

PORT OF SEATTLE
MEMORANDUM

COMMISSION AGENDA – POLICY AND STAFF BRIEFING

Item No. 7b
Date of Meeting October 12, 2010

DATE: September 23, 2010

TO: Port of Seattle Commissioners

FROM: Stephanie Jones Stebbins, Senior Manager Seaport Environmental Programs
Kathy Bahnick, Environmental Program Supervisor, Seaport Environmental Programs

SUBJECT: Briefing on the Lower Duwamish Waterway Feasibility Study

BACKGROUND:

The purpose of this briefing is to provide an update on the Lower Duwamish Waterway (LDW) Feasibility Study (FS) being performed by the Lower Duwamish Waterway Group (LDWG). The LDWG consists of the Port of Seattle, City of Seattle, King County and the Boeing Company. A briefing of the first draft of the FS was presented to the Commission on May 5, 2009.

The LDW is a sediment site that stretches from the south end of Harbor Island to the Norfolk Combined Sewer Overflow area just south of Turning Basin 3. This section of river was straightened and widened by the Army Corps of Engineers in 1911 to create an industrial river for navigation. In September 2001, the LDW was formally listed as a Federal Superfund site, and in February 2002, the LDW was formally listed as a Washington Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA) site.

In 2000, the LDWG members signed a joint Agreed Order on Consent to conduct a Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study for the LDW, with oversight by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology). The draft RI was submitted to EPA and Ecology on November 5, 2007, and the RI was given final approval on July 7, 2010. The RI describes what is known about the LDW including the history of the LDW; the environmental setting, habitat, and uses; the deposition and transport of sediment within the LDW; the distribution of contamination in the LDW, including concentrations of chemicals in sediment, water, and tissues; and information regarding potential historical and ongoing sources of chemicals to LDW as well as the source control and identification strategy.

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The first draft of the Feasibility Study which has been worked on concurrently with the RI was submitted to the regulatory agencies and the public on April 24, 2010. The draft FS evaluated multiple alternatives for cleanup of the LDW and evaluated those alternatives for their effectiveness in meeting the risk objectives. A revised draft addressing EPA, Ecology and stakeholder comments is scheduled for submittal on October 12, 2010. An EPA public meeting is scheduled for December 12, 2010. The combined RI/FS documents will enable EPA and Ecology to make final cleanup decisions for the LDW.

BRIEFING OUTLINE:

This briefing will include a brief site background and history, a status and schedule of the study, information on the draft cleanup alternatives that were developed as part of the study and layout the EPA process moving forward.

PREVIOUS COMMISSION ACTIONS OR BRIEFINGS:

May 5, 2009 – Briefing on the Draft Lower Duwamish Waterway Feasibility Study

December 6, 2007 – Briefing on the Draft Lower Duwamish Waterway Remedial Investigation