



Spokane River –Project Update 2007

Cleanup Focuses on PCBs, Lead, Arsenic, Zinc, and Cadmium

Several restoration projects are taking place along the Spokane River in Washington State. The projects in this update are part of Governor Gregoire's priority to Reduce Toxic Chemicals in the Environment. Work is being conducted mainly through the Department of Ecology's Toxics Cleanup Program in Spokane.

Three Projects Completed

Upriver Dam. The dam is located along Upriver Drive east of Greene Street. The project begins directly behind the dam and stretches east for nearly one half mile. Under Ecology's direction, contractors for Avista Development, Inc., placed a three-layered cover called an engineered cap over the contaminated sediments on the river bottom. The cap is made of coal, sand, and gravel and is intended to isolate PCBs and keep contaminants from moving.



Placing the Cap at Upriver Dam

Donkey Island. This project is east of the dam in wetlands and backwater channels found on the north bank of the river. Ecology provided oversight as contractors removed PCB-contaminated soil and restored the area with clean sand. Replanting in areas that were disturbed is planned for spring 2007.



Removing PCBs at Donkey Island

Starr Road. This restoration area runs along the north bank of the Spokane River near the intersection of Starr and River Roads close to the Idaho state line. EPA in coordination with Ecology removed shoreline soils contaminated with lead, arsenic, zinc and cadmium. These heavy metals came from historic mining activities upstream. After removal of contaminants, clean materials were placed on shoreline and upland areas. A pull-out parking area and footpath to the clean shoreline area were also created.



New pull-out parking and footpath at Starr Road

Two New Projects Begin in 2007

Murray Road. The work area for this project lies along the north bank of the river about one mile downstream from the Starr Road site. A sand and gravel covering is being planned for this area that will act as a cap over the lead, arsenic, zinc, and cadmium contamination. A new footpath will be built leading to the newly cleaned recreational area.

Island Complex. This project is located about 2.5 miles west of the Idaho border. Cleanup work focuses on the south and west banks of the island in the river. Restoration includes stabilizing and capping certain areas of the river bank where lead and arsenic exceed state standards. This work reduces erosion and limits human and wildlife exposure to contaminants. It also restores portions of the river bank with natural vegetation. A footpath is also planned at this site.

What are PCBs?

- PCBs are a group of manufactured chemicals used to insulate, cool, and lubricate transformers, capacitors or other electrical equipment.
- PCBs build up in the fatty tissues of humans, fish, and animals and may cause cancer.

For More Information Contact

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Why Cleanup Matters

- These restoration projects reduce contamination in the environment.
- Cleanup improves the health of the Spokane River.
- Reducing contamination provides a safer environment for children, adults, and wildlife who may use these areas.

Ecology's Spokane River Web Site

www.ecy.wa.gov then click on Spokane River

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