

Proposed interim cleanup ready for public review

The Washington Department of Ecology is announcing a proposed interim cleanup of portions of the Georgia-Pacific West cleanup site in Bellingham. The interim action will remove mercury-contaminated building materials, and soils with high levels of mercury and petroleum, from certain areas of the site and dispose of them at an approved upland landfill. Construction is scheduled to occur in two phases: petroleum soils in the fall of 2011 and mercury materials and soil in the spring of 2012.

In August 2009, the Port of Bellingham and Ecology entered into a legal agreement, called an agreed order, to complete an environmental study of the site (remedial investigation) and evaluate cleanup options (feasibility study). The remedial investigation and feasibility study report is scheduled to be ready for public review in 2012.

Results of the remedial investigation led to further study of select areas of the site. This additional information shows levels of contamination that warrant an interim action in advance of completing the investigation and final cleanup.

The interim action is described in a proposed amendment to the 2009 agreed order and includes a detailed plan for the interim action as well as general language providing for potential future interim actions. Future cleanup actions will also be subject to public review.

Ecology invites the public to review the proposed amendment and submit comments from July 5 through August 3, 2011. A public meeting will be held on July 12, 2011 (See right for details).

Site history, location and contaminants

The Georgia-Pacific West site, located at 300 W. Laurel Street in Bellingham, Washington, encompasses approximately 64 acres on the south side of the Whatcom Waterway (Figure 1). A pulp and tissue mill operated at the site from 1926 through 2007. A chlor-alkali plant, which produced chlorine gas and sodium hydroxide (caustic) using a mercury cell technology, operated within the southeastern portion of the mill property between 1965 and 1999.

Public Meeting and comment period

Public Meeting:

6-8pm; July 12, 2011
Technology Development Center
Douglas G. Smith Conference Room
1000 F Street, Bellingham

Comments accepted:

July 5 through August 3, 2011

Submit comments and technical questions to:

Brian Sato, Site Manager
WA Department of Ecology
3190 160th Avenue SE
Bellevue, WA 98008-5452
Phone: 425-649-7265
E-mail: brian.sato@ecy.wa.gov

Document at these review locations:

Department of Ecology
Bellingham Field office
1440 10th St., Ste., 102
Bellingham, WA

By appointment. Call Linsay Albin at 360-715-5200.

Bellingham Public Library
210 Central Ave.
Bellingham, WA
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 160th Ave. SE
Bellevue, WA

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

Ecology's Toxics Cleanup Web site:

<https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/gsp/Sitepage.aspx?csid=2279>

Steam heat was supplied to the Mill by burning Bunker C fuel oil in an on-site steam plant. The fuel oil was stored in a pair of large tanks on the site.

As a result of these historical activities, investigations have found petroleum hydrocarbons, metals, dioxins, furans, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), and volatile organic compounds in soils and groundwater. These contaminants are in concentrations that exceed standards under the state's toxic cleanup law, the Model Toxics Control Act, and must be addressed.

The site is one of 12 cleanup sites in the Bellingham Bay Demonstration Pilot, a multi-agency bay-wide project that brings together cleanup, controlling pollution sources, restoring habitat, accommodating public access, and land-use planning.

Proposed interim action

The proposed interim action will remove mercury-contaminated building materials, approximately 450 tons of mercury contaminated soil and approximately 8,000 tons of petroleum contaminated soil that are a source of contamination to groundwater and air. The three planned removal areas are shown on Figure 1.

The removed contaminated material will be disposed at an approved upland landfill. Soil excavations will be backfilled with clean material.

Public comment invited

Ecology is providing the interim action in a proposed amendment to the existing agreed order and is asking for your comments.

You are invited to:

- **Review** the proposed agreed order amendment.

- **Send** your comments to Ecology for consideration. **Comments will be accepted July 5 through August 3, 2011.**

The Port of Bellingham is conducting a separate public comment period under the State Environmental Policy Act for this site. Please see the port website for details at: <http://www.portofbellingham.com/index.aspx?nid=93>

What happens next?

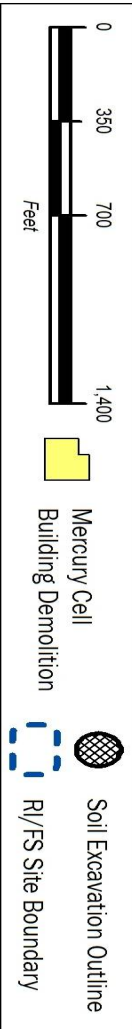
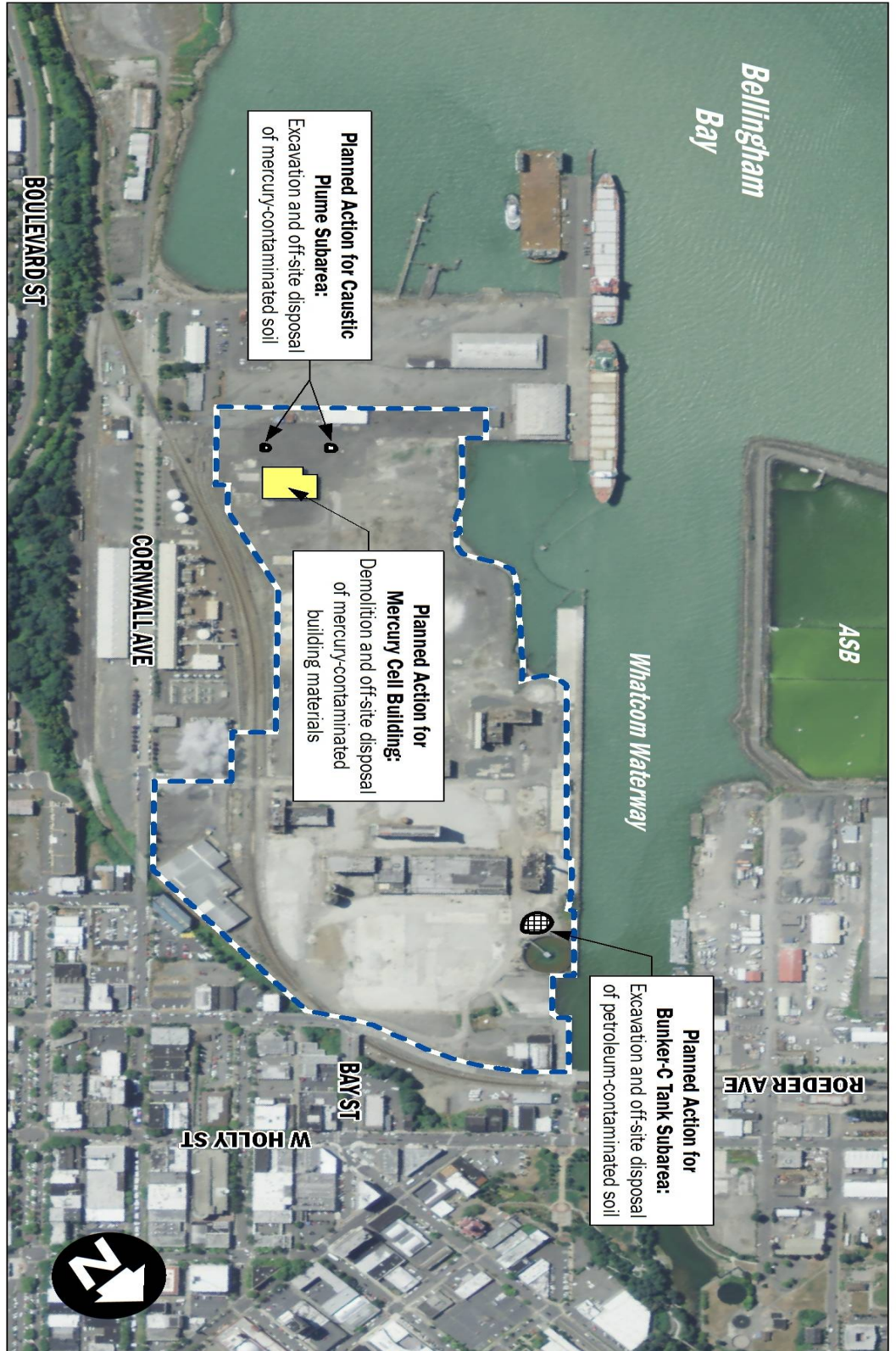
Once the public comment period ends, Ecology will review and consider all comments received. The proposed amendment may be modified based upon your comments. If there are significant changes, Ecology will issue the amendment again for public review.

Why this cleanup matters

Cleaning up the Georgia-Pacific West site is necessary to protect people, plants, birds and other life from exposure to harmful levels of contamination, based upon the intended use of the site. All phases of the cleanup will be conducted under the Model Toxics Control Act, passed by citizen initiative in 1988 and enacted in 1989.

What can you do?

- Read about the cleanup in this handout.
- To get more detailed information, review the supporting documents at the locations listed in the column on Page 1 of this document.
- Write down your comments and questions. Send them to the Department of Ecology at the address provided on Page 1 of this mailer.
- Attend the public meeting July 12, 2011.



GP West Site Interim Action

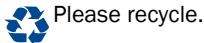
Bellingham, Washington

FIGURE NO.

1



3190 160th Avenue SE
Bellevue, WA 98008-5452



Please recycle.

Georgia-Pacific West, Bellingham, WA

Ecology seeks public comment on proposed interim cleanup

Public comment period: July 5 through August 3, 2011. Public meeting: July 12, 2011

Facility Site ID #: 14

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

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

Información en español: El Departamento de Ecología del Estado de Washington (Ecología) solicita sus comentarios sobre la propuesta de limpieza provisional para el sitio de limpieza de Georgia-Pacific West en Bellingham.

Ecología aceptará comentarios del público desde el 5 de julio hasta el 3 de agosto de 2011. Habrá una reunión público el 12 de julio de 2011 a las 6 a 8 pm en el Technology Development Center, Sala de Conferencia "Douglas G. Smith", 1000 F St, en Bellingham. Se presentará la propuesta de limpieza provisional durante esta reunión.

Para más información en español, favor de llamar a Richelle Pérez a 360-407-7528 o por correo electrónico a richelle.perez@ecy.wa.gov. Refiere al sitio de limpieza de GP West.
