information to all interested parties.
- Let you know when there are opportunities to provide input.
- Listen to concerns.
- Address those concerns.

### ***Part of the Puget Sound Initiative***

The Custom Plywood Mill Site is one of several sites in the Anacortes area and is part of a larger cleanup effort called the Puget Sound Initiative (PSI). Governor Chris Gregoire and the Washington State Legislature authorized the PSI as a regional approach to protect and restore Puget Sound. The PSI includes cleaning up 50-60 contaminated sites within one-half mile of the Sound. These sites are grouped in several bays around the Sound for “baywide” cleanup efforts. As other sites in the Anacortes baywide area move forward into investigation and cleanup, information about them will be provided to the community as well as to interested people and groups.

### ***Roles and Responsibilities***

Ecology will lead public involvement activities, with support from GBH. Ecology maintains overall responsibility and approval authority for the activities outlined in this plan. Both Ecology and GBH are responsible for cleanup at this site. GBH is responsible for cleanup of the Site, with Ecology providing oversight of all remedial activities. Ecology will ultimately oversee all cleanup activities and ensure that contamination on this Site is cleaned up to concentrations that are established in state regulations and that protect human health and the environment.

### ***Organization of this Public Participation Plan***

The sections that follow in this Plan provide:

- Section 2: Background information about the Custom Plywood Mill Site.
- Section 3: An overview of the local community that this plan is intended to engage.
- Section 4: Public involvement opportunities in this cleanup.

This Public Participation Plan addresses current conditions at the Site, but it is intended to be a dynamic working document that will be reviewed at each phase of the cleanup, and updated as needed. Ecology and GBH urge the public to become involved in the cleanup process.

## 2.0: Site Background

### *Site Description and Location*

The Custom Plywood Mill Site is located at 35<sup>th</sup> Street and V Avenue in Anacortes, Skagit County, Washington (see Figure 1). The northern portion of the Site is currently used for temporary boat storage, and the southern portion of the site is vacant, with several freshwater wetlands in the upland area and one estuarine wetland. The Site is bounded on the east by Fidalgo Bay, on the west and southwest by the Tommy Thompson hiking trail, on the north and south by undeveloped land, and on the northwest by V Place Road.



Figure 1: The Custom Plywood Mill Site is shown in the above map, located at 35<sup>th</sup> Street and V Avenue, in Anacortes, WA.

## ***General Site History and Contaminants***

A sawmill and wood-box factory, and then a plywood mill, operated on the Custom Plywood Mill Site for almost a century. Site features included a hog-fuel boiler; drum and tank storage area; transformer yard; above-ground storage tanks containing fuel oil, gasoline, diesel and/or propane; phenol formaldehyde resin and caustic storage tanks (both used to make plywood glue); a machine shop; a metal shop; and an area for spraying paint and oil. Contaminants from these operations may be present in site soil, sediments, and water.

Investigations on the site in 1995 and 1997 found the following contaminants at concentrations above MTCA cleanup levels in soil:

- Gasoline and oil
- PCBs
- Metals (arsenic, cadmium, chromium, and lead)

Contamination has also been detected in marine sediments and groundwater.

## ***The Cleanup Process***

Washington State's cleanup process and key chances for you to provide input are outlined in Figure 2. The general cleanup process includes the following steps:

- Remedial Investigation (RI) – investigates the site for types, locations, and amounts of contaminants.
- Feasibility Study (FS) – identifies cleanup options for those contaminants.
- Cleanup Action Plan (CAP) – selects the preferred cleanup option and explains how cleanup will be conducted.

Each of these steps is generally documented in reports and plans that will be available for public review. Public comment periods of at least 30 calendar days are usually conducted for the following documents:

- Draft Agreed Order or Draft Consent Decree
- Draft Public Participation Plan
- Draft RI report
- Draft FS report
- Draft CAP

These cleanup steps and documents are described in greater detail in the following subsections.



## ***Remedial Investigation for Interim Action***

The Remedial Investigation (RI) determines which contaminants are on the Site, where they are located, and whether there is a significant threat to human health or the environment.

The Draft Remedial Investigation (RI) for Interim Action for the Custom Plywood Mill Site was prepared by the Site owner in accordance with an Agreed Order with Ecology. The RI's purpose is to identify the nature and extent of contaminated upland soil and groundwater and sediments in the in-water portions of the Site.

Results of the investigations can be found in the draft RI report.

## ***Feasibility Study for Interim Remedial Action***

The Feasibility Study (FS) report identifies and evaluates cleanup options, in preparation for the next step in the process.

A Draft Feasibility Study (FS) for Interim Remedial Action was prepared in December 2010 to evaluate site conditions and develop cleanup options. The Draft FS addresses cleanup options for both upland and in-water portions of the Custom Plywood Mill Site.

The report describes exposure pathways, or how contaminants move through upland soils, groundwater, and sediment, and how human health may be affected. Information about the amount and location of contaminants and exposure pathways is used to identify cleanup action alternatives. Cleanup action alternatives are the options that will successfully achieve cleanup of the Site. Alternatives may contain pollution, remove pollution, or include institutional controls such as fencing, and they may be used in different combinations.

Cleanup options identified can be the draft FS report.

## ***Fidalgo Bay and Custom Plywood Mill Sediment Dioxin Study***

Previous sediment investigations in Fidalgo Bay have identified sediment contamination near the former Custom Plywood Mill Site. The purpose of the Fidalgo Bay and Custom Plywood Mill Sediment Dioxin Study was to further understand sediment quality relative to dioxin near the Custom Plywood Mill Site, and to determine background dioxin concentrations in Fidalgo Bay and Padilla Bay sediments.

Results of the investigations can be found in the report.

## ***Cleanup Action Plan for Phase 1***

The draft CAP explains the cleanup standards that will be applied at the Site, selects the preferred cleanup alternative(s), and outlines the work to be performed during the actual Site remediation. The CAP may also evaluate the completeness and effectiveness of any interim actions that were performed on the Site. The draft CAP will be available for public review and comment. Once public comments are reviewed and any changes are made, Ecology provides final approval, and Site cleanup can begin.

The Draft Cleanup Action Plan (CAP) for Phase 1 describes cleanup plans in detail for the upland portion of the Site, including the wetland mitigation area. It also contains the Draft Conceptual Engineering Design Report.

## ***State Environmental Policy Act Checklist and Determination of Non-Significance***

In addition to the Site cleanup documents, Ecology prepared a State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) checklist for the Site to identify any potential environmental impacts of the project on the surrounding environment. SEPA is intended to make sure that environmental values are considered during agency decision-making. The checklist identifies whether these impacts could be significant, that is, reasonably likely to have more than a moderate negative impact on the environment. Ecology determined that the cleanup actions were not likely to have significant negative impacts (a SEPA Determination of Non-Significance). The checklist and determination are both available for public comment.

## **3.0: Community Profile**

### ***Community Profile***

Anacortes is Skagit County's second largest city and its largest seaport. It is the principal city on Fidalgo Island. The current population is approximately 16,300 people (about 7,200 households) situated within about 12 square miles. Located on Fidalgo Bay, Anacortes has 12.5 miles of saltwater shoreline, giving rise to three Port of Anacortes marine terminals, a shipyard, several yacht and mid-size boat building and sales operations, and four private marinas. Four freshwater lakes and 3,300 acres of city-owned forestland and parks create a rural feeling, but the City also has modern educational and health care facilities. The City's 2006 labor workforce was more than 7,000, predominantly employed in manufacturing, accommodations/food service, retail, and health care<sup>2</sup>.

### ***Key Community Concerns***

An important part of the Public Participation Plan is to identify key community concerns for each cleanup site.

Many factors may raise community questions, such as the amount of contamination, how the contamination will be cleaned up, or future use of the Site. Community concerns often change over time, as new information is learned and questions are answered. Identifying site-specific community concerns at each stage of the cleanup process is helpful to ensure that they are adequately addressed. On-going key community concerns will be identified for the Custom Plywood Mill Site through public comments and other opportunities as detailed in Section 4.

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<sup>2</sup> Anacortes Chamber of Commerce web site, *available at* <http://www.anacortes.org/pdf/AnacortesCommunityProfileMarch2007.pdf>; Accessed 11/12/07.

## **4.0: Public Participation Opportunities**

Ecology and GBH invite you to share your comments and participate in the cleanup in your community. As we work to meet our goals, we will evaluate whether this public participation process is successful. This section describes the public participation opportunities for this Site.

### ***Measuring Success***

We want this public participation process to succeed. Success can be measured, at least in part, in the following ways:

- Number of written comments submitted that reflect understanding of the cleanup process and the site.
- Direct, in-person feedback about the site cleanup or public participation processes, if public meetings are held.
- Periodic updates to this plan to reflect community concerns and responses.

If we are successful, this process will increase:

- Community awareness about plans for cleanup and opportunities for public involvement.
- Public participation throughout the cleanup.
- Community understanding regarding how their input will be considered in the decision-making process.

### ***Activities and Information Sources***

#### **Ecology Contacts**

Ecology is the lead contact for questions about the cleanup in your community. The Ecology staff person identified in this section is familiar with the cleanup process and activities at the Site. For more information about public involvement or the technical aspects of the cleanup, please contact:

Hun Seak Park  
Ecology Site Manager  
WA State Dept. of Ecology  
Toxics Cleanup Program  
PO Box 47600  
Olympia, WA 98504-7600  
Phone: (360) 407-7189

E-mail: [Hpar461@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:Hpar461@ecy.wa.gov)

## Ecology's Webpage

Ecology has created a webpage to provide convenient access to information. Documents such as the Agreed Order, draft reports, and cleanup plans, are posted as they are issued during the investigation and cleanup process. Visitors to the webpage can find out about public comment periods and meetings; download, print, and read information; and submit comments via e-mail. The webpage also provides links to detailed information about the MTCA cleanup process. The Custom Plywood Mill Site webpage is available at the following address:

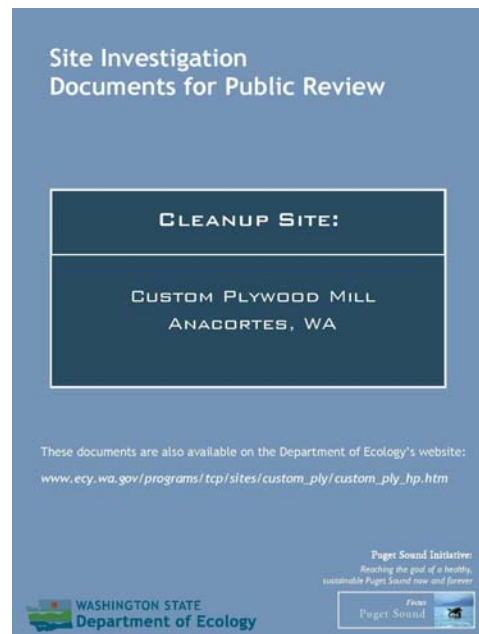
[http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/tcp/sites/custom\\_ply/custom\\_ply\\_hp.htm](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/tcp/sites/custom_ply/custom_ply_hp.htm).

## Information Centers/Document Repositories

The most comprehensive source of information about the Custom Plywood Mill Site is the information center, or document repository. Two repositories provide access to the complete list of site-related documents. All Custom Plywood Mill Site investigation and cleanup activity reports will be kept in print at those two locations and will be available for your review. They can also be requested on compact disk (CD). Document repositories are updated before public comment periods to include the relevant documents for review. Documents remain at the repositories throughout the investigation and cleanup. For this Site, the document repositories and their hours are:

- **Anacortes Public Library**  
1220 10<sup>th</sup> Street  
Phone: (360) 293-1910  
Hours: Mon. 9 am - 8 pm,  
Tues. – Wed. 11 am - 8 pm,  
Thurs. – Fri. 11 am - 6 pm,  
Sat. 12 pm - 5 pm, Sun. 1 pm - 5 pm
- **WA Department of Ecology Headquarters**  
300 Desmond Dr.  
Lacey, WA 98503  
By appointment. Please contact Carol Dorn  
at (360) 407-7224 or [Carol.Dorn@ecy.gov](mailto:Carol.Dorn@ecy.gov).

Look for document covers much like the illustration on the right.



## Public Comment Periods

Public comment periods provide opportunities for you to review and comment on major documents, such as the Agreed Order, draft Public Participation Plan, draft RI and FS reports, and the draft CAP. The typical public comment period is 30 calendar days.

### *Notice of Public Comment Periods*

Notices for each public comment period will be provided by local newspaper and by mail. These notices indicate the timeframe and subject of the comment period, and explain how you can submit your comments. For the Custom Plywood Mill Site, newspaper notices will be posted in The Anacortes American.

Notices are also sent by regular mail to the local community and interested parties. The community typically includes all residential and business addresses within one-quarter mile of the site, as well as potentially interested parties such as public health entities, environmental groups, and business associations.

### *Fact Sheets*

One common format for public comment notification is the fact sheet. Like the newspaper notice, fact sheets explain the timeframe and purpose of the comment period, but also provide background and a summary of the document under review. Two fact sheets have been prepared for the Custom Plywood Mill Site. The fact sheets explain the documents that have been released for public comment (See Appendices A and B). Future fact sheets will be prepared at key milestones in the cleanup process.

## **MTCA Site Register**

Ecology produces an electronic newsletter called the MTCA Site Register. This semi-monthly publication provides updates of the cleanup activities occurring throughout the state, including public meeting dates, public comment periods, and cleanup-related reports. Individuals who would like to receive the MTCA Site Register can sign up three ways:

- Call (360) 407-6069
- Send an email request to [ltho461@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:ltho461@ecy.wa.gov)
- Register on-line at  
[http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/tcp/pub\\_inv/pub\\_inv2.html](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/tcp/pub_inv/pub_inv2.html)

## **Mailing Lists**

Ecology maintains both e-mail and regular mail distribution lists throughout the cleanup process. The lists are created from carrier route delineations for addresses within one-quarter mile of the Site; potentially interested parties; public meeting sign-in sheets; and requests made in person or by regular mail or e-mail. You may request to be on a mailing list by contacting the Ecology staff person listed earlier in this section.

## **Optional Public Meetings**

A public meeting and open house will be held during the comment period for the Draft Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study, Draft Cleanup Action Plan and Engineering Design Report, and State Environmental Policy Act Checklist and Mitigated Determination of Non-Significance. The public meeting will be on **February 24, 2011 from 4:30-6:30 pm at the Anacortes City Council Chambers**, located at 6<sup>th</sup> Street and Q Avenue in Anacortes, WA. Public meetings provide additional opportunities to learn about the investigation or cleanup, and to enhance informed comment.

## **Submitting Comments**

You may submit comments by regular mail or e-mail during public comment periods to the Ecology Project Manager listed earlier in this section.

## **Response to Comments**

Ecology will review all comments submitted during public comment periods, and will modify documents as necessary. You will receive notice by regular mail or e-mail that Ecology has received your comments, along with a general explanation about how the comments were addressed, and where the revised document can be found.

## **Other**

Ecology and GBH are committed to the public participation process and will consider additional means for delivering information and receiving comments.

## ***Notification to Neighborhood Organizations***

In addition to notification about cleanup activities, special notification to the community is triggered if GBH chooses to take land use actions. Local neighborhood organizations will be notified by telephone or by e-mail within one week of occurrence or confirmation of the following:

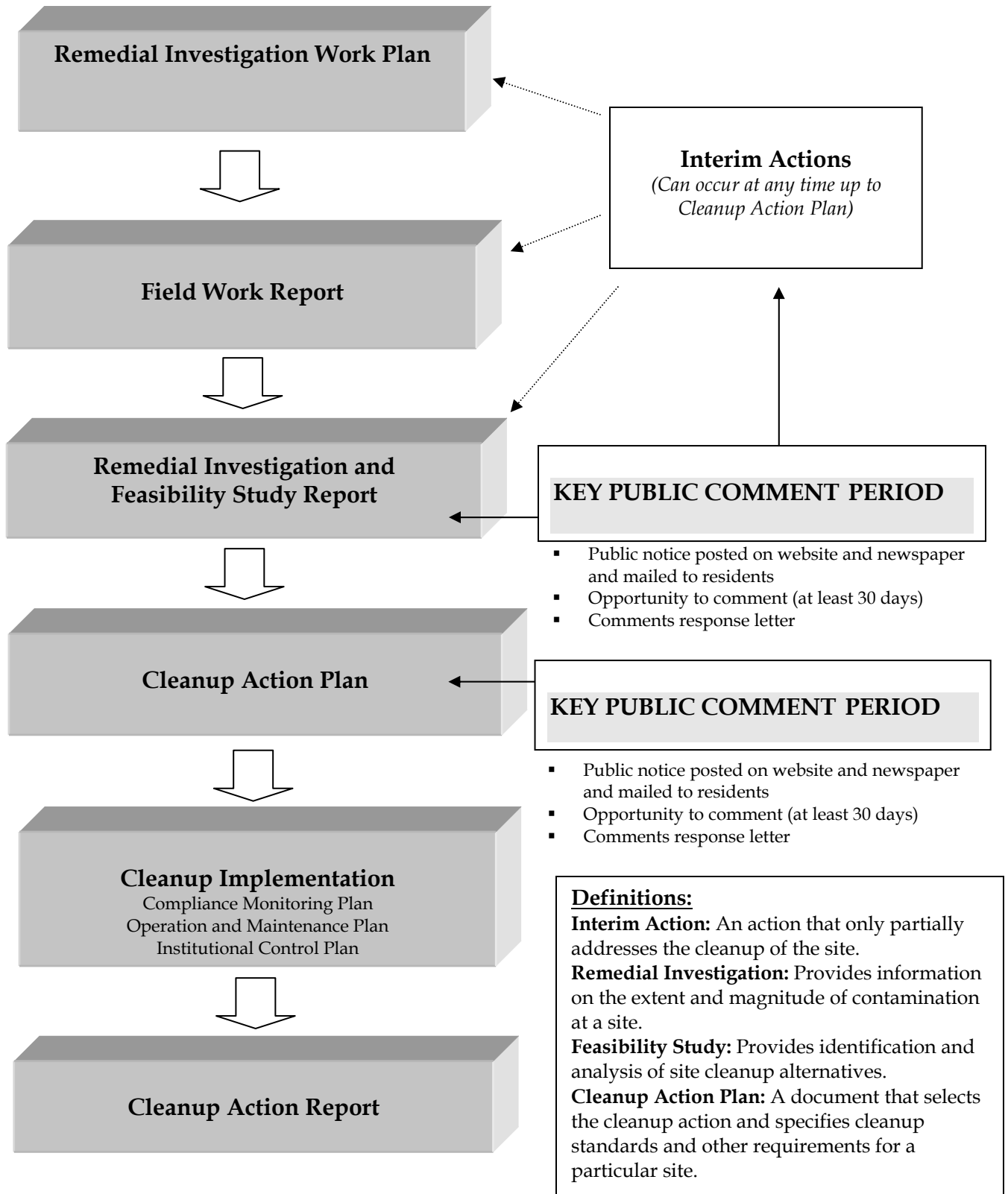
- Notification of the intent to transfer properties;
- Notification of public comment periods for development actions that will trigger State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) and permitting requirements. All major documents will be submitted to the official document repositories; and
- Notification and stop work for any activities performed on the site that are not allowable under a restrictive covenant for the site.

## ***Public Participation Grants***

You are eligible to apply for a Public Participation Grant from Ecology to provide additional public participation activities. Those additional activities will not reduce the scope of the activities defined by this Plan. Activities conducted under this Plan would coordinate with the additional activities defined under the grant.



**Figure 2: Washington State Cleanup Process**



## Glossary

**Cleanup:** The implementation of a cleanup action or interim action.

**Cleanup Action:** Any remedial action except interim actions, taken at a site to eliminate, render less toxic, stabilize, contain, immobilize, isolate, treat, destroy, or remove a hazardous substance that complies with MTCA cleanup requirements, including but not limited to: complying with cleanup standards, utilizing permanent solutions to the maximum extent practicable, and including adequate monitoring to ensure the effectiveness of the cleanup action.

**Cleanup Action Plan:** A document that selects the cleanup action and specifies cleanup standards and other requirements for a particular site. The cleanup action plan, which follows the remedial investigation/feasibility study report, is subject to a public comment period. After completion of a comment period on the cleanup action plan, Ecology finalizes the cleanup action plan.

**Cleanup Level:** The concentration (or amount) of a hazardous substance in soil, water, air, or sediment that protects human health and the environment under specified exposure conditions. Cleanup levels are part of a uniform standard established in state regulations, such as MTCA.

**Cleanup Process:** The process for identifying, investigating, and cleaning up hazardous waste sites.

**Contaminant:** Any hazardous substance that does not occur naturally or occurs at greater than natural background levels.

**Feasibility Study:** Provides identification and analysis of site cleanup alternatives and is usually completed within a year. The entire Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study (RI/FS) process takes about two years and is followed by the cleanup action plan. Remedial action evaluating sufficient site information to enable the selection of a cleanup action plan.

**Hazardous Site List:** A list of ranked sites that require further remedial action. These sites are published in the Site Register.

**Interim Action:** Any remedial action that partially addresses the cleanup of a site. It is an action that is technically necessary to reduce a threat to human health or the environment by eliminating or substantially reducing one or more pathways for exposure to a hazardous substance at a facility; an action that corrects a problem that may become substantially worse or cost substantially more to address if the action is delayed; an action needed to provide for completion of a site hazard assessment, state remedial investigation/feasibility study, or design of a cleanup action.

**Model Toxics Control Act:** Refers to RCW 70.105D. Voters approved it in November 1988. The implementing regulation is WAC 173-340 and was amended in 2001.

**Public Notice:** At a minimum, adequate notice mailed to all persons who have made a timely request of Ecology and to persons residing in the potentially affected vicinity of the proposed action; mailed to appropriate news media; published in the local (city or county) newspaper of largest circulation; and the opportunity for interested persons to comment.

**Public Participation Plan:** A plan prepared under the authority of WAC 173-340-600 to encourage coordinated and effective public involvement tailored to the public's needs at a particular site.

**Release:** Any intentional or unintentional entry of any hazardous substance into the environment, including, but not limited to, the abandonment or disposal of containers of hazardous substances.

**Remedial Action:** Any action to identify, eliminate, or minimize any threat posed by hazardous substances to human health or the environment, including any investigative and monitoring activities of any release or threatened release of a hazardous substance, and any health assessments or health effects studies conducted in order to determine the risk or potential risk to human health.

**Remedial Investigation:** Any remedial action that provides information on the extent and magnitude of contamination at a site. This usually takes 12 to 18 months and is followed by the feasibility study. The purpose of the Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study is to collect and develop sufficient site information to enable the selection of a cleanup action.

# **APPENDIX A**

## **Fact Sheet for Agreed Order and Public Participation Plan**

# **APPENDIX B**

**Fact Sheet for Draft RIFS,  
Draft CAP and Engineering Design Report,  
and  
SEPA Checklist and Mitigated DNS**