

Portac Inc Tacoma Site (aka Parcel 15)

4215 SR 509, E Frontage Road

Cleanup Plan and SEPA Documents

Available for Public Review and Comment

Comments accepted

April 22 – May 23, 2021

Submit comments:

Online at:

<http://tcp.ecology.commentinput.com/?id=u3fNM>

Or by mail to:

Andrew Smith, Site Manager
 WA Department of Ecology
 Southwest Regional Office
 PO Box 47775
 Olympia, WA 98504-7775
 Email:
Andrew.Smith@ecy.wa.gov

Document review options:

Ecology's Site webpage
<https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/gsp/Sitepage.aspx?csid=3642>

In consideration of public health and safety, Ecology cannot offer in-person review options at this time.

If you need document review assistance, please contact Andrew Smith, Site Manager Andrew.Smith@ecy.wa.gov 360-407-6316, or Nancy Davis, Outreach Coordinator Nancy.Davis@ecy.wa.gov 360-407-0067.

Cleanup Contamination

Arsenic in soil, surface water, and groundwater

Pentachlorophenol (PCP) in soil and groundwater.

Site information

Facility Site ID: 1215
 Cleanup Site ID: 3642

Cleanup plans available for public comment

The Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) is entering into a legal agreement called an Agreed Order (AO) DE 15816 with the Port of Tacoma (Port) to clean up contamination at the Portac Inc. Site (Site) in the tideflats. The Port is the potentially liable person (PLP) responsible for cleanup at the Site.

Ecology invites you to review and comment on draft documents for this Site.

- **[Remedial Investigation \(RI\) Report](#)**

(<https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/gsp/docviewer.ashx?did=84711>) describes conditions and contamination at the Site. The RI is four volumes consisting of the Report and three volumes of appendices. The Report and Appendices are available at our [Site webpage](#) (<https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/gsp/Sitepage.aspx?csid=3642>).

- **[Feasibility Study \(FS\)](#)**

(<https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/gsp/docviewer.ashx?did=91934>) and the **[Addendum](#)** (<https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/gsp/docviewer.ashx?did=91947>) compare alternatives for cleaning up the contamination.

- **[Draft Cleanup Action Plan](#)** (dCAP)

(<https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/gsp/docviewer.ashx?did=98639>) describes Ecology's plan for cleaning up contamination at the Site.

- **[Agreed Order DE 15816](#)**

(<https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/gsp/docviewer.ashx?did=98638>) requires the Port to implement and maintain the cleanup actions described in the Cleanup Action Plan.

- **[State Environmental Policy Act \(SEPA\) Determination of Non-Significance](#)**

(<https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/gsp/docviewer.ashx?did=99859>) describes Ecology's determination that cleanup activities are not likely to harm the environment.

The comment period is from **April 22 to May 23, 2021**. The blue box on the left shows where to comment and find more information on Ecology's Site webpage.

Ecology will consider comments received during the comment period. If there are no changes, then Ecology will approve the cleanup documents and sign the AO. The Port will do the cleanup work.

Site background

The Site is about 52 acres located at 4215 E Frontage Rd. (SR 509) next to Wapato Creek in the Tacoma tideflats. From 1974 to 2009, Portac Inc. leased the property from the Port. The property was a log yard and a sawmill (see Figure 1). In 2008, Portac Inc. removed the sawmill. Now the site is a paved parking lot for cars and trucks.

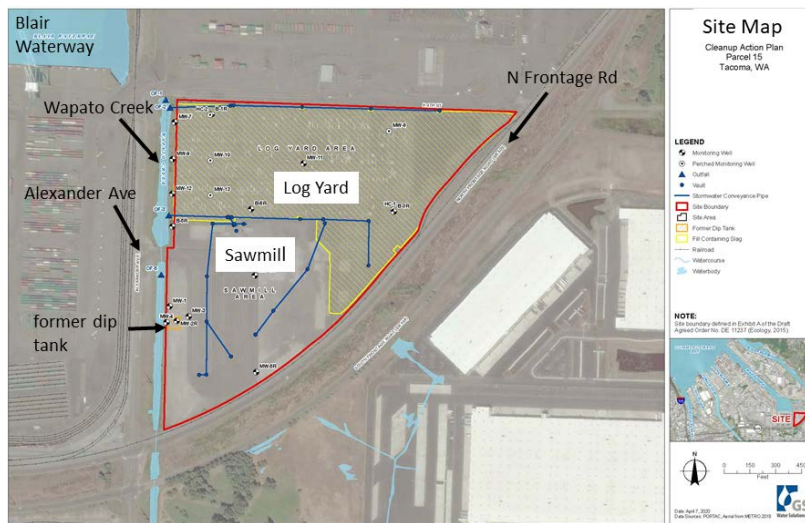


Figure 1. The location where the log yard and sawmill were located.

Log yard: In 1974 to the 1980s, slag or waste from the former Asarco smelter was brought to the Site for roads to support heavy equipment. The slag contained arsenic and other metals. Stormwater contacted the slag and it became contaminated with metals. Contaminated stormwater ran off the Site into Wapato Creek, which flows into the Blair Waterway and Commencement Bay.

In 1988, a concrete cap was constructed in the log yard to cover the soil containing arsenic. A stormwater collection system was built to control movement of stormwater off the cap. Methane gas from decomposition of wood waste was detected coming up from under the cap.

Sawmill: In 1976 to 1986, the sawmill used a wood preservative containing pentachlorophenol (PCP) to treat lumber. At first, the sawmill sprayed PCP on the wood. After 1980, a dip tank containing PCP was used to treat lumber. When Portac Inc. removed the sawmill, PCP contamination was found in soil and groundwater in the dip tank area and in a drainage ditch that ran through the property. Arsenic contamination was found where a log ramp connected the log yard and sawmill. Petroleum contamination was found in soil in the footprint of the sawmill. These areas were excavated, the excavations backfilled with clean soil, and contaminated soil was properly disposed. Decreasing PCP concentrations are still present in one monitoring well located in the dip tank area.

After completing the partial cleanup, in 2018 Ecology released Portac Inc. from responsibility for cleanup at the Site. Ecology began working with the Port to draft a preliminary plan to address the remaining contamination. Ecology used the preliminary plan to produce the dCAP.

Proposed cleanup of the log yard

The Port would clean up the log yard in two phases (see Figure 2). Phase 1 begins after the Port finalizes design work and permitting. Phase 2 begins later when the site is ready for redevelopment.

Log yard Cleanup Phase 1:

- Improve existing stormwater system to prevent arsenic-contaminated water from moving into Wapato Creek. Monitor arsenic in stormwater to make sure improvements are working.
- Construct a barrier along the western boundary of the log yard to reduce arsenic in groundwater as it moves through the barrier. The barrier is a permeable reactive barrier. Monitor arsenic in groundwater before it moves into Wapato Creek to make sure the barrier is working.

Log yard Cleanup Phase 2:

- Construct a new, improved cap to reduce stormwater from seeping through the cap into the groundwater.

- Install a watertight stormwater system to reduce the amount of water contacting the arsenic-containing soil buried underneath the cap.
- Monitor groundwater to make sure these actions reduce arsenic-contaminated water from moving off the Site. If these cleanup actions are not successful, use more actions to protect people's health and the environment.

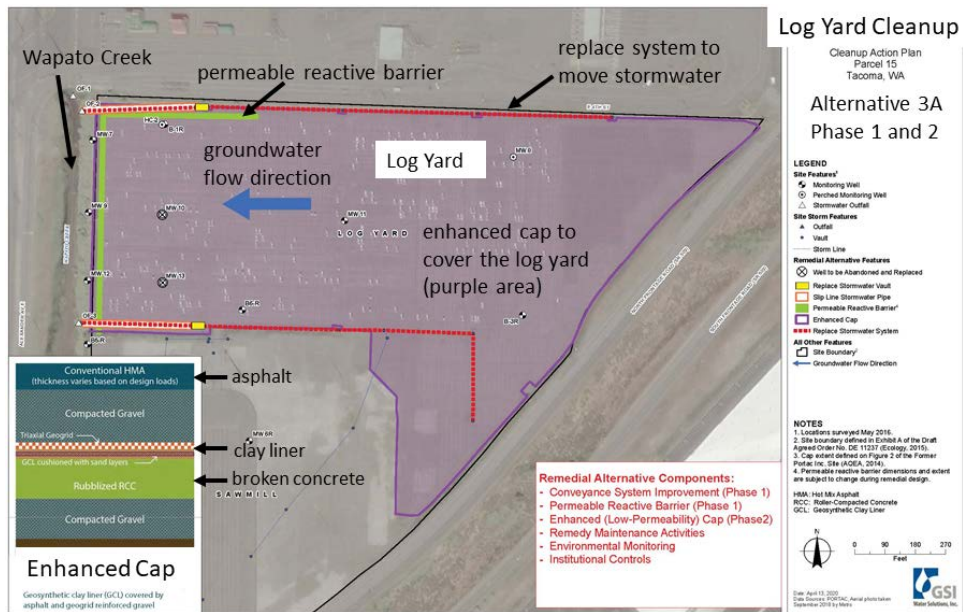


Figure 2. The log yard cleanup prevents arsenic contamination in soil from contacting water and moving off the property into Wapato Creek.

Proposed cleanup of the sawmill

The amount of PCP in groundwater in the dip tank area is decreasing because of biological activity in the soil. The cleanup action includes the following:

- Routinely measure the amount of PCP in groundwater near the dip tank to make sure it continues to decrease (see Figure 3).

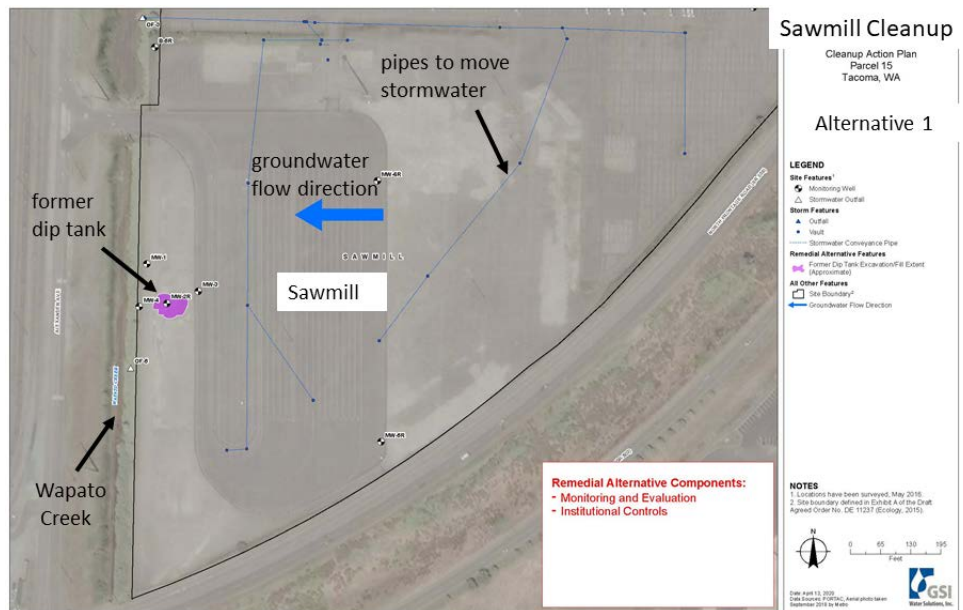


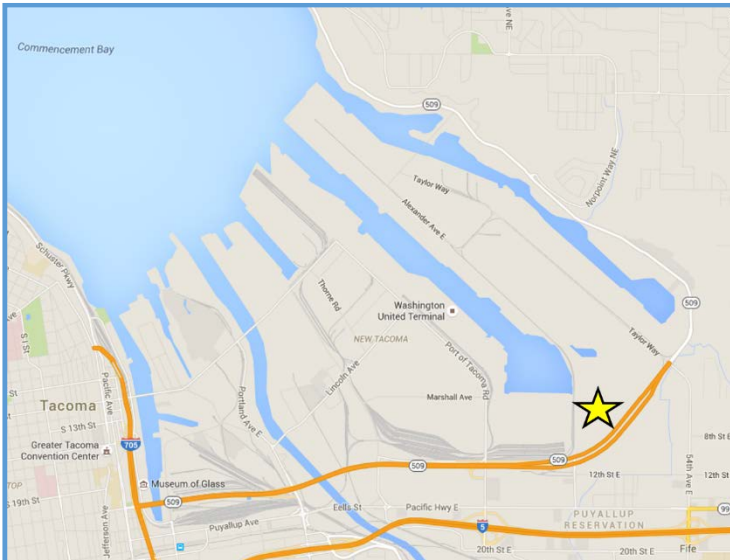
Figure 3 Cleanup of the sawmill area includes monitoring groundwater to make sure there is continued natural decrease in PCP near the dip tank area.

Environmental covenant and institutional controls

An environmental covenant on the property will be filed in county records. The covenant will restrict the Site to industrial use. Removing groundwater for any use will be prohibited. If a building is constructed on the Site, then the risk of methane soil gas collecting in the building will be checked to make sure it is safe.



Toxics Cleanup Program
 PO Box 47775
 Olympia, WA 98504-7775



Portac Inc. Tacoma Site
4215 SR 509 E Frontage Rd, Tacoma

Public comment period

April 22 to May 23, 2021

Why did I receive this mailing?

You live near the Portac Inc. Site or have expressed interest in the cleanup. This fact sheet informs you about the proposed work and the opportunity for public comment.

What can I do?

Please review the Site documents and submit your comments, questions, and concerns. To be removed from this mailing list, please call Nancy Davis at 360-407-0067 or email Nancy.Davis@ecy.wa.gov

¿Habla Español?

Unáse al diálogo sobre Portac Inc. Site. Cuando el período de comentarios termine, revisaremos los comentarios y haremos cambios antes de finalizar los documentos. Para más información en español llame al 360-407-0067 y solicite un intérprete.

Accommodation Requests: To request an ADA accommodation, contact Ecology by phone at 360-489-4971 or email at nancy.davis@ecy.wa.gov, or visit <https://ecology.wa.gov/accessibility>. For Relay Service or TTY call 711 or 877-833-6341.