

Agreed Order Available for Review and Comment

The Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) is providing an opportunity for the public to comment on the Agreed Order for the BNSF Track Switching Facility site (Site), generally located at 500 Main Street, Wishram, in Klickitat County. The Agreed Order requires completion of a Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study. A remedial investigation provides information about what contamination is present, and how far it extends. A feasibility study will compare different ways to clean up the site. It includes information about how much the cleanup will cost as well as how long it will take.

Public Comment Invited

Ecology is asking for your comments on the Agreed Order. You are invited to:

- **Review** the Agreed Order.
- **Send** your comments to Ecology for consideration. Comments will be accepted October 7, 2015 through November 6, 2015.

See the box at the right for details about where to review documents and submit comments.

Site Background

The Site was developed by the Spokane, Portland, and Seattle Railway between 1910 and 1912. The historic use of the facility was railcar switching; however, most of the track spurs and early structures no longer remain. The activity that impacted the Site was fueling of locomotives which took place over about 60 years after establishment of the facility. Initially, heavy oil (Bunker C) was used to fuel the locomotives and a former powerhouse that generated steam to power the facility. Heavy fuel oil was phased out during the late 1940s and early 1950s with a switchover to diesel. Diesel fueling continued onsite until the late 1970s. In 1957, the completion of The Dalles Dam raised the water elevation of the Columbia River by about 40 feet from the river's former base level.

Site investigations and cleanup actions, such as removal of underground storage tanks and petroleum contaminated soils, began in 2002 and have continued until present. These investigations show

Comments Accepted

October 7, 2015 through
November 6, 2015

Submit Comments and Technical Questions to:

John Mefford - Site Manager
WA Department of Ecology
Toxics Cleanup Program
1250 W Alder St
Union Gap, WA 98903-0009
Phone: (509) 454-7836
E-mail: john.mefford@ecy.wa.gov

DOCUMENT REVIEW LOCATIONS

Goldendale Community Library
131 W Burgen St
Goldendale, WA 98620
Phone: (509) 773-4487
Hours: Mon - Sat: 10 am - 6:30 pm

**WA Department of Ecology
Central Regional Office**
1250 W Alder St
Union Gap, WA 98903-0009
By appointment only:
Contact CRO Public Records
Coordinator at
cropublicrequest@ecy.wa.gov or
(509) 575-2027

Ecology's Toxics Cleanup Website
<https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/gsp/Sitepage.aspx?csid=230>

Facility/Site ID #: 1625461
Cleanup Site ID #: 230

BNSF Track Switching Facility

that the Site is generally characterized by contamination including diesel and heavy oil. In 2012, the investigations showed distribution of free phase (“floating”) and dissolved diesel and heavy oil at locations both north and south of the mainline railroad tracks. A soil and groundwater treatment system was also installed to address diesel contamination that could not be recovered through soil removal. In 2013, additional definition of the “floating” contamination was conducted as well as determination of the depth to bedrock. Some of the free phase product is submerged below the groundwater table due to the properties of the product and the change in historical site conditions.

In June 2015, and previously in July 2013 and 2014, petroleum sheen was observed near the shallow water of the north bank of the Columbia River. These occurrences were reported to the Department of Ecology and investigated. The source of the petroleum sheen was not conclusively identified even though the sheen was observed in the near vicinity of the Site.

Why This Investigation Matters

Petroleum contains many chemicals that are harmful to human health and the environment. In January 2015, Ecology entered into negotiations with BNSF Railway to conduct a Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study. This investigation into the nature and extent of the contamination will provide information necessary to design and implement cleanup actions. Additionally, the investigations will allow an assessment of whether there is enough evidence to link the petroleum sheen observed in 2013-2014 and the existing contamination present at the Site.

What Happens Next?

After the 30-day public comment period, Ecology will review all comments received and respond. We will make changes to the Agreed Order if needed based on public comments.

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://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/publiccalendar/>

While you are at the calendar page, you may click on the link Frequently Asked Questions about Effective Public Commenting and learn more about the public comment process.

What can you do?

1. Read about the cleanup in this handout.
2. To get more detailed information, review the supporting documents at the locations listed in this document.
3. Write down your comments and questions. Send them to the Department of Ecology at the address provided in this document.

We appreciate your comments and concerns. *Thank you.*

Help with other languages and formats?

Para asistencia en español, llame 509-575-2490, o mande un correo electrónico al equipo de la lengua española de Ecología a preguntas@ecy.wa.gov.

To request ADA accommodation for disabilities, or printed materials in a format for the visually impaired, call Frosti Smith at Ecology, 509-454-7841. Persons with impaired hearing may call Washington Relay Service at 711. Persons with speech disability may call TTY at 877-833-6341.

