



PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

RG Haley Cleanup Site Bellingham, WA

Washington State Department of Ecology
Northwest Regional Office
Toxics Cleanup Program
3190 160th Avenue SE
Bellevue, Washington 98008

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1 Introduction

Public participation is essential in reaching informed decisions when addressing community environmental issues such as cleanup of contaminated properties. The purpose of this Public Participation Plan (PPP) is to assist in promoting public understanding and participation in the R.G. Haley Site cleanup. This PPP outlines a variety of tools and activities to encourage public involvement. Cleanups conducted under the Washington State Model Toxics Control Act (WAC 173-340; MTCA), require public notice and encourage public comment and participation. Required elements of public participation under MTCA are incorporated into this PPP as well as additional elements added to meet the needs of the community.

This plan has been prepared by the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology). The goal of this Public Participation Plan is to promote public understanding of the cleanup process, including opportunities for public involvement, so that the community can provide comments and be involved in a meaningful way throughout the process. The following sections provide background information on the site and the community and outline the public involvement tools and activities for the R.G. Haley site.

2 Site Background

The R.G. Haley site consists of about six upland acres and a larger in-water area on the Bellingham waterfront south of the intersection of Cornwall Avenue and Wharf Street. Studies show that upland soil, marine sediment, and groundwater within the site, are contaminated with wood treatment chemicals. The site includes land owned by the City of Bellingham and land owned by the State of Washington, managed by the State Department of Natural Resources.

From the mid-1800s to the mid-1900s, the site was used for industries including lumber, coal and wharf operations. Various companies treated wood on the property since before 1951. R.G. Haley International Corporation was the last company to treat wood there, from 1955 to 1985. Douglas Management Company bought the R.G. Haley property in 1990. The city of Bellingham then bought it in 2009.

In 2001 and 2002, Douglas Management investigated oil seeping into Bellingham Bay from the shoreline along the northern boundary of what is now the site. The investigations identified contaminants and located a floating hydrocarbon plume immediately inland from the oil seep. The ongoing release of contaminants to Bellingham Bay prompted the company to take emergency actions, coordinating with Ecology. Emergency measures included building a sheet pile wall along the shoreline, installing oil recovery wells, monitoring wells and equipment, removing some sediment, and building shoreline erosion protection. An additional action was taken in 2013 to arrest oil seepage into the bay from a different location on the shoreline.

Additional work to investigate the nature and extent of contamination at the site continued between 2002 and 2014. A public-review draft remedial investigation report of this work was issued in August, 2015. A public-review draft feasibility report describing an evaluation of cleanup alternatives was issued at the same time.

Contaminants at the site include pentachlorophenol (PCP), hydrocarbons related to diesel fuel, dioxins/furans, and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs). These contaminants are present in concentrations that must be addressed under the state's cleanup law, the Model Toxics Control Act.

The R.G. Haley site is one of 12 sites coordinated through the Bellingham Bay Demonstration Pilot project. The Pilot is a bay-wide multi-agency effort to clean up contamination, control pollution sources and restore habitat, with consideration for land and water uses.

3 Public Involvement Activities

Ecology will use a variety of methods to keep community residents and stakeholders informed and involved in the RG Haley Cleanup Project. We will continue to try to find new ways to share project information and expand our audience. This plan will be edited and updated as appropriate. Public involvement activities include the following:

Public Meetings, Hearings, and Open Houses

Ecology will hold public meetings at key points in the cleanup process. In addition, Ecology may also hold smaller meetings and open houses for groups in the community who are affected and/or interested in the cleanup project. Public meetings will be held at locations convenient to the community. If 10 or more people request an additional public meeting, one will be scheduled. Otherwise, meetings will be scheduled as needed.

Information Repositories

Information repositories are places where the public may read and review site information. The Repositories Ecology will use for this cleanup site are:

Bellingham Public Library
210 Central Avenue
Bellingham, WA 98225
Phone: 360-778-7323

Ecology-Bellingham Office
913 Squalicum Way, Unit 101
Bellingham, WA 98225
By appointment, call 360-255-4400

Ecology-Bellevue Office
3190 160th Avenue SE
Bellevue, WA 98008-5452
By appointment, call 360-649-7190

Ecology's Web Site:

<http://bit.ly/EcologyRGHaley>

Site Register

Ecology's Toxics Cleanup Program uses its bimonthly *Site Register* to announce all of its public meetings and comment periods, as well as many other activities. To receive the *Site Register* in electronic or hard copy format, contact CherylAnn Bishop (360) 407-6848 or email her at CherylAnn.Bishop@ecy.wa.gov. It is also available on Ecology's website: http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/tcp/pub_inv/pub_inv2.html.

Mailing List

Ecology has compiled a mailing list for the site. The list includes individuals, groups, public agencies, elected officials, private businesses, and other known interested parties. The list will be maintained at Ecology's Northwest Regional Office and will be updated as needed.

Fact Sheets

Ecology will mail fact sheets to inform the community and other interested parties of public meetings and important site activities, including project milestones and status updates.

Brochures and Posters

Ecology has developed brochures and posters that contain information about potential health risks associated with contamination. These materials are free to the community and can be requested by phone (425) 446-1024 or email at brad.petrovich@ecy.wa.gov.

Site signage

Large signs displaying information about construction status, traffic impacts and health risks will be installed near construction areas. These signs contain inserts which will be updated as needed (weekly or bi-weekly during construction season).

Community Group Meeting Presentations

Ecology staff will present information about the cleanup when requested. Residents can request an Ecology presentation for their neighborhood association or other community groups.

Ecology Website and Blog

Ecology will maintain a website with site information at <http://bit.ly/EcologyRGHaley>. This site will be updated regularly and will hold information available for comments and other relevant documents and information.

Newspaper Display Ads

Ecology may place ads in the Bellingham Herald to announce public meetings and other events related to the cleanup.

Plan Update

This public participation plan may be updated as the project proceeds. If an update is necessary, and constitutes a substantial change in the plan, it will be announced via site register and the website.

Public Participation Grants

As part of the Model Toxics Control Act, Ecology developed a public participation grant program to promote public participation during cleanups. Public Participation Grants provide funding to community groups that help involve the public in the cleanup process.

Non-profit groups, or groups of three or more unrelated individuals, can apply for grants to fund efforts for the community that is impacted by cleanup activities. Grant funds may be used to pay for technical experts who help people understand cleanup issues. They can also be used to hold meetings, workshops and other events. In addition, printing and distribution of reports, brochures and other materials may be covered.

For more information about this grant program, visit <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/swfa/grants/ppg.html>

4 Points of Contact

If you have questions or need more information about this plan or the cleanup project, please contact;

General project information or public involvement:

Brad Petrovich, Project Planner & Public Involvement
Washington State Department of Ecology
Northwest Regional Office
3190 160th Avenue SE, Bellevue, WA 98008
Phone: (425) 649-4486
Email: Brad.Petrovich@ecy.wa.gov

Technical or construction questions:

Mark Adams, Project Manager
Washington State Department of Ecology
Northwest Regional Office
Phone: (425) 649 - 7107
Email: Mark.Adams@ecy.wa.gov

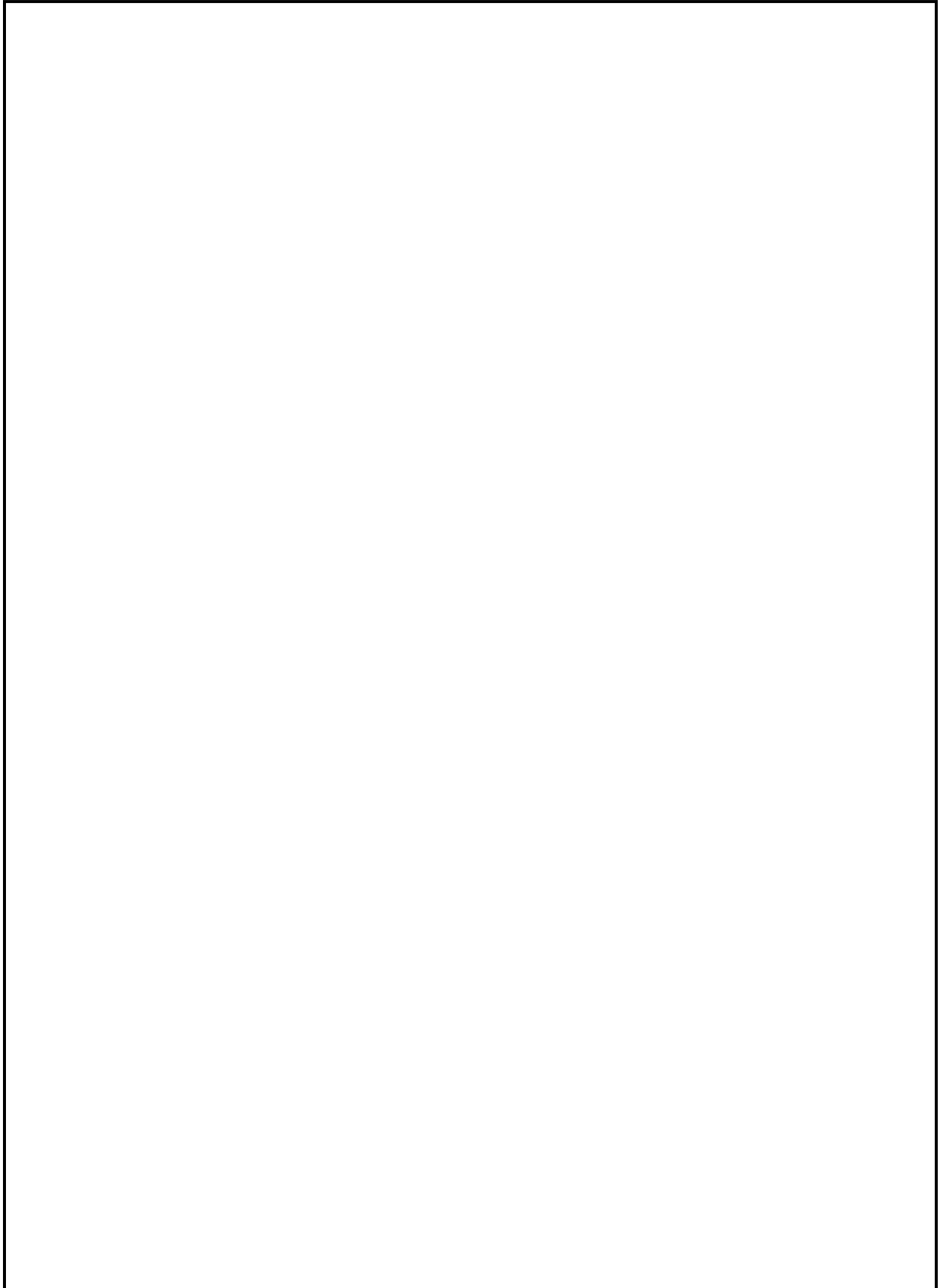


Figure 1. 1953 Aerial view of RG Haley Site



Figures 2, 3. Aerial view of RG Haley Site, and looking northeast

