Landsburg Mine Site Cleanup Update

WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

Site Study and Evaluation of Cleanup Alternatives Complete

Public Comment Period and Public Meeting Scheduled

The Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) has prepared this fact sheet to update you on the environmental investigation taking place at the Landsburg Mine in Ravensdale, Washington. We also want to make sure you're aware of opportunities to give us your input during the cleanup process.

Report Available for Public Review

The final report on the environmental investigations conducted at the Landsburg Mine Site is now available for public review and comment. The report, called the Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study Report, describes the nature and extent of contamination at the Site and evaluates alternatives for cleanup. The report is now available for review at the locations listed in the box on the right.

Ecology is currently seeking comments from the public on the findings of the investigations and the alternatives being considered for cleanup. The Comment Period will run from *March 13 - April 12.* Comments may be submitted in writing by mailing them to the address listed on the right, or may be given at a public meeting which will be held on March 27, 1996.

At the public meeting the information in the report will be summarized and the public will be invited to comment.

Public Meeting

March 27, 1996
7 - 9 pm
Tahoma Jr. High Auditorium
24425 SE 216th Way
Maple Valley, WA

At this time, Ecology is also seeking comments on a proposed amendment to the legal agreement between Ecology and the Landsburg Mine Site Potentially Liable Persons (PLPs) Group regarding the site investigations. The amendment is available at the locations listed on the right and its contents are summarized near the end of this fact sheet.

Site Investigation Findings

Soil and Remaining Drums

The results of the Remedial Investigation indicate that chemicals associated with the prior waste disposal activities at the site do not appear to be exiting the mine. Chemicals associated with the waste were found, but only in the soils in the area where waste disposal occurred. The levels of chemicals detected outside of the mine trench are consistent with typical background levels in the area.

Historical information indicates much of the waste disposed of in the trench may have

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Review Documents at:

Maple Valley Library
23730 Maple Valley Hwy
Maple Valley, WA 98038

Department of Ecology
Northwest Regional Office
3190 160th Avenue S.E.
Bellevue, WA 98008-5452
(206) 649-7190

Send Comments to:

David L. South
Site Manager
Department of Ecology
3190 160th Avenue S.E.
Bellevue, WA 98008-5452
(206) 649-7200

Questions?

Call: Marianne Deppman
Department of Ecology
Public Involvement Specialist
(206) 649-7254

For special accommodation or language translation needs, call Marianne at the number above or at (206) 649-4259 (TDD)

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either been consumed by fires which occurred during disposal, or may have already leaked from drums due to drum rupture or bullet holes. Drums remaining in the trench are buried by land-clearing and construction debris and earthen fill.

Wastes remaining in the trench could include some intact and partially intact drums buried beneath the trench bottom surface at some depth. However, based on observations during the removal of the accessible drums, the majority of the drums have probably already ruptured or deteriorated in some manner.

Ground water

Extensive sampling of private wells in the vicinity of the mine and of wells installed specifically for the investigation indicate that the wastes disposed of in the mine are not impacting the ground water at this time.

Ground water represents the most probable potential pathway by which waste may leave the mine. Waste present in the trench is believed to be confined to the northern half of the site. Ground water flow beneath this portion of the site is to the north through the mined out and highly permeable Rogers Seam.

Future ground water monitoring activities will focus on detecting potential releases from the north end of the mine. The chance of a discharge occurring at the southern end is unlikely given the direction of ground water flow and the absence of waste in this portion of the mine.

Once exiting the site, contaminants leaving the northern end of the mine would flow primarily to the north and northeast towards the Cedar River, consistent with the local ground surface topography. No drinking water wells are currently located along this primary path of ground water flow. Two monitoring wells were installed along this probable pathway during the site investigation. Neither showed evidence of contamination. These two wells will likely serve as ground water monitoring points during future site activities.

It is also possible that some ground water flow could occur to the northwest within the glacial outwash deposits located to the north of the mine. If ground water were to flow in this direction, potential receptors would include the wells located to the northwest of the mine portal located along the Summit-Landsburg Road. The closest well is approximately 1,500 feet away from the trench. It is not likely that ground water would flow to these wells given the strong topographic gradient towards the Cedar River.

Preferred Cleanup Alternative

Based on the information in the Remedial Investigation Report, nine potential cleanup options were evaluated for this site. The options ranged from no action, or leaving the site in its current state with no future monitoring, to excavating and removing all remaining waste and contaminated soil at the site.

After several screenings based on criteria specified in the Model Toxics Control Act, the Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study indicates the preferred cleanup alternative for the site is to leave the remaining waste in place and backfill and grade the area of the trench where waste disposal occurred. The backfilled area would then be covered with a low-permeability cap made of compacted soil. This cap design will minimize the amount of water infiltrating the waste and thus minimize the potential for future impacts to ground water. This alternative also includes continued ground water monitoring, institutional controls to limit access to the site and periodic maintenance.

Amendment of Agreed Order

The original Agreed Order between Ecology and the Potentially Liable Persons (PLPs, listed at the end of this fact sheet) provided for conducting further investigations at the site if necessary in order to select a cleanup alternative for the site. However, the information gathered during the first phase of the investigation was sufficient to identify and evaluate cleanup

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alternatives. The amendment to the Agreed Order simply indicates that additional investigations are not necessary and that adequate information was obtained during the first phase of the study.

What Happens Next?

After receiving and considering public comment on the Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study Report and the Amendment to the Agreed Order, Ecology will select a cleanup alternative for the site. Ecology will then prepare a Cleanup Action Plan (CAP) describing in detail the cleanup alternative selected. Ecology and the PLPs will negotiate a legal document (Agreed Order or Consent Decree) to govern the CAP implementation. The public will have an opportunity to comment on the CAP and on the legal document before cleanup work begins.

Development of a CAP, negotiating a legal document, and obtaining public comment usually takes between six and 12 months. If all goes well, field activities for the cleanup at the site may begin as early as Spring 1997.

Questions

If you have questions, feel free to call either Marianne Deppman, Ecology's Public Involvement Specialist, at (206) 649-7254, or David L. South, Ecology's Site Manager for the Landsburg Mine Site, at (206) 649-7200. Of course, please feel free to bring any questions to the public meeting.

Site Background

The Landsburg Mine Site is a former underground coal mine located approximately 1.5 miles northwest of Ravensdale in southeast King County. The Cedar River passes within approximately 500 feet of the site to the north. The mine site occupies property owned by Palmer Coking Coal Company and the Plum Creek Timber Company, L.P.. Coal mining began along the Landsburg coal seam in the 1940's. In 1959, when the Landsburg seam was exhausted, mining shifted to the Rogers seam and continued there until 1975.

Underground caving methods were used to extract the coal from the Rogers Seam. These methods resulted in a subsidence trench at the ground surface. This trench is roughly three-quarters of a mile long, 20 to 60 feet deep and 60 to 100 feet wide.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, the northern part of the trench was used as a disposal site for a variety of industrial wastes. The wastes were either contained in barrels or were drained from tanker trucks. Records indicate that about 4,500 drums and 200,000 gallons of oily waste water and sludges were disposed of in this portion of the trench. Samples taken from recovered drums indicate that this material consisted of a wide range of organic and inorganic industrial waste, including paint-waste, PCBs, cyanide, metals and oily sludge. Disposal of land-clearing debris and construction debris in the trench continued until the early 1980s.

In 1991 Ecology designated the mine site a high priority for cleanup. In late 1991, at Ecology's request, four of the PLPs removed the most accessible drums from the trench and constructed a fence to restrict access to the site. Following removal of the drums, Ecology and the PLPs began negotiations for a Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study. The results of this study are now available for public review and comment.

The Landsburg Mine Site PLP Group is the group of companies responsible for addressing the environmental issues at the Landsburg Mine Site. Collectively these companies are known as the "Potentially Liable Persons" or PLPs. The PLPs are: Browning-Ferris Industries, Philip Environmental (formerly known as Burlington Environmental), Burlington Northern Railroad, PACCAR, Palmer Coking Coal Company, Plum Creek Timber and Time Oil.

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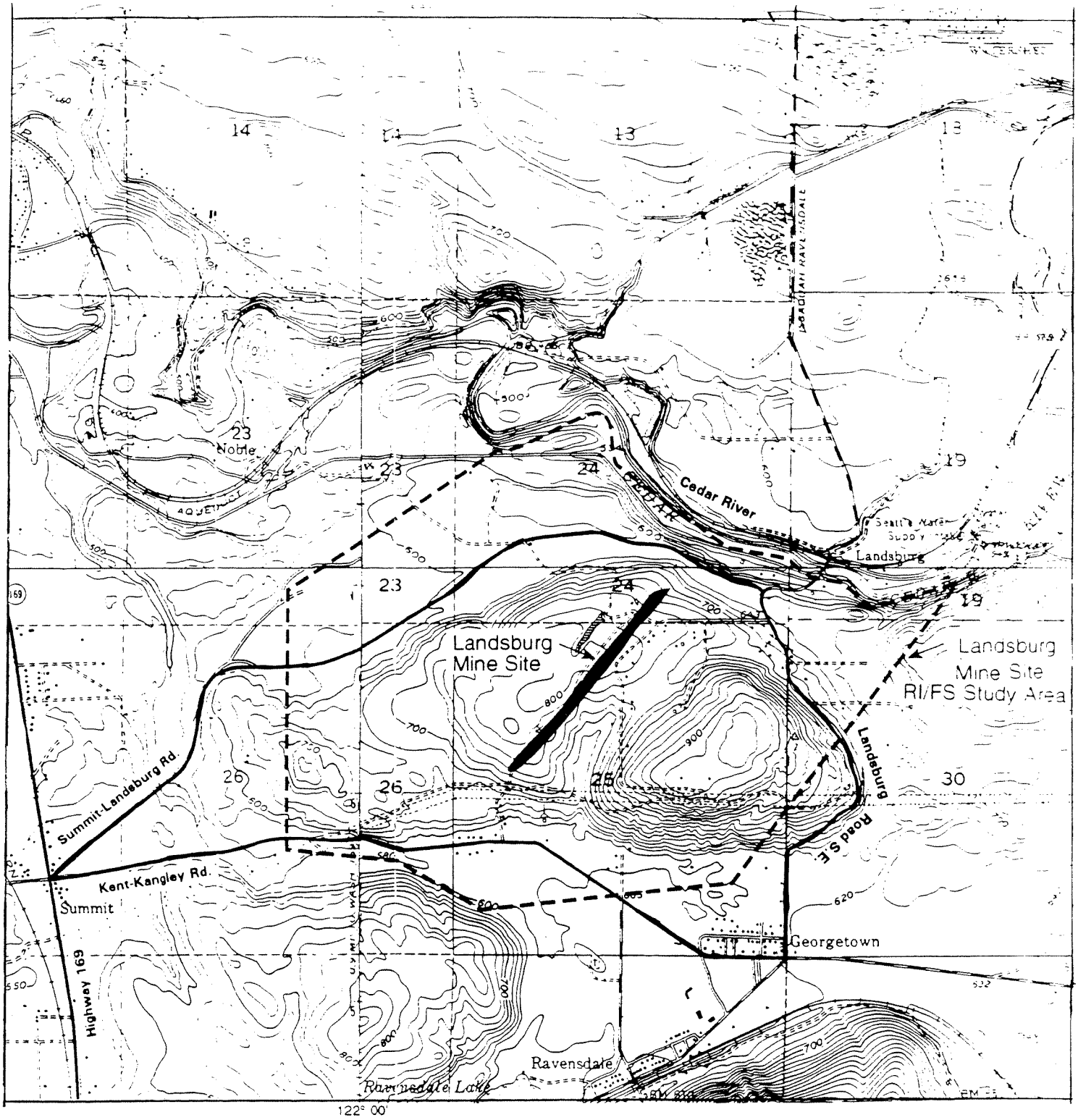

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