



City of Anacortes “A” Avenue Landfill

Historical Background

The City of Anacortes has been working with Skagit County Public Health and Washington State Department of Ecology on the closure and capping of the “A” Avenue Landfill in Anacortes for many years. In the 1960’s and 1970’s the area was used as a municipal landfill. As regulations changed the City no longer accepted waste at the site from local residents but used it to store of and dispose of wood waste, concrete, asphalt, metals, yard waste, vector waste and street sweepings. In the 1980’s a concrete slab was built east of the cap to dry out sewage sludge. In the early 1990’s the landfill was used to treat petroleum contaminated soils.

Skagit County Public Health Investigation

In 2003, Skagit County Public Health conducted an initial investigation into the landfill. As a result the City hired Geomatrix to test for the presence of any contaminants that were likely to pose risks which would trigger further action under the Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA). No results from the water quality tests exceeded applicable MTCA Method A or B clean up levels for groundwater and surface water with the exception of manganese. There was only one type of volatile organic compound (VOC), p-isopropyl toluene, detected; but there was no clean up level listed for this compound. After reviewing the results, the site was placed on the Confirmed and Suspected Contaminated Sites list by the Washington State Department of Ecology for confirmed soil contamination with petroleum products and suspected soil and sediment contamination with petroleum and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons.

The City worked with Geomatrix again in 2005, on a possible grading plan for the landfill. In 2006, Aqua Terr System Incorporated (ATSI) was hired to do a Wetland, Fish/Wildlife Reconnaissance and Delineation including the 10 acre vicinity around the landfill. In 2008, the City added soil and graded sections of the landfill cap. In 2009, ATSI was hired to complete a 10 Year Closure Plan for the “A” Avenue Landfill.

Conclusion under MTCA Guidelines

In 2009, Skagit County recommended no further action under MTCA guidelines conditioned on completion of the approved landfill closure plan. Skagit County asked the City to address these issues:

1. Limit public access to the cap and the western glass/metal debris field;
2. Removal of material from the surface of the landfill where it can be done in a way that does not negatively impact the environment;

3. The large area of glass within the wetland will not be removed due to the likelihood for disruption of soils;
4. Completion of a soil cap to prevent ponding;
5. Maintenance of the grass landfill cap; and
6. Test sampling, 5 and 10 years after the approval of the plan.

The City followed these recommendations agreed upon with Skagit County Public Health and put up fencing, performed annual maintenance and limited access to the western glass and metal debris field.

Skagit County went to test the site in 2014, but due to low water levels a sample could not be taken so site observations were made and recorded.

Current Status

In 2019, the Anacortes Parks and Recreation Department began discussing the possibility of placing a bike skills course on the dump cap with Skagit County. In the spring of 2019, the department held public meetings with the Forest Advisory Board, Planning Commission and City Council.

In September of 2019, the Parks and Recreation Department received a request for information on the landfill from the Department of Ecology which were referred to Skagit County Department of Health.

In January 2020, the City received a letter from Ecology rescinding the No Further Action Determination from 2009. A subsequent letter was received in February 2020 correcting errors in the January letter.

In February and March 2020, the Skagit County Health Department conducted their regularly scheduled water quality test as specified in the 2009 closure plan. The raw data was provided to the Department of Ecology and the City is waiting for further direction from Ecology at this time.