

## Department of Ecology News Release - September 17, 2010

10-242

### Agreement requires environmental report on old Bellingham landfill site - Public comment period Sept. 22 – Oct. 22, 2010

BELLINGHAM – The Washington Department of Ecology invites the public to comment on a draft legal agreement and draft public participation plan for the Eldridge Municipal Landfill cleanup site within Little Squalicum Park.

Public review of the draft agreement is an early step toward cleaning up the historical landfill. The public comment period is Sept. 22 – Oct. 22, 2010.

The landfill site is one of 12 cleanup sites in the Bellingham Bay Demonstration Pilot – a multi-agency collaborative effort that combines cleanup, controlling pollution sources, habitat restoration and land use.

The site covers about 7,200 square feet within the Little Squalicum Park boundary. Whatcom County owns the property, and the city manages it as a park.

In the 1930s, the city used a portion of what is now the park as a landfill for burning and burying local municipal waste. It operated for only a few years.

The landfill was discovered and investigated as part of the 2006 Little Squalicum Park environmental study. The landfill site is separate from the Little Squalicum Park site. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is overseeing cleanup of the creek area of the park as part of the adjacent Oeser Superfund site.

In the landfill area, researchers found municipal garbage, including glass bottles, metal scraps, drywall, charcoal, ash and ceramics. Surface soil samples contained low levels of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), benzoic acid, phthalates, pentachlorophenol (PCP) and metals (cadmium, lead and zinc). Subsurface soil samples contained higher levels of metals (cadmium, copper, lead, mercury and zinc).

The final legal agreement will require the city to develop an environmental report using information collected during the Little Squalicum Park investigation, analyze cleanup options and develop a draft cleanup action plan. Ecology will oversee work done under the agreement.

The draft public participation plan describes how Ecology will inform the public about the site, and explains when and how the community can get involved.

A final agreement and public participation plan are required steps toward cleaning up toxic contamination in the environment under the state's cleanup law, the Model Toxics Control Act.

Ecology will reimburse up to half the city's costs for work performed under the agreement. Reimbursements come from the state's remedial action grant program, which helps pay to

clean up publicly owned sites. The state Legislature funds the grant program with revenues from a tax on hazardous substances.

Draft documents will be available for public review as hard copies and online by Wednesday, Sept. 22.

View documents:

- Bellingham Public Library, 210 Central Ave.; 360-778-7323.
- By appointment at Ecology's Bellingham Field Office, 1440 10th St., Ste. 102; Call Lindsay Albin: 360-715-5200; Hours: Monday – Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.
- By appointment at Ecology's regional office in Bellevue, 3190 160th Ave. SE Bellevue, WA 98008-5452; Call Sally Perkins: 425-649-7190
- Ecology's toxics cleanup website: [\*Eldridge Municipal Landfill\*](#)

Submit comments Sept. 22 – Oct. 22, 2010 to: Mary O'Herron, site manager, Washington Department of Ecology, 1440 10th St., Ste. 102, Bellingham, WA 98225-7028, or [mary.oherron@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:mary.oherron@ecy.wa.gov)

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