EPA U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY September 2000

Wyckoff Cleanup Moving Into High Gear

More environmental work is about to begin at Wyckoff and in Eagle Harbor. Soon cleanup preparations will begin in earnest, with more visible work at and around the site, and some noise, too. This fact sheet provides a progress report and tells you what to expect. It also announces a community information meeting.

Come to a Community Information Meeting September 21

You are invited to a community information meeting to learn more about environmental activities at Wyckoff and in Eagle Harbor. The meeting will take place September 21, from 7-9:30 pm, at the Bainbridge Island City Hall, 280 Madison Avenue North.

Community Information Meeting
Wyckoff Cleanup: Progress Report

September 21, 2000
Bainbridge Island City Hall
280 Madison Avenue North
7:00 pm to 9:30 pm

The purpose of the meeting is to give you details about upcoming construction and cleanup activities and how you may be affected. You will have a chance to hear directly from project managers, ask questions, and view displays. We will discuss project schedules, cleanup designs, and potential impacts on your community such as noise. Because site cleanup decisions have been made, EPA is not seeking formal public comment at this time. However, your feedback and suggestions are always welcome.

Sheet Pile Wall: Noise, Schedule

EPA has selected thermal technology for cleanup of contaminated soils and groundwater at the Wyckoff site. (The ground will be heated, and then contaminants, groundwater, and vapors will be pumped out and treated or sent off-site for disposal.) The first step in the cleanup process is the installation of a sheet pile

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wall. The wall will be installed along the shoreline to prevent contamination from moving into the harbor and Puget Sound during thermal treatment. At the same time, a shorter section of sheet pile will be installed upland for testing of the pilot thermal plant. The sheet pile wall will also provide long-term containment if any contamination remains on the site after thermal treatment.

Manufacture of the sheet pile has already started, and the sheet pile will begin arriving on site in October. Installation of the sheet pile will begin the first week of November and will happen Monday through Friday, during business hours. We are dedicated to getting this important environmental step completed by February 15.

EPA scheduled the wall installation during winter months in response to community requests, to

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minimize noise impacts. Additionally, an insulated, muffled hammer will be used. During the installation, crews will be working to minimize noise impacts to the community. No installation will occur on weekends, holidays, lunch breaks (12-12:30), or at night.

Even with these steps, the sheet pile driving is expected to be noisy. We know this noise will be an inconvenience to some residents in the community. Other possible ways to further minimize noise impacts are currently being evaluated by EPA. Results of this evaluation will be presented at the community information meeting.

More Harbor Capping: Where and When?

In 1993, EPA installed a 50-acre clean sediment cap in Eagle Harbor as an interim cleanup for contaminated sediments. Since that time, EPA has been monitoring the cap to evaluate performance, and sampling areas just outside of the cap to determine if the cap needs to be extended. Based on all of the information, EPA determined that the cap needs to be extended from the southern edge of the cap to the shoreline of the Wyckoff site as shown in Figure 1 (shaded area). This cap extension will complete the remedy put forward in the East Harbor Record of Decision.

Placement of the Eagle Harbor cap extension will begin in late October. Completion of the cap will take two, or perhaps three, construction seasons (years) because available clean sediments are limited, a lot of clean sediment needs to placed, and timing of the work needs to avoid runs of Chinook salmon. The cap extension will be placed in layers, with each construction season providing an additional layer.

Initially, clean capping material will be placed as gently as possible by washing it off a barge. This method was used to place the cap in 1993. After the first layer of clean capping material is placed, material may be placed more rapidly from shore, or from a conveyor on a barge. The final cap layer will be placed near the existing shoreline (against the newly installed sheet pile), forming a beach that will connect existing beaches off the site with the proposed habitat site.

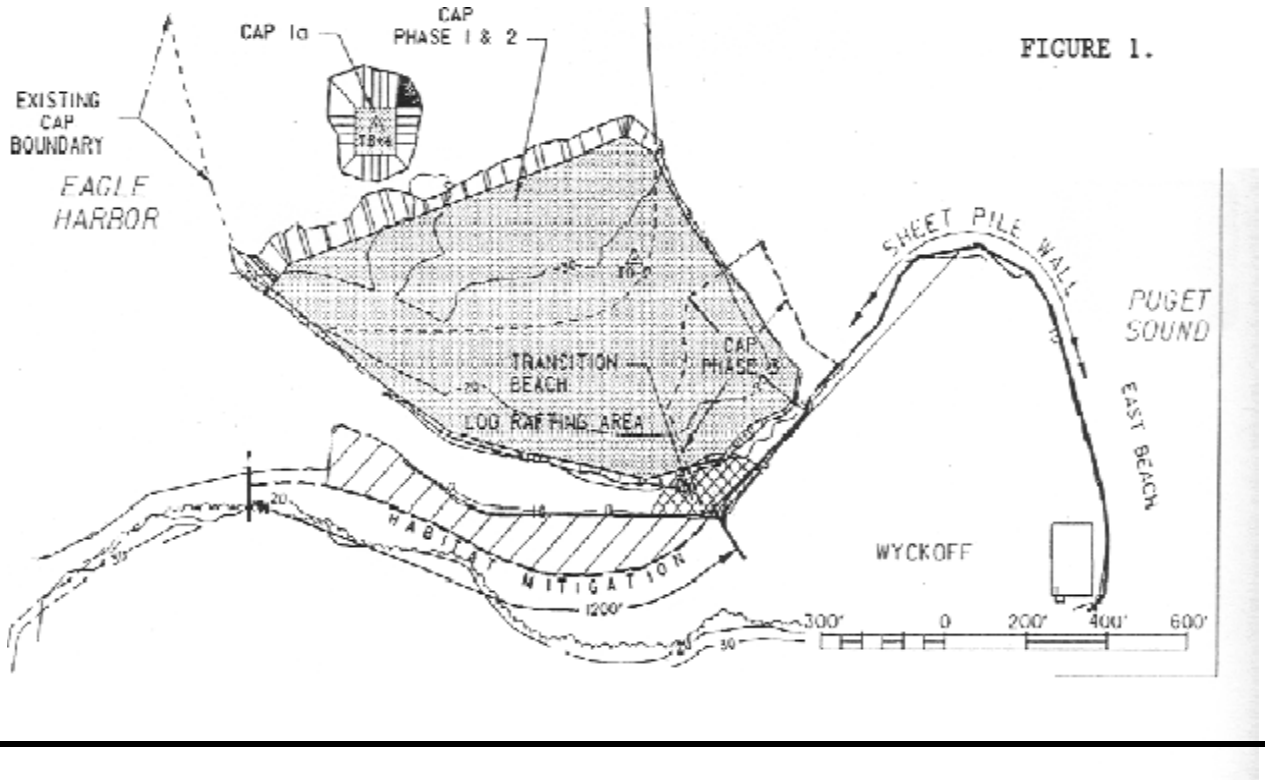

FIGURE 1.

EPA To Create Habitat

Because of the sheet pile wall installation project, and the cap extension project, EPA will be taking away, or changing, about ½ acre of intertidal habitat. This habitat is considered by regulatory agencies to be critical to salmon, smelt, and other species. As a result, EPA is required to provide new habitat similar to the habitat that has been affected. EPA is also required to provide this habitat on the Wyckoff site if possible.

EPA will be creating new intertidal habitat along the western shoreline of the Wyckoff property (see diagonally-striped area of Figure 1) by removing the old, broken-down, wooden bulkhead and cutting back the bank to provide a gentle-sloping beach. This project will provide 2 acres of new, clean habitat which connects an existing smelt spawning beach to the west, with newly created beach from the cap to the east. In addition to increasing the area for fish-spawning habitat, this new intertidal area will also provide feeding, resting, and refuge habitat for migrating fish and provide a connecting corridor between existing habitats within Eagle Harbor and Puget Sound. EPA has been working closely with other regulatory agencies, the Suquamish Tribe, and the City of Bainbridge Island throughout the early design process.

Construction of the habitat site will take place at the same time the sheet pile wall is being installed. Clean material removed from the site will be used to provide backfill between the sheet pile wall and the shoreline. Construction of the habitat area will proceed by removing material upland and working towards the shoreline. Habitat work should be completed by February 15, 2001.

Status of Thermal Cleanup Preparations

EPA will begin the thermal cleanup process with a "pilot" small-scale study. The purpose of the pilot is to evaluate the performance of steam injection cleanup at the Wyckoff site and to gather information for the larger, full-scale system if the pilot is successful. Design of the pilot is underway and should be complete by December 2000. Construction of the pilot system is planned to start by spring 2001. Operation of this system will begin in fall 2001.

The source of boiler water for steam injection is unknown at this time. EPA is currently evaluating alternatives, including an on-site water supply well and using the City's sewage effluent water. EPA has not made a decision regarding the best source of water. EPA will inform the public when this decision is made.

During the pilot study, EPA will use low-sulfur diesel fuel to run the boilers. Using the data gathered during this phase of the cleanup, EPA will evaluate whether to continue using diesel fuel for the larger full-scale operation. EPA will not be adding any more toxins to the environment as a result of using low-sulfur diesel fuel. Emissions are expected to be very low -- well below regulatory limits. It is EPA's goal that the surrounding community not be affected in any way by boiler emissions.

During the pilot system operation, low-sulfur diesel fuel will be delivered to the site by truck. EPA estimates that there will be approximately 2 to 3 (with a maximum of 4) truck deliveries per week. However, to minimize truck traffic associated with the full-scale system, EPA plans to have the fuel delivered by barge at that time.

There is likely to be some noise associated with operation of the pilot system. Noise will be generated by the boilers, pumps, and other machinery. At this time we do not know, in terms of decibel levels, how noisy the systems will be. Although we do not expect a great deal of noise, we will evaluate the specific noise levels during the pilot study. Noise mitigating measures will be implemented, if necessary.

Local Group Urges EPA to Minimize Problems for Community

contributed by Dave Davison, Co-Chair, Association of Bainbridge Communities

The Technical Advisory Group of the Association of Bainbridge Communities (ABC) is excited about and supports the probable cleanup of the Wyckoff site in Eagle Harbor -- a good result which looks like it will become a reality following 80 years of use as a creosote wood treatment facility with toxic contamination. ABC has been pursuing a cleanup of the site for more than 15 years and has received EPA funds for 12 years. An estimated 750,000 to 1 million gallons of creosote are contained at the site below the surface. The planned use of a thermal treatment system to remove the creosote looks very promising (99% effective under laboratory conditions) once the site is prepared for the procedure. An underground metal wall around the site will contain contaminants while they are liquified by steam injection and pulled out of the ground. However, to accomplish these cleanup goals, the surrounding residential community will have to endure certain problems.

ABC is working to make sure that EPA acts positively in minimizing these problems.

a) ABC has asked EPA to include noise reduction methods in the design phase, to minimize noise of the wall installation.

b) ABC has asked EPA to consider a one-hour pause in the loud pile-driving of the wall in the middle of each work day to give local residents a quiet lunch hour. To allow for this quiet period, ABC has offered to support an extension from Fish and Wildlife agency requirements that limit the wall installation period to within a 3-month fall/winter window.

c) ABC has requested that EPA use City of Bainbridge Island's sewage treatment plant effluent water (which the City strongly supports) instead of digging a new well into a fresh water aquifer west of the site for use in the steam process. Steam injection would use up to 200 gallons per minute of water during the process (expected to be 3 years of water use).

d) ABC has requested that EPA use propane fuel instead of diesel, to limit air pollution at the site.

ABC encourages residents to attend the public meeting scheduled for 7 pm on September 21 at City Hall. For more information from our ABC TAG group, or to receive ABC's Scotch Broom newsletter which includes regular coverage of the Wyckoff cleanup, please call Dave Davison at 206/842-7003.

Documents:
The Administrative Record is a file that contains all information used by EPA to make decisions on the cleanup actions from the beginning of the site's history. The Administrative Record can be reviewed at the EPA Records Center, 7th Floor, 1200 Sixth Avenue, Seattle. Call 206/553-4494 to make an appointment. Select documents can be viewed at the Information Repository located at the Bainbridge Island Public Library, 1270 Madison Avenue North. If the library does not have the document you need, feel free to call Andrea Lindsay, EPA Community Involvement Coordinator, at (206) 553-1896.

EPA Web Site:
www.epa.gov/r10earth/
click on "index" at the bottom
click on "W" for Wyckoff

Additional services can be made available to persons with disabilities by calling EPA toll-free at 1-800-424-4372.

Site Background

EPA listed Wyckoff/Eagle Harbor as a Superfund site in 1987. The site is divided into four work areas called "operable units." The operable units are: West Harbor, East Harbor, Wyckoff Soil, and Wyckoff Groundwater.

The former Wyckoff wood treating facility, located at the mouth of Eagle Harbor on Bainbridge Island, operated from the very early 1900's to 1988. Soils at the facility, and groundwater beneath the facility, are severely contaminated. Contaminants include creosote and other wood treatment compounds. An estimated 1 million gallons of creosote product remains in the site's soil and groundwater. These contaminants pose a risk to public health and the environment.

A groundwater extraction and treatment system has been operated on site since 1990. However, contaminants are still moving into the marine environment and only relatively small amounts of contaminants are being removed. In February 2000, EPA selected thermal treatment technologies to clean up remaining soil and groundwater contamination at the site.

In Eagle Harbor, bottom sediments were severely contaminated with chemicals from wood-treating and shipyard operations. The sediments are toxic to marine organisms. A public health advisory is in effect recommending against eating fish and shellfish harvested from the harbor. Contaminated sediments were capped with clean material in 1994 and again in another location in 1997. More capping will occur soon.

Contacts For More Information

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Wyckoff/Eagle Harbor Site

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