



Slip 36 Removal Action

Part of the East Waterway Operable Unit and the Harbor Island Superfund Site

November 2024

Fact Sheet

What is Slip 36 of the East Waterway?

Slip 36, created during the straightening of the East Waterway, is situated approximately one mile south of downtown Seattle at the United States Coast Guard base. The East Waterway is one of seven operable units of the Harbor Island Superfund Site being addressed for cleanup by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (see Figure 1).

Today, the Coast Guard's use of Slip 36 includes operation and maintenance of vessels, including its large "cutters."

Why is a removal action happening at Slip 36?

Previous investigations at and near Slip 36 identified polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons as the main contaminant of concern, although other semi-volatile organic compounds, as well as polychlorinated biphenyls, dioxins/furans, mercury, and arsenic are also present.

The EPA is supporting an early removal (or cleanup) action for Slip 36 in advance of the larger East Waterway cleanup due to the Coast Guard's need to renovate Slip 36 to moor their vessels that support missions such as polar icebreaking, search and rescue, national security, and other critical operations.

What will happen?

The EPA will direct and oversee the Coast Guard's work which will include:

- Removing some structures, including one pier.
- Removing (called 'dredging') contaminated sediment throughout Slip 36, while maintaining the required slope.
- Treating contaminated sediment with activated carbon in areas where dredging cannot be done because of structural concerns.

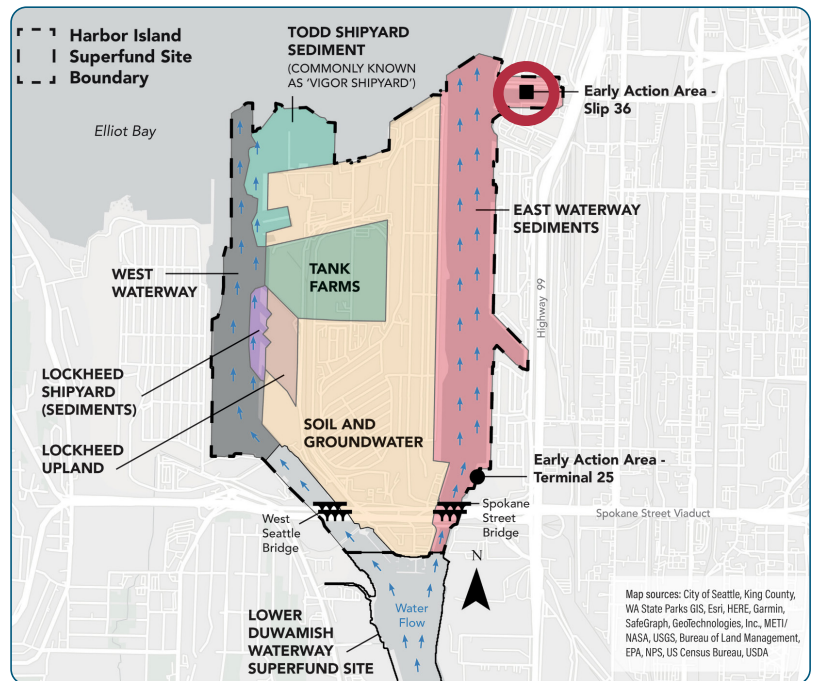


Figure 1. Map of the Harbor Island Superfund Site and operable units, with the Slip 36 early action area circled in red.

Map by U.S. EPA.

KEY TERMS

Superfund: The U.S. government law to clean up some of the nation's most contaminated sites.

Early Action Area: A specific area where cleanup occurs expeditiously to help the final cleanup.

Operable Unit (or "OU"): Distinct areas within a Superfund site (like East Waterway for the Harbor Island Superfund Site) that help organize the cleanup work.

Remedial Action Level (or "RAL"): A RAL is a level of contamination that helps identify and prioritize the most contaminated areas to achieve future anticipated cleanup level goals over the entire project area.

How does this Slip 36 removal action compare to the East Waterway Interim Cleanup Plan?

This removal action is consistent with the EPA's [May 2024 interim cleanup plan for the East Waterway Operable Unit](#) because sediment exceeding the Remedial Action Levels outlined in that plan will be removed from all accessible areas within Slip 36. When cleanup levels are selected in a final cleanup plan, those cleanup levels will be applied to Slip 36 as well.

Furthermore, this removal action enhances the East Waterway interim cleanup by including the removal of some dilapidated structures, including one pier. This will allow for the removal of contaminated sediment under those structures.

When will this happen?

The Coast Guard will work with EPA to design this removal action before any construction begins. The goal is to complete the dredging and treatment of contaminated sediment by 2028.

How much will this cost?

This removal action is expected to cost less than \$100 million.

How may I get involved or learn more?

Please visit the [EPA's Harbor Island website](#) to:

- Review the full document (called an Action Memo) that describes this removal action.
- View a [short educational video](#) of this removal action.
- Learn where to attend community spaces where EPA will provide updates and you may ask questions.
- Contact EPA (see "For More Information" section below) if you have any questions or concerns.



Figure 2. Image of Slip 36

Photo by U.S. EPA.

For More Information

Visit the [EPA's Harbor Island Superfund Site website](#).

CONTACT:

Ravi Sanga, EPA Remedial Project Manager, at (206) 553-4092, sanga.ravi@epa.gov.

Laura Knudsen, EPA Community Involvement Coordinator, (206) 553-1838, knudsen.laura@epa.gov.

If you need materials in an alternative format, please contact Laura Knudsen at 206-553-1838.

Stay Connected: If you would like to receive information about this site in the future, please email Laura Knudsen at knudsen.laura@epa.gov and tell us if you prefer updates to your email or mailing address — or wish to be taken off our mailing list.