



Bainbridge Island, WA

EPA to Repair Sediment Cap in Eagle Harbor

December 2016

What's happening? Construction crews will repair a portion of the sediment cap on the floor of Eagle Harbor. They will build a one-foot-thick layer of clean sand on the bottom, covering about nine acres. Over about a third of the area, they will add a two-foot-thick layer of rocks. The rock layer will prevent the sand cap from eroding.

How will this impact the community? We expect few, if any, community impacts. Construction equipment and materials will be brought to the site by barge, so there will be no impacts on traffic or local roads. There will be no impact on the ferry schedule. The ferry may tie up in a different location (berth) than it normally uses. There may be noise from the construction equipment, and you may notice lighting on the construction equipment and material storage barges. Because the construction crews will need to work around the ferry schedule, they may be working at night.

When will this happen? The cap repair will begin in December 2016 and will be completed by mid-February 2017.

Who is responsible for the project? The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is responsible for this project. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers designed the repair, and will oversee the construction on behalf of the U.S. EPA.

Why is this work needed? Eagle Harbor is part of the Wyckoff/Eagle Harbor Superfund Site. Sediments on the bottom of the harbor became contaminated by releases of chemicals from former shipyard operations and a wood treating facility. In 1992 and 1993, the EPA remediated about 54 acres of contaminated sediment by installing a cap, which buried the contamination beneath a thick layer of sand. A portion of the sand cap in front of the Bainbridge ferry terminal has eroded, exposing contaminated sediment that was once buried. The concentration of chemicals in the surface sediments is high enough to be toxic to marine organisms.

Who is paying and how much will this cost? This project will cost approximately \$3 million. The EPA will pay 90 percent of the costs. The Washington Department of Ecology will pay the remaining 10 percent.

How will this project impact marine organisms in Eagle Harbor? By burying contaminated sediment, the cap repair will improve water quality and protect fish and other marine organisms from exposure to hazardous chemicals. Fish, crabs and other large organisms will move out of the construction area, but the sand cap will smother worms, clams and other organisms. These communities are expected to recover quickly and move onto the new sandy habitat that the cap provides.

What is the EPA doing to minimize the impacts of this project? The EPA partnered with the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to reduce the impact of this project in two important ways. First, the agencies thoroughly assessed the condition of the original sand cap, mapping the area that needs repairs. This study allowed the EPA to reduce the footprint of the repair area. Second, DNR has provided clean dredged sand, which the EPA will use to build the sand layer of the cap repair. This clean dredged sand will come from Everett, where it was dredged from the Snohomish River navigational channel. Using dredged materials will lower the carbon footprint of this project because the sand will not need to be quarried, crushed or delivered to Puget Sound by truck.

Questions?

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