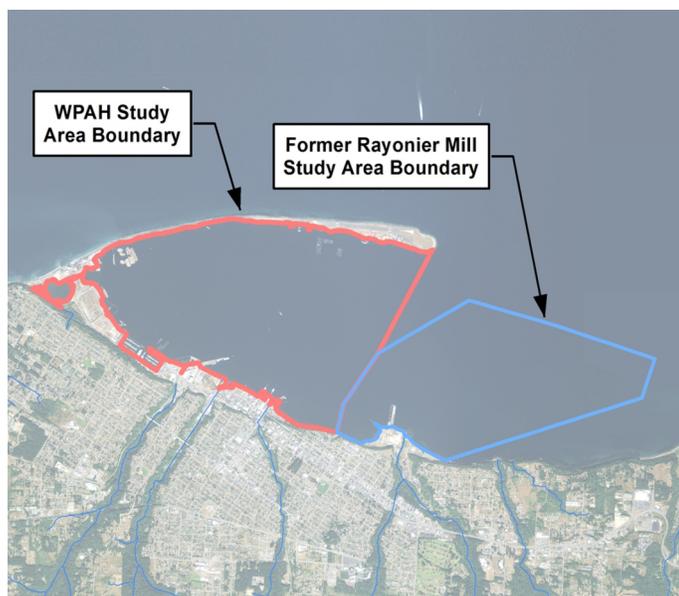


## Joint Announcement from the Port of Port Angeles and City of Port Angeles Draft Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study submitted to Washington Department of Ecology

An important milestone was reached in the environmental cleanup of the western portion of Port Angeles Harbor (western Harbor). The Port of Port Angeles (Port) and City of Port Angeles (City), working cooperatively since 2013 with Georgia-Pacific, Merrill & Ring, and Nippon (collectively the Western Port Angeles Harbor Group or WPAHG), have conducted an investigation of contaminants in sediments and recommended a preferred cleanup alternative.



WPAHG prepared a draft Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study (RI/FS) report that was submitted on April 6, 2018, to the Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology). It is an important milestone for the western Harbor under the state's Model Toxics Control Act environmental cleanup program, overseen by Ecology. The draft report will first be reviewed and commented on by Ecology. Ecology will then work with WPAHG to issue a revised draft incorporating Ecology's comments. The revised draft (the public review draft RI/FS) will be available for review and comment by the public before any decisions are made. The RI/FS will help guide the next steps toward cleanup.

Ecology is responsible for selecting cleanup actions to restore the western Harbor and protect human health and the environment. Ecology will provide the community, Tribal Governments and interested parties the opportunity to comment on the public review draft RI/FS and Ecology's proposed cleanup action prior to making its decision.

WPAHG's RI/FS covers the western portion of Port Angeles Harbor. This project is separate from the longstanding Rayonier cleanup project that affects the eastern portion of the Harbor and is under separate oversight by Ecology.

### Guiding Principles

The City and Port view the western Harbor cleanup as an important benefit to the community, its citizens, and its businesses; and so both entities adopted a proactive and comprehensive approach to a clean harbor. On January 30, 2017, the City and Port adopted the following goals:

- The Harbor cleanup should include well-defined steps that proceed efficiently on a reliable timeline with finality.
- The cleanup should comprehensively protect human and ecological health, and enhance the quality of life in the community.
- The cleanup should at the same time not unreasonably interfere with operations at a working harbor that support a variety of family-wage jobs.
- The cleanup action should be based on sound science.
- The cleanup action must acknowledge that funds are limited and must be spent wisely.
- Parties who contributed to contamination should contribute to the cleanup.

To accomplish these goals, the City and Port are cooperating with other members of WPAHG to achieve a directed and purposeful cleanup.

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## An Important Harbor to All

The western Harbor plays a significant role in Tribal, commercial and sport fisheries. Since the 1800s, industrial and commercial development at and around the western Harbor, including sawmills, plywood manufacturing, pulp and paper production, marinas, boat building, and maritime trade, has provided commerce, economic development and jobs for the Northern Olympic Peninsula. The western Harbor is home to more than 60 species of fish, shellfish, birds and marine mammals. The western Harbor is located within the traditional territory of the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe, a part of the Klallam Tribe, whose people have lived throughout the Northern Olympic Peninsula for thousands of years. The western Harbor is a tremendous natural, economic and cultural asset.

## About the Contamination

PCBs, dioxins, mercury, and carcinogenic polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons are the primary contaminants of concern in sediments associated with historical discharges. Many of the contaminants in sediments in the western Harbor are the result of historical discharges from industrial and commercial operations and sewer conveyances before it was known that these discharges would not dissipate. After modern-day environmental restrictions came into effect, industrial and commercial operations have improved their management of waste and reduced contaminant discharges.

## Risks to Human and Environmental Health

The Washington Department of Health has issued fish or shellfish consumption advisories for Puget Sound as a whole (Chinook salmon) and for Port Angeles Harbor specifically. The advisories provide guidelines on how many meals of certain kinds of fish people can eat safely and impose closures or recommend limitations on certain other harvesting. The cleanup of the Harbor may reduce, but not entirely remove the need for fish and shellfish advisories. Pollutants such as bacterial pollution and paralytic shellfish poison biotoxin, which are the reason for the closure of shellfish harvesting in the western Harbor, are different from the contaminants in sediments to be addressed by the cleanup.

## Proposed Cleanup Plan

A broad range of remedial alternatives were considered in the draft RI/FS, with estimated costs from nearly \$1.25 million to approximately \$169 million and time to complete construction from three years or less to an estimated 10 years. A combination of removal, capping, enhanced natural recovery, and monitoring contaminated sediments would meet MTCA requirements and prevent or reduce future exposure to the legacy contaminants. This cleanup plan protects human health and the Harbor's ecosystem and is the most cost effective, least disruptive cleanup approach relative to current operations at the waterfront. This cleanup plan can be implemented in a reasonable construction time, which is important to the working waterfront industries and to taxpayers.

Under the proposed cleanup plan, removal, capping, and enhanced natural recovery will take about six years to complete and will cost approximately \$32 million. Monitoring will be conducted during and after active cleanup. Acceptable cleanup levels should be achieved 10 years after construction is complete and sediment quality is expected to continue to improve thereafter.

## Working Together

The Port and City have worked diligently with the other WPAHG members to perform the investigation and provide comprehensive information to Ecology to select a cleanup action that will protect human health and the environment. The Port and City expect that parties who have contributed to the contamination will pay their fair share of cleanup costs.

## Next Steps

Ecology will endeavor to review and provide initial comments on the draft RI/FS within 60 days of receipt of the document. Ecology will then work with WPAHG to issue a revised draft incorporating Ecology's comments. This public review draft will be available for review and comment by the public.

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