

LITTLE SQUALICUM CREEK CLEANUP



U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10
Bellingham, Washington

March 2010

Public Comment Period: March 18 – April 19

The U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is seeking comments on alternatives for cleaning up contamination in Little Squalicum Creek. The creek runs through a park on the northeast end of Bellingham's waterfront and is fed by springs and stormwater runoff from adjacent properties.

This cleanup action will address chemicals associated with wood-treating operations and stormwater discharges that have been found in the creek. The Oeser Company (Oeser), an active wood-treating facility that has operated since the 1940s, has been identified as a source of some of these contaminants.

Mark your calendars for the EPA public meeting to explain the cleanup alternatives.

DATE: Wednesday, March 31, 2010
TIME: 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.
PLACE: City Council Chambers of City Hall (2nd Floor)
210 Lottie Street
Bellingham, WA

Oeser-related contaminants have historically been discharged to Little Squalicum Creek. In 2003, when the Oeser Site Record of Decision was signed, EPA determined that the risk posed by Oeser-related contaminants to the creek did not pose an unacceptable risk to humans or the environment.

Since that time, and based on additional information, the EPA has determined that Oeser-related contamination in the creek that potentially poses a risk to human health or the environment will be cleaned up. Although there are other contributing sources of contamination to the Little Squalicum Creek, this cleanup action will address only the area in the creek where Oeser-related contaminants are located.

We would also like to hear from you on the cleanup alternatives. You will have the opportunity to comment in person at the meeting or you can send written comments between March 18 and April 19, 2010 to:

- Howard Orlean, EPA Project Manager
- 1200 6th Avenue, Suite 900,
MS-ECL- 111
- Seattle, WA 98101
- e-mail: orlean.howard@epa.gov

Please include the following statement in the subject line:

COMMENTS ON CLEANUP
ALTERNATIVES

What Happens Next?

EPA will select a cleanup alternative after reviewing and considering comments received during the public comment period.

A written response to significant comments will be prepared and made available to the public in the information repositories listed in this fact sheet. A copy of the final decision document, called an Action Memorandum will also be available.

The cleanup will prevent people and animals from being exposed to contaminants and the potential health effects that exposure may cause.

The various cleanup options are described, and the effectiveness, implementability and cost of each potential alternative is analyzed in a document called an Engineering Evaluation/Cost Analysis (EE/CA).

Cleanup Alternatives

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Alternative 1

Alternative 1 is the No Action Alternative. This alternative is included only as a basis for comparison. There would be no cost involved.

Alternative 2

Alternative 2 has three options. Depending on how much of the contaminated material is hazardous and on limits on the capacity for contaminated material at the Oeser facility, Alternative 2 will be some combination of the following options. Calculations have been prepared that show the range of possible costs of this alternative.

Option 2A is excavation and disposal of contaminated material that potentially poses a risk. If the material is classified as non-hazardous, it will be taken to a non-hazardous waste landfill.

This option would remove contamination, backfill with clean material, restore and revegetate the area, and transport excavated material to the landfill. The cost for Option 2A would be \$3,342,700.

Option 2B includes the same work as Option A, with the exception of the landfill. If the excavated material is classified as hazardous, it would need to go to a hazardous waste landfill and the cost for Option 2B would be \$7,530,400.

Option 2C includes the same work as Options A and B with consolidation of the excavated material at a repository on the Oeser property rather than having it transported to a landfill for disposal. The cost for Option 2C would be \$2,066,200.

Alternative 3

Alternative 3, **EPA's preferred alternative**, is excavation, capping and creek re-route. This option includes excavating contaminated material that potentially poses a risk and placing it in the deeper middle section of the existing creek, creating a new creek channel and using the clean excavated mate-

rial from the new creek as a cap for the old creek.

Clean material would also be used to add extra protection over the contamination that exists in the historical creek channel. If the excavated material is not enough to cover the historical creek channel, additional clean cover would be taken from the estuary area. Restoration along the creek channel, revegetation and wetland restoration would be completed. The cost of this alternative would be \$1,150,100.

Alternative 4

Alternative 4 is excavation, capping and creek re-route back through the historical creek channel. This alternative is similar to Alternative 3. Under this alternative the creek is re-routed back through the historical creek channel, which is currently contaminated. However, contaminated material would be excavated.

The existing creek channel would need to be expanded to hold the additional material, and clean cover would be taken from the estuary area. Restoration

along the creek channel, revegetation and wetland restoration would be completed. The cost of this alternative would be \$1,457,500.

Alternative 5

Alternative 5, is excavation, consolidation, capping and re-routing the creek. This alternative is similar to Alternative 4 in several ways.

Like Alternative 4, it involves excavation of contaminated material from the historical creek channel and part of the existing channel and re-routing of the creek into the historical creek channel.

However, in Alternative 5, the creek is first re-routed through the northeastern portion of Little Squalicum Park before joining the historical creek channel. Another difference in Alternative 5 is that the creek downstream of the Marine Drive bridge is re-routed into the estuary area.





Little Squalicum Creek

Excavated contaminated material would be placed in the middle portion of the existing creek channel and/or taken to a repository on the Oeser property. The middle and lower portions of the existing creek would be capped. Clean soil excavated to create the new creek channel would be used as cap material. If needed, additional clean soil may be excavated from the estuary area. Restoration along the creek channel, revegetation and wetland restoration would be completed. The cost of this alternative would be \$1,961,000.

Comparing the Alternatives

Each of the alternatives, excluding Alternative 1, would be effective and implementable. The difference is cost, which ranges from \$1,150,100 to \$7,530,400, and since cost is a major factor in the cleanup remedy, Alternatives 2A and 2B will not be considered further.

Alternative 3 is the recommended removal action alternative. However, EPA may choose to combine elements of each alternative, select a different alternative, or develop a new removal action alternative after reviewing all comments.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Information Repositories

Copies of the EE/CA report on Little Squalicum Creek and other documents related to the Oeser site are available at the information repositories, located in Bellingham:

Central Library
210 Central Avenue
Bellingham, WA 98227

In Seattle:
EPA Records Center
1200 Sixth Avenue, Suite 900
Seattle, WA 98101

Contacts

Howard Orlean, EPA Project Manager
(206) 553-2851
e-mail – orlean.howard@epa.gov

Jeanne O'Dell, Community Involvement
Coordinator (206) 553-6919
e-mail – odell.jeanne@epa.gov

Information is also posted on the EPA Oeser Company Web page under Little Squalicum Creek <http://go.usa.gov/ltk>



U. S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Sixth Avenue, Suite 900, ETPA-081
Seattle, Washington 98101-3140

Bellingham, Washington

March 2010

***LITTLE SQUALICUM CREEK
PUBLIC MEETING AND
COMMENT PERIOD ON
CLEANUP ALTERNATIVES***

READ INSIDE FOR DETAILS



*If you need materials in an alternative format,
please contact Jeanne O'Dell at (206) 553-6919.
TTY users please call the Federal Relay Service
at (800) 877-8339*