

Sally Lider

Having attended the informational meeting held in Edmonds City Hall on September 16, I would like to make a couple of comments. As a retired City of Edmonds employee (Environmental Education Coordinator) I have watched the progress of this cleanup for over 30 years. At times it has seemed like it was moving so slowly that it would never get to the point where we could say the cleanup is done. Now, it seems that we're getting close, but I'm worried that some things are going to be left undone permanently because they're just too expensive or inconvenient, and people are willing to say that since we don't know for sure who will end up owning the land and whether it will be ecologically restored, maybe we shouldn't require a complete cleanup of all the contamination.

Number three on the DOE Questions and Answers Sheet says that Ecology's role in the cleanup of the site is "to ensure the contamination released from operations at the property is not a risk to human health or the environment." It doesn't seem like that can be ensured, if some of the contamination is going to be left onsite, covered up to prevent movement, and somehow guarded with Environmental Covenants. Especially troubling is the contamination around the WSDOT storm water pipe that runs through the middle of the property. This pipe is over 50 years old, decaying by the minute, and there is no plan for replacing it? That seems incredibly shortsighted.

I can't imagine that ecological restoration of this site will be possible, unless all of the contamination is removed, not just covered up. This land was once a productive part of the Edmonds Marsh Estuary, before it was defiled by industrial activities. It has the potential to be estuarine habitat once again, supporting salmon and migratory birds and other wildlife, contributing to the richness and diversity of Puget Sound. Let's do our best to reach the final step in this process, and not have reason for future regrets that we didn't clean up the entire mess!