



Wyckoff/Eagle Harbor Superfund Site Community Involvement Plan

Bainbridge Island, Washington

November 2022

The Wyckoff/Eagle Harbor Superfund Site is on the east side of Bainbridge Island.

EPA Photo

This plan describes how EPA will inform and engage with the local community while performing cleanup activities at the Wyckoff/Eagle Harbor Superfund Site. EPA is designing this plan to align with the needs of the community. In March 2022, before we drafted this plan, we asked local people about their views of the cleanup and how they want to be informed and involved. EPA's community involvement coordinator interviewed seven people representing a diversity of views. We heard from community members, the local parks district and parks foundation, an employee of the Suquamish Tribe, and others. Many thanks to everyone who took the time to talk with us and share ideas. We consider this Community Involvement Plan a living document; even after it is final, we will continue to welcome suggestions.

Community engagement goals

EPA's project staff is committed to a meaningful community involvement program. Our goals are to:

- Make timely, relevant information available about site activities.
- Present information in a clear, understandable way.
- Foster open communication, responding to questions and concerns as they arise.
- Be clear about opportunities where the public can influence cleanup decisions.
- Offer formal public comment opportunities on major EPA decision documents.
- Listen to and consider local input.

The Community Involvement Action Plan

EPA uses many tools to inform and involve people. To best serve the people of this community, including those with limited internet access, EPA will provide information in a variety of ways. EPA will focus on the methods and activities listed below.

Fact Sheets

We will begin issuing fact sheets on a regular basis, starting in early 2023, to share important information about the site. The fact sheets will provide cleanup updates, meeting notices, historical information, and other news. We intend to distribute the fact sheets primarily through email, and post them on our project webpage and regional social media.

Helpful resources to understand the cleanup

EPA has created some materials to explain our approach to cleaning up the contamination at the site and how the public can avoid contaminated areas.

- [Fact sheet on May 2018 cleanup decision](#) for upland (on land) and offshore (in water), including cleanup actions on the beaches, replacement of the perimeter wall around the former Wyckoff wood-treating facility, and improvements to the facility access road.

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The Community Involvement Action Plan: Helpful resources to understand the cleanup

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- [Fact sheet on May 2019 cleanup decision](#) for contamination remaining in soils and groundwater associated with “The Point” also known as the Former Process Area.
- [Fact sheet on creosote contamination](#) on some Eagle Harbor beaches.
- [Fact sheet on Eagle Harbor “no anchor” zone](#):

Mailing list and email announcements

EPA maintains both hard copy and email mailing lists of people who may be interested in the cleanup. To get on our mailing lists, or be removed, contact sherbina.debra@epa.gov. On occasion, we send out information about cleanup activities to our electronic mailing list. We may solicit additions to our email list through a postcard mailing.

Informal communication

Project managers and community involvement staff are available to talk with you about the site. Feel free to contact us to share information, discuss concerns, or ask questions. Contacts are listed on page 8.

Community information sessions: in-person and virtual

EPA will host local community information sessions. EPA project managers will also attend local meetings hosted by others, when possible and appropriate.

Working with the City of Bainbridge Island

EPA will continue to contribute periodic project updates to the City Manager’s Report. We will coordinate with the City Council to give presentations at City Council meetings as requested.

Working with Washington State Ferries

EPA will work with Washington State Ferries to distribute project materials to Bainbridge Island commuters. For example, EPA may put meeting and other project announcements on ferry monitors, or table at the ferry dock and on the ferries.

Formal public comment periods

During key decision points in the Superfund process, EPA announces and opens public comment periods. EPA carefully considers all public comments. No formal comment periods for this site are expected soon. Even so, we welcome input and suggestions at any time.

Working with the media

EPA announces meetings and review opportunities using display ads in the local newspapers, the Bainbridge Review and Kitsap Sun. We issue press releases to local media whenever there is important news to share. We also offer press availability sessions and are available for interviews with local reporters.

EPA will explore working with local reporters to produce stories and articles about the project and publish a regular “column” about work occurring at the site.

Local bulletin boards

EPA may post project information at local Winslow bulletin boards, including the Town and Country Market, Bainbridge Library, Bainbridge Island Senior Community Center, and other locations.

Pritchard Park signage

EPA expects to install updated signs about the project at Pritchard Park in early 2023.

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The Community Involvement Action Plan

Document collections: public information repository

EPA provides space for the public to view records related to Superfund work at the site. You can review [copies of all Administrative Records](#) for this site, and collections of [technical and outreach documents](#), at www.epa.gov/superfund/wyckoff-eagle-harbor. Select site documents are available at:

Bainbridge Public Library

1270 Madison Avenue
Bainbridge Island, WA 98110
206-451-5050

Website

EPA maintains a [website about the cleanup](#) to provide site activity information, background details, technical and legal documents, opportunities for public engagement, and much more.

Language access

EPA will provide language translation and interpretation services as needed, to ensure that any non-English speaking individuals can have equal access to EPA materials and activities. To date, these services have not been requested and a need has not been identified. To make a request, contact congdon.julie@epa.gov.

Social Media

Occasionally, EPA posts site updates on its regional [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) pages.

Background

The Wyckoff/Eagle Harbor Superfund Site is on the east side of Bainbridge Island in central Puget Sound, Washington. The former Wyckoff wood-treating facility, located at the mouth of Eagle Harbor on Bainbridge Island, forms part of the site. The facility operated from 1903 until 1988, contaminating soils and groundwater with creosote. EPA added Eagle Harbor to the Superfund National Priorities List in 1987, when environmental investigations revealed extensive contamination in soils, groundwater, and in the sediment on the bottom of Eagle Harbor. For administrative purposes, EPA assigned three cleanup areas:

Eagle Harbor Sediment and Beaches: approximately 100 acres of sediment on the bottom of Eagle Harbor became contaminated with creosote and other wood preserving chemicals released from the former Wyckoff wood treating facility. This area is also called the East Harbor Operable Unit (OU1).

Wyckoff Wood Treating Facility Soil and Groundwater: located on the south side of Eagle Harbor, this area includes soil and groundwater that became contaminated during decades of wood treating operations. This area is known as the Soil and Groundwater Operable Units (OU2 and OU4).

West Harbor Soil and Sediment: located on the north side of Eagle Harbor and not associated with the former Wyckoff wood-treating facility, this area is the site of a former shipyard, which became contaminated with mercury and other metals. This area is also called the West Harbor Operable Unit (OU3).



West Beach.

EPA Photo

What is Superfund?

Superfund is a federal law authorizing EPA to clean up contaminated sites. Its official name is the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act, or CERCLA.



East Beach and North Shoal are still contaminated with creosote.

Both photos - EPA



The North Shoal area of the Wyckoff site.

Creosote and other site contaminants

Creosote is a chemical used to treat wooden railroad ties, utility poles, and pier pilings. It is an oily petroleum-based product with a distinctive odor. On bare skin, creosote can cause chemical burns. Creosote contains polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), which are chemicals found in oil, coal and tar. Some of the PAHs found in creosote may cause cancer. More [information about creosote](#) is available from the Centers for Disease Control. More [information about PAHs](#) is also available online.

Besides creosote, [pentachlorophenol \(PCP\)](#), and [mercury](#) are contaminants of concern at the site. A list of web addresses about these chemicals is available in the [More Information](#) section at the end of this document.

The beaches to the east (East Beach) and north (North Shoal) of the wood-treating facility Former Process Area are still contaminated with creosote. EPA and the Washington Department of Ecology advise that people avoid these areas until they are cleaned up and warning notices have been installed at the site. See our fact sheet [with tips to safely enjoy these beach areas](#).

What has been done to clean up the site?

Over the years, extensive cleanup actions have been completed in all four of the site's operable units: East Harbor (OU1), Soil and Groundwater (OU2 and OU4), and West Harbor (OU3). The operable units are monitored regularly to ensure the cleanup actions continue to be protective. The major actions taken at the site are as follows:

- **1990:** Groundwater treatment plant installed (OU4)
- **1994:** Time-critical removal action of soil and sludge completed (OU2)
- **1994:** Phase I subtidal sediment cap completed (OU1)
- **1997:** Sediment dredging and capping completed (OU3)
- **2000:** Phase II subtidal sediment cap near the facility completed (OU1)
- **2001:** Perimeter sheet pile wall completed (OU2/4)
- **2001:** Phase III intertidal beach cap completed (OU1)
- **2003:** Thermal pilot test completed (OU2/4)
- **2008:** Exposure barrier system intertidal sediment cap completed (OU1)
- **2010:** Construction of new (and current) groundwater treatment plant completed (OU2)
- **2012:** Ecology began operating the groundwater extraction and treatment system at the former Wyckoff facility (OU2)
- **2017:** Subtidal cap repair completed (OU1)



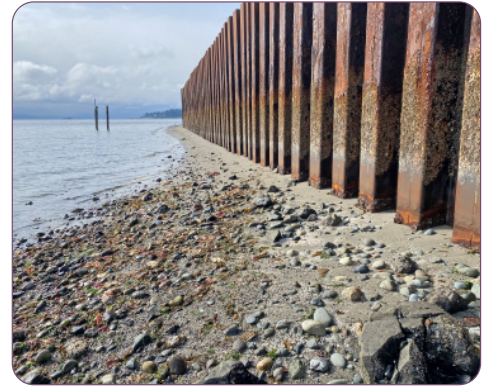
In 2017, EPA repaired the subtidal cap.

EPA Photo

EPA is the lead agency for the Wyckoff/Eagle Harbor Superfund site and Ecology is a key partner. The two agencies continue to coordinate closely to study areas of remaining contamination, assess cleanup options, as well as develop and implement remedial actions.

What is the current site status?

Additional cleanup actions are needed in the soil and groundwater at the former Wyckoff wood treating facility, and in the adjacent beach sediments. EPA issued a cleanup decision in May 2018, selecting additional cleanup actions for the beaches next to the former wood-treating facility. The May 2018 cleanup plan also includes improvements to the site access road and replacement of the metal sheet pile wall around the perimeter of the facility. In May 2019, EPA issued a second cleanup decision to address upland soil and groundwater contamination at the former wood treating facility at the site. The May 2019 cleanup plan modifies the earlier “containment” cleanup decision, issued in 2000.



EPA will replace the wall around the perimeter of the facility. EPA Photo

What is next for the cleanup?

In 2022, EPA completed pre-construction design fieldwork including vegetation clearing, geophysical surveying, air and noise monitoring, sub-surface drilling, test pitting, and infiltration testing. EPA also conducted an in-situ solidification/stabilization pilot study. This fieldwork will support ongoing construction design for additional work at each of the operable units associated with the former Wyckoff facility (OU1 - sediment, OU2 - soil, and OU4 - groundwater).

Within the next year, EPA will be entering a very active construction period at the site. We will be increasing our information sharing and engagement opportunities. We want to make sure the community is aware of and knows what to expect from upcoming activities, and how to provide input.



In 2022, EPA performed an in-situ solidification/stabilization pilot study. EPA Photo

About the community

The Superfund site is on Bainbridge Island, a city and island in Puget Sound, in Kitsap County, Washington. In 2019, its population was estimated at 25,298. Bainbridge Island is a suburb of Seattle, connected by the Washington State Ferries system. State Route 305 connects the island to Poulsbo and the Port Madison Native Reservation, which belongs to the Suquamish Tribe. The island is seeing population growth and increased development.

EJSCREEN is an environmental justice mapping and screening tool, [available online](#) to everyone. This tool uses environmental indicators for a community to show potential exposures. It uses demographic factors to show potential susceptibility. Using EJSCREEN, EPA looked at Census American Community Survey data estimates from 2014-2018. During this time, there were about 24,060 residents on Bainbridge Island. About 13% of the population reported as people of color. One percent reported speaking English “less than very well.” An estimated 24% of the population were 65 or older. Five percent were aged four and younger.

The EJSCREEN analysis for the Wyckoff/Eagle Harbor Superfund Site found limited environmental justice concerns in this community. None of the 11 environmental indicators were at the 75th percentile or above, compared to the rest of the United States, the region, or the state. EPA will continue to be alert for environmental justice concerns in this area.

Environmental Justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. EPA Region 10 works to make sure underserved, low income, and tribal communities facing disproportionate environmental risks have opportunities for meaningful participation in environmental decision-making. You can find many EPA environmental justice resources [online](#) at <https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice>.

What the community told us

During conversations with local people, EPA learned about the community's perspectives and concerns.

Impressions of EPA's cleanup

- In general, people are pleased with how EPA is proceeding with the cleanup. One person said, "I think the [Wyckoff] project has been managed well in all of its complexity." Another person said, "I have a generally favorable impression of the cleanup."
- Good to see new access road has been built.
- EPA staff have made cleanup possible – Wyckoff is an example of what good government can do. Shows how regulations and working with local community on environmental solutions can help protect the environment.
- Important to keep up communication on how contamination could impact aquifers – be clear about what EPA is doing to protect drinking water on Bainbridge.
- Could fence on the south side of the groundwater treatment plant be remedied to allow vehicle access to the trail for wheelchair access, or for people to carry in boats?
- When will the perimeter wall be replaced? Isn't its integrity failing from corrosion?

Recommendations for connecting with the community

- Most people liked a mix of paper copy and email communications, with project updates and opportunities to engage.
- One person said, "I think early and often is the best way to inform most of the neighborhood; I find fliers in my mailbox to be ineffective and unnecessary. I know that the Lower Duwamish Waterway has created a roundtable of which I've been a part, and the listserv is helpful for getting information out to a big group."
- If I have questions about the cleanup, I call EPA or the Army Corps of Engineers.
- All tools to reach out sound great – email blasts, fact sheets, post cards.
- Overall, internet connectivity is good in this community.
- Publish public notices in local newspapers: *Bainbridge Review*, *Bainbridge Islander*, *Kitsap Sun*.
- I would like to see more education on the upcoming cleanup. Many new people are moving to Bainbridge Island and don't know much about the site. Be sure to tell them the story of the Wyckoff project and let them know of opportunities to engage.
- Community meetings: need compelling reason to hold a meeting as people are short on time to attend, have competing priorities. If pandemic is at a point where it's safe, I suggest an in-person meeting. Could present a hybrid option – both virtual and in-person meeting. This is one of the tools EPA can use to keep people informed and answer questions.
- Two people preferred virtual public meetings.
- We welcome community briefings via virtual meetings. The community would like to hear the schedule for cleanup and plans moving forward so that the park can be used by the public safely. Virtual meetings could be recorded so that our community leaders and the public can access the information at any time and links can be provided on the City website.
- Multiple ways to connect are useful.
- Keep messaging consistent on what to expect as cleanup moves on and be clear about schedule.
- The Bainbridge Island Parks Foundation offered to share EPA information on its listserv. People ask the foundation how they can help, and how they can get involved in EPA and Bainbridge Island Parks and Recreation District activities.
- Post EPA information in the weekly online City of Bainbridge Island Manager's Report.
- *COBI Connects* is a good hard copy newsletter to use to get the word out about Wyckoff activities. The *Island Wanderer* listserv is also a good communications conduit.
- I also rely on neighbor connections to get information about Wyckoff, which take place on email or via text message.

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Recommendations for connecting with the community

- I feel like work to engage the community ended abruptly after the Washington Department of Ecology's Community Interest Group sunsetted a few years ago. This Community Interest Group was helpful because we would talk about communications with the community and what people heard and were concerned about. Good to present technical information for the laymen. The group provided a filter to help agencies craft plain language messaging for the broader community.

What our partners told us

Suquamish Tribe:

- I feel comfortable reaching out to EPA project managers with questions.
- If Suquamish Tribal Council is interested, we may ask EPA to give a briefing to Tribal Council regarding accelerated Wyckoff schedule. They prefer major milestone updates.
- Coordination with EPA's technical staff on Wyckoff is going well. I have talked to the project manager about ways to increase community support at tribal level.
- Orientation of new perimeter wall a concern – the Suquamish Tribe wants to make sure the new wall does not impact the habitat restoration with eelgrass beds. This is a high priority for tribe.
- As EPA installs caps on creosote seeps in the intertidal beaches, they need to do it effectively but not impact the tribe's potential future shellfish harvests.
- The Suquamish Tribe prefers to have contamination removed – prefers contaminated sediment disposed of offsite rather than placed in upland.
- Tribe would like design to incorporate native species habitat and natural beach processes as much as possible. Anything that would be in keeping with the more natural state of the property – pull it back from its history of industrial use.

Bainbridge Island Metro Parks and Recreation District

- I have a generally favorable impression of EPA's cleanup and believe the community supports it.
- I think the agency would like to see elements of the cleanup help facilitate the citizen committee's program recommendations for the park outline.

Other ideas and input from the community

- Put up new exhibits at the site describing the upcoming cleanup work with good visuals, like maps and renderings of what the final cleanup will look like. Many people walk Pritchard Park and visit the Japanese American Exclusion Memorial. This is an opportunity to help them learn about what is planned. Exhibits should include webpage links and contact information.
- See if EPA can get interest from newspaper editorial board on telling the story of Wyckoff in the local newspapers; there are many instances where local people really stepped up to address the environmental problem of Wyckoff. There's not a lot of awareness about the history of this part of the island and how citizen activists helped shape EPA's involvement and bring attention to the site. It's a great human-interest story. It's also a story of government doing the right thing and being responsive to the needs and concerns of the community. EPA has shown commitment. Much cleanup has been done, there's more cleanup coming up; people know more about contamination at the site and will be able to eventually produce the upcoming public park.
- Wyckoff is the "gateway" to Bainbridge Island, in some sense. People see the Wyckoff point while passing on the ferry. It's good to make a positive first impression.
- I would love to host site visits/tours with the Bainbridge Island Park District and EPA. What are plans? What are next steps? People are interested in the details of what's coming for the site cleanup.
- The Association of Bainbridge Communities has disbanded. This group was active in the cleanup early on and did positive things through their Technical Assistance Grant with EPA. Some people who used to be active in this organization continue to follow EPA's activities at Wyckoff.

Working with our partners

EPA is committed to effective coordination with other agencies, governments, and organizations during its cleanup work at the Wyckoff site.

These include the Washington Department of Ecology, the Suquamish Tribe, Washington State Department of Health, the Bainbridge Island Metro Parks and Recreation District, the City of Bainbridge Island, and others.



For more information

Site Contacts:

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Brandon Perkins, Project Manager • perkins.brandon@epa.gov • 206-553-6396

Debra Sherbina, Community Involvement Coordinator • sherbina.debra@epa.gov • 206-553-0247

If you need materials in an alternative format, please contact Debra Sherbina at 800-424-4372, Ext. 0247.

Learn more on the Web:

- Wyckoff Harbor Superfund Cleanup Site: <https://www.epa.gov/superfund/wyckoff-eagle-harbor>
- Fact sheet on May 2018 cleanup decision: <https://bit.ly/3XPLOvK>
- Fact Sheet on May 2019 cleanup decision: <https://bit.ly/3FdVPKP>
- Fact sheet on creosote contamination on some Eagle Harbor beaches: <https://bit.ly/3XR6gw0>
- Fact sheet on Eagle Harbor “no anchor” zone: <https://bit.ly/3XOO2LJ>
- Creosote: <https://wwwn.cdc.gov/TSP/ToxFAQs/ToxFAQsDetails.aspx?faqid=65&toxid=18>
- PAH s (polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons): <https://wwwn.cdc.gov/TSP/ToxFAQs/ToxFAQsDetails.aspx?faqid=121&toxid=25>
- PCP: <https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/tfacts51.pdf>
- Mercury: <https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/tfacts46.pdf>
- EJ Screen: <https://www.epa.gov/ejscreen>
- EPA Environmental Justice resources: <https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice>.
- EPA Region 10 Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/eparegion10>
- EPA Region 10 Twitter page: <https://twitter.com/EPAnorthwest>