

Ross Island Investigation – Update June 2003

This fact sheet updates ongoing environmental work at Ross Island and assumes a certain level of familiarity with the project. For background on the project, please see the May 23, 2001 Fact Sheet.

Fact sheets and additional information about the Ross Island investigation are available at the DEQ web site:

<http://www.deq.state.or.us/nwr/rossisland.htm>

Environmental investigation approved

Ross Island Sand and Gravel Co. (RISG) submitted the final Remedial Investigation/Risk Assessment Report on October 21, 2002 and DEQ approved the report on November 12, 2002. The final version addresses comments provided by DEQ. The response to comments, indicating how the comments were addressed in the final report, is available on the DEQ web site.

Feasibility study in progress

Because contaminated material exceeding risk-based standards is present at Ross Island, an evaluation of appropriate measures to clean up the contamination must be completed. Clean-up actions can range from those that prevent exposure through engineered or administrative controls to actions that remove or treat contamination. The Feasibility Study for the Ross Island site will need to address the following:

- Areas along the southern shore of the lagoon where elevated levels of pH in sediment and groundwater have been detected.
- Long-term monitoring and management for existing confined aquatic disposal cells in the lagoon.
- Long-term monitoring and management of breach material confined in the former eastern section of the upland settling pond.
- A limited area along the southern shore where soil concentrations indicate a potential for adverse impacts due to erosion.
- Two upland areas where zinc and arsenic were found at elevated concentrations in surface soils.

- A limited area in the southern portion of the upland areas where subsurface concentrations of contaminants may pose a threat via groundwater migration.
- Elevated concentrations of contaminants detected in surface sediments in the southeast bench area and in the vicinity of the breach of one of the confined disposal cells.
- Potential migration of contaminants detected at elevated concentrations in two grab groundwater samples collected near the southern shoreline of the lagoon.
- Elevated concentrations of petroleum hydrocarbons detected at several locations in the upland fill area.

Pilot testing may be required to fully evaluate cleanup options for some of the issues identified above. Testing protocols will be described in the Feasibility Study report. The Feasibility Study will also address how cleanup actions will be coordinated with site reclamation activities.

An outline and schedule for the Ross Island Feasibility Study was approved by DEQ in February 2003. The schedule provides for completing the Feasibility Study in sections over an approximately 12-month time frame. The schedule incorporates time to complete pilot testing associated with addressing the elevated pH in nearshore sediments.

The first three sections of the Feasibility Study were submitted to DEQ for review at the end of March 2003. These sections provide general project background, summarize the results of the remedial investigation, and outline the specific areas of the site that require remediation. The draft text and associated DEQ comments (letter dated 5/1/03) are available on DEQ's web site.

In April 2003, Ross Island Sand and Gravel Company submitted a proposal to conduct pilot testing to evaluate the effectiveness of various types of capping material in reducing the elevated pH levels detected in shoreline areas. In response to DEQ comments, they provided additional details on this testing in June.



State of Oregon
Department of
Environmental
Quality

Northwest Region
Site Response
Program
2020 SW 4th Ave
Portland, OR 97201
Phone: (503) 229-5263
Fax: (503) 229-6945
TTY: (503) 229-6993
Contact: Jennifer Sutter
Phone: (503) 229-6148

Last Update:
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J. Sutter
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Next steps

Pilot testing results and Sections 4 and 5 of the Feasibility Study are scheduled to be submitted in August 2003. Sections 4 and 5 will describe and evaluate a range of remedial options for site areas warranting action. The final sections (6 through 9) of the Feasibility Study will provide a detailed analysis of alternatives and recommend particular remedial actions.

When the Feasibility Study is completed and approved, DEQ will issue a proposal (staff report) for remedial action. DEQ will hold a public review and comment period, and consider any public comment received, before this proposal is finalized in a Record of Decision (ROD) for the site. The public review period will likely occur in the Spring of 2004.

New Reclamation Plan Approved

The final meeting of the reclamation committee was held in September 2002. The committee endorsed the proposed modification to the reclamation plan in principal and the proposal was submitted to the Division of State Lands as part of the Ross Island fill permit application. The Reclamation Plan proposal is available on the Division of State Lands web site at: http://www.statelandsonline.com/pdfs/ross_island_app0009819b.pdf. DSL provided a public review period for the proposed plan and held a public meeting to receive comments on it in January 2003. DSL approved the Reclamation Plan proposal and modified the removal-fill permit in June 2003.

As part of the revised permit, DEQ prepared a Fill Evaluation Scope of Work as Attachment A of the permit. The Fill Evaluation Scope of Work describes the process for determining if material proposed to be used for reclaiming the mined areas at Ross Island can be safely placed there without long-term management. Material meeting these criteria is considered Class A fill. Ross Island Sand and Gravel Company has indicated that they will only accept Class A fill.

Opportunities for public participation

Draft sections of the Feasibility Study as well as DEQ comments on these sections can be accessed on DEQ's web page. Many project documents are also available at the Multnomah County Library – Central (801 SW 10th Ave.) and Sellwood (7904 SE Milwaukie Ave.) branches. The project file is also available for review by appointment at DEQ's Northwest Region Office, 2020 SW 4th Ave., Portland. To set up an appointment please contact the Environmental Cleanup File Specialist at (503) 229-6729.

DEQ is available to provide updates at neighborhood or other group meetings if there is interest.

Direct comments, questions, and requests to be added to the mailing list to the DEQ Project Manager, Jennifer Sutter, (503) 229-6148, sutter.jennifer@deq.state.or.us. Please indicate if you do not want your comments placed on the web site for public consideration.

Alternative Formats

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