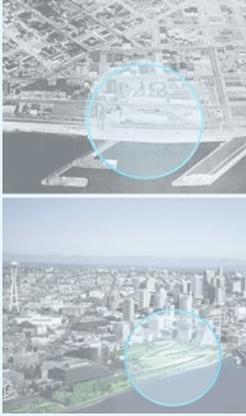




Olympic Sculpture Park/Former Unocal Terminal: Cleanup and Transformation



The Unocal clean up site is transformed to the Olympic Sculpture Park

The conversion of the former Unocal Marketing Terminal on Seattle's waterfront into the Seattle Art Museum's Olympic Sculpture Park demonstrates the capacity of Washington's Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA) to transform seriously contaminated land into fresh and constructive use. Passed by voters as an initiative in 1989 and administered by the Department of Ecology, MTCA provides administrative and legal mechanisms and sets environmental and technical standards to restore contaminated land, promote economic development and protect public safety and health and the environment.

Background

Union Oil Company of California (Unocal) developed the fuel storage and transfer center in the early 1900's at the northern end of Seattle's central waterfront. Situated north of Broad Street, between Western Avenue and the waterfront, the facility included numerous above-ground storage tanks, loading racks for tank trucks and rail tank cars, pumping stations, underground and above-ground pipelines and Pier 71. Pipelines crossed beneath a railroad line and Elliott Avenue, which passed through the terminal. The facility remained in operation until 1975.

As a result of the activities on this site, soil and groundwater were contaminated with an assortment of petroleum hydrocarbon products. In 1988 Unocal and Ecology signed the first in a series of agreements to clean up the soils and groundwater on this site.

Cleaning up soil and groundwater

The company removed more than 120,000 tons of petroleum-contaminated soil. Under Elliott Avenue cleanup work included in-place soil bio-treatment, soil vapor extraction, and groundwater pump-and-treat techniques. On the west side of the railroad tracks, Unocal installed groundwater extraction and treatment systems, which will remain in operation until groundwater meets cleanup standards set under MTCA. The treated water is discharged into the sanitary sewer system.

Seattle Art Museum (SAM) purchased the site in 2000 to develop the sculpture park. SAM, the Museum Development Authority (MDA) and Ecology entered a legal agreement called a Prospective Purchaser Consent Decree, which is used to describe the cleanup responsibilities of buyers and sellers of contaminated sites.

Ecology provides grant assistance

From 2000 to 2006, Ecology provided \$2.2 million dollars in matching grants for cleanup work at the sculpture park site, under Ecology's Remedial Action Grants program. These grants are available to assist up to half the cleanup costs when local governments redevelop publicly-owned sites. The MDA is the official owner of the Olympic Sculpture Park, which SAM acquired and is developing on the authority's behalf. Grant funds come from the state Toxics Control Account, supported by wholesale taxes on petroleum and other toxic products.

SAM continued the cleanup process by importing more than 100,000 tons of clean fill and constructing low-permeability covers over areas where contaminated soils remain. These projects protect park users from exposure to contaminated materials and isolate the remaining polluted areas from storm water so that the petroleum products remain in place.

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Ongoing oversight

An extensive monitoring system enables SAM and Unocal to keep track of groundwater conditions and to develop responses as needed in the future. Ecology oversees all aspects of the cleanup, monitoring and any additional follow-up actions that may be needed in the future.

Results that matter

Using the MTCA process Ecology, Unocal, SAM and the MDA formed an effective partnership that has revived the last undeveloped portion of Seattle's central waterfront. Olympic Sculpture Park provides public open space and shoreline access, cultural exhibits, restored natural habitat areas and other public amenities.

This successful cleanup is an important part of Ecology's support of the Puget Sound Initiative http://www.ecy.wa.gov/puget_sound/index.html, a cooperative effort among state, local, federal and tribal governments, businesses and organizations. More than 500 MTCA cleanup sites lie within a half-mile of Washington's inland marine waters. Cleanup projects such as the former Unocal terminal at Olympic Sculpture Park make a significant contribution to the larger effort to protect and restore the Sound.

To learn more

Ecology provides additional information about the cleanup of this site, including technical documents, on line at:

<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/tcp/sites/unocal/unocal.html>.