

News Release

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DEQ Invites Comments on Conditional No Further Action on a Portion of Former Pope and Talbot Site in St. Helens

The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) invites comments on a proposed subdivision of a Port of St. Helens property and issuance of a conditional no further action on one portion of the property. Located at 1550 Railroad Avenue, the property was formerly used as a Pope and Talbot wood treating facility from 1912 to 1960.

The wood-treating operations primarily used creosote, along with limited use of other treatment solutions. The investigation on the property identified areas where soil, groundwater, and sediments have been impacted by polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, metals and petroleum hydrocarbons.

Port of St. Helens purchased the property in 1963 and subsequently placed several feet of dredge sand fill across the entire site. The placement of fill resulted in reducing the potential for contact by both humans and fish and wildlife with site contaminants since the wood treating chemical contaminated soil is in native soils buried beneath the newer fill. The highest levels of contamination have been measured on the 20-acre west side of the property, Area 1, where the wood treating activities occurred. The 17-acre east side of the property, Area 2, has limited impact related to wood treating.

Port of St. Helens submitted a request to DEQ to legally divide the property into these two parcels. In addition, the Port requested that DEQ consider issuing a no further action (NFA) determination for Area 2 which will facilitate redevelopment of Area 2 before the cleanup action on Area 1 is implemented and completed.

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DEQ reviewed Port of St. Helens proposal and the project file and is proposing to issue a conditional NFA on Area 2 based on the following: 1) active remediation is not anticipated on Area 2; 2) redevelopment is unlikely to exacerbate existing conditions; and 3) human health and ecological risks can be safely managed with a contaminated soils management plan.

The conditions on the NFA would be as follows: 1) Any soil excavated on the property would have to be sampled according to a soil management plan and managed appropriately; 2) any excavation would be managed under an appropriate health and safety plan; 3) groundwater use would be restricted; and, 4) soil erosion would be controlled using best management practices.

You can review the administrative record for the proposed conditional no further action and other documents for the Port of St. Helens / Former Pope and Talbot Site, by appointment, at the DEQ Northwest Region Office, 2020 SW Fourth Avenue, Suite 400, Portland, Oregon, 97201. To schedule a file review appointment, call 503-229-6729; toll free at 1-800-452-4011; or TTY at 503-229-5471. Site information is also available in the DEQ Environmental Cleanup Site Information (ECSI) database. Go to <http://www.deq.state.or.us/lq/ECSI/ecsiquery.asp>, enter 959 in the Site ID box and click "Submit" at the bottom of the page. Next, click the link 959 in the Site ID/Info column.

Send written comments by 5 p.m., Wednesday, Dec. 31, to DEQ Project Manager Deborah Bailey, at the address listed above, or e-mail to bailey.deborah.a@deq.state.or.us

*Celebrating 150 years of Oregon statehood, 1869 - 2009,
and 40 years of DEQ's environmental stewardship, 1969 - 2009*