



DEPARTMENT OF
ECOLOGY
State of Washington

Public Participation Plan

Custom Plywood Mill

35th Street and V Avenue Anacortes, Skagit County, Washington

Facility Site ID: 2685

Cleanup Site ID: 4533

February 2019 (updated from February 2011)

Publication and Contact Information

This plan is available on the Washington Department of Ecology's website at <https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/gsp/Sitepage.aspx?csid=4533>

For more information contact:

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Lacey, WA 98503
360-407-6000

Washington State Department of Ecology - www.ecology.wa.gov

- Headquarters, Olympia 360-407-6000
- Northwest Regional Office, Bellevue 425-649-7000
- Southwest Regional Office, Olympia 360-407-6300
- Central Regional Office, Yakima 509-575-2490
- Eastern Regional Office, Spokane 509-329-3400

Accommodation Requests: To request Americans with Disabilities Act accommodation including materials in a format for the visually impaired, call Ecology at 360-407-6700. Persons with impaired hearing may call Washington Relay Service at 711. Persons with speech disability may call TTY at 877-833-6341.

Public Participation Plan

Custom Plywood Mill

Toxics Cleanup Program
Washington State Department of Ecology
Olympia, Washington

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Public Involvement in Contamination Cleanup

The Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) developed this public participation plan (plan) in cooperation with GBH Investments LCC, the parties responsible for cleanup. The purpose of the plan is to promote meaningful community involvement during cleanup.

The plan describes ways Ecology will inform the public about contamination investigations and cleanup options throughout the cleanup process. Ecology encourages the public to learn about and get involved in decision-making opportunities. This plan identifies how and when the public can get involved during different stages of the investigation and cleanup of contamination.

This plan is for interim actions for the Custom Plywood Mill Site (Site).

Site contacts

To be included in the site record, comments about the cleanup process must be submitted to Ecology during comment periods. Questions and informal comments or information about the site's history are welcomed by Ecology anytime.

Department of Ecology
Toxics Cleanup Program
PO Box 47600
Olympia, WA 98504-7600

Hun Seak Park, site manager
hunseak.park@ecy.wa.gov
360-407-7189

Public Participation Grants

Grants may be available to neighborhood committees, non-profits, and other groups interested in the site. These funds may be used to provide additional public involvement opportunities, receive technical assistance¹, and enhance the public's understanding of the cleanup process. For more information about public participation grants, please contact [Lynn Gooding](#) at 360-407-6062 or lynn.gooding@ecy.wa.gov. You may also visit the [Public Participation Grant website](#)².

¹ Ecology currently does not have a citizen technical advisor for providing technical assistance to citizens on issues related to the investigation and cleanup of the site.

² <http://www.ecology.wa.gov/About-us/How-we-operate/Grants-loans/Find-a-grant-or-loan/Public-participation-grants>

Washington's Cleanup Laws

Ecology uses the Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA) and accompanying regulations for cleanup activities.

This plan is required under MTCA, a law that passed in 1989. MTCA provides guidelines for contaminated site cleanup in Washington state and sets standards to ensure the cleanup protects human health and the environment.

Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA)

MTCA began as a grassroots citizen's initiative in 1988, and started the process of systematically cleaning up contaminated sites in Washington. Under MTCA, a current or past property owner or operator may be held responsible for cleaning up contamination on, or coming from, their property to standards that are safe for human health and the environment.




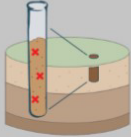





Ecology enacts MTCA and oversees cleanups in the state and issues regulations and guidance governing those cleanups. The regulations are found in [Chapter 173-340 Washington Administrative Code \(WAC\)](#)³. Ecology investigates reports of property contamination, and if the contamination is seen as a significant threat to human health or the environment, the contaminated property is placed on the Hazardous Sites List, and the cleanup process begins.

Public participation is an important part of cleanup under the MTCA process. Participation needs are assessed at each cleanup site according to the level of public interest and the degree of risk posed by the contamination. Individuals who live near the site, community groups, businesses, government, other organizations, and interested parties have the opportunity to get involved by commenting on the cleanup process.

Under MTCA, the cleanup process generally includes five phases. Each phase includes an opportunity for the public to review and comment on cleanup documents.

³ <https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/publications/publications/9406.pdf>

Steps in Washington’s Cleanup Process

 <p>Interim Action</p>		<p>If contaminants pose an immediate risk to people or the environment, action can be taken at any point in the cleanup process to reduce the risk. Interim actions may also be used to progress cleanup when only a brief opportunity is available.</p>
 <p>Remedial Investigation (RI)</p>		<p>Environmental investigation to identify the nature, extent, and magnitude of pollution at a site, and how people, plants, and animals may be exposed to the pollution.</p>
 <p>Feasibility Study (FS)</p>		<p>Uses information gathered during the Remedial Investigation to develop cleanup alternatives, and then evaluates them through an environmental benefit vs. cost analysis. This process determines a preferred alternative.</p>
 <p>Cleanup Action Plan (CAP)</p>		<p>Ecology identifies a cleanup plan based on information in the RI/FS and public input. The CAP includes cleanup standards, a schedule for design and construction work, and requirements for monitoring, operation, and maintenance.</p>
<p>Cleanup & Monitoring</p>		<p>The CAP is used to clean up the site. After construction is complete, monitoring occurs. Environmental covenants prohibit or restrict activities that would expose any remaining contamination or adversely affect the cleanup.</p>

 Opportunities for public comment

State Environmental Policy Act

The State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) is followed during review and development of cleanup plans. For more information see, <https://ecology.wa.gov/regulations-permits/SEPA-environmental-review>.

Site History

Land and in-water use

The Custom Plywood Mill Site is located at 35th Street and V Avenue in Anacortes, Skagit County, Washington (see Figure 1). The northern portion of the Site is currently used for temporary boat storage, and the southern portion of the site is vacant, with several freshwater wetlands in the upland area and one estuarine wetland. The Site is bounded on the east by Fidalgo Bay, on the west and southwest by the Tommy Thompson hiking trail, on the north and south by undeveloped land, and on the northwest by V Place Road.



Figure 1: The Custom Plywood Mill Site is shown in the above map, located at 35th Street and V Avenue on Fidalgo Bay in Anacortes, WA.

How the site became contaminated

A sawmill and wood-box factory, followed by a plywood mill, operated on the Custom Plywood Mill Site for almost a century. Site features included a hog-fuel boiler; drum and tank storage area; transformer yard; above-ground storage tanks containing fuel oil, diesel, phenol,

formaldehyde resin and caustic storage tanks (both used to make plywood glue); a machine shop; a metal shop; and an area for spraying paint and oil.

Contamination

Due to historic land use and industrial practices, upland soil, groundwater and sediment at the Site area are contaminated with:

- Diesel and heavy fuel oil
- Metals (arsenic, cadmium, chromium, and lead)
- Dioxins/furans
- carcinogenic Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons
- Wood waste

Cleanup plans

Ecology and the Potential Liable Person (PLP) - GBH Investments LLC - entered into an Agreed Order for site cleanup in March 2008. The Agreed Order required the PLP to develop a Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study (RI/FS) work plan to evaluate the nature and extent of Site contamination, and RI/FS Report, and a draft Cleanup Action Plan (CAP) for both Upland and in-water Remediation.

A Phase I interim remedial action was completed in the upland area during the summer of 2011. Contaminated soil was removed and disposed of off-site, and a 12,000 square foot wetland mitigation area and vegetated buffer zone were constructed in the upland area. The remaining portion of the Site upland was hydro-seeded with grasses, and a stormwater bio-swale was built along the southern section.

A Phase II interim remedial action was completed in inter-tidal water covering 10 acre during summer/fall of 2013. Marine construction debris and pilings was removed due to the navigational hazards. Marine sediment contaminated with dioxins/furans and wood waste was removed and disposed of off-site. Length of habitat-friendly shoreline was tripled by building new aquatic spit/jetty extension preventing waves from erosion.

Since 2013 Ecology has conducted compliance monitoring per the Conservation Measures and Monitoring Plan (CMMP) developed for the project to comply with the Nationwide Permit and the Wetland Notice for Deed Notification. Monitoring has included physical monitoring of the restored beach, epibenthic zooplankton, forage fish spawning, nearshore fish, advanced eelgrass transplants, and wetland mitigation area (wetland, backshore and upland buffer). Five of the six performance criteria have been met. The wetland mitigation area met most of its individual performance criteria; however, TCP recommends additional maintenance and monitoring to accelerate and evaluate progress towards reaching all the performance standards.

Final Phase III Cleanup Action Planned for sub-tidal area

The Phase III area consists of approximately 10.4 acres of subtidal sediments; 4.7 acres of those sediments support eelgrass. The planned Phase III remedial action consists of:

- Placement of a thin layer cap (between 2 to 8-inch thickness) over approximately 10 acres of subtidal sediments with dioxin concentration greater than 10 nanograms per kilogram (ppt) TEC (but less than 25 ppt)
- Dredging and backfilling 0.46 acres of sediment in excess of 25 ppt dioxins and wood waste accumulation greater than 1-foot below the mudline within eelgrass beds.
- Eelgrass mitigation using advanced mitigation plantings from Phase II along with additional mitigation efforts to compensate for the loss of eelgrass bed due to dredging (0.38 acres out of 0.46 acre dredge footprint supports eelgrass).

Area community

Anacortes is Skagit County's second largest city and its largest seaport. It is the principal city on Fidalgo Island. The current population is approximately 16,953 people⁴ situated within approximately 12 square miles. Located on Fidalgo/Padilla Bays, Anacortes has 12.5 miles of saltwater shoreline that support three Port of Anacortes marine terminals, a shipyard, several yacht and mid-size boat building and sales operations, and four private marinas. In addition to the City's modern educational and health care facilities, four freshwater lakes and 3,300 acres of city-owned forestland and parks create a rural character in the community. The City's 2016 labor workforce was approximately 7,459, predominantly employed in service-based industries (education, health care, social assistance, arts/entertainment/recreation, accommodations/food, retail) and manufacturing.⁵

Public Participation Activities

Members of the public may ask questions, submit informal comments, or share site information at any time. Interested parties do not need to wait for a formal public comment period to contact Ecology.

However, to be included in the formal site record, comments about the site investigation, cleanup alternatives, or cleanups must be submitted during formal comment periods. In addition, the public is invited to review site documents before they become final. This is the most direct and influential way to learn more about the site and be involved in the cleanup's decision-making.

⁴ US Census Bureau, State & County QuickFacts, *available at* <http://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/PST045215/5301990> (Accessed 06/25/2018).

⁵ American Fact Finder. https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_13_5YR_DP03&prodType=table (accessed 06/25/2018).

How we share information with the community

During specific stages of the cleanup, Ecology will mail notices about public comment periods to addresses surrounding the site. The mailing list area will vary depending on the type of contamination and where it's located, but the list will at least include addresses within a 0.25-mile radius of the site and other known interested organizations and individuals. These notices will provide general information about the site, contact information for submitting comments, and times and locations of public meetings or hearings or how to request one if not yet scheduled.

Ecology may also develop documents outside of comment periods to keep the community updated on the site's status. These informational documents will be available online and at document repositories. Print copies may be mailed to the nearby community if we feel the message warrants the associated cost and resources.

Comment period notices and other site announcements may also be posted in various locations throughout the community (for example, local businesses, schools, libraries).

Postal mailing list

Ecology maintains a mailing list that includes addresses within a 0.25-mile radius of the site and relevant local, state, and federal government contacts. These people receive public comment notices when draft documents are available.

We will add additional individuals, organizations, and other interested parties to the mailing list as requested. If you would like to be added to the mailing list for this site, please contact Hun Seak Park at 360-407-7189 or hunseak.park@ecy.wa.gov.

Site Register

Public comment periods, events, and other cleanup notices are published in Ecology's [Site Register](#)⁶. To receive the *Site Register* by email, please contact Cheryl Ann Bishop at 360-407-6848 or cherylann.bishop@ecy.wa.gov, or [subscribe online](#)⁷.

Newspaper display ads or legal notices

We announce public comment periods and events in ads or notices published in the Anacortes American, Skagit Valley Herald and the Clamdigger. We will also publish notice on Ecology's [Public Input & Events Listing](#)⁸.

⁶ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/Guidance-technical-assistance/Site-Register-lists-and-data>

⁷ <http://listserv.wa.gov/cgi-bin/wa?SUBED1=siteregister&A=1>

⁸ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Events/Search/Listing>

Ecology's website and social media platforms

We maintain a website for the Custom Plywood Mill site⁹. The website provides site information, and you may download cleanup documents.

We may also share information about cleanup sites through [news releases, our ECOconnect blog, and social media](#)¹⁰.

Document repositories

During public comment periods, you can find print documents at the following locations:

Anacortes Public Library

1220 10th Street
Anacortes, WA 98221
360-293-1910

Padilla Bay Nation Estuarine Research Reserve

10441 Bayview-Edison Road
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

Washington Department of Ecology Headquarters

300 Desmond Drive SE
Lacey, WA 98503

To schedule an appointment, please contact Carol Dorn at 360-407-7224 or Carol.Dorn@ecy.wa.gov.

Signs around the cleanup site

We may also install signs displaying information about project status, traffic impacts, and health risks around the cleanup site.

How to share information with us

At minimum, MTCA requires 30-day public comment periods for draft cleanup documents and 14-day comment periods SEPA documents. SEPA documents are often made available for review with other cleanup documents. We may hold comment periods longer than 30 days.

We may also identify public concerns and cleanup goals by meeting with and soliciting information from interested community members and organizations. To collaborate with us about this site, please contact Hun Seak Park at 360-407-7224 or hunseak.park@ecy.wa.gov

⁹ <https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/gsp/Sitepage.aspx?csid=4533>

¹⁰ <https://ecology.wa.gov/About-us/Get-to-know-us/News>

Public comment periods

Formal 30-day comment periods allow interested members of the public to comment on draft documents, legal agreements, and proposed cleanup actions. If there is significant interest, Ecology may extend the public comment period. When Ecology oversees SEPA determinations, we hold comment periods on SEPA documents for at least two weeks.

Following a comment period, we consider all the input we received and respond to significant comments and questions. If the comments result in significant changes to the cleanup documents, the documents will be revised and re-issued for public review. If the comments do not result in significant changes, then they become final.

Public events

We hold public meetings, workshops, open houses, and public hearings based on community interest. If we have not scheduled a meeting, we will hold one if 10 people request it, and this may cause us to extend a public comment period so the meeting occurs during it.

Events are held at locations close to the site that meet Americans with Disabilities Act standards. Public meetings, workshops, open houses, and hearings are always announced in advance using a variety of methods.

Plan Amendments

Ecology developed this plan following MTCA regulations (WAC 173-340-600). We review it as the cleanup progresses and amend it as necessary. You may suggest amendments to Hun Seak Park at 360-407-7189 or hunseak.park@ecy.wa.gov.

This plan includes information for the public regarding opportunities for public involvement and comment. The outreach activities discussed in this section reflect Ecology's current plans for keeping the public informed and providing ways for those interested in the site to communicate their concerns and questions to us.

If you feel the planned outreach activities and mechanisms described in this plan are insufficient, or should otherwise be modified, we will work to find solutions. New outreach activities or outreach tools established as a result can be implemented right away, with or without amending this plan.

Glossary

Cleanup: The implementation of a cleanup action or interim action.

Cleanup Action: Any remedial action except interim actions, taken at a site to eliminate, render less toxic, stabilize, contain, immobilize, isolate, treat, destroy, or remove a hazardous substance that complies with MTCA cleanup requirements, including but not limited to: complying with cleanup standards, utilizing permanent solutions to the maximum extent practicable, and including adequate monitoring to ensure the effectiveness of the cleanup action.

Cleanup Action Plan: A document that selects the cleanup action and specifies cleanup standards and other requirements for a particular site. The cleanup action plan, which follows the remedial investigation/feasibility study report, is subject to a public comment period. After completion of a comment period on the cleanup action plan, Ecology finalizes the cleanup action plan.

Cleanup Level: The concentration (or amount) of a hazardous substance in soil, water, air, or sediment that protects human health and the environment under specified exposure conditions. Cleanup levels are part of a uniform standard established in state regulations, such as MTCA.

Cleanup Process: The process for identifying, investigating, and cleaning up hazardous waste sites.

Contaminant: Any hazardous substance that does not occur naturally or occurs at greater than natural background levels.

Feasibility Study: Provides identification and analysis of site cleanup alternatives and is usually completed within a year. The entire Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study (RI/FS) process takes about two years and is followed by the cleanup action plan. Remedial action evaluating sufficient site information to enable the selection of a cleanup action plan.

Hazardous Site List: A list of ranked sites that require further remedial action. These sites are published in the Site Register.

Interim Action: Any remedial action that partially addresses the cleanup of a site. It is an action that is technically necessary to reduce a threat to human health or the environment by eliminating or substantially reducing one or more pathways for exposure to a hazardous substance at a facility; an action that corrects a problem that may become substantially worse or cost substantially more to address if the action is delayed; an action needed to provide for completion

of a site hazard assessment, state remedial investigation/feasibility study, or design of a cleanup action.

Model Toxics Control Act: Refers to RCW 70.105D. Voters approved it in November 1988. The implementing regulation is WAC 173-340 and was amended in 2001.

Public Notice: At a minimum, adequate notice mailed to all persons who have made a timely request of Ecology and to persons residing in the potentially affected vicinity of the proposed action; mailed to appropriate news media; published in the local (city or county) newspaper of largest circulation; and the opportunity for interested persons to comment.

Public Participation Plan: A plan prepared under the authority of WAC 173-340-600 to encourage coordinated and effective public involvement tailored to the public's needs at a particular site.

Release: Any intentional or unintentional entry of any hazardous substance into the environment, including, but not limited to, the abandonment or disposal of containers of hazardous substances.

Remedial Action: Any action to identify, eliminate, or minimize any threat posed by hazardous substances to human health or the environment, including any investigative and monitoring activities of any release or threatened release of a hazardous substance, and any health assessments or health effects studies conducted in order to determine the risk or potential risk to human health.

Remedial Investigation: Any remedial action that provides information on the extent and magnitude of contamination at a site. This usually takes 12 to 18 months and is followed by the feasibility study. The purpose of the Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study is to collect and develop sufficient site information to enable the selection of a cleanup action.