Public Participation Plan

Tru-Grit Abrasives Inc
1110 E Alexander Ave, Tacoma

Toxics Cleanup Program

Washington Department of Ecology
Olympia, Washington

Publication 26-09-097, August 2026

Publication Information

This document is available on the Department of Ecology's Tru-Grit Abrasives Inc cleanup site page.[1]

Related Information

- Cleanup site ID: 1294
- Facility site ID: 1206878

Contact Information

Toxics Cleanup Program[2]

Southwest Region Office
300 Desmond Drive SE
Lacey, WA 98503-1274
Phone: 360-407-6300

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Language Access

The Department of Ecology offers free translation and interpretation services. If you need help in your preferred language, please call Abby Zabrodsky at 564-250-0561 and request an interpreter, or email Abby.Zabrodsky@ecy.wa.gov.

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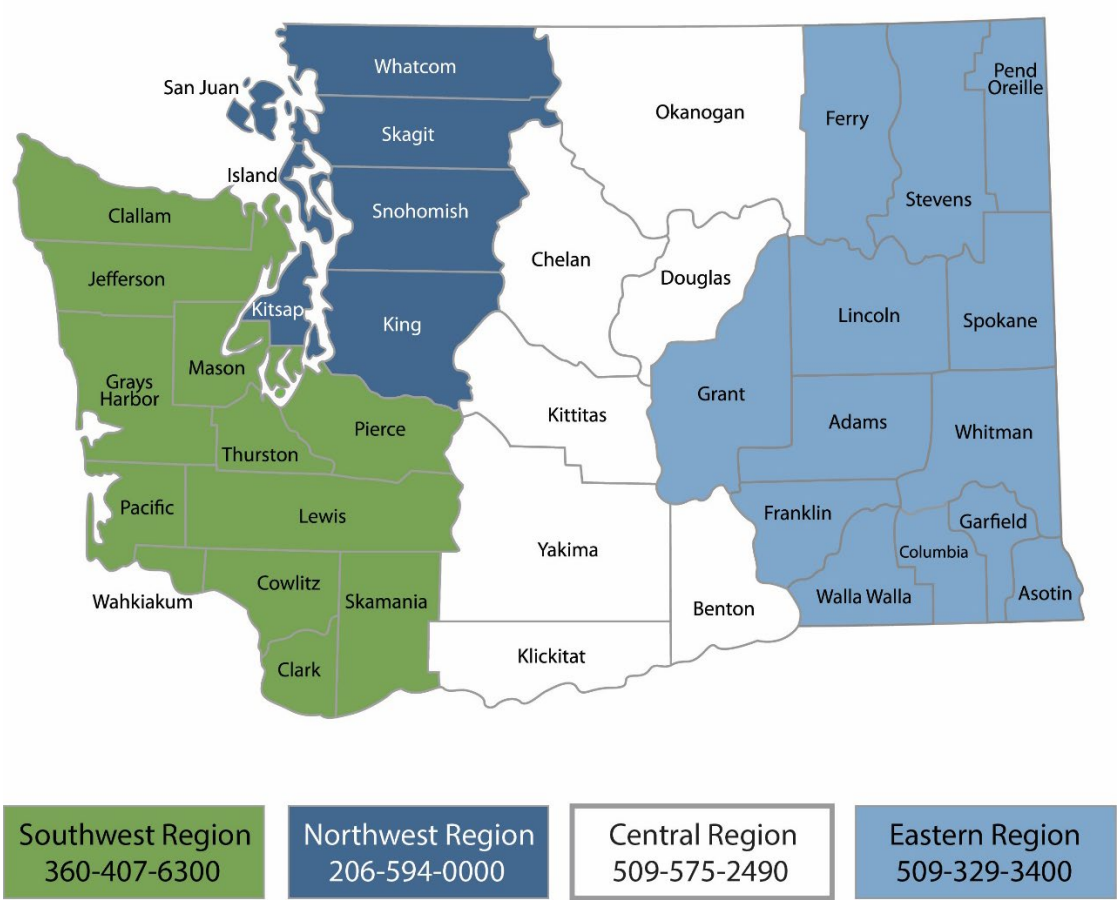
[1] https://go.ecology.wa.gov/1294
[2] https://ecology.wa.gov/About-us/Who-we-are/Our-Programs/Toxics-Cleanup

Department of Ecology's Region Offices

Map of Counties Served



Region	Counties served	Mailing Address	Phone
Southwest	Clallam, Clark, Cowlitz, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, Mason, Lewis, Pacific, Pierce, Skamania, Thurston, Wahkiakum	PO Box 47775 Olympia, WA 98504	360-407-6300
Northwest	Island, King, Kitsap, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish, Whatcom	PO Box 330316 Shoreline, WA 98133	206-594-0000
Central	Benton, Chelan, Douglas, Kittitas, Klickitat, Okanogan, Yakima	1250 W Alder St Union Gap, WA 98903	509-575-2490
Eastern	Adams, Asotin, Columbia, Ferry, Franklin, Garfield, Grant, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, Spokane, Stevens, Walla Walla, Whitman	4601 N Monroe Spokane, WA 99205	509-329-3400
Headquarters	Across Washington	PO Box 47600 Olympia, WA 98504	360-407-6000

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1110 E Alexander Ave, Tacoma

Toxics Cleanup Program
Washington State Department of Ecology
Southwest Region Office

Olympia, Washington

August 2026

DEPARTMENT OF
ECOLOGY
State of Washington

Table of Contents

List of Figures ..... **ii**

Figures ii

Public Involvement in Contamination Cleanup **3**

Site contacts 3

Public Participation Activities **4**

How we share information with the community 4

How you can share information with us 6

Public Participation Grants 7

Site Information **8**

Historical use 8

How the site became contaminated 9

Contamination 9

Cleanup plans 9

Area community 10

Tribal engagement 10

Washington's Cleanup Laws **11**

Model Toxics Control Act 11

State Environmental Policy Act 11

Plan Amendments **11**

Appendix **13**

Steps in the MTCA cleanup process 13

List of Figures

Figures

Figure 1. Site map 8

Public Involvement in Contamination Cleanup

The Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) developed this Public Participation Plan in cooperation with the potentially liable parties (PLPs), the parties responsible for cleanup costs. Ecology has identified two PLPs responsible for cleaning up Tru-Grit Abrasives Inc site. The PLPs include CanAm Minerals, Inc (who signed an Agreed Order in 2012) and the Port of Tacoma (who signed the Amended Agreed Order in June 2026).

This plan outlines how Ecology will keep the public informed about contamination investigations and cleanup options at each stage of the process. Please review the appendix for more information about the cleanup process. The plan also details when and how the community can participate in the cleanup process.

We encourage the public to engage with the decision-making opportunities and provide input. To be included in the site record, comments about the cleanup process must be submitted during comment periods. Questions and informal comments or information about the site's history are welcome anytime.

Site contacts

Ecology

Southwest Region Office
300 Desmond Drive SE
Lacey, WA 98503-1274

Valerie Chu, site manager
Valerie.Chu@ecy.wa.gov
564-669-0298

Abby Zabrodsky, public involvement coordinator
Abby.Zabrodsky@ecy.wa.gov
564-250-0561

CanAm Minerals, Inc. (CanAm)

Suite 210
50 Oak Court
Danville, CA 94526-4048

Fionn O'Neill
Director of Operations
925-831-9802

Port of Tacoma

Port of Tacoma
PO Box 1837
Tacoma, Washington 98401

Scott Hooton, Environmental Programs Project Manager
Phone: 253-383-9428

If you are unable to reach these contacts, please visit Ecology's cleanup site page[3] for up-to-date contact information.

Public Participation Activities

Members of the public may ask questions, submit informal comments, or share site information at any time. Interested parties do not need to wait for a formal public comment period to contact Ecology.

However, to be included in the formal site record, comments about the site investigation, cleanup alternatives, or cleanups must be submitted during formal comment periods. In addition, the public is invited to review site documents before they become final. This is the most direct and influential way to learn more about the site and be involved in the cleanup's decision-making.

How we share information with the community

During specific stages of the cleanup, Ecology will mail notices about public comment periods to addresses surrounding the site. The mailing list area will vary depending on the type of contamination and where it's located. However, at a minimum, the list will include addresses within a 1/4-mile radius of the site and other interested organizations and individuals. These notices will provide general information about the site, contact information for submitting comments, and times and locations of public meetings or hearings, or how to request one if not yet scheduled.

Comment period notices will be available online and at document repositories (for example at the library closest to the site). Notices may also be posted in various locations throughout the community (for example, local businesses, schools, or post offices).

Ecology may also develop documents outside of comment periods to keep the community updated on the site's status. These informational documents will be available online and print

[3] https://go.ecology.wa.gov/1294

copies may be mailed to the nearby community if we feel the message warrants the associated cost and resources.

Postal mailing list

Ecology maintains a mailing list that includes, at a minimum, addresses within a 0.25-mile radius of the site and relevant local, state, and federal government contacts.

People on the mailing list receive public comment notices when draft documents are available.

We will add additional individuals, organizations, and other interested parties to the mailing list as requested. If you would like to be added to the mailing list for this site, please contact Abby Zabrodsky at 564-250-0561 or Abby.Zabrodsky@ecy.wa.gov.

Contaminated Site Register

Public comment periods, events, and other cleanup notices are published in Ecology's *Contaminated Site Register*.[4] To receive the *Contaminated Site Register* by email, please subscribe online,[5] or contact Sarah Kellington at sarah.kellington@ecy.wa.gov or 360-280-3167.

Newspaper display ads or legal notices

We announce public comment periods and events for this site in ads or notices published in the *Tacoma News Tribune.* We will also publish notice on our Public Input & Events Listing.[6]

Email lists

Ecology maintains an email list to update interested persons about this site. If you would like to be added to the email list for this site, please subscribe online,[7] or contact Abby Zabrodsky at 564-250-0561 or Abby.Zabrodsky@ecy.wa.gov.

Ecology's website and social media platforms

We maintain a website for the Tru-Grit Abrasives Inc site.[3] The website provides site information, and you may download cleanup documents.

We may also share information about cleanup sites through news releases, our blog, and social media.[8]

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[4] https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/Guidance-technical-assistance/Site-Register-lists-and-data
[5] https://ecology.wa.gov/site-register
[6] https://ecology.wa.gov/Events/Search/Listing
[7] https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/WAECY/subscriber/new?topic_id=WAECY_33
[8] https://ecology.wa.gov/about-us/who-we-are/news

Automatic site updates

You can subscribe to this site from our Tru-Grit Abrasives Inc webpage.[3] You'll receive a weekly email if we change the site's status, add documents to the site's webpage, or have an open comment period.

Places to see print documents

During public comment periods, you can find print documents at the following locations:

Tacoma Public Library – Main Branch
1102 Tacoma Avenue South
Tacoma, WA 98492
253-280-2800

Washington Department of Ecology
Southwest Region Office
300 Desmond Drive SE
Lacey, WA 98503-1274

To view print documents at Ecology's repository, you must schedule an appointment ahead of time. To schedule an appointment, please contact Susan Baxter at 360-407-6365 or PublicDisclosureSWRO@ecy.wa.gov.

Signs around the cleanup site

We may also install signs displaying information about project status, traffic impacts, and health risks around the cleanup site.

How you can share information with us

We hold public comment periods and sometimes public events to learn your thoughts, opinions, and concerns about cleanup at a site. We may also identify public concerns and cleanup goals by meeting with and soliciting information from interested community members and organizations. To get involved with this site, please contact Abby Zabrodsky at 564-250-0561 or Abby.Zabrodsky@ecy.wa.gov.

Public comment periods

At a minimum, the Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA, see page 11 for more information) requires 30-day comment periods to allow interested members of the public to comment on draft documents, legal agreements, and proposed cleanup actions. If there is significant interest, Ecology may extend the public comment period.

When Ecology oversees State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) determinations (see page 11 for more information), we hold comment periods for at least two weeks and may extend to 30 days or more when other cleanup documents are concurrently available for review.

Following a comment period, we publish all the input we received and respond to significant comments and questions, as appropriate. If the comments result in significant changes to the cleanup documents, then the documents will be revised and re-issued for public review. If the comments do not result in significant changes, the documents will become final.

Public events

We hold public meetings, workshops, open houses, and hearings based on community interest. At meetings, workshops, and open houses, attendees can ask questions, learn more about the site, and submit written comments when a comment period is open. At a public hearing, verbal comments are transcribed for the record, and Ecology responds to them after the comment period in our response to comments.

If we have not scheduled an event, we will hold one if 10 people request it. This may cause us to extend a public comment period, so the event occurs during it.

Events are held at locations close to the site that meet Americans with Disabilities Act standards. Public events are always announced in advance using a variety of methods.

Public Participation Grants

Grants may be available to neighborhood committees, non-profits, and other groups interested in the site. For contaminated sites, these funds can be used to:

- Hire an expert to help interpret technical information
- Conduct activities that enhance the public's understanding of, and participation in, the cleanup process

For more information about public participation grants, please contact Laura Busby at 360-280-5088 or laura.busby@ecy.wa.gov and Maria Marlin at 360-407-6083 or maria.marlin@ecy.wa.gov. You may also visit the Public Participation Grant webpage.[9]

[9] https://ecology.wa.gov/PPG

Site Information

Historical use

The Tru-Grit site is in the Tacoma Tideflats, on the northeastern side of the Blair Waterway. The site has been used for grit processing since before 1993. In 2007, the Port of Tacoma acquired the property. CanAm continued operations at the site under a lease with Port until the lease expired on July 31, 2020. Today, CanAm is still in operation at a different property, located at 3701 Taylor Way, and is now known as KleenBlast.

In 2007, Ecology's Water Quality Program issued an enforcement order, Admin Order No. 4003, for the property's Industrial Stormwater General Permit. This order was required because grit had migrated into the Blair Waterway, causing water quality and contamination issues in the sediment. In 2010, CanAm and Ecology reached a settlement to start work on addressing the cleanup of contaminated sediment. CanAm signed Agreed Order No. DE 8978 in 2012 to work with Ecology's Toxics Cleanup Program and begin the cleanup process for toxic contamination at the site.

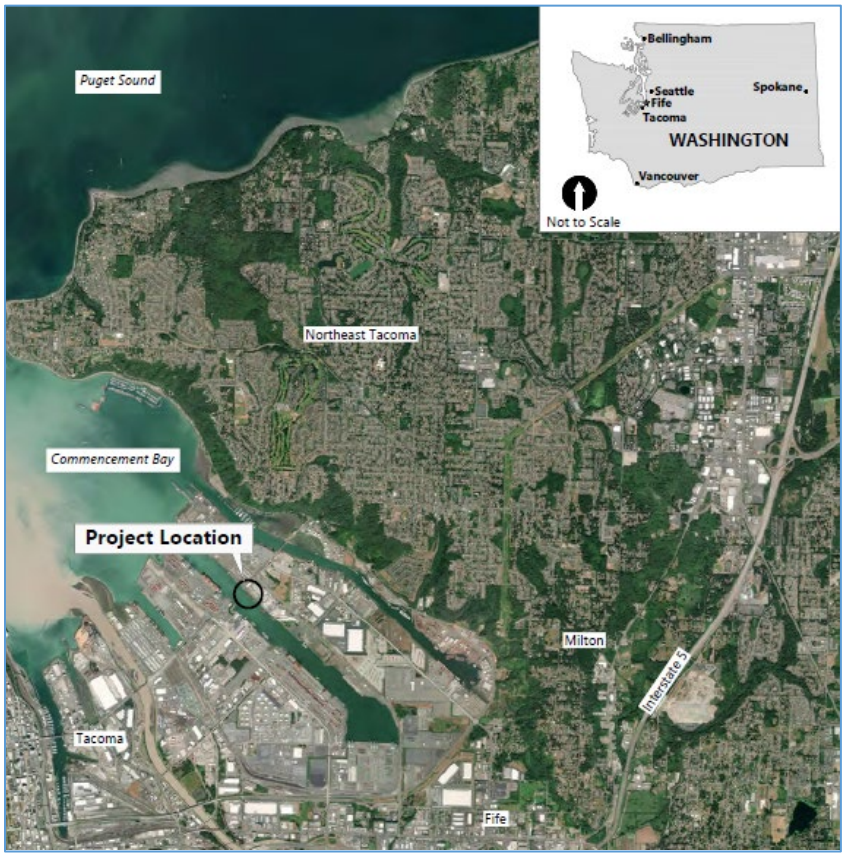

Figure 1: Location of the Tru-Grit cleanup site.

How the site became contaminated

Sources of the contamination include minerals from an offloading facility operated by Tru-Grit and its parent company, CanAm Minerals, Inc. as well as former past shipyard operations.

Tru-Grit receives grit from an out-of-use copper mine, via barge transport. Tru-Grit unloads the barges with a ship-to-shore system and places the grit in a tarp-covered outdoor storage pile. Then, Tru-Grit processes and packages the grit for use in roofing products and sandblast grit.

The grit contains high levels of copper and zinc. Inspections from 2005-2011 found grit around the property, under a ship-to-shore conveyor, and in Blair Waterway sediments. In 2008, sediment sampling found copper and zinc contamination in the Blair Waterway near Tru-Grit. Therefore, the site needs environmental cleanup to protect human health and the environment.

Contamination

Contaminants needing cleanup at the site include:

- Metals (arsenic, copper, and zinc)
- Carcinogenic polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (cPAHs)
- Dioxins/furans

Cleanup plans

Planning cleanup for the entire site is still in progress. CanAm and the Port of Tacoma have been studying the site and considering cleanup options. Once the studies are complete, Ecology will review their findings. After we finish reviewing the reports resulting from the site's studies and considerations (called a Remedial Investigation & Feasibility Study), we will develop a draft Cleanup Action Plan. The public will be able to review and comment on these documents before they are approved and implemented by Ecology.

In 2026, the Port of Tacoma prepared an Interim Action Plan at the site. This purpose of this interim cleanup is removing contaminated sediment from the lower slope area of the Tru-Grit site in preparation for the larger Blair waterway deepening project, planned to be carried out by the US Army Corps of Engineers in 2028. The Port of Tacoma is to carry out this interim action work. Ecology will gather public input before approving and finalizing the plan.

Area community

To better understand communities surrounding the site, Ecology will use the Tacoma Equity Index[10] and the Washington Environmental Health Disparities Map.[11] These tools provide language access and environmental justice information that influence how we conduct our public outreach and participation activities.

The city of Tacoma's population is ethnically and economically diverse. In the district surrounding the site (WA Legislative District 27), there are large African American, Latino/Hispanic, Asian American, and Native American populations. Ecology is aware of several demographic indicators that show a need to consider environmental justice for, including:

- Low-income populations
- Minority populations
- Population with Less Than High School Education

Ecology will reach out to cultural community organizations as part of our outreach and provide information in other languages according to federal guidance.[12] The non-English languages most widely spoken in the larger Tacoma area are Spanish and Korean. Ecology has been informed that many workers in the Tideflats speak Russian as their primary language. To request information in another language, call Abby Zabrodsky at 564-250-0561 and wait on the line while we connect an interpreter.

We strive to make our public participation efforts as inclusive as possible and welcome your input about how to best reach the nearby community.

Tribal engagement

The Puyallup Tribe is a federally recognized tribe that owns land or relies on resources that could be affected by site contamination. For thousands of years, the Tribe has used the surrounding natural resources including the riparian areas of the Puyallup River for food, medicines, and materials for clothing. They have a spiritual connection to the land.

We will reach out to Tribes with potential interest in the site to offer opportunities to engage in the cleanup process that are separate from the public involvement process. This engagement is described in a site-specific Tribal Engagement Plan, as required by WAC 173-340-620.[13] We invite Tribal members and other indigenous peoples to engage in the public involvement process as well.

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[10] https://tacoma.gov/government/departments/equity-and-human-rights/equity-index/
[11] https://doh.wa.gov/data-and-statistical-reports/washington-tracking-network-wtn/washington-environmental-health-disparities-map
[12] https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2004/06/25/04-14464/guidance-to-environmental-protectionagency-financial-assistance-recipients
[13] https://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=173-340-620

Washington's Cleanup Laws

Ecology uses the Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA)[14] and accompanying regulations for cleanup activities. Passed in 1989, MTCA provides guidelines for contaminated site cleanup in Washington state. This law sets standards to ensure the cleanup protects people and the environment. MTCA requires the creation of this plan.

Model Toxics Control Act

MTCA began in 1988 as a citizen-led effort to clean up contaminated sites in Washington state. The law holds property owners or operators responsible for cleaning up contamination on, or coming from, their property.

Ecology carries out MTCA, making sure cleanups happen according to state rules and regulations. These rules are found in Chapter 173-340 Washington Administrative Code (WAC).[15] Ecology investigates reports of contamination, and the property is placed on the Contaminated Sites List[16] if the pollution is determined to pose a serious risk to human health or the environment. This starts the cleanup process at the site.

The cleanup process under MTCA includes several steps (Appendix). Public involvement is a key part of MTCA's cleanup process.[17] Nearby residents, businesses, community groups, and other interested parties can review and comment on documents related to steps that make crucial decisions or plans about the cleanup.

State Environmental Policy Act

MTCA cleanups also require evaluation under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA).[18] Under SEPA, the potential for significant adverse environmental impacts from a project or action must be evaluated by state and local agencies when making decisions. This evaluation is subject to public review and comment in parallel with cleanup documents.

Plan Amendments

Ecology developed this plan following MTCA regulations (WAC 173-340-600). We review it as the cleanup progresses and amend it as necessary. You may suggest amendments to please contact Abby Zabrodsky at 564-250-0561 or Abby.Zabrodsky@ecy.wa.gov.

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[14] https://www.ecology.wa.gov/mtca
[15] https://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=173-340
[16] https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/cleanupsearch/reports/cleanup/contaminated
[17] http://www.ecology.wa.gov/MTCA-process
[18] https://app.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?cite=197-11

We intend for this plan to provide the public with information on opportunities for public involvement and comment. The outreach activities discussed reflect Ecology's current plans to keep the public informed. It also provides ways for those interested in the site to communicate their concerns and questions to us.

If you feel the planned outreach activities and mechanisms found in this plan are insufficient or would like to modify them in some way, please contact us. We will work to find solutions. We can implement new activities or outreach tools right away, with or without amending this plan.

Appendix

Steps in the MTCA cleanup process

The cleanup process is defined in the Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA), Washington's cleanup law. See the accessible PDF on the next page for details.

Washington's Cleanup Process

Public participation plans and comment periods are only required for cleanups under a legal agreement with Ecology. Otherwise, all cleanups follow the same steps. The steps are defined by Washington's cleanup law, the Model Toxics Control Act.

DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY State of Washington

Public input opportunity

Initial investigation
Find out if there's contamination needing cleanup.

Assess the site
Evaluate potential threat to humans and the environment.

Study the site (remedial investigation)
- Find out what and where the contamination is.
- Determine how contamination might impact living things.

Consider options (feasibility study)
- Compare ways to keep the contamination from harming people or the environment.
- Weigh benefits versus costs of each cleanup option.

Plan the cleanup (cleanup action plan)
- Describe Ecology's selected cleanup option.
- Set cleanup standards that will protect living things.
- Schedule next steps.
- Set requirements for monitoring and maintenance.

Design the cleanup
Make detailed construction plans for the cleanup action.

Clean up the site!
Complete the cleanup action. For example:
- Constructing a multi-layered capping system.
- Installing a treatment system.
- Removing contamination to a special landfill.

Monitor, maintain, and review
- Operate treatment systems and monitor progress.
- Prevent activities that could disturb the cleanup.
- Review regularly to ensure cleanup still protects living things.

Remove from Contaminated Sites List
Move to No Further Action list if site meets all standards and requirements.

Interim actions may clean up some contamination before the final cleanup.

Legal orders or agreements define required tasks and schedules.

Public participation plans explain how Ecology will ask for input from the local community.

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