

SLURFUND

Fact Sheet

COMMENCEMENT BAY NEARSHORE/TIDEFLATS *Tacoma, Washington*

 **EPA** U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

December 2001

Pilot Project in the Hylebos Waterway

EPA is currently negotiating with parties for performance or funding of the Hylebos Waterway cleanup. Work to move the cleanup forward will take place this winter, as negotiations continue.

General Metals Inc. and Atofina Chemicals, Inc. have agreed to conduct a pilot project at the head of the waterway. This project will collect information on how the upland landfill disposal option selected in EPA's August 2000 Explanation of Significant Differences (ESD) can best be implemented. Field work began during the second week of December near the head of Hylebos Waterway, in the lower turning basin. The companies will summarize the information collected and report the results to EPA in March 2002.

Cleanup Plan for Middle Waterway to be Finalized Early Next Year

EPA issued its draft cleanup plan (called an "Explanation of Significant Differences" or "ESD") for public comment in August 2001. The plan outlined EPA's cleanup proposal for the contaminated sediments in Middle Waterway. EPA is currently reviewing and responding to the comments received.

A final cleanup plan, which will include responses to all the comments, will be completed in early 2002. EPA will then work with all the responsible parties to negotiate a settlement to prepare final design plans, and conduct the cleanup. Dredging of contaminated sediments could begin as early as January 2003.

Work to Begin this Summer at the Olympic View Resource Area

Cleanup work at the Olympic View Resource Area will begin by June 2002, in accordance with an administrative order on consent recently signed by EPA and the City of Tacoma. The Olympic View Resource Area is located offshore of the peninsula between the Thea Foss and Middle Waterways. The area has been designated as a habitat restoration site.

In August of this year, the City of Tacoma agreed to pay a \$50,000 civil penalty for not disclosing dioxin data related to this site in response to two separate information requests by EPA.

Background

The Commencement Bay Nearshore/Tideflats Superfund site is located in Tacoma, Washington at the southern end of Puget Sound. EPA placed the site on the Superfund List or National Priorities List (NPL) on September 8, 1983. Since the late 1800s, shipbuilding, oil refining, chemical manufacturing and storage, and other industrial activities have caused hazardous waste contamination of the land and water in the Commencement Bay area. Many of these contaminants affected marine life. The cleanup goal is to once again have a healthy marine environment and protect people from eating contaminated seafood from the bay. This goal was established in EPA's 1989 cleanup plan.

The site included the Hylebos, Sitcum, Milwaukee, St. Paul, Middle, Wheeler-Osgood, and Thea Foss Waterways, the Puyallup River upstream to the Interstate 5 bridge, and adjacent land areas. The sediment cleanups have been completed for the St. Paul and Sitcum waterways. The cleanup of the Sitcum Waterway was combined with some of the fill of the Milwaukee Waterway to expand a marine terminal facility. EPA deleted portions of the site in 1996 because cleanups had been completed or studies had been done to show that no cleanup was required. These areas are the St. Paul and Blair Waterways and part of the land transferred to the Puyallup Tribe. EPA is now working to clean up four remaining waterways: Hylebos, Thea Foss, Wheeler-Osgood, and Middle.

For More Information

Copies of documents with more detailed information about the cleanups are available for review at the information repositories listed below, or you can check EPA's website at <http://www.epa.gov/r10earth>. Go to the index and hit "C" for Commencement Bay, then go to Nearshore/Tideflats to review the latest fact sheets and decision documents.

Tacoma Main Public Library
21102 Tacoma Avenue South
Northwest Room
Tacoma, WA

Citizens for a Healthy Bay
917 Pacific Avenue, Suite 406
Tacoma, WA
(253) 383-2429

Please call for an appointment if information is needed after business hours.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Sixth Avenue
Records Center - 7th Floor
Seattle, WA

Questions?

If you have questions or would like more information, please call:

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Or call toll free 1-800-424-4372.

To ensure effective communication with everyone, additional services can be made available to persons with disabilities by contacting one of the EPA numbers listed above.



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