Early Actions

Early action cleanups are already having a positive impact. In 2004, King County's Wastewater Treatment Division removed an estimated 66,000 cubic yards of contaminated sediment, including about 400 pounds of PCBs, from the river ecosystem.

Other early actions include sediment removal at Slip 4 and Terminal 117 as well as Boeing's significant Plant 2 demolition and cleanup.

These actions will be completed prior to the Superfund cleanup and will reduce pollution levels by up to 50 percent.

THE BOTTOM LINE:

DUWAMISH CLEANUP SHOULD PROTECT PUBLIC HEALTH, THE ENVIRONMENT AND OUR ECONOMY

Cleanup offers an opportunity for community members to realize their vision for a more vibrant Lower Duwamish, and we are eager to get started.

At this point in the process, we have invested 10 years and more than $40 million studying cleanup approaches and alternatives and have committed to spending an additional $70 million in the early action work. Clearly, as the process moves toward selecting a final cleanup plan, we need to continue this momentum. A cleanup approach that is perceived as reasonable by all stakeholders has the best chance of successfully moving forward. EPA will propose a cleanup plan in early 2012 based on the alternatives analyzed in the Feasibility Study described on Page 1.

A successful cleanup plan will meet environmental standards, retain economic vitality, protect the quality of life for people who will be directly impacted by cleanup activities, and make wise use of public funding.

More information about the Lower Duwamish Waterway Cleanup is available online at www.ldwg.org or www.kingcounty.gov/duwamishcleanup.

King County
Department of Natural Resources and Parks
Wastewater Treatment Division
201 S. Jackson St., KSC-NR-0505
Seattle, WA 98104-3855
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City of Seattle

BOEING

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THE ECONOMICS OF CLEANING UP THE LOWER

DUWAMISH

King County, Port of Seattle, City of Seattle and Boeing are currently working with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Washington State Department of Ecology on a Superfund cleanup plan. There are 11 proposed alternatives that ultimately reach the same level of cleanup, but with varying costs and tradeoffs. A well-executed cleanup plan can improve the environment, attract business investment and create an economically vibrant and prosperous community.

King County boasts an enviable quality of life that attracts a broad range of business and commercial investment. Though sometimes overlooked, the industrial and manufacturing businesses around the Lower Duwamish Waterway in south Seattle play a key role in our local economy. Today the Lower Duwamish at is the heart of a thriving industrial corridor that provides about 100,000 jobs with an economic output of $13.5 billion annually. Having a viable place for industry is critical for economic stability.

Through the mid-20th century, industry practices and planning decisions created a legacy of pollution in sediment deposits that still poses risks to people and the environment. A five-mile area of the Lower Duwamish Waterway was designated as a Superfund site by EPA in 2001, and King County, the City of Seattle, the Port of Seattle and Boeing formed the Lower Duwamish Waterway Group to work with EPA and Ecology on a cleanup plan.

Recognizing that economic and environmental health are intertwined, the partners recently commissioned studies to better understand the economic importance of the Duwamish area and the ways in which cleanup decisions could potentially bolster – or dampen – commercial activity and job creation in this unique industrial area.

"One of the best ways to grow sustainable jobs is to appreciate and support the ones we've already got. Whether it's aerospace, trade, maritime and industrial, coffee or high-tech, many regions want what we have, and the competition is getting fierce…Meanwhile, we need to accelerate the cleanup of areas that are critical to our economy and environment, such as the Duwamish Waterway."

- Seattle Times Op-Ed, Nov. 16, 2010, by Maud Daudon, Greater Seattle Chamber of Commerce; Dave Freiboth, King County Labor Council; and Ross MacFarlane, Climate Solutions.

The Feasibility Study describes in detail the 11 cleanup alternatives being considered for the Lower Duwamish Waterway. To view documents, visit the Lower Duwamish Waterway Group's website at ***www.ldwg.org*** or call **206-684-1280** or **711 TTY** to request a paper copy of the 8-page summary fact sheet.

King County

BOEING

City of Seattle

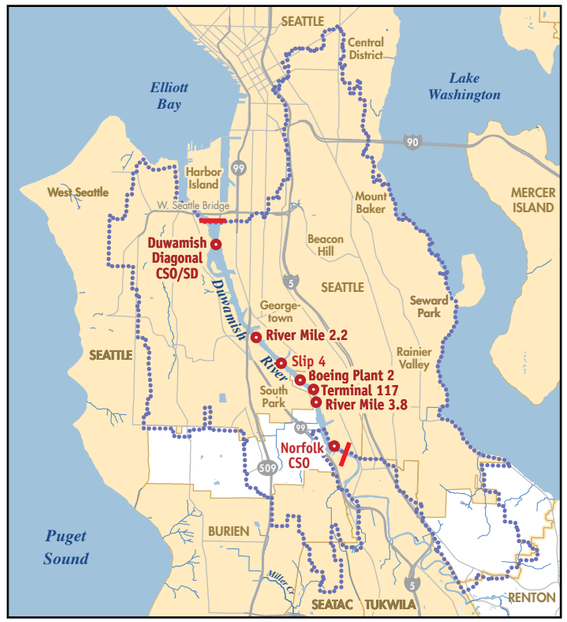
Port of Seattle

ECONOMIC FACTORS ALSO PLAY A ROLE IN CLEANUP

Protecting public health and the environment are the overarching goals of the Waterway cleanup. But economic factors are an important consideration, too.

These studies provided an opportunity to review the area's economic characteristics and the potential impacts cleanup could have on the business climate as well as the regional economy. Here is a summary of what we learned:

Eight percent of King County's jobs are located in the Lower Duwamish corridor, along with 25 percent of all jobs in King County associated with manufacturing, transportation and warehousing.



The Duwamish is a regional economic engine. Commercial and industrial activity in the Waterway attracts investment and generates jobs. The area has a much higher jobs to resident ratio (1.75) compared to the County as a whole (0.7).

The Duwamish supports many blue-collar jobs and workforce diversity. The area provides a large number of jobs that pay above-average wages without requiring advanced education, opening the door to a culturally and educationally diverse workforce.

Industrial jobs could be difficult to relocate. Many of the jobs in the area rely on access to the extensive transportation and infrastructure framework unique to the Lower Duwamish. Some businesses that choose to relocate would likely need to look outside King County for a comparable location.

THE ECONOMIC BOOST OF CLEANUP

When it comes to the economy, the best reason for cleanup is to protect and enhance the commercial and industrial activity that already exists in the Lower Duwamish, not to create temporary short-term job growth from the cleanup projects alone.

THE ECONOMIC REALITIES OF THE CLEANUP WORK

- When evaluating the economic impact of each cleanup alternative, the highest number of annual jobs created is forecast to be fewer than 1,000 seasonal jobs, which is less than one-tenth of one percent of King County's overall employment.
- While most of the jobs associated with cleanup are likely to be located in King County, only about 25 percent of them will be based in the Lower Duwamish Waterway area.
- Alternatives that rely more heavily on dredging would result in more jobs being located outside the King County area given the need to haul and dispose of dredged materials at distant landfills.

A LOT IS AT STAKE

The cleanup alternatives being evaluated in the Feasibility Study range in cost from about $200 million to $1.3 billion. Other costs include any future upland cleanup work that will be carried out separate from the Superfund process.

King County, Port of Seattle, City of Seattle, and Boeing want to engage other businesses so that cleanup can proceed with a reasonable approach to getting the job done. If the process becomes mired in costly and lengthy legal battles over who will pay, it would only delay the cleanup's implementation and its environmental and economic benefits.

In areas where Superfund cleanup was a contentious process, project delays and legal actions depressed economic activity and increased liability and risk. Local leaders in Portland, Ore., have expressed concerns that this is happening at the Portland Harbor Superfund site. Such impacts in the Lower Duwamish could have a chilling effect on commercial and industrial activity and our regional economy.

Because of the Lower Duwamish area's wide-reaching economic influence, the impacts of cleanup – positive or negative – could have a big effect on regional economic health. We need to ensure that this area remains a good place to retain and grow commercial and industrial businesses.

AN ECONOMICALLY BENEFICIAL CLEANUP? THE CHOICE IS OURS

A hypothetical model shows that a 10 percent decrease in output in just the major economic sectors in the Duwamish due to Superfund stigma or delay in cleanup could result in a loss of 6,600 annual jobs, causing a half a percent increase in King County's unemployment rate, hindering community and economic development opportunities. On the other hand, a 10 percent increase in output in major economic sectors in the Duwamish, perhaps brought about by the perception of a proactive, successful cleanup, could result in a corresponding increase in regional employment and economic activity.

Future private investment in the Lower Duwamish could depend on how businesses perceive the progress on the Superfund cleanup.

Who pays for cleanup?

Under the Superfund process, existing businesses and public agencies determined by EPA to bear responsibility for the historic pollution in the Lower Duwamish will be required to pay for its cleanup.

Public agencies will likely pass along the cost of cleanup through taxes and utility rates. Private companies will need to factor cleanup costs into their existing business costs. Moving ahead with a reasonable and cost-effective cleanup approach will minimize the potential for bankruptcies and reduce the likelihood of businesses leaving the area or suspending economic investment.

PHOTO: BILL PRESTT