

Holly Street Landfill Site



Aerial view of Holly Street Landfill Site

Comments accepted

June 3 – July 3, 2024

Submit comments

Online:

<https://www.bit.ly/Ecology-Holly-Comments-2024>

By mail or email:

Cliff Nale, Site Manager
 WA Department of Ecology
 PO Box 330316
 Shoreline, WA 98133-9716
 425-725-0438
Cliff.Nale@ecy.wa.gov

Document review

<https://www.bit.ly/Ecology-Holly>

Bellingham Public Library
 210 Central Avenue
 Bellingham, WA 98225

Site info

Facility Site ID: 2925
 Site Cleanup ID: 253

Public Outreach Contact

Kristen Forkeutis
 Outreach Specialist
Kristen.Forkeutis@ecy.wa.gov
 425-240-4353

Cleanup evaluation report ready for public review

The Department of Ecology (Ecology) invites you to review a report evaluating the completed cleanup of the Holly Street Landfill site (Site) near the Bellingham waterfront.

We prepared the report to determine if the cleanup, completed by the City of Bellingham (City) in 2005, still protects human health and the environment.

On-site walking tour

RE Sources, a local nonprofit organization, will host a walking tour of the Site to provide project information. Ecology and City representatives will be available for questions.



Thursday, June 13, 2024

12 noon – 1:30 pm

Meet at 1600 C St, Bellingham, WA
 (in front of the Maritime Heritage Center)

<http://www.re-sources.org/HollyLandfill>

This tour is funded by a Public Participation Grant (<https://ecology.wa.gov/ppg>) from Ecology.

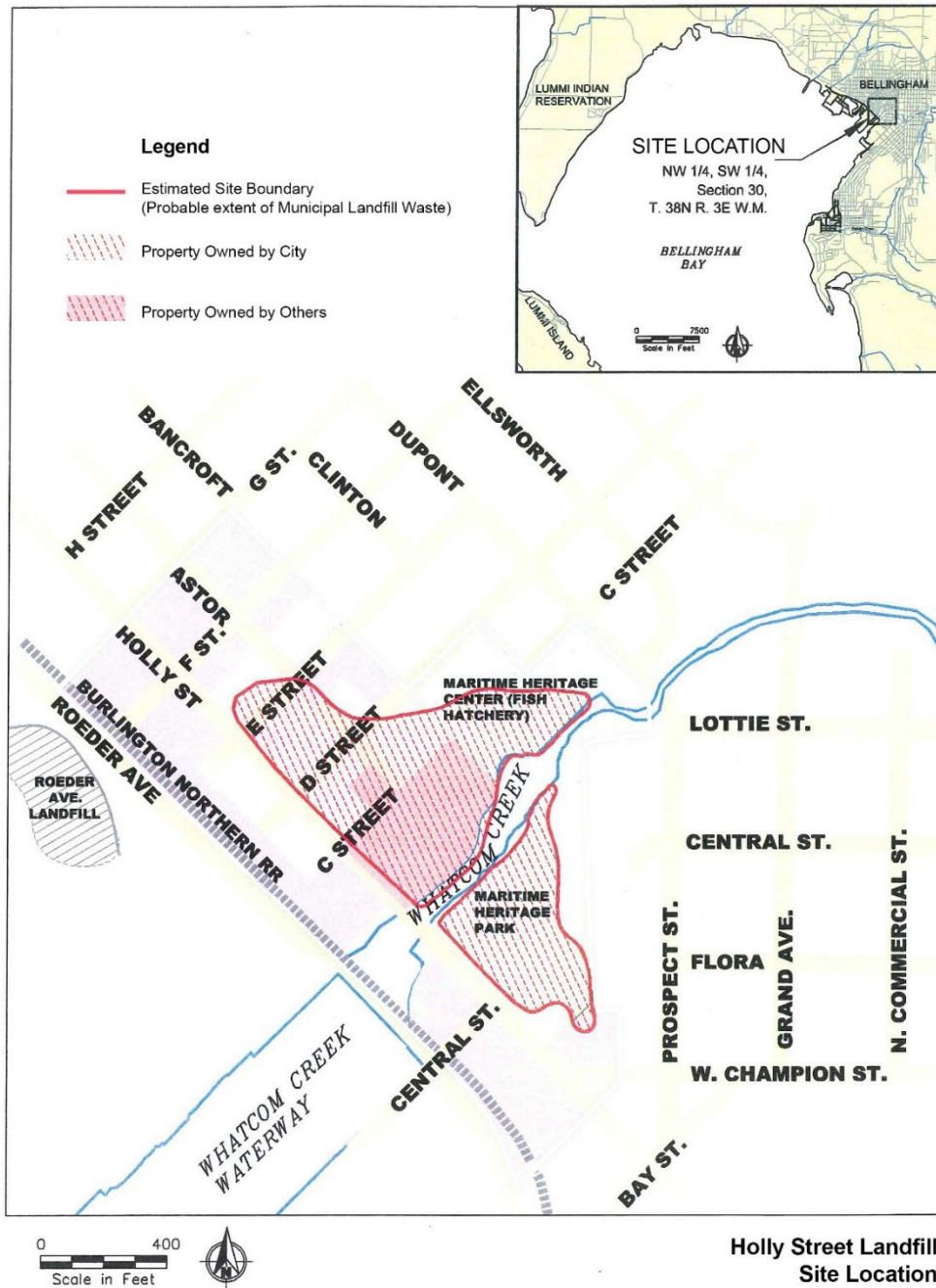
En español

El Departamento de Ecología le invita a comentar sobre un reporte ambiental para el sitio que está contaminado Holly Street Landfill en Bellingham. Si le gustaría recibir este documento en español, por favor llame a 425-240-4353 y espere que un intérprete se una a la llamada o envíe un correo electrónico a preguntas@ecy.wa.gov. Traducciones de avisos públicos para los sitios de limpieza de la Bahía de Bellingham se preparan bajo solicitud.

Site description

The Site is a former solid waste landfill located at 600 W Holly Street, in the Old Town district of the City of Bellingham, Washington. The 13-acre Site is covered by soil, gravel, buildings, building foundations and pavement. The Site is separated by Whatcom Creek with about 9 acres on the northwest side of the creek and 4 acres on the southeast side.

The City owns about 8 acres of the 13-acre Site. Various private entities own the rest of the Site.



2005 cleanup

The City cleaned up the Site in 2005 while under a legal agreement with Ecology. They addressed solid waste, methane production, and contaminant impacts to Whatcom Creek. The cleanup included:

- Maintaining a minimum 2-foot thick cover over the Site to physically isolate the solid waste. The cover is currently comprised of soil, gravel, buildings, building foundations and pavement.
- Placing material along the southern shoreline to stabilize the bank.
- Addressing methane issues when constructing buildings in the area of the Site located on the southeast side of Whatcom Creek.
- Removing refuse along the northern shoreline of Whatcom Creek and placing an engineered cap to control releases of copper and zinc to Whatcom Creek.
- Monitoring groundwater seeps discharging to Whatcom Creek to assess the effectiveness of the cleanup.
- Implementing restrictive covenants covering 34 tax parcels. These covenants contain restrictions and prohibitions to protect the integrity of the cleanup in the long-term.

The cleanup removed about 12,400 tons of solid waste, primarily from the northern bank prior to construction of the cap. The excavated materials were transported and disposed of at a permitted, off-site landfill. Along with the cleanup activities the City restored historically lost habitat at the mouth of Whatcom Creek. They converted about 0.3 acres from upland to intertidal elevations, created side channel habitat, placed large woody debris, removed invasive vegetation, and re-introduced native plants. In addition the City constructed a boardwalk and viewpoints/overlooks along the estuary to improve public access to the shoreline.



Southern Shoreline, 2005



Northern Shoreline, 2005



Northern Shoreline, 2005

Conclusion of the cleanup evaluation

The cleanup evaluation report concludes that more information is needed to determine if the completed cleanup protects human health and the environment, including:

- Monitoring to assess the current quality of groundwater seeps discharging to Whatcom Creek
- Conducting a climate change vulnerability assessment
- Investigating the source of contamination in Whatcom Creek bank sediment next to the Site



Northern Shoreline, 2024

Ecology will work with the City to gather this additional information.

What happens next?

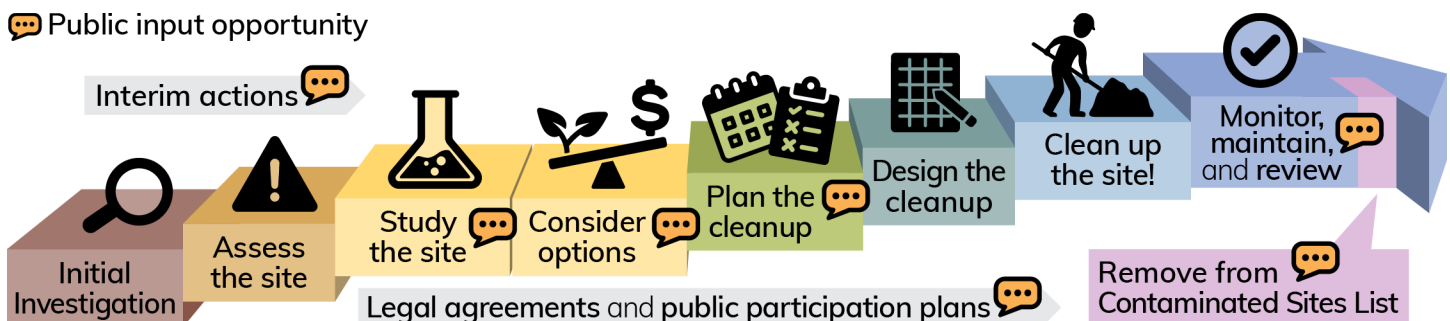
Ecology will consider all comments received during this public comment period. If the cleanup evaluation report requires significant changes, we will hold another public comment period. If no significant changes are made, Ecology will finalize the report. The timeline to finalize the report and gather additional information is outlined below:

- **June 3 - July 3, 2024:** Public comment period on the cleanup evaluation report.
- **Fall 2024:** Ecology finalizes the report.
- **2025 - 2027:** Ecology works with the City to gather more information as identified in the report.

Ecology’s cleanup process

The Model Toxics Control Act ([MTCA](https://ecology.wa.gov/mtca))¹ is Washington’s environmental cleanup law. It provides requirements for contaminated site cleanup and sets standards that protect human health and the environment. Ecology implements the [MTCA cleanup process](https://ecology.wa.gov/MTCA-process)² and oversees cleanups.

The Site is in the Monitor, Maintain and Review step of the cleanup process shown below.



¹ <https://ecology.wa.gov/mtca>

² <https://ecology.wa.gov/MTCA-process>

Background

In the late 1800s, the Site location was part of the original Whatcom Creek estuary and mudflat. Around 1905, private property owners began filling the estuary with dredge spoils and other materials to increase useable upland areas. From 1937 to 1953, municipal waste was also used by private property owners to fill tidelands to increase usable upland areas.

Waste disposed at the Site included glass, concrete, household debris, metal scrap, soil, coal slag, ashes, and woody debris, consistent with municipal waste disposal practices of the time. The waste materials are currently covered by soil, gravel, buildings, building foundations and pavement.



Photo by J. W. Sandison, 1949. Whatcom Museum cat. #5980

Landfilling activities along the banks of Whatcom Creek, 1949.

Bellingham Bay Cleanup

The Site is one of 12 [Bellingham Bay Cleanup sites](https://www.ecology.wa.gov/BellinghamBayCleanup)³ coordinated through the Bellingham Bay Demonstration Pilot. The Pilot is a bay-wide multi-agency effort to clean up contamination, control pollution sources and restore habitat, with consideration for land and water uses.

³ <https://www.ecology.wa.gov/BellinghamBayCleanup>

Toxics Cleanup Program
913 Squalicum Way, Unit 101
Bellingham, WA 98225

Holly Street Landfill Site

Cleanup evaluation report ready for public review

Información en español incluida (página 1)

Public comment period

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On-site walking tour hosted by RE Sources

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See page 1 for details.

ADA accessibility

To request an ADA accommodation, contact Ecology by phone at 425-240-4353 or email at kristen.forkeutis@ecy.wa.gov, or visit ecology.wa.gov/Accessibility. For Relay Service or TTY call 711 or 877-833-6341.



Aerial view of Holly Street Landfill Site