BNSF Track Switching Facility

BNSF Track Switching Facility aka Wishram

Comments accepted:

January 19, 2021 through
February 19, 2021

Submit comments:

Online:
http://tcp.ecology.commentinput.com/?id=K5J97

Or by mail to:
John Mefford, Site Manager
1250 West Alder Street
Union Gap, WA 98903-0009

509-454-7836
John.Mefford@ecy.wa.gov

Site info:

https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/gsp/Sitepage.aspx?csid=230

Facility Site ID: 1625461
Site Cleanup ID: 230

Document review locations:

Due to circumstances beyond control and public health and safety concerns, Ecology cannot offer in-person review options. Documents are currently available electronically at the BNSF Track Switching Facility cleanup site website at the site info link above.

Remedial Investigation Report Available for Review and Comment

The Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) is providing an opportunity for the public to review and comment on the draft Remedial Investigation (RI) Report for the uplands portion for the BNSF Track Switching Facility aka Wishram site, located at 500 Main Street, Wishram.

A Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study (RI/FS) and a draft Cleanup Action Plan (DCAP) are required under an Agreed Order between Ecology and BNSF Railway Company (BNSF). A Remedial Investigation (RI) uses data to see how far contamination has spread. A Feasibility Study (FS) outlines options to cleanup contamination. A Cleanup Action Plan is a document describing the final cleanup action selected for the site. A DCAP is prepared following the Feasibility Study. An Agreed Order (AO) is a legal agreement between Ecology and the Potentially Liable Persons (PLPs) outlining the expectations, process, and schedule for site cleanup.

The FS and DCAP are being prepared and will be made available for public review and comment when they are complete.

Ecology is asking for your comments on the Remedial Investigation Report.

You are invited to:

- Review the *"Uplands Remedial Investigation Report, BNSF Wishram Railyard (Ecology Site Name BNSF Track Switching Facility), Wishram, Washington"* dated October 20, 2020 Please Note: Due to the large file size, the report is in sections.
- Send your comments to Ecology for consideration. Comments will be accepted January 19, 2021 through February 19, 2021

Site Background

The Spokane, Portland, and Seattle Railway developed the site in the early 1900s and an Engine House, turntable, and several smaller outbuildings was constructed. Historically, actions at the site were engine and railcar repairs, fueling and watering locomotives, and railcar switching. The majority of the railyard is made up of railroad tracks for railcar switching and is still done today. Over time, a concrete sump, a railcar repair shop, a 30,000-barrel oil aboveground storage tank (AST), an elevated oil service 28,000-gallon AST, an oil-unloading trough, as well as the associated connections and piping was added at the site.

From 1912 to 1956, steam locomotives were fueled using Bunker C heavy oil. In 1949, a concrete diesel-fueling island was installed and included a 15,000-gallon and a 20,000-gallon underground storage tanks (USTs). By the late 1950s, the oil ASTs were removed and two 100,000-gallon ASTs were constructed to store diesel after the transition to diesel locomotives. Underground piping to and from the tanks transported the diesel fuel. From the early 1950s to the 1970s, diesel locomotives were fueled at the site. By the late 1970s, fueling no longer occurred at the site and the two 100,000-gallon ASTs were removed. The railcar repair shop was removed in 1960 and the Engine House was removed in the 1980s after they were no longer needed.

In 1957, with the completion of the Dalles Dam, the water level of the Columbia River rose by approximately 40 feet and engulfing a portion of the shoreline. The in-water portion of the shoreline is a fishing area and part of the treaty with the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation. Tribal members still exercise the treaty fishing rights in the area near the railyard.

In 1970, a merger between several railroads, including the Spokane, Portland, and Seattle Railway created the Burlington Northern Railroad, now known as BNSF Railway (BNSF). BNSF currently owns the site.

What Has Been Done?

In the early 2000s, BNSF had an UST site assessment performed. The report revealed heavy oil and diesel in soil at concentrations above state cleanup levels. Several interim cleanup actions have been performed since then. An Interim Action is a partial or short-term cleanup of contamination and is meant to reduce exposure to harmful contaminants while a long-term cleanup up plan is worked on. In 2015, Ecology and BNSF entered into an Agreed Order to complete an RI/FS and DCAP.

Groundwater monitoring wells have been installed and groundwater samples continue to show heavy oil and diesel contamination remain above state cleanup levels.

Why This Matters?

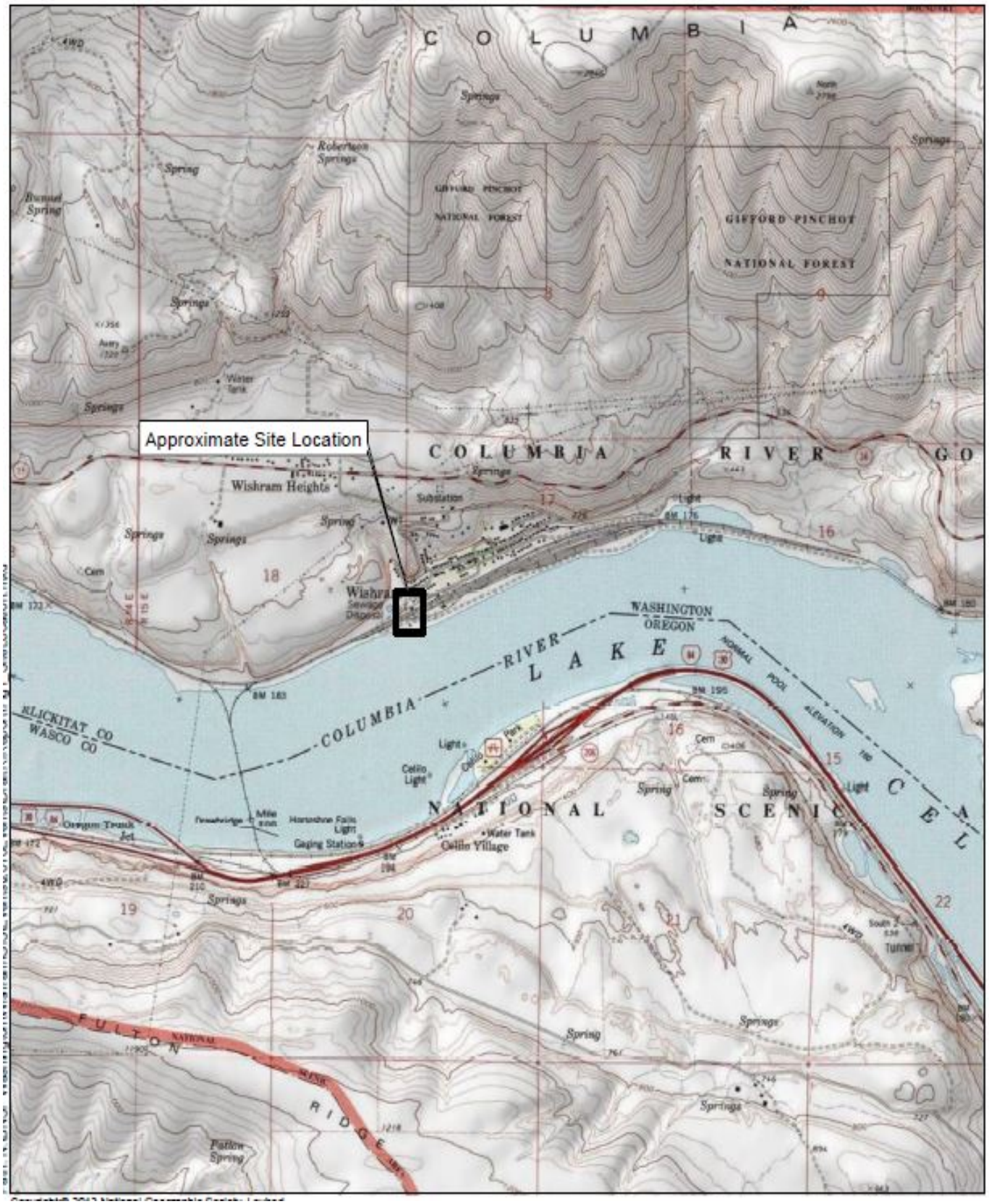
Diesel and oil (petroleum products) are hazardous substances and cleaning up the site will help reduce or eliminate the potential harmful effects of the contaminants and protect human health and the environment.

What Happens Next?

After the public comment period ends, Ecology will review and respond to comments received and will hold a public meeting if 10 or more people request one.

For information about other opportunities for public involvement, such as meetings, hearings, open houses, and workshops, please visit Ecology's Public Involvement Calendar at https://ecology.wa.gov/Events/Search/Listing.

BNSF Track Switching Facility Site Map



Map courtesy of Kennedy Jenks RI Report November 2018

DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY
State of Washington

Toxics Cleanup Program
1250 West Alder Street
Union Gap, WA 98903-0009

BNSF Track Switching Facility

Map courtesy of Bing Maps

Public comment period

January 19, 2021 through February 19, 2021

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The Washington State Department of Ecology is providing an opportunity for you to review and comment on the Remedial Investigation Report for the BNSF Track Switching Facility site, located at 500 Main Street, Wishram.

See inside for site information and details on how to comment.

ADA Accessibility: To request an **ADA accommodation**, contact Ecology at 509-575-2490 or visit https://ecology.wa.gov/accessibility. For Relay Service or TTY call 711 or 877-833-6341.