

Hamilton/Labree Roads Groundwater Contamination Superfund Site

EPA Will Introduce Cleanup Proposal for Public Comment Later this Year

Chehalis, Washington

July 2012

Later this year, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency will offer the public an opportunity to review and comment on a cleanup proposal for a part of the Hamilton/Labree Roads Groundwater Superfund Site. This cleanup proposal is called a Proposed Plan.

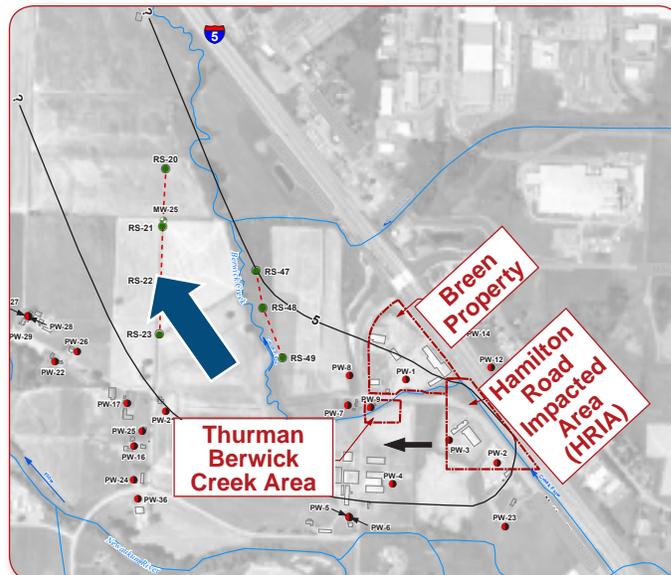
The part of the site is called the Hamilton Road Impacted Area (HRIA). The Proposed Plan will describe the cleanup alternatives that EPA considered to address contamination within the HRIA. The Proposed Plan will also identify our preferred cleanup alternative and rationale for this preference.

EPA will select a cleanup alternative for the HRIA after considering all public comments. The final selection will be documented in an Interim Record of Decision. It is called "Interim" because EPA will consider cleanup options for other areas of the site after the HRIA cleanup action has taken place, and additional site-wide data is collected.

The Hamilton/Labree Roads Groundwater Contamination Superfund Site is located near the intersection of North Hamilton Road and Labree Road, west of Interstate 5, about two miles south of Chehalis, Washington.

The site includes several areas where tetrachloroethene (PCE) and other chemicals were released onto soil and surface water, including the HRIA. PCE is a chemical used for dry cleaning, metal degreasing and other industrial processes. PCE-contaminated groundwater from these areas flows west and northwest along the Newaukum River Valley.

Many of the homes and businesses across the site currently use drinking water from the City of Chehalis public water supply system. However, if the PCE is not cleaned up and the contaminated groundwater continues to move down the valley, residents and workers not on the public water supply system may be at risk if they drink PCE-contaminated groundwater.



Hamilton/Labree Roads Groundwater Contamination Superfund Site. PCE-contaminated groundwater flows west and northwest from several source areas at the site

About the Hamilton Road Impacted Area

The part of the site called the HRIA is a 10-acre area located along Interstate 5 and North Hamilton Road. North Hamilton Road and Berwick Creek, which flows north, cross the HRIA from northwest to southeast.

The source of contamination at the HRIA appears to be a release of PCE directly into Berwick Creek by an unknown entity. EPA estimates that the release occurred before but no later than 1990 and was between 100 and 700 gallons. PCE has contaminated a silt layer in the bed of the creek and the soil and groundwater of the shallow aquifer. The PCE has continued to dissolve over time. If not cleaned up, it will continue to contaminate the groundwater for many decades to come.

Draft Site-Wide Cleanup Studies Currently Available

In late 2011, EPA completed two draft reports on the entire Hamilton/Labree Roads Groundwater Contamination Superfund Site:

- the Remedial Investigation Report, which describes the nature and extent of contamination across the entire the site,
- the Baseline Risk Assessment Report, which evaluates current and potential future risks to people's health and the environment from contamination across the site

These draft documents are available at the information repositories listed on the next page. Additional investigations are required to finalize these site-wide documents and prepare cleanup options for other areas of the site outside of the Hamilton Road Impacted Area. However, there is enough valuable information in these draft reports to proceed with cleanup options for the HRIA.

Next Steps

Based on the studies done to date, EPA has determined there is enough reliable information about the contamination at the HRIA to move forward with

- a Feasibility Study, which will evaluate different cleanup alternatives for the HRIA
- a Proposed Plan, which will identify EPA's preferred cleanup alternative

These documents will be made available at the information repositories when completed. The public will have the opportunity to send comments to EPA on the Proposed Plan.

EPA will respond to public comments and select an interim cleanup action for the HRIA in an Interim Record of Decision. Further studies are needed to determine options for cleaning up the rest of the site.

Site Studies and Past Cleanups

Contamination was first identified at the site in 1993–94, when the Washington State Department of Health found six private water-supply wells contaminated with PCE. The Washington State Department of Ecology started providing bottled water to affected well owners, and began investigations to determine the source of this contamination.

In 1998, two areas of contamination were discovered at the site: the HRIA and an area northwest of the HRIA on property owned by the S.C. Breen Construction Company.

The Breen property covers about 11 acres and is bounded by Interstate 5 to the east, North Hamilton Road to the south, and Labree Road to the west. In 1999, about 70 drums, pails and cans, and 600 tons of PCE and petroleum-contaminated soil were removed from under a building on the Breen property.

In 2000, EPA added the site to its Superfund National Priorities List of contaminated sites selected for further investigation and cleanup.

Actions related to cleanup at the site take place under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act, also known as Superfund.

From 2000 – 2002, EPA installed a new public water supply line to homes and businesses whose private wells were or could be contaminated with PCE.

Since then, investigations suggest there are other sources of contamination at the site. One of these is the Thurman Berwick Creek Area, located west of the HRIA and south of the Breen Property. However, more data is needed to draw conclusions about this area and other potential source areas.

About Tetrachloroethene (PCE)

Other names for tetrachloroethene (PCE) include tetrachloroethylene and perchloroethylene. PCE is a chemical used for metal degreasing, dry cleaning, and other industrial processes. It can move easily through air, water and soils and may harm people. EPA has determined that tetrachloroethylene is carcinogenic (causes cancer) in humans by all routes of exposure (ingestion, inhalation, and dermal).

- At high concentrations in air, particularly in closed, poorly ventilated areas, exposures can cause dizziness, headache, sleepiness, confusion, nausea, difficulty in speaking and walking, unconsciousness, and death.
- At low levels in ambient air or drinking water (below the drinking water standards), risk of adverse health effects is minimal.
- The Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) for PCE has been set at 5 parts per billion. EPA believes, given present technology and resources, this is the lowest level to which water systems can reasonably be required to remove this contaminant should it occur in drinking water.

- These drinking water standards, and the regulations for ensuring these standards are met, are called National Primary Drinking Water Regulations. All public water supplies must abide by these regulations.

MCL = Maximum Contaminant Level

is the legal threshold limit on the amount of a substance that is allowed in public water systems under the Safe Drinking Water Act.

The limit is usually expressed as a concentration in milligrams per liter (parts per million;) or micrograms per liter (parts per billion) of water.

For more information about possible health effects from PCE, see the Agency for Toxic Substances and Diseases Registry web page at

☆ http://1.usa.gov/PCE_fact

Search under “T” for tetrachloroethylene or go to

☆ www.atsdr.cdc.gov/az/t.html

For More Information...

General Information

Debra Sherbina
Community Involvement Coordinator
(206) 553-0247 or toll free: (800) 424-4372
Sherbina.Debra@epa.gov

If you need materials in an alternative format, please contact Debra Sherbina.

Technical Information

Tamara Langton
Project Manager
(206) 553-2709 or toll free: (800) 424-4372
Langton.Tamara@epa.gov

☎ *TTY users please call the Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339*

Find information about this site at :

☆ Hamilton/Labree website: <http://go.usa.gov/Ya4V>

Chehalis Timberland Library
76 N.E. Park St., Chehalis, WA
(360) 748-3301
Call for hours

EPA Region 10
Superfund Records Center
(206) 553-4494 or toll free: (800) 424-4372
Call for an appointment

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