

## **Draft legal agreement for site study ready for public review**

The Washington Department of Ecology, the city of Bellingham and Puget Sound Energy have completed a draft legal agreement for an environmental cleanup site in Bellingham. The agreement, called an agreed order, is for the South State Street Manufactured Gas Plant site at the north end of Boulevard Park.

When final, the agreement will require the city and Puget Sound Energy to complete certain tasks. They must study the environmental conditions of the site (called a remedial investigation) and analyze cleanup options (called a feasibility study) with Ecology oversight.

The draft legal agreement and a draft public participation plan will be available for public review and comment Feb. 5 – March 8, 2010.

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.

The gas plant site, formerly called the Boulevard Park site, is one of 12 cleanup sites in the Bellingham Bay Demonstration Pilot, a multi-agency initiative integrating sediment cleanup, control of pollution sources, habitat restoration and land use bay wide.

### **Site location and contaminants**

The South State Street Manufactured Gas Plant site is about 6 acres (4 acres of land and 2 acres of sediment in the water) at the north end of Boulevard Park on the Bellingham waterfront.

Portions of properties at South State Street near Bay View Drive are contaminated where a manufactured gas plant operated from the 1890s to the 1950s. The plant made gas from coal for home heating and cooking. In-depth investigation may reveal additional contamination sources. These contaminated areas make up the site.

The only remaining gas plant structures are a concrete above-ground gas-holding tank, a small brick building and underground piping in an area near South State Street.

### **Comments accepted**

Feb. 5 – March 8, 2010

#### **Submit comments and technical questions to:**

Mary O'Herron  
Site Manager  
WA Department of Ecology  
1440 10<sup>th</sup> St., Ste. 102  
Bellingham, WA 98225-7028  
Phone: 360-715-5224  
E-mail: [mary.oherron@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:mary.oherron@ecy.wa.gov)

#### **Documents at these review locations by Feb. 5, 2010:**

**Department of Ecology  
Bellingham Field Office**  
1440 10<sup>th</sup> St., Ste. 102  
Bellingham, WA

**By appointment.** Call Linsay Albin:  
360-715-5200

**Bellingham Public Library**  
210 Central Ave.  
Bellingham, WA 98227

Phone: 360-778-7323  
Hours: Mon.-Tues. 10 a.m.-8 p.m.,  
Wed.-Sat. 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Sun. closed

**Department of Ecology  
Northwest Regional Office**  
3190 160<sup>th</sup> Ave. SE  
Bellevue, WA 98008-5452

**By appointment.** Call Sally Perkins:  
425-649-7190.

**Ecology's Toxics Cleanup Web site:**  
[www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/tcp/sites/blhm\\_bay/sites/s\\_state\\_st\\_mgp.htm](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/tcp/sites/blhm_bay/sites/s_state_st_mgp.htm)

**Or:** Go to [www.ecy.wa.gov](http://www.ecy.wa.gov), click on cleanup, site list by county, scroll to Whatcom County, then click S. State St. MGP.

Facility Site ID #: 2865

## S. State St. Manufactured Gas Plant

Bellingham Bay Gas Co., a predecessor to Puget Sound Energy, was the first operator of the plant. Cascade Natural Gas bought and continued to operate the plant in the 1950s. Residential developers bought the gas plant property in the 1960s. The city acquired most of the gas plant property in 1975 for use as a park. The state and BNSF Railway Co. also own portions of the site.

Past sampling and analysis have found elevated concentrations of petroleum hydrocarbons, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) and benzene, toluene and xylene (BTX) at the site.

These contaminants are present in concentrations that exceed standards under the state's cleanup law and must be addressed.

### Overview of the agreed order

The proposed agreed order is a legal agreement between Ecology, the city and Puget Sound Energy.

It describes the studies that the city and Puget Sound Energy agree to perform on the site. The agreed order covers these studies and documents:

- **Remedial investigation and feasibility study (RI/FS) work plans** - Explains the work needed to look for and analyze contamination in sediment, soil, surface water and groundwater.
- **RI/FS report** - Presents the results of the study, proposes alternatives for cleanup actions, and identifies a preferred action.

The purpose of the agreed order is to direct actions that will lead to a cleanup that protects human health and the environment. It ensures the work happens in a timely manner and according to the state's cleanup law.

### Public comment invited

Ecology is asking for your comments on the draft agreed order, the legal agreement that will require the city of Bellingham and Puget Sound Energy to complete an in-depth environmental study of the site and analyze cleanup options.

Ecology also is seeking comments on a draft public participation plan.

You are invited to:

- **Review** the agreed order and public participation plan.
- **Send** your comments to Ecology for consideration. **Comments will be accepted Feb. 5 – March 8, 2010.**

See the box at the right of Page 1 for details about where to review documents and submit comments.

### Overview of the draft public participation plan

Ecology is committed to providing the public with information about cleanup activities and opportunities to participate. As part of this commitment, Ecology has developed a draft public participation plan for this site. The plan outlines how interested parties can learn about the cleanup and provide input.

Your comments and ideas are needed to help inform cleanup activities. The public participation plan explains how Ecology will:

- Notify the public when and where documents are available for review and comment.
- Notify the public about how to become involved.
- Provide public participation opportunities.
- Respond to public comments.

### What happens next?

Once the public comment period ends, Ecology will review and consider all comments it receives. The draft agreed order and public participation plan may be modified based on your comments. If there are significant changes, Ecology will issue the documents again for public review.

As future documents about the site are developed, Ecology will notify the public of

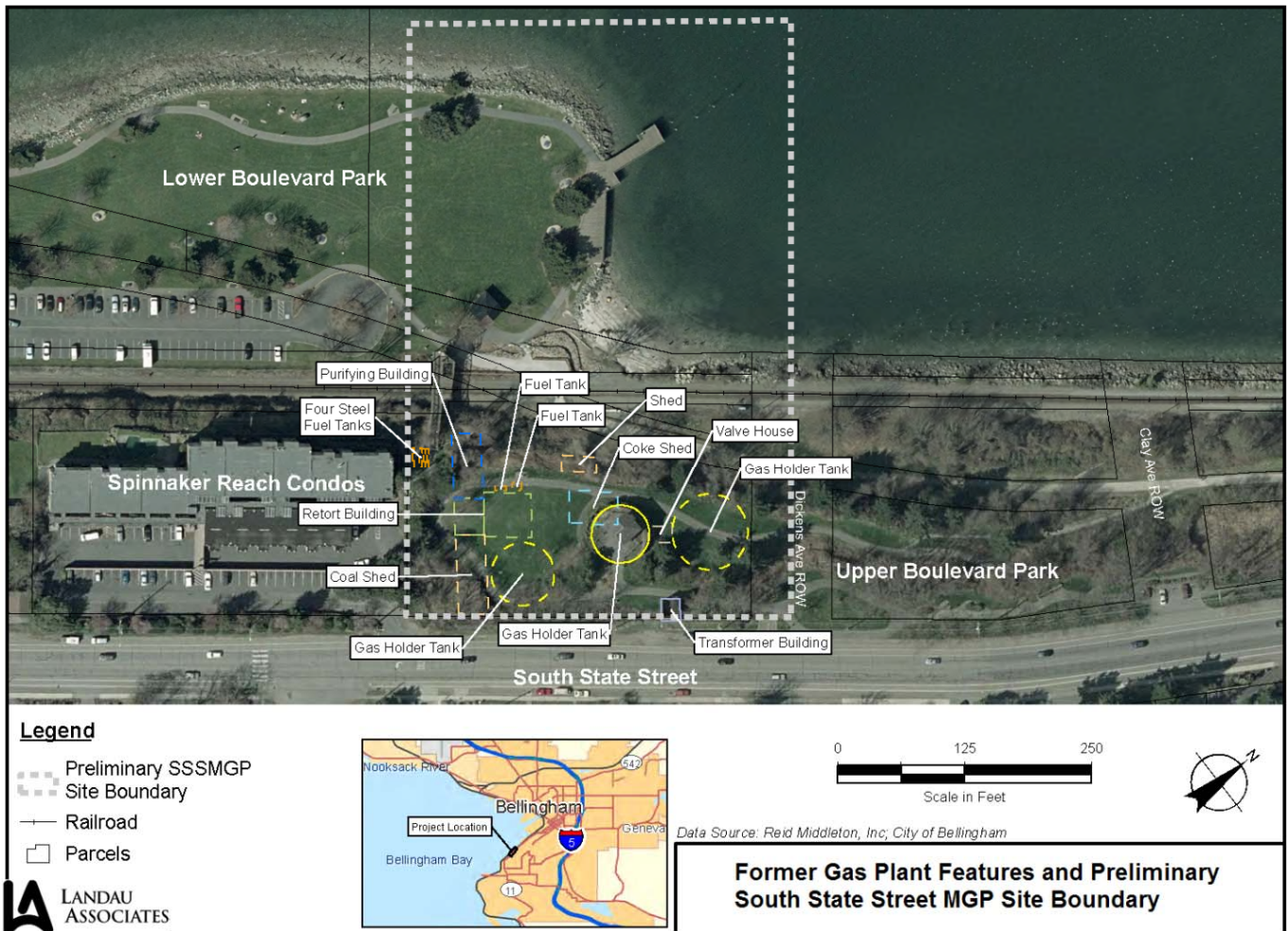
## S. State St. Manufactured Gas Plant

additional comment periods.

### Why this cleanup matters

Cleaning up the South State Street Manufactured Gas Plant site is necessary to protect people, plants, fish, birds and other aquatic and

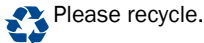
terrestrial life from exposure to harmful levels of contamination. All phases of the cleanup, including development of the agreed order, will be conducted under the Model Toxics Control Act, passed by citizen initiative in 1988 and enacted in 1989.



**You might be able to get this information by e-mail.** We are required to use regular mail to reach those who live or work close to cleanup sites. To find out if you can receive these notices electronically, call Katie Skipper at 360-715-5205 or send e-mail to [katie.skipper@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:katie.skipper@ecy.wa.gov).



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Bellingham, WA 98225-7028



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## **South State Street Manufactured Gas Plant, Bellingham, WA**

**Ecology seeks public comment on a draft legal agreement for site study and draft public participation plan**

**Public comment period: Feb. 5 – March 8, 2010**

**Facility Site ID #: 2865**

### **Help with other formats?**

To ask about obtaining this document in a version for the visually impaired, call Katie Skipper at Ecology's Bellingham office, 360-715-5205.

Persons with hearing loss, call 711 for Washington Relay Service.

Persons with a speech disability, call 877-833-6341.

**Information in Spanish:** El borrador de una orden acordada y un plan de participación pública están disponible para revisión. El Departamento de Ecología del Estado de Washington (Ecología) está aceptando comentarios desde el 5 de febrero hasta el 8 de marzo de 2010. Cuando finalizado, el acuerdo requeriría que la ciudad de Bellingham estudia el sitio con la supervisión de Ecología. Para más información en español, favor de llamar a Greg Bohn a 509-454-4174 o por correo electrónico a [gregory.bohn@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:gregory.bohn@ecy.wa.gov), y refiere al South State Street Manufactured Gas Plant.