



Portland Harbor

CLEANUP NEWSLETTER

Spring 2005

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) added Portland Harbor to its National Priorities List of contaminated sites in December 2000, because river sediments are contaminated with metals, pesticides, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and petroleum products. This newsletter presents current information from the ongoing Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study (RI/FS) and provides a progress update on in-water early removal actions, upland investigations, and source control work.

SAMPLES PROVIDE VALUABLE INFORMATION

A first round of field sampling for the Portland Harbor Superfund site was completed from 2001 through 2004. A second round began last fall. Sampling data provide valuable information about the bottom, banks, water and aquatic life of the Willamette River.

This information is being gathered by the Lower Willamette Group, under EPA oversight, as part of the site Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study (RI/FS). The Group includes the Port of Portland, the City, and some private businesses along the river. The goal of the RI/FS is to understand the level of contamination in Portland Harbor and how it can affect people and the environment. Sampling results point us toward what is needed to clean up the site.

Round 1 Sampling Looked at Fish, River Structure

The first round of data was collected from 2001 through 2004 to study the effects of contamination on fish in the Willamette. Data also provided better understanding of the river's physical structure.

Tissue samples were taken from fish and shellfish species in Portland Harbor, including sub-yearling Chinook salmon, brown bullhead, black crappie, large scale sucker, northern pike-minnow, peamouth, sculpin, small mouth bass, carp, clam and crayfish.

Chemical analysis revealed higher metal concentrations in the clam and crayfish than in the fish. Of the fish, carp had the highest metal concentrations. Pesticides such as DDT were found frequently in many of the species sampled, and persistent bioaccumulative toxics (PBTs) were found in all species. Levels of other contaminants varied more because they depend on the feeding habits of each organism and its position in the food chain.

(continued)

Also In This Issue

	Page
Round 2 Sampling	2
Upcoming Sampling Activities	2
Groundwater Pilot Study	3
Early Action Updates.	3
• Terminal 4	3
• GASCO	4
• Arkema	4
Pollution Source Control Actions	4
• Gunderson Interim Measures	4
• McCormick & Baxter Cleanup	5
• Other Source Control Actions	5
Community Involvement.	6
• CAG Discusses Cleanup	6
• TAG Reviews Documents	6
Willamette River Authority	7
Site Background	7
What Is Coming Up	7
For More Information	8

