

# Portland Harbor Superfund Site

## Portland Utility Board Quarterly Update



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## Portland Harbor Superfund

The Portland Harbor Superfund site, which lies within a 10-mile stretch of the lower Willamette River, received EPA's final cleanup plan in early 2017. The cleanup plan is designed to reduce risks to human health and the environment using cleanup actions such as dredging, capping, enhanced natural recovery, and monitored natural recovery. The final cleanup plan calls for removal of about 3 million cubic yards of contaminated sediments and active remediation of 23,305 lineal feet of river bank. EPA estimates that the cleanup will cost approximately \$1.05 billion and take about 30 years to complete. Early this year, EPA leaders placed Portland Harbor on a list of priority sites targeted for immediate and intense action. Since that announcement, top EPA officials have visited the Portland Harbor site and have remained closely involved in the process.

## Update on EPA's process

Since the release of the final cleanup plan, EPA has been working on three main areas to make progress towards cleanup; public involvement, site-wide baseline sampling and remedy design.

### Public involvement- EPA initiates quarterly Public Forum

As part of EPA's work to provide information to the public, EPA hosted the first quarterly Portland Harbor Public Forum on June 13 at the Immigrant Refugee and Community Organization Community Center. The purpose of the Public Forum is for members of the public to meet with EPA and the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ) on a quarterly basis to understand and review information and receive status updates from the Portland Harbor Superfund Site. The next Public Forum is scheduled to take place in September.

*If you are interested in receiving notices for upcoming Public Forums or would like notes and presentations from previous forums, please contact Laura Knudsen with the EPA at [knudsen.laura@epa.gov](mailto:knudsen.laura@epa.gov), 206-553-1838.*

### Baseline Sampling

As commonly practiced at superfund sites before cleanup starts, a site-wide sampling effort is done to establish current conditions. This reference point is then used to evaluate progress towards cleanup goals. This work effort is being done by a group of four parties that include Arkema Inc., The Marine Group LLC, Evraz Inc. and Schnitzer Steel Industries Inc. This work is underway and is expected to be completed by the end of 2019.

*More information about this Baseline Sampling can be found here:  
<https://semspub.epa.gov/work/10/100098479.pdf>*

## Remedy design

While baseline sampling is taking place, three priority sites have stepped up to move forward with their individual cleanup areas. All three sites have started the remedial design process. Below are links to project descriptions.

- [Northwest Natural's GASCO site](#), the former gas manufacturing plant located on the west side of the river between the St. Johns Bridge and the Railroad Bridge. Northwest Natural is the lead for this site.
- [The Port of Portland's Terminal 4](#), located on the east side of river just north of St. Johns Bridge. The Port of Portland is the lead for this site.
- [The River Mile 11 East site](#), located in between the Broadway and Freemont Bridges. This site is described in more detail below. The parties working together at this site include the City of Portland, Cargill Inc., CBS Corporation, DIL Trust, Glacier Northwest, and PacifiCorp.

## Update on City of Portland's work on Superfund

In these early stages after the release of the final cleanup plan, the City continues to work closely with our partners to move the cleanup forward efficiently and effectively while supporting EPA's efforts to engage Portlanders in the process. Below are updates on three areas of work; Community Involvement Program Development, Fish Advisories, and remedy design at River Mile 11 East (RM 11E).

### Community Involvement Program Development

Development of the Portland Harbor Community Involvement Program to increase the public's understanding of and engagement in the Superfund continues to move forward. Staff continues to engage, strengthen, and build relationships with community organizations, including Oregon Tradeswomen, Wisdom of the Elders, Columbia River Inter-Tribal Commission, and Self-Enhancement Inc. We are in the final stages of executing community grants with Portland Harbor Community Coalition, Portland Harbor Community Advisory Group, and the Audubon Society of Portland to ensure the City program is designed with the input of Portland's diverse communities. Grantees will contribute to the development of the program by providing expertise and consultation on behalf of communities they represent to ensure development of a meaningful Portland Harbor public involvement program. Communities and organizations engaged in the process will include, but are not limited to those that focus on environmental justice constituents such as people of color, immigrants, people who are low-income and people who are houseless. Through facilitating community dialogues; tabling at culturally specific, community and citywide events; and holding river tours, the grantees will collect information that will increase the City's understanding of:

- The knowledge, questions, concerns, and priorities regarding Portland Harbor among communities most impacted by the Superfund;
- Where and how impacted communities access information;
- How the City can effectively engage and communicate with these communities about Superfund and related issues; and
- How impacted communities want to be involved with the City as Portland Harbor cleanup moves forward.

Input collection will take place July through October. The City will analyze community input to inform the development of programmatic priorities and framework in November and December. City staff will share program goals, key components, and timeline with community stakeholders for a round of feedback before finalizing.

*PUB members are invited to share their input on the development of the Portland Harbor Community Involvement Program. Interested PUB members can contact community engagement staff Jessica Terlikowski directly at [Jessica.terlikowski@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:Jessica.terlikowski@portlandoregon.gov).*

#### Update on Fish Advisory Outreach Program

When EPA evaluated the risks to people and wildlife from the contaminants in the Portland Harbor, they determined that the greatest health risk to people is from eating resident fish like carp, bass, and catfish. To protect public safety, EPA has required fish advisories to be issued for the site.

In April the Oregon Health Authority released an updated and expanded health advisory for resident fish in the Portland Harbor area. The boundary now encompasses the Lower Willamette River from the Sellwood Bridge to its confluence with the Columbia, to include Multnomah Channel from its confluence with the Willamette to the Sauvie Island Bridge. The original advisory covered only the Portland Harbor study area from the mouth of the Columbia River to the Fremont Bridge.

To prepare for this updated advisory and ongoing anticipated changes to the advisory as the cleanup starts, the City entered into an Intergovernmental Agreement with the State of Oregon and the Port of Portland to fund Multnomah County Public Health Department to create a new fish consumption advisory outreach program for Portland Harbor.

Foundational work for the Multnomah County Fish Advisory Education and Outreach Program has begun. In consultation with Portland Harbor community stakeholders including the City of Portland, Multnomah County staff lead Beth Appert has developed a list of nearly 100 organizations that represent or serve culturally specific groups in Portland who may be fishing or eating fish from the Lower Willamette River. She is now working to develop key components of the grant program which will support identification of organizations with connections to communities who fish and eat from the lower Willamette. Selected organizations will receive funding and support to develop community-centered materials related to the Lower Willamette River fish advisory.

*For more information regarding Oregon Health Authority's updated fish advisory for the lower Willamette please click [here](#).*

#### The River Mile 11 East (RM 11E): Design Phase

The RM 11E project area is located along the east bank of the Willamette River between river mile 10.9 and river mile 11.6, just south of the Fremont Bridge. It includes the river bottom and shoreline adjacent to the historic Albina district. The River Mile 11E Group is a group of six parties, who have stepped forward to move the site towards cleanup. Members of the RM 11E Group include the City of Portland, Cargill Inc., CBS Corporation, DIL Trust, Glacier Northwest, and PacifiCorp.

The next major deliverable for cleanup design work is the Basis of Design Report (BODR). The purpose of this report is to evaluate the best cleanup approaches under the framework of the final cleanup plan given existing site conditions. The RM 11E project area site presents challenging conditions that need to be considered in the design process. Those challenges include the fact that the site has working docks

with several ships regularly coming in and out of port, there is underwater debris and overwater structures, and one of Portland's main submerged power cables located right under the site. Work on this design report has started and should be completed in spring 2019.

*Reports documenting work completed to date for the RM11E Work project area are available at EPA's RM11E web site: <http://yosemite.epa.gov/r10/cleanup.nsf/sites/11e>.*