



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
REGION 10**

1200 Sixth Avenue, Suite 900  
Seattle, Washington 98101-3140

## Letter to Residents near the Gorst Creek Landfill:

### Cleanup at Gorst Creek Landfill

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) began the cleanup of the former Gorst Creek Bremerton Auto Wrecking Landfill (GCL) in your area this past April. The GCL Site is near Port Orchard in Kitsap County, Washington. The site operated as a landfill from the 1960s until 1989. During this time, the landfill received auto wrecking wastes but also received other wastes, including medical waste and other material from Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, including demolition debris and municipal solid waste. The EPA and the US Navy have completed a multi-million dollar settlement agreement to remove the landfill. By cleaning up the landfill, three goals will be achieved:

- prevent toxic chemicals from flowing downstream impacting water quality for human health and fish habitat;
- prevent waste from threatening the integrity of State Highway 3; and
- improve fish habitat.

#### What's Been Done

Since May 2016, cleanup workers have been excavating the landfill site and removing the landfill debris. Trees and shrubs cleared from the site will be used in

erosion control and habitat restoration at the site. Metal, tires and concrete are separated for recycling, and hazardous materials are separated and taken to a permitted disposal facility.

During this time, you may have noticed additional truck traffic. We will continue to make every effort to minimize disruption to local residents.



#### What Happens Next

Beginning in mid-September and continuing into October the focus will shift to stabilizing the excavation site for the wet winter season. Primary activities at the site will focus on preventing erosion during the winter rainy season. The majority of landfill debris that has been removed from the landfill will be trucked off-site for proper disposal. Landfill debris remaining in the landfill, and in the stockpile area will be covered to prevent erosion. Erosion controls and native grass seed will be applied to the areas where all of the landfill debris has been removed and a temporary channel will be constructed for Gorst Creek. Over the winter the erosion controls will be monitored and repaired as needed.

The excavation of landfill debris will resume in the spring of 2017. Spring growing conditions will allow continued work on restoration of hill sides by planting seedlings of native trees and shrubs.

#### Progress to Date

##### Off-site Debris & Soil Disposal

- 154,837 tons of non-hazardous waste
- 1,771 tons of hazardous waste

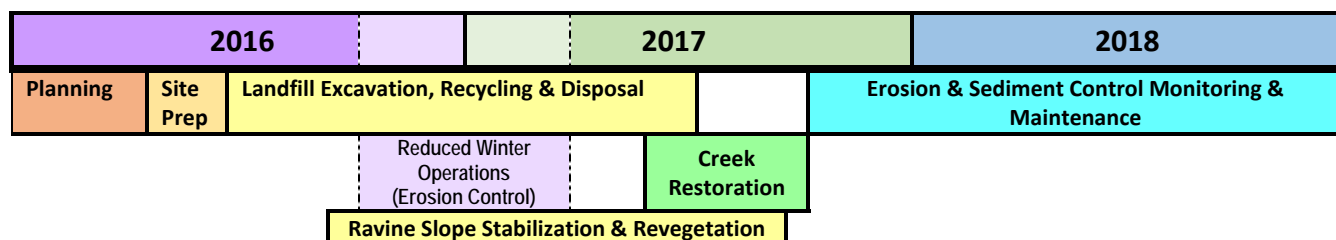
##### Recycling

- 4,374 tons of concrete
- 638 tons of metal
- 360 tons of tires

#### Materials Put Back to Use!

The City of Bremerton Parks Department picked up 6.7 tons of cut granite slabs that were recovered from the landfill. They plan to use them as benches and landscaping features in city parks.

Another part of the work at GCL is restoring Gorst Creek to its normal flow and help fish make it upstream again. Gorst Creek is habitat for threatened Chinook salmon and steelhead, as well as coastal cutthroat trout, a state priority species. Landfill slides at the site degraded downstream water quality and habitat, the landfill and crushed culvert blocked fish passage to upstream habitat. The Suquamish Tribe operates a Chinook hatchery 2.5 miles downstream and is concerned about impacts on fish and habitat. Habitat restoration work at the site includes planting native trees and shrubs along the creek, as well as stabilizing the channel and ravine slopes. The stream channel is expected to be restored during the summer of 2017 with coordination from Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Suquamish Tribe, and Washington State Department of Transportation.



## Frequently Asked Questions

**Question:** “The Creek is dry some of the year – how can this be a salmon stream?”

**Answer:** Many productive salmon streams have low flows or dry up in the summer. Salmon have adapted to these conditions and return to the creek late in the year after the fall rains allow the streams to flow. Salmon will spawn in gravels that meet certain criteria regarding gravel size distribution and stream velocity etc. Hatchlings stay in the gravel for several weeks and then emerge as fry. Coho fry spend typically one to two years in freshwater and prefer the upper reaches of stream systems for their freshwater rearing period. They can survive in isolated pools and wetlands even when the connection to the rest of the stream dries up during the summer. Early in the spring (before low flow) the fish migrate downstream and undergo smolting and eventually head into the ocean.

**Question:** “What materials are on the site? Are they hazardous?”

**Answer:** Most of the material has been non-hazardous debris and soil. There is a lot of construction demolition debris. We have identified hazardous levels of lead in some of the soil that has been removed and hauled offsite. We are using best management practices to prevent the off-site migration of hazardous substances during our clean-up. All air and water monitoring indicate no threat to local residents.

**Question:** “Are hazardous substances getting off the site? Can they impact nearby homes?”

**Answer:** We are monitoring the water downstream, air on the landfill, air at the edges of the landfill, and screening the waste for chemicals and radiation. Although some hazardous substances have been found at unsafe levels in the landfill debris, we have not found hazardous substances migrating off site. All of the hazardous substances that we have found so far have been removed and trucked off-site for proper treatment and disposal. All hazardous substances will be removed upon project completion.

## For further information

For more background information, site photos, and time lapse videos about the site please visit the web page.

<http://epaossc.org/BremertonAutoWreckingGorstCreek>

The webpage is regularly updated to reflect the current activities. You may also review the cleanup plan and other key documents in the Administrative Record at the Kitsap Regional Library, 612 5th Street, Bremerton, WA 98337. (Please contact the Library at (360) 377-3955).

## Who to Contact

If you have questions or concerns, please contact:

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