



DEPARTMENT OF
ECOLOGY
State of Washington

Response to Comments

Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study

Anacortes Former Water Treatment Plant Cleanup Site Anacortes, WA

Facility Site ID: 79423677

Cleanup Site ID: 13264

May 2020

Publication and Contact Information

This document is available on the Department of Ecology's Anacortes Former Water Treatment website at: <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/gsp/Sitepage.aspx?csid=13264>

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Response to Comments

Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study

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Washington State Department of Ecology

Northwest Regional Office

Toxics Cleanup Program

Bellevue, Washington

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Comment Summary

From March 16 to April 14, 2020, the Department of Ecology solicited public comments on two environmental reports (Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study) for the Anacortes Former Water Treatment Plant cleanup site (Site). These reports:

- Describe contamination found at the Site.
- Evaluate cleanup alternatives.
- Identify a preferred cleanup alternative.

Ecology also hosted an online public meeting on Monday, March 23, 2020 where the community could learn more about the cleanup and ask questions. Information was provided on how to submit comments.

The Site is next to the Skagit River in Mount Vernon and is next to the current water treatment plant, which provides the drinking water for the City of Anacortes and surrounding communities.

Ecology received one anonymous comment during the 30-day comment period.

Table 1: List of Commenters

	First Name	Last Name	Agency/Organization/Business	Submitted By
1	Anonymous	Anonymous		Individual

Comments and Responses

Ecology has reviewed and considered all public comments received on the Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study. Based on Ecology's evaluation of the comments, no changes were necessary in the documents and they are being finalized.

The public comments are presented below, along with Ecology's responses. Appendix A, page 6, contains the comment in its original format.

Comment from: Anonymous

The Remedial Investigation report includes geologic logs and geologic and hydrogeologic interpretations. Per Washington state law, and the requirements of the Agreed Order, all geologic and hydrogeologic work shall be conducted under the supervision and direction of a licensed geologist or hydrogeologist and any documents submitted containing geologic or hydrogeologic work shall be under the seal of an appropriately licensed professional. The report should be stamped by the licensed professional(s) under whose supervision it was prepared.

Response:

The commenter is correct; a *licensed professional* is required for all geologic and hydrogeologic work conducted for the purposes of this Remedial Investigation (RI), as well as other related project steps in the cleanup process.

Licensure requirements in Washington State for geologists and hydrogeologists are found in [RCW 18.220](#)¹. The statute also makes provision for licensed engineers to perform work involving “soil, rock, groundwater, and other earth materials”, and this allowance is commonly used for geologic and hydrogeologic investigation, characterization, and reporting purposes. In this case, the RI was supervised and approved by a professional engineer whose seal appears on the title page of the document.

Additionally, the [Agreed Order](#)² governing this cleanup process contains specific language addressing professional licensing requirements:

Agreed Order No. DE 16576, VIII TERMS AND CONDITIONS, C. Performance, Page 11:

“All geologic and hydrogeologic work performed pursuant to this Order shall be under the supervision and direction of a geologist or hydrogeologist licensed by the state of Washington or under the direct supervision of an engineer registered by the state of Washington, except as otherwise provided for by RCW 18.43 and RCW 18.220. [...]”

and;

Agreed Order No. DE 16576, VIII TERMS AND CONDITIONS, C. Performance, Page 12:

“[...] Any documents submitted containing geologic, hydrogeologic, or engineering work shall be under the seal of an appropriately licensed professional as required by RCW 18.43 and RCW 18.220. [...]”

Public Outreach Summary

Ecology’s public involvement activities related to the Anacortes Former Water Treatment Plant cleanup site’s 30-day comment period (March 16 – April 14, 2020) included:

- **Fact Sheet:**
 - US mail distribution of a fact sheet providing information about the Anacortes Former Water Treatment Plant documents and the public comment period to approximately 740 people including neighboring businesses and other interested parties. Fact sheets were scheduled to arrive in mailboxes by Friday, March 13, 2020.
 - Email distribution of the outreach notice to 123 people, including interested individuals, local/county/state/federal agencies, and interested community groups.
 - Translated information was included in the mailed English fact sheet about how to access a fully-translated Spanish fact sheet.
- **Legal Notices:**
 - Publication of one paid display ad in *The Anacortes American* dated Wednesday, March 11, 2020.
 - Publication of one paid display ad in *The Skagit Valley Herald* dated Friday, March 13, 2020.

¹ <https://app.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=18.220>

² <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/gsp/DocViewer.ashx?did=86517>

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- Publication of one paid legal ad in *The Whidbey News-Times* dated Saturday, March 14, 2020.
- **Site Register:**
 - Publication of 4 notices in Ecology's Toxics Cleanup Site Register:
 - Comment Period and Meeting/Hearing:
 - March 12, 2020
 - March 26, 2020
 - April 9, 2020
 - Response to Comments:
 - May 21, 2020
 - Visit [Ecology's Site Register website](#)³ to download PDFs.
- **Media Coverage:**
 - A media notice was sent to *The Anacortes American*, [Anacortes Now website](#)⁴, KSVR 91.7 FM, *The Skagit Valley Herald*, *Cascadia Weekly*, and *The Whidbey News-Times*.
- **Social Media:**
 - **Blog:** On Thursday, March 12, 2020, Ecology's Northwest Regional Office posted an Anacortes Former Water Treatment Plant story on [Ecology's blog](#)⁵, which has approximately 1,200 email subscribers.
 - **Twitter:** On [Thursday, March 12, 2020](#)⁶ Ecology – Northwest Region @ecyseattle posted tweets connecting readers to the blog post for information on the Anacortes Former Water Treatment Plant comment period including how to submit comments, the blog post, a podcast, and the online public meeting.
- **Websites:**
 - Announcement of the public comment period, online public meeting, and posting of the fact sheet, and associated documents for review on Ecology's Anacortes Former Water Treatment Plant [website](#)⁷ and Ecology's [Public Inputs & Events webpage](#)⁸.
- **Document Repositories:**
 - Provided copies of the documents for public review through three information repositories:
 - Anacortes City Hall in Anacortes, WA
 - Ecology's Northwest Regional Office in Bellevue, WA
 - Ecology's Bellingham Field Office in Bellingham, WA
- **Online Public Meeting:**
 - In consideration of public health and safety, Ecology held an online public meeting on Monday, March 23, 2020 from 4 – 5:30 p.m. Approximately six joined online along with the presentation team.
 - Ecology, City of Anacortes and their consultants, Anchor QEA, presented about the Anacortes Former Water Treatment Plant's Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study reports and answered questions throughout the presentation.

³<https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/publications/UIPages/PublicationList.aspx?IndexTypeName=Program&NameValue=Toxics+Cleanup&DocumentTypeName=Newsletter>

⁴ <https://www.anacortesnow.com/news>

⁵ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Blog/Posts/March-2020/Cleaning-up-A-riverside-cleanup-just-around-the-be>

⁶ <https://twitter.com/ecyseattle/status/1238170143701659648>

⁷ <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/gsp/Sitepage.aspx?csid=13264>

⁸ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Events/Search/Listing>

Next Steps

After review of public comments, Ecology is finalizing the Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study reports. Ecology will make a draft Cleanup Action Plan available for public review and comment (estimated in 2020-2021). This draft Cleanup Action Plan for the Site is based on the information in the final Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study reports.

Appendices

Appendix A. Public Comments in Original Format

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Anonymous Anonymous

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