

# Harris Avenue Shipyard Site



*Harris Avenue Shipyard after Interim Action, July 2018*

## Comments accepted:

April 1 - 30, 2019

## Submit comments:

Online at [bit.ly/Ecology-HarrisAveShipyard-Comments](http://bit.ly/Ecology-HarrisAveShipyard-Comments)

### Or by mail to:

John Guenther, Site Manager  
 WA Department of Ecology  
 913 Squalicum Way, Unit 101  
 Bellingham, WA 98225  
 Phone: 360-255-4381  
 Email: [John.Guenther@ecy.wa](mailto:John.Guenther@ecy.wa).

## Site info:

[bit.ly/Ecology-HarrisAveShipyard](http://bit.ly/Ecology-HarrisAveShipyard)

Facility Site ID: 2922  
 Site Cleanup ID: 193

## Document review locations:

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 160<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE  
 Bellevue, WA 98008-5452  
 By appointment, call 360-649-7190

## Environmental report ready for public review

The Department of Ecology (Ecology) invites you to comment on an environmental report for the Harris Avenue Shipyard cleanup site (Site) in Bellingham. The report, called a remedial investigation/feasibility study (RI/FS):

- Describes contamination found at the Site.
- Evaluates cleanup alternatives.
- Identifies a preferred cleanup alternative.

The Port of Bellingham (Port) prepared this report with Ecology oversight.

The contamination is the result of historic shipbuilding and other industrial activities. The levels of contamination are potentially harmful to humans and the environment and must be addressed under Washington's cleanup law, the Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA).

The remedial investigation/feasibility study report is available for review and comment April 1 - 30, 2019.

## Public meeting

Ecology will hold a public meeting to provide more information and collect comments.

**Wednesday, April 17, 2019**

**6 - 8 p.m.**

**Bellingham Cruise Terminal**

**355 Harris Avenue**

**Bellingham, WA 98225**

# Toxics Cleanup Program

## Background

The Harris Avenue Shipyard cleanup site is located at 201 Harris Avenue in Bellingham’s Fairhaven Neighborhood. The Site consists of approximately 5 acres of contaminated marine sediment (in-water) and 5 acres of contaminated soil and groundwater (upland). The contamination is from historic shipbuilding and other industrial operations.

Shipbuilding activities began in the early 1900’s, and in 1966 the Port began leasing to other industrial operations.

The State of Washington and the Port own the property within the Site. The Port and the Washington State Department of Natural Resources have a management agreement for the harbor-area parcels, including the aquatic and historical infill lands.



*Harris Avenue Shipyard facing north, January 1967; Washington State Archives<sup>1</sup>*

In 1998, the Port began voluntarily investigating sediment at the Site. Based on this work, Ecology and the Port entered into a legal agreement (agreed order) in 2003 to complete a comprehensive sediment investigation. In 2010, Ecology and the Port entered into a second agreed order to investigate upland soil and groundwater.

## Early cleanup action

In 2018, the Port, with Ecology oversight, completed an early cleanup action for a portion of the Site (see figures on page 3 and 4).

The early cleanup action, called an interim action:

- Removed wooden and creosote structures.
- Dredged and disposed of contaminated subtidal sediment.
- Excavated and backfilled intertidal areas with clean sediment.
- Excavated and disposed of contaminated soil, and capped with gravel.
- Replaced creosote-treated wooden pier with concrete and steel pier.



*Harris Avenue Pier before/after Interim Action*

<sup>1</sup> South terminal, Pacific American Fisheries, Records of the Port of Bellingham, Photographs, 1890-1999, Washington State Archives, Digital Archives, <http://www.digitalarchives.wa.gov>, December 20, 2018.



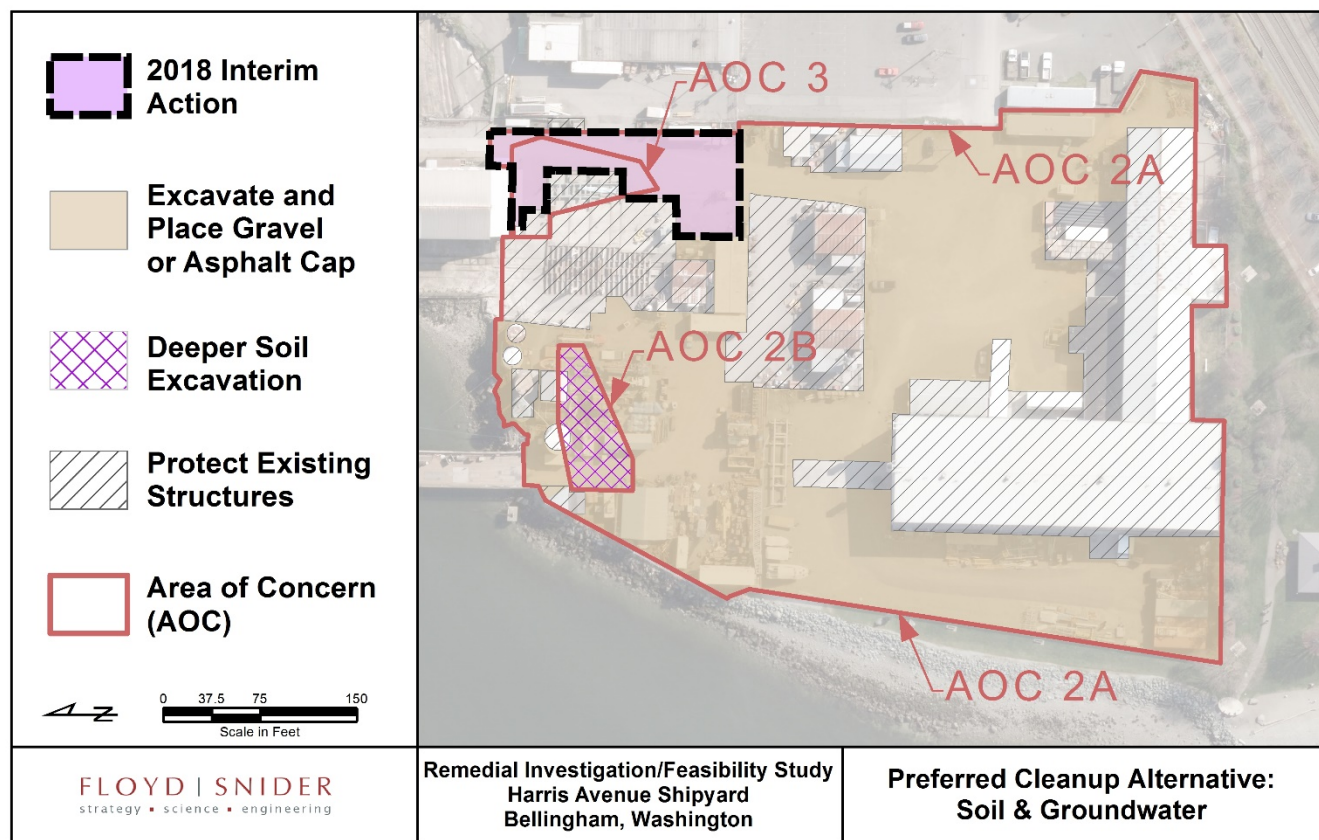
## Remedial Investigation

Investigations conducted by the Port found contamination from former ship building and other historical operations. Contaminants in soil and groundwater (petroleum hydrocarbon compounds and metals) and sediment (polychlorinated biphenyls, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, semivolatile organic compounds, and metals) were found at concentrations above state standards established to protect human health and the environment.

## Feasibility Study

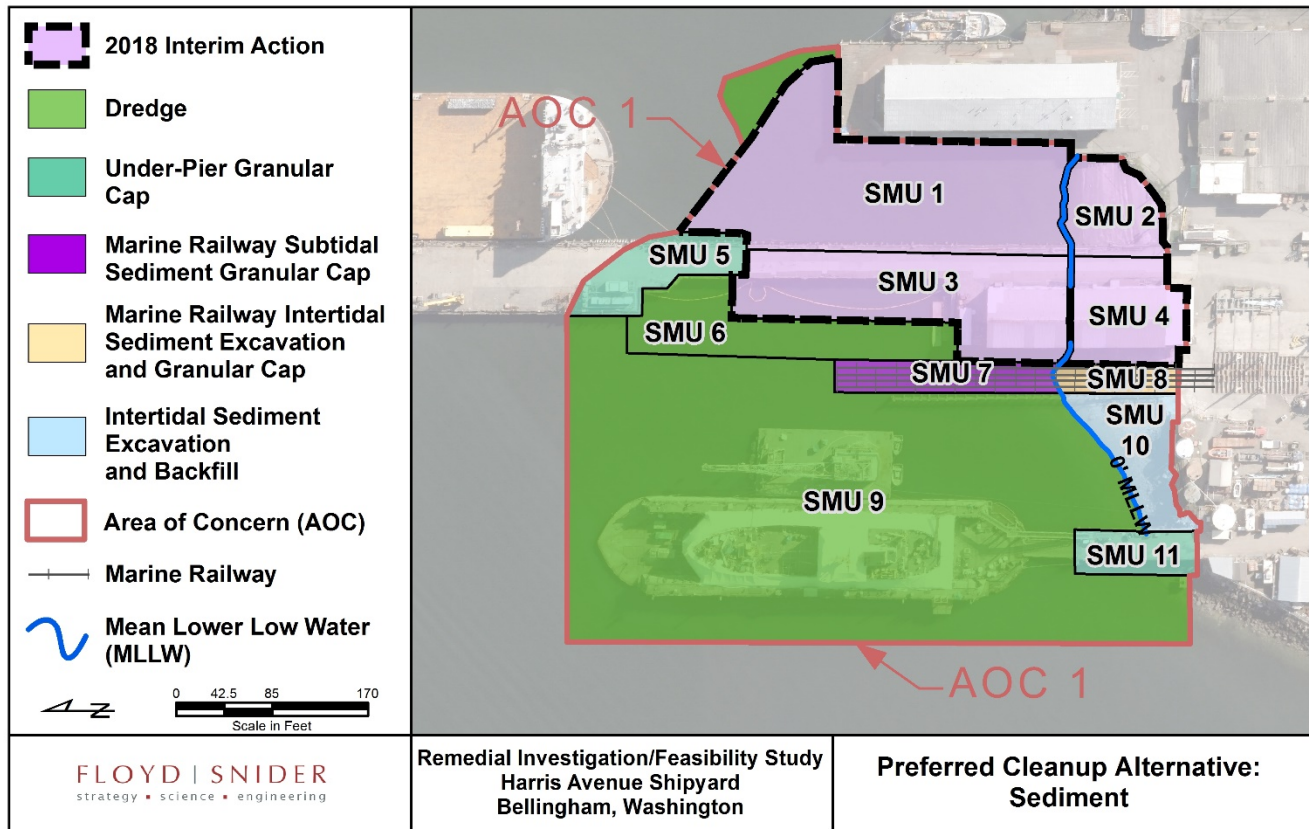
To address the contamination found at the Site, the Port developed and evaluated six cleanup alternatives, three for soil & groundwater (upland) and three for sediment (in-water). The costs and environmental benefits of the alternatives were then compared, leading to a preferred cleanup alternative for soil & groundwater (upland) and for sediment (in-water). The cleanup actions are described in the figures on page 3 and 4, and both incorporate the 2018 interim action.

### Preferred cleanup alternative: soil & groundwater (upland)



- **Retain 2018 interim action (Areas of Concern or AOCs 2A, 3):** Early cleanup action removed and properly disposed of contaminated soil and placed a gravel cap.
- **Excavate and cap shallow soil (AOCs 2A, 2B):** Remove 1 to 2 feet of soil and cap with clean soil. Manage stormwater as necessary.
- **Excavate or solidify deeper soil (AOC 2B):** Remove or solidify soil as deep as 3 or 4 feet. Approach to be refined based on future remedial design investigation work.
- **Restrict land use and conduct operational maintenance and monitoring.**

**Preferred cleanup alternative: sediment (in-water)**



- **Retain 2018 interim action (Sediment Management Units or SMUs 1, 2, 3, 4):**  
Early cleanup action:
  - Removed wooden and creosote structures.
  - Dredged and disposed of contaminated subtidal sediment.
  - Excavated and backfilled intertidal areas with clean sediment.
  - Excavated and disposed of contaminated soil, and capped with gravel.
  - Replaced creosote-treated wooden pier with concrete and steel pier.
- **Dredge sediment (SMUs 6, 9):** Dredge contaminated sediment an average of 2 to 4 feet deep. Dispose of dredged sediment upland.
- **Place sediment cap under piers (SMUs 5, 11):** Place a minimum 1-foot deep sand cap under piers.
- **Place subtidal sediment cap under marine railway (SMU 7):** Place a 1 to 3 feet deep sand cap under marine railway.
- **Excavate sediment and place intertidal sediment cap under marine railway (SMU 8):** Remove targeted contaminated sediment and place a minimum 1-foot deep sand cap.
- **Excavate intertidal sediment and backfill (SMU 10):** Remove contaminated sediment to an average of 3-feet deep and backfill with appropriate habitat material to match existing elevations.
- **Restrict land use and conduct operational maintenance and monitoring.**





*Carpenter Building and pier before Interim Action, January 2017*

## Costs and funding

The preferred cleanup alternative is estimated to cost about \$28 million to construct. The Port is eligible for reimbursement of up to half of this cost through the state's Remedial Action Grant Program, which helps pay for the cleanup of publicly-owned sites. The Legislature funds the grant program with revenues from a tax on hazardous substances.

## Next steps and project timeline

- **April 1 - 30, 2019:** Hold a 30-day public comment period.
- **April 17, 2019:** Hold a public meeting.
- **Later 2019:** Finalize the RI/FS report. Ecology will review and consider all comments received as we finalize the RI/FS report. We will provide a written response to comments received.
- **2020:** Select cleanup action. Based on the information in the final RI/FS report, Ecology will select a cleanup action for the Site. We will issue our cleanup action plan and an associated legal agreement for public review. The legal agreement will require the Port, and possibly others, to design the cleanup action.
- **2021:** Complete design and permitting for the cleanup action. Public review of a legal agreement requiring the Port, and possibly others, to implement the cleanup action.
- **2022-2023:** Begin implementing the cleanup action.

### En español

El Departamento de Ecología le invita a comentar sobre un reporte ambiental para el sitio contaminado Harris Avenue Shipyard en Bellingham.

Para recibir este documento en español, favor de llamar a Gretchen Newman al 360-407-6097 o envíe un correo electrónico a [preguntas@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:preguntas@ecy.wa.gov). Traducciones de avisos públicos para los sitios de limpieza de la Bahía de Bellingham se preparan bajo solicitud.



Toxics Cleanup Program  
913 Squalicum Way, Unit 101  
Bellingham, WA 98225

## Harris Avenue Shipyard – environmental report ready for review



*Aerial view of Harris Avenue Shipyard cleanup site*

### Public comment period

April 1 - 30, 2019

[bit.ly/Ecology-HarrisAveShipyard](https://bit.ly/Ecology-HarrisAveShipyard)

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### Public meeting

Wednesday, April 17, 2019

6 – 8 p.m.

Bellingham Cruise Terminal

355 Harris Avenue

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### Información en español incluida

**Accommodation Requests:** To request ADA accommodation including materials in a format for the visually impaired, call Ecology at 360-255-4382 or visit <https://ecology.wa.gov/accessibility>. People with impaired hearing may call Washington Relay Service at 711. People with speech disability may call TTY at 877-833-6341.