



Willamette River clean up 2017

PGE taking action to help clean up the Willamette River

PGE will be cleaning up two parcels of land along the Willamette River in downtown Portland, near the site of a former power plant that the company closed in 1975. PGE will be installing isolation caps at both locations to cover and contain contaminated sediment.

- Work on the first parcel, just south of OSMI, was completed in 2015.
- Similar work on the second parcel, just south of the Hawthorne Bridge, will take place during a six to eight-week period between July and September of 2017. This is the timeframe that will best protect migrating fish. It will require closing the Audrey McCall beach and a nearby floating dock owned and maintained by the Prosper Portland. PGE has worked with the Portland Boathouse to ensure their members have access to the river with a temporary dock upstream from the project.

Is this part of the Portland Harbor Superfund cleanup?

No. This action is separate and distinct from studies and cleanup options being evaluated for the Portland Harbor Superfund site, which is located farther north on the Willamette River, between the Broadway Bridge and Sauvie Island. That project is managed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality is managing the cleanup of parcels south of the Broadway Bridge that are less contaminated than the Portland Harbor parcels, but still require some level of containment or cleanup.

Why is the downtown cleanup necessary?

Beginning in the late 1800s, discharges from government agencies and commercial and industrial companies, including PGE, made their way into the river, either directly or through stormwater runoff. Some of these discharges contained chemicals which are now known to be harmful to human health and the environment. Traces of these chemicals, including polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) and various pesticides, remain in river sediment.

Why is the sediment being capped instead of removed?

In April of 2015, DEQ issued a Record of Decision that found that installing a cap would be the most effective and protective method to isolate the chemicals and prevent exposure to people and wildlife.

For more information, contact:

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