

Fact Sheet #9
June 2005

DTSC is one of six
Boards and
Departments
within the
California
Environmental
Protection Agency.
The Department's
mission is to
restore, protect,
and enhance the
environment, to
ensure public
health,
environmental
quality and
economic vitality,
by regulating
hazardous waste,
conducting and
overseeing
cleanups, and
developing and
promoting
pollution
prevention.

State of California



California
Environmental
Protection Agency



Ascon Landfill Site
HUNTINGTON BEACH, CALIFORNIA



Emergency Action at Ascon Landfill Site to Start Late June / Early July

In late June or early July 2005, workers will begin a project to remove some waste and strengthen the berms around two hazardous waste lagoons (ponds) near Hamilton Avenue on the Ascon Landfill site. The unusually heavy rains this past winter and spring may have weakened the earthen berms, which are more than 30 years old. Future rains may cause them to leak or give way. This could pose the danger of hazardous waste spilling into the street.

This work will include removing some of the sludgy (semi-solid) waste from the two lagoons, taking it offsite for disposal, and reinforcing and reshaping the berms. It is expected to take four to six months. More details are in this fact sheet and will be discussed at the public meeting on July 6.

The Ascon Landfill site is a vacant, 38-acre parcel at the southwest corner of Hamilton Avenue and Magnolia Street in Huntington Beach. It contains various types of industrial and oil field drilling waste in buried pits and lagoons.

Our agency is the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC). Our role is to protect human health and the environment by overseeing the site investigation and cleanup, which includes this current action.

A group of private companies (Responsible Parties) that formerly used the site are paying for this current action as well as all other work done at the site.

We are moving very quickly on this project due to the urgency of the situation. The goal is to complete the work before the next rainy season begins.

On most cleanup actions we ask for public review and comment before making a decision and starting the work. In this case, however, we have determined that immediate

Public Meeting July 6, 2005

Huntington Beach City Council
Chambers
2000 Main St., Huntington Beach

6-7 p.m. — Open House
7 p.m. — Presentation

The open house will include poster displays and handouts. It is an opportunity for you to talk informally with staff from our agency and the contractors who will be doing the work. The formal presentation will give more details on the project, followed by a question-and-answer session.

action is needed to protect the public. Therefore we are moving ahead without public comment, as allowed by law in such cases. We will keep the community informed through fact sheets, meetings, and flyers as the project progresses.

What is planned

A map at the end of this fact sheet shows the site layout, and the locations of the lagoons and berms. All work will be done by licensed contractors hired by the Responsible Parties. Workers will:

1. Prepare the site by setting up trailers, improving site access roads, and creating a staging area for trucks.
2. Remove some of the waste from Lagoons 4 and 5 (next to Hamilton Avenue). About 28,000 cubic yards of waste will be removed, lowering the level in the lagoons by about three feet.
3. Haul the waste offsite to an appropriate waste disposal facility.
4. Lower the berm along Hamilton Avenue from about 18 feet to about 15 feet, and haul the excess dirt off site.
5. Put in a drainage system at the base of the berm along Hamilton Avenue.
6. Reinforce the berm between Lagoons 3 and 4 with crushed concrete.

The lagoon waste and berm dirt together will total up to 100,000 cubic yards to be hauled off site. Lagoon waste will be mixed with dirt on site to solidify it and make it safer to transport. The main contaminants in the waste are petroleum hydrocarbons; metals such as lead, barium, arsenic, and chromium; benzene, toluene, and other volatile organic compounds; and chemicals

called PAHs (polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons).

Protecting public safety

To protect the surrounding community during the project, the work will include the following safeguards:

- Coordinate all traffic plans with the City of Huntington Beach.
- Control dust, odors, and vapors by applying water and/or foam to the excavation area and waste piles. Constantly monitor the air within and around the site to meet South Coast Air Quality Management requirements.
- Comply with federal, state, and local regulations for handling hazardous waste and for construction activities. Cover the lined trucks carrying lagoon waste with tarps. Clean off trucks and tires before leaving the site.
- Follow a spill contingency plan for dealing with any potential spill from the trucks during excavation and hauling. Contract with a licensed chemical cleanup company to respond rapidly.

Work hours, truck routes

- The work is expected to take four to six months.
- There will be up to a maximum of 90 truck trips per day to and from the site. Filled trucks will leave the site one at a time as they are loaded, weighed, covered with tarps, and cleaned.
- Truck trips will be limited to 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday-Friday.

Work hours on site will be from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday-Saturday.

- Empty trucks will travel to the site from the 405 freeway by going south on Beach Boulevard, south on PCH, north on Newland, then east on Hamilton Avenue to the site entrance. Filled trucks will exit the site going south on Magnolia Street, north on PCH, and north on Beach Boulevard to the 405 freeway.
- One southbound lane on Magnolia Street and one lane on Hamilton Avenue may be closed temporarily during work hours.

Environmental review

Due to the unstable site conditions, we have determined that the proposed actions are necessary to prevent an emergency. As such, these actions are exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act. We will file a Notice of Exemption based on the statutory exemption (PRC section 21080(b)(4)) for emergency projects.

Future plans for the site

This emergency action will not affect the final cleanup plans for the site. The site has gone through several environmental investigations and cleanup plans through its many changes of ownership. Previous investigations of the site determined that the waste should be excavated and removed.

Before a final decision is made, we will conduct an extensive environmental review of whatever cleanup plan is proposed. Then we will give the public the opportunity to review and comment on both the cleanup plan and the environmental review.

Where to get more information

Documents about the Ascon Landfill site are at the Banning Branch Library, 9281 Banning Avenue, Huntington Beach; the Huntington Beach Library, 7111 Talbert Avenue, Huntington Beach; and the Department of Toxic Substances Control, 5796 Corporate Avenue, Cypress, California (call 714-484-5337 for an appointment).

We also have some Ascon Landfill site documents posted on our website at: www.dtsc.ca.gov

Click on the link to "Site Cleanup" then "Site Cleanup Project Documents" to the alphabetical listing for "Ascon Landfill Site."

Who to contact at our agency

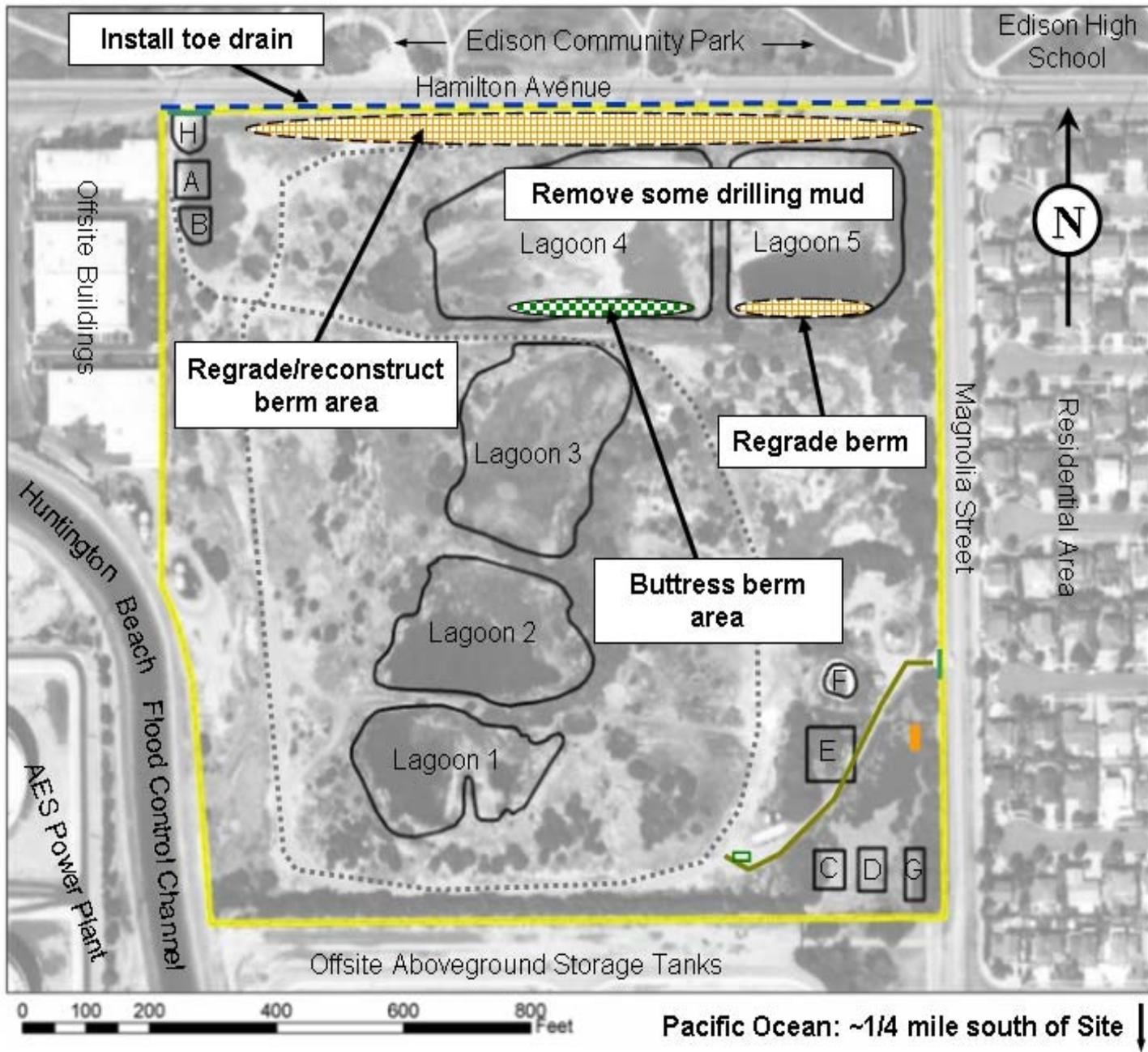
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For media inquiries

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Notice to the Hearing Impaired: For more information, you may use the California State Relay Service at 1(888) 877-5378 (TDD). Ask them to contact Kim Foreman at (714) 484-5324.



Legend

- Ascon Landfill Site Boundary
- Pits and Lagoons Boundaries
- Concrete Decontamination Pad
- Asphalt-Paved Road
- Dirt/Gravel Access Road
- Site Entry Gate
- Site Office Trailer
- Proposed Toe Drain