



DEPARTMENT OF
ECOLOGY
State of Washington

Public Participation Plan

Northern State Multi Service Center Cleanup Site Sedro-Woolley, WA

Facility Site ID: 65415931

Cleanup Site ID: 10048

April 2019

Publication and Contact Information

This document is available on the Department of Ecology's Northern State Multi Service Center website at: <https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/gsp/Sitepage.aspx?csid=10048>

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Public Participation Plan
Northern State Multi Service Center Cleanup Site
Sedro-Woolley, WA

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Washington State Department of Ecology
Northwest Regional Office
Toxics Cleanup Program
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Introduction

The Port of Skagit (Port) is addressing soil and groundwater contamination at the Northern State Multi Service Center Cleanup Site (Site) under a legal agreement with the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology). The contamination is from the former state hospital operations and the materials used in the Site's historic buildings and is present at potentially harmful levels. In order to protect human health and the environment, the contamination must be addressed in accordance with Washington's cleanup law, the Model Toxics Control Act.

Ecology developed this public participation plan (plan) as required under the MTCA, to promote meaningful community involvement in the Site cleanup process. The plan first discusses the MTCA and the cleanup process, then provides information about the Site. Next it describes planned public involvement activities and then addresses plan updates and amendments.

Washington's Cleanup Law

Ecology derives its authority to require cleanup of contamination from the state Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA; [Chapter 70.105D Revised Code of Washington \(RCW\)](#)¹). The MTCA provides requirements for contaminated site cleanup in Washington State and sets standards to ensure the cleanup protects human health and the environment. Standards for sediment cleanup are established in the state Sediment Management Standards, [Chapter 173-204 Washington Administrative Code \(WAC\)](#)².

The MTCA began as a grassroots citizen's initiative in 1988, and started the process of systematically cleaning up contaminated sites in Washington. Under the MTCA, anyone with a current or past relationship with a contaminated site may be held responsible for cleaning it up to standards established to protect human health and the environment.

Ecology enacts the MTCA and oversees cleanups in the state and issues regulations and guidance governing those cleanups. The regulations are found in [Chapter 173-340 WAC](#)³. Ecology investigates reports of contamination, and if it poses a significant threat to human health or the environment, the site is placed on the Confirmed and Suspected Contaminated Sites List for further assessment. The cleanup process can begin at any time after a release of a hazardous substance to the environment has been discovered.

Public participation is an important part of cleanup under the MTCA. 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,

¹ <https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/publications/publications/9406.pdf>




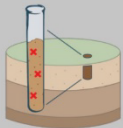






² <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?cite=173-204>

³ <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?cite=173-340>

government, other organizations, and interested parties have the opportunity to get involved by commenting during the cleanup process.

Under the MTCA, the cleanup process generally includes four steps, with opportunities for the public to review and comment on cleanup documents. In addition, a partial cleanup (called an interim action) can occur at any time during the cleanup process. The public is provided an opportunity to review and comment on planned interim action work as well.

Steps in Washington's Cleanup Process

 <p>Interim Action</p>		<p>Cleanup action that partially addresses contamination at a site. Can occur anytime during the cleanup process. Typically performed to address contamination that poses an immediate threat to human health and the environment, or to take advantage of an opportunity to reduce overall cleanup costs.</p>
 <p>Remedial Investigation (RI)</p>		<p>Determines the nature, extent and magnitude of contamination at a site, and how people, plants and animals may be exposed to the contamination.</p>
 <p>Feasibility Study (FS)</p>		<p>Identifies various methods to eliminate exposure to the contamination found by the RI. Assembles methods into a range of cleanup alternatives. Evaluates alternatives through an environmental benefit versus cost analysis. This process identifies a preferred alternative.</p>
 <p>Cleanup Action Plan (CAP)</p>		<p>Describes Ecology's selected cleanup action for the site. Developed based on information in the RI/FS. Includes cleanup standards, a schedule for design and construction work, and requirements for monitoring, operation and maintenance of the cleanup action.</p>
 <p>Cleanup, Monitoring, and Use Restrictions</p>		<p>Construction of the cleanup action described in the CAP. Post-construction monitoring, operation and maintenance activities. Restricting or prohibiting certain activities that could expose any remaining contamination or adversely impact the cleanup action, without prior Ecology approval.</p>

 Opportunities for public review and comment

Figure 1: Steps in Washington's Cleanup Process

MTCA cleanups also require evaluation under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA; Chapter 197-11 WAC). Under SEPA, the potential for significant adverse environmental impacts from a project or action must be evaluated by state and local agencies when making decisions. This evaluation is subject to public review and comment in parallel with cleanup documents.

Site Information

Location, history, and ownership

The approximately 225-acre Northern State Multi Service Center cleanup site (Site) is located on the eastern edge of Sedro-Woolley in Skagit County (County). The property was formerly owned and operated by Washington State as the Northern State Hospital and is now owned by the Port of Skagit. The hospital was constructed in 1912. It treated psychiatric patients until it closed in 1973. The Northern State Hospital is on the [National Registry of Historic Places](https://catalog.archives.gov/id/75613149)⁴.

In 2015 the City of Sedro-Woolley (City) annexed the Northern State property within city limits. In 2018 Washington State transferred ownership of the Northern State property to the Port. Many of the property's buildings are currently leased to tenants.

The Port, City, and County are partnering on re-use of the property as the Sedro-Woolley Innovation for Tomorrow Center or SWIFT Center, a mixed use campus focused on technology and innovation.

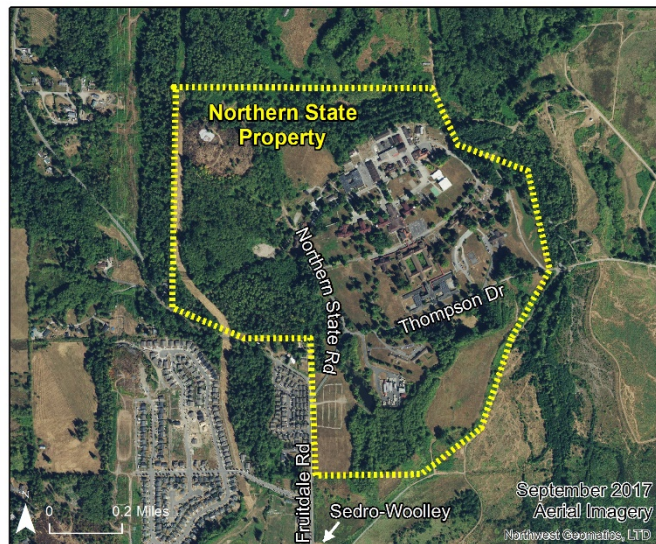


Figure 2: Aerial view of Northern State property, September 2017



Figure 3: Northern State Hospital dedication, May 1912; Washington State Archive

⁴ <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/75613149>

Contamination

The Site includes soil and groundwater with contaminant levels above state cleanup standards established to protect human health and the environment. Contamination is from the former state hospital operations and the materials used in the Site's historic buildings.

Preliminary testing found contamination in:

Soil: metals, carcinogenic polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (cPAHs), tetrachloroethene (PCE) and petroleum products.

Groundwater: metals, PCE, trichloroethene (TCE), and petroleum products.

Contaminant levels within the Northern State Multi Service Center are present at potentially harmful levels and must be addressed under Washington's toxics cleanup law, the Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA).

Status of cleanup

The Site is in the beginning of the formal cleanup process shown in Figure 1 on Page 2.

In 2019, Ecology will issue for public review an Agreed Order (legal agreement) between Ecology and the Port that requires the Port to characterize the Site (Remedial Investigation), analyze cleanup options (Feasibility Study), and create a draft Cleanup Action Plan (CAP).

As part of the Agreed Order, the Port will also be required to complete two initial cleanups (Interim Actions). These early cleanup actions at the Site are planned for Summer 2019. See Exhibit B in the Agreed Order for more details.

Preliminary testing identified contamination within seven areas of concern (AOCs) across the Site. The two AOCs scheduled for early cleanup action in 2019 as Interim Actions are:

- Area of Concern 1: Former Laundry Building
- Area of Concern 4: Arsenic in Soil

Design and performance of the cleanup work described in the CAP will occur in the future under a separate legal agreement. All future legal agreements will be issued for public review and comment.

Area land use and SWIFT Center

The Northern State property is being redeveloped as the Sedro-Woolley Innovation for Tomorrow or SWIFT Center by the Port, City, and County. The property was annexed within the city limits of the City of Sedro-Woolley in 2015 (see Figures 4 and 5). It is currently zoned as "Public" with the land parcels surrounding the property to the east as "Urban Reserve Public Open Space" and to the west as "Residential-5."

Public Participation Plan: Northern State Multi Service Center

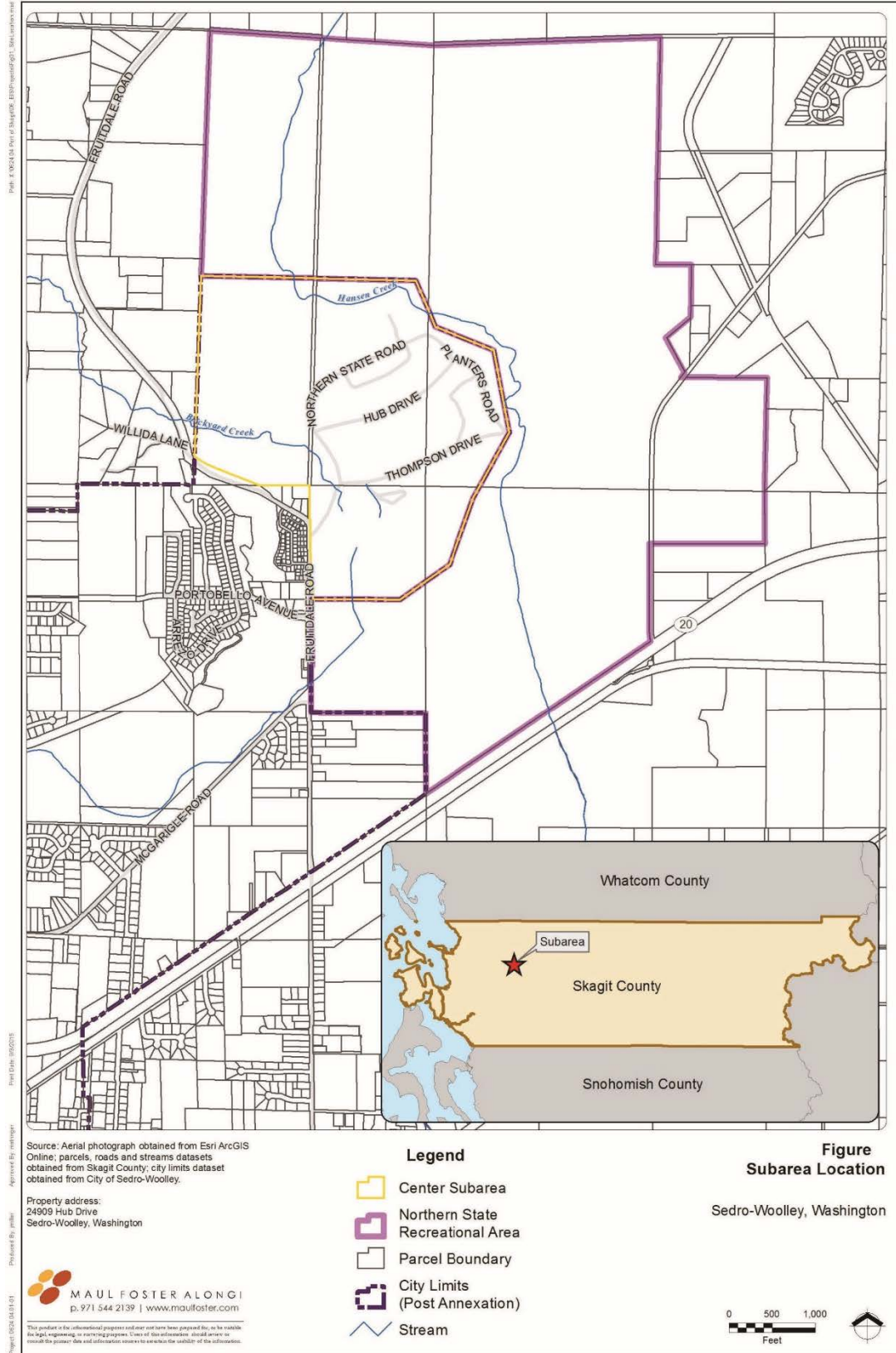


Figure 4: SWIFT Center 2015 Subarea Plan Location Map

Site Information

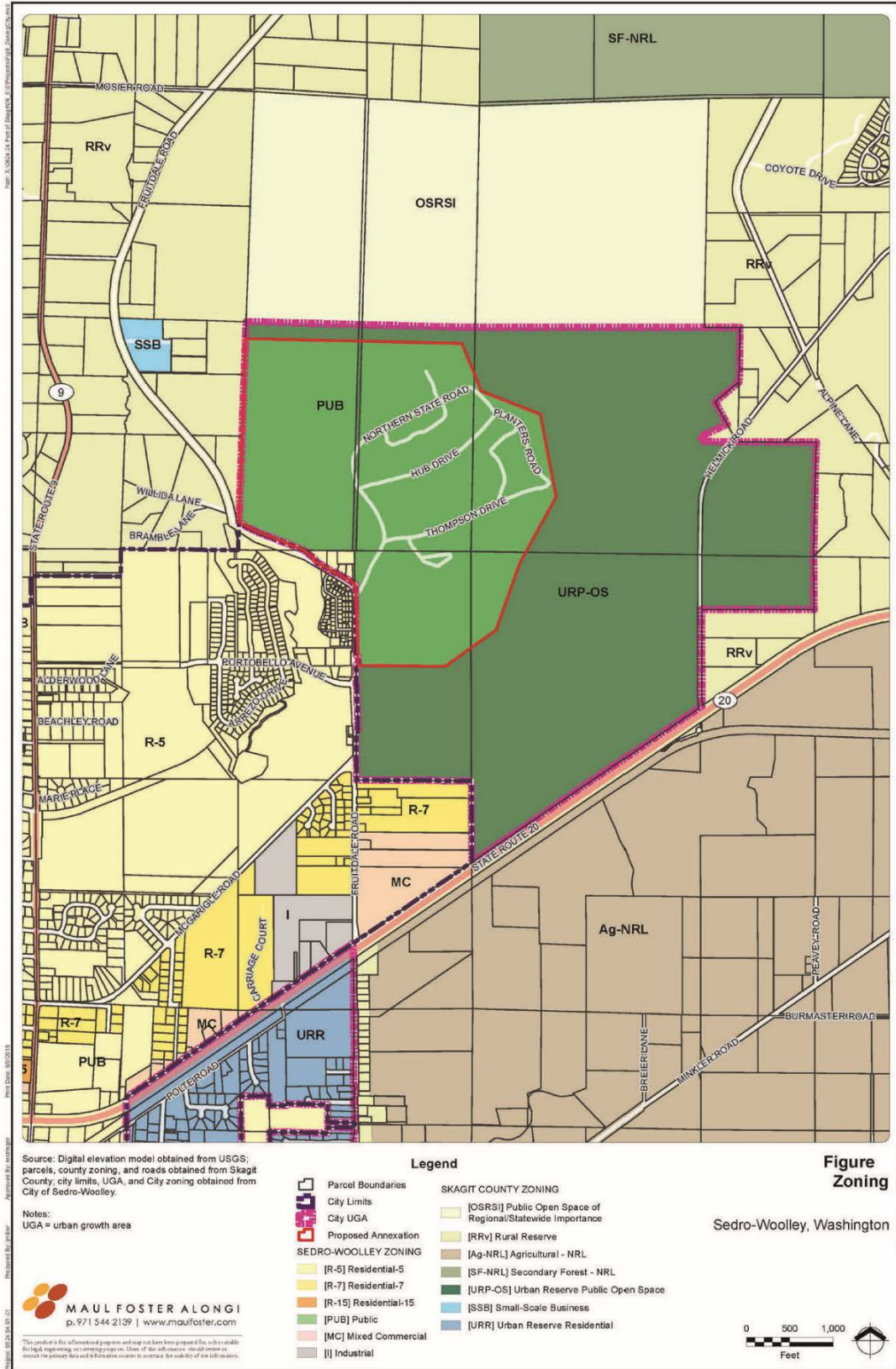


Figure 5: SWIFT Center 2015 Subarea Plan Zoning Map

The [Port](#)⁵, [City](#)⁶, and County entered into an [interlocal agreement](#)⁷ (and [amendment](#)⁸) with the following [redevelopment goals](#)⁹:

- Encourage the private sector to create and sustain jobs at the SWIFT Center benefitting all of Skagit County and its citizens and that are compatible with all of the other goals.
- Continue and promote public recreational use of the property.
- Protect the environmentally sensitive areas of the property, in particular Hansen Creek.
- Acknowledge and protect the historic significance of Northern State Hospital to the local community, the wider region and the State of Washington.
- Acknowledge and respect the neighboring Upper Skagit Indian Tribal Nation's interests in the property.

Community information

Economic Trends

The [SWIFT Center 2015 Sub Area Plan](#)¹⁰ characterizes the area's market conditions and trends (page 28):

“Adaptive reuse of the Center will be strongly influenced by the demographic and economic trends of the county and the city. In general, the county has a relatively small population that has experienced modest but steady growth. The county's economy is driven in large part by manufacturing, with 36 percent of the county's gross domestic product (GDP)¹¹ coming from this sector. The manufacturing sector is primarily driven by nondurable goods such as food and petroleum. While the county's economy did not fare as well as others during the Great Recession, it has recovered, with the 2012 GDP only 2 percent less than it was when it was at its peak in 2005. This economic activity, along with moderate population growth and improving employment figures, indicates that the local economy is stabilizing.”

⁵ <http://www.portofskagit.com/skagit-advantage/swift-center/>

⁶ https://www.ci.sedro-woolley.wa.us/departments/planning/northern_state.php

⁷ https://www.ci.sedro-woolley.wa.us/Departments/Finance/Interlocal%20Agreements/2014/20140113_IA_between_City_and_County_and_Port_re_Northern_State.pdf

⁸ https://www.ci.sedro-woolley.wa.us/Departments/Finance/Interlocal%20Agreements/2015/20150227_Amendment_to_IA_between_City_and_County_and_Port_re_Northern_State.pdf

⁹ https://www.ci.sedro-woolley.wa.us/departments/planning/northern_state.php

¹⁰ https://www.ci.sedro-woolley.wa.us/Departments/Planning/Northern%20State/20151112_Northern_State_Subarea_Plan.pdf

¹¹ U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2012 GDP by Region.

Environmental Justice, spoken languages, and community outreach

The [Environmental Protection Agency’s Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool](#)¹² reports no significant demographic indicators above the EPA 80th percentile threshold in the area surrounding the Site.

The [United States Census Bureau’s American Fact Finder](#)¹³ census tract data reports no significant language populations speaking English less than “very well.”

Ecology will reach out to cultural community organizations as part of our public involvement efforts and provide information in other languages as appropriate following federal guidance.¹⁴ The non-English language most widely spoken in the Site area is Spanish. As a result, Fact Sheets will provide contact information for Spanish speakers to request translation services. We strive to involve the whole community in our public participation efforts and welcome your input on additional measures we can take to reach the nearby community.

The Upper Skagit Tribe is a federally recognized tribe that relies on resources that could be affected by the contamination. Ecology will reach out to this tribe throughout the cleanup process.

Public Involvement Activities

This section describes how Ecology will share information with the community and how you can share information with us. In addition, this section provides information about state grants that are available to help the community understand and participate in the cleanup process.

How we share information with the community

During specific steps of the cleanup process, Ecology will mail notices about upcoming public comment periods to residences and businesses near the Site. The mailing list area may vary depending on the type of contamination and where it is located, but at a minimum it will include addresses within a quarter-mile radius of the Site, and other interested organizations and individuals. The 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 one is not yet scheduled.

¹² <https://ejscreen.epa.gov/mapper/index.html?wherestr=47.505875%2C+-122.290814>

¹³ <https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/searchresults.xhtml?refresh=t>

¹⁴ Guidance to Environmental Protection Agency Financial Assistance Recipients Regarding Title VI Prohibition Against National Origin Discrimination Affecting Limited English Proficient Persons, 69 Fed. Reg. § 35602 (June 15, 2004).

Ecology may also develop documents outside of comment periods to keep the community updated on the Site's status. We will make these informational documents available online and, if warranted, by US mail.

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

Notification lists

Ecology maintains an email list and a mailing list that includes: postal addresses within a quarter-mile radius of the Site; relevant local, state, federal, and tribal government contacts; and, other interested parties.

We will use these lists to send notices when cleanup documents are available for public review and comment or for other Site communications.

If you would like to be added to the email or mailing lists for this Site, please contact Ian Fawley at 360-255-4382 or ian.fawley@ecy.wa.gov.

Site Register

Public comment periods, events, and other cleanup notices are published in Ecology's [Site Register](#).¹⁵ To receive the *Site Register* by email, please contact Sarah Kellington at 360-407-7466 or sarah.kellington@ecy.wa.gov.

Newspaper display ads or legal notices

We announce public comment periods and events in ads or notices published in the Skagit Valley Herald. We will also publish notice on our [Public Input & Events Listing](#).¹⁶

Ecology's website and social media platforms

We maintain a [website for the Northern State Multi Service Center](#) site.¹⁷ The website provides Site information, including current status, public comment period information and documents, and other Site documents.

We may also share information about cleanup sites through [news releases, our ECOconnect blog, and social media](#).¹⁸

¹⁵ ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/Guidance-technical-assistance/Site-Register-lists-and-data

¹⁶ ecology.wa.gov/Events/Search/Listing

¹⁷ <https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/gsp/Sitepage.aspx?csid=10048>

¹⁸ ecology.wa.gov/About-us/Get-to-know-us/News

Document repositories

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

Central Skagit Sedro-Woolley Library

802 Ball Street
Sedro-Woolley, WA 98284
Phone: 360-755-3985

Washington Department of Ecology

Bellingham Field Office
913 Squalicum Way, Unit 101
Bellingham, WA 98225

To schedule an appointment, please contact the Bellingham Field Office Administration Staff at 360-255-4400 or ECYDLBFOADMINSUPPORT@ecy.wa.gov.

Washington Department of Ecology

Northwest Regional Office
3190 160th Avenue SE
Bellevue, WA 98008-5452

To schedule an appointment, please contact the Northwest Region Office Central Records staff at 425-649-7190 or sally.perkins@ecy.wa.gov.

Signs at the Site

We may also install signs displaying information about cleanup status, traffic impacts, and health risks at the Site.

How to share information with us

Interested persons may ask questions, submit informal comments, or share Site information with Ecology at any time. However, to be included in the formal Site record, comments must be submitted in writing during designated comment periods. These written comments can be submitted via:

- Ecology's online comment form
- Email or mail to the Ecology Site Manager

We may also meet with interested community members and organizations to gather information and identify public concerns. To collaborate with us about this Site, please contact Ian Fawley at 360-255-4382 or ian.fawley@ecy.wa.gov.

Public comment periods

At minimum, the MTCA requires 30-day public comment periods for cleanup documents. Ecology may hold longer public comment periods based upon the complexity of the documents, level of public interest, or other compelling factors.

For related SEPA documents, these are typically issued for public review with the cleanup documents and follow their public comment period.

After a public comment period ends, we respond in writing to all comments received in a Response to Comments document. This document is provided to each commenter, and placed on the Site webpage. If the comments received result in significant changes to the cleanup documents, then we will revise and re-issue the documents for public review. If the comments do not result in significant changes, then the documents are considered 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 we receive 10 or more written requests.

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.

Public participation grants

Qualified individuals and not-for-profit public interest organizations are eligible to apply for a Public Participation Grant (PPG) from Ecology. For contaminated sites, these funds may be used to:

- Contract with an expert to help interpret technical jargon and information.
- Conduct activities that enhance the public's understanding of, and participation in, the site cleanup process.

For more information about PPGs, please contact Lynn Gooding at 360-407-6062 or lynn.gooding@ecy.wa.gov. You may also visit Ecology's [Public Participation Grant website](#).¹⁹

¹⁹ ecology.wa.gov/About-us/How-we-operate/Grants-loans/Find-a-grant-or-loan/Public-participation-grants

Plan Amendments/Updates

Ecology will review this plan as the cleanup progresses and amend/update it as necessary.

The public involvement activities presented herein describe Ecology's current plans for keeping the public informed and for receiving information and comments from the public.

If you feel the public involvement activities described in this plan are insufficient, or need modification, please contact Ian Fawley at 360-255-4382 or ian.fawley@ecy.wa.gov.