



DEPARTMENT OF
ECOLOGY
State of Washington

Public Participation Plan

Westman Marine Cleanup Site Blaine, WA

Facility Site ID: 66519819

Cleanup Site ID: 2205

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Publication and Contact Information

This document is available on the Department of Ecology's Westman Marine website at: <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/gsp/Sitepage.aspx?csid=2205>

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**Public Participation Plan
Westman Marine Cleanup Site
Blaine, WA**

*Facility Site ID: 66519819
Cleanup Site ID: 2205*

Washington State Department of Ecology
Northwest Regional Office
Toxics Cleanup Program
Bellevue, Washington

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Introduction

The Port of Bellingham (Port) is addressing soil and sediment contamination at the Westman Marine Cleanup Site (Site) under a legal agreement with the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology). The contamination is the result of historical boat maintenance and repair operations conducted at the Site 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>




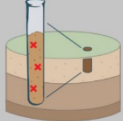






² <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?cite=173-204>

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, ownership, and history

The Westman Marine cleanup site is located at 218 McMillan Avenue in the Blaine Harbor industrial area in Blaine, WA. The Site consists of an approximately 1 acre upland area (Upland Unit) and an approximately 27 acre in-water sediment area (Marine Unit). Portions of the property were contaminated by past boat maintenance and repair operations.

Blaine Harbor was originally created in the late 1930s by dredging the tideflats and using the dredged materials to create uplands. The harbor's upland areas were expanded in the 1940s, 1950s, and again in 2001.

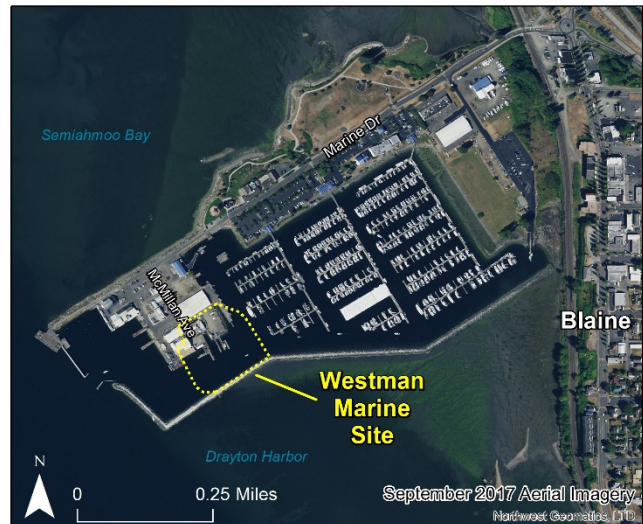


Figure 2: Westman Marine cleanup site location

The property has been used for marine operations since approximately 1949. In 1984, the Port became the owner of the property, including this cleanup site, and has leased it to several different companies. The State of Washington owns a portion of the site which the Port manages.



Figure 3: Aerial photo of Blaine Harbor, 1956, including Westman Marine cleanup site

Early cleanup action

In March 2014, the Port completed an early cleanup action (interim action) in order to construct a new building for another tenant partially located in the Site area. The Port removed and disposed of approximately 420 tons of contaminated soil.

Contamination

In 2001 the Port began voluntarily sampling sediments in Blaine Harbor. Further investigations conducted by the Port in 2013-2014 found contamination concentrations at the Site above state standards established to protect human health and the environment:

Soil: carcinogenic polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (cPAHs), polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and metals

Sediment: Metals, organotins (TBT), cPAHs and PCBs

Groundwater is not affected by the contamination releases on the Site and is not considered an affected medium for the Site.

Status of cleanup

Ecology and the Port entered into a legal agreement (Agreed Order) in April 2013 to complete a Remedial Investigation and Feasibility study (RI/FS) report and develop a draft Cleanup Action Plan.

The Port has completed a draft RI/FS report that summarizes investigation results, evaluates a range of cleanup alternatives, and identifies a preferred cleanup alternative. Ecology invites the public to review and comment on this draft RI/FS report from September 3 – October 2, 2019.

Based on the information in the final RI/FS report, Ecology will select a cleanup action to address contamination at the Site. We will describe our selected cleanup action in a draft Cleanup Action Plan. Ecology expects to issue the cleanup action plan for public review in 2020.



Figure 4: Cleanup site boundary and interim action location

Area land use and community

The Site is located in the Blaine Harbor area of Blaine’s Central Business District.⁴ (see figure 5). The Blaine Harbor and adjacent waterfront area is regulated by the [Wharf District Master Plan \(2007\)](https://www.ci.blaine.wa.us/DocumentCenter/View/13724/Wharf-District-Mstr-Pln-BlaineCompPlanAppendix_C?bidId=)⁵ (see Figure 6).

Blaine Harbor is bordered by Semiahmoo Bay to the north, Central Blaine to the east, Drayton Harbor to the south and Semiahmoo to the west. Upland property on the Site is owned by the Port and leased for a variety of uses. The Site is located in the “Shipyard Industrial Park” area of the Wharf District Master Plan.⁵ (See Figure 7)

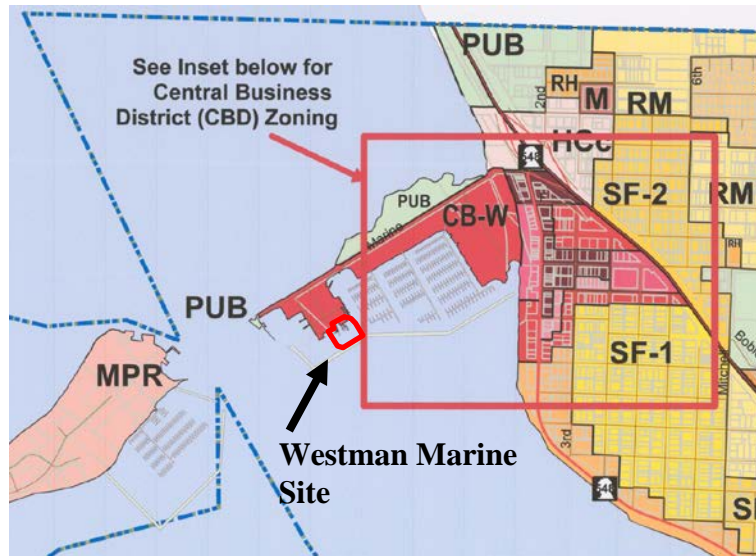


Figure 5: Cleanup site location in Blaine’s Central Business District

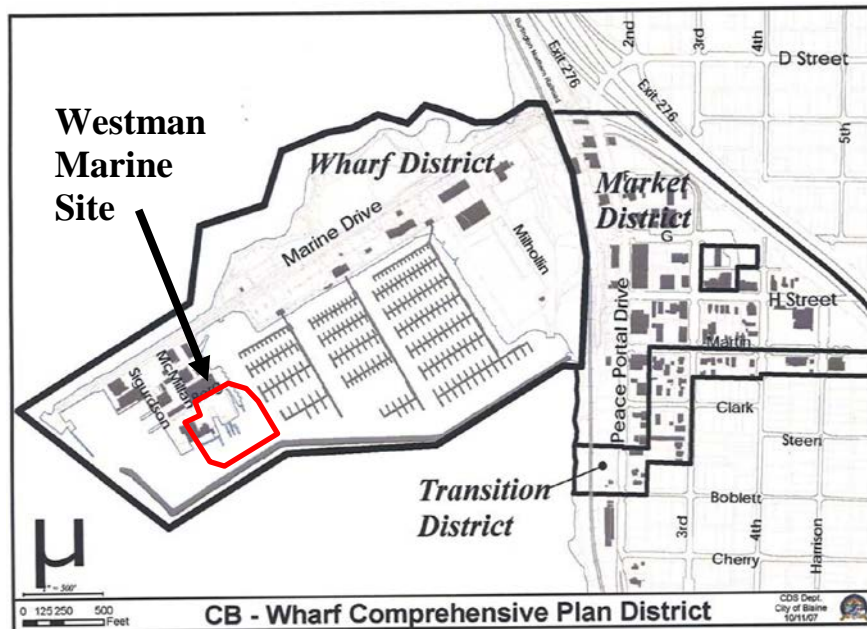


Figure 6: City of Blaine Central Business Wharf Comprehensive Plan District Map

⁴ <https://www.ci.blaine.wa.us/DocumentCenter/View/13431/Land-Use-Map-Set2?bidId=>

⁵ https://www.ci.blaine.wa.us/DocumentCenter/View/13724/Wharf-District-Mstr-Pln-BlaineCompPlanAppendix_C?bidId=

Site Information

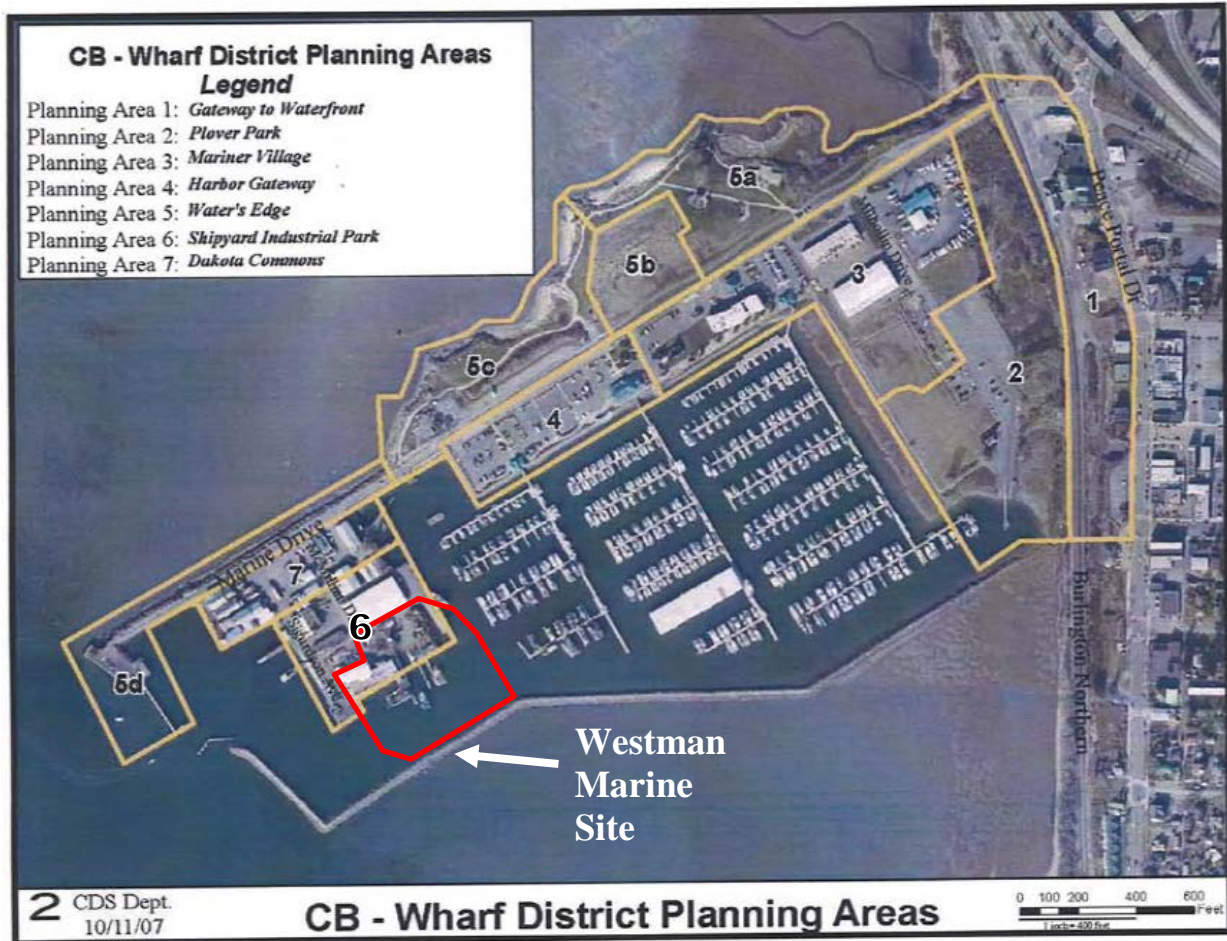


Figure 7: Central Business Wharf District Planning Areas

The [Environmental Protection Agency’s Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool](#)⁶ reports a significant “population over 64 years of age” in the area surrounding the Site. Ecology will plan our public outreach to consider this population’s needs.

There also were significant “linguistically isolated” populations, but further research using the [United States Census Bureau’s American Fact Finder](#)⁷ 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.⁸ The non-English language most widely spoken in the Site area is Spanish. As a result, Fact

⁶ <https://ejscreen.epa.gov/mapper/index.html?wherestr=47.505875%2C+-122.290814>

⁷ <https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/searchresults.xhtml?refresh=t>

⁸ 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).

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 Lummi Nation and Nooksack Tribe are federally recognized tribes that may harvest seafood from the Site. Ecology will reach out to these tribes 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.

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](#).⁹ To receive the Site Register by email, please contact Sarah Kellington at 360-407-7466 or sarah.kellington@ecy.wa.gov, or [subscribe online](#).¹⁰

Newspaper display ads or legal notices

We announce public comment periods and events in ads or notices published in the Bellingham Herald and The Northern Light (Blaine) newspapers. We will also publish notice on our [Public Input & Events Listing](#).¹¹

Ecology's website and social media platforms

We maintain a [website for the Westman Marine site](#).¹² 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](#).¹³

Document repositories

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

Blaine Library

610 3rd Street
Blaine, WA 98230
Phone: 360-305-3637

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

⁹ ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/Guidance-technical-assistance/Site-Register-lists-and-data

¹⁰ <http://listserv.ecology.wa.gov/scripts/wa-ECOLOGY.exe?SUBED1=SITEREGISTER&A=1>

¹¹ ecology.wa.gov/Events/Search/Listing

¹² <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/gsp/Sitepage.aspx?csid=2205>

¹³ ecology.wa.gov/About-us/Get-to-know-us/News

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.

Following the comment period, we publish all the input we received and respond to significant comments and questions, as appropriate. We will place our responses [on Ecology's Westman Marine webpage](#)¹⁴. If the comments received result in significant changes to the project 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.

¹⁴ <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/gsp/Sitepage.aspx?csid=2205>

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](#).¹⁵

Americans with Disabilities Act

To request ADA accommodation for disabilities, or printed materials in a format for the visually impaired, contact the Ecology ADA Coordinator at 360-407-6831 or ecyadacoordinator@ecy.wa.gov, 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.

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.

¹⁵ ecology.wa.gov/About-us/How-we-operate/Grants-loans/Find-a-grant-or-loan/Public-participation-grants