



# PUBLIC NOTICE

Date posted: 10/1/2023

## Deadline extended: DEQ requests comments on recommended revision of remedial action for Ashland Rail Yard Site

### HOW TO PROVIDE PUBLIC COMMENT

**Facility/property:** Ashland Rail Yard

**Project location:** 536 A St., Ashland, Jackson County

**Comments due by:** 5 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 31, 2023

**Submit written comments:**

**By mail:** Send comments to Margaret Oscilia, Oregon DEQ Project Manager, 4026 Fairview Industrial Drive SE, Salem, OR 97302

**By email:** [margaret.oscilia@deq.oregon.gov](mailto:margaret.oscilia@deq.oregon.gov)

**UPDATE:** DEQ extended the public comment deadline by 32 days in response to requests from the public. The new comment deadline is Oct. 31, 2023.

**Proposal highlights:** DEQ is proposing a revision of the recommended cleanup plan for contamination related to rail yard operations on the former Union Pacific Railroad rail yard site in Ashland. This site includes 11.7-acres located on the central portion of the original 21-acre property. The Southern Pacific Railroad entered the 21-acre property into the DEQ Voluntary Cleanup Program in 1993 for cleanup of contamination related to rail yard operations. Southern Pacific merged with Union Pacific in 1996. DEQ previously issued no further action determinations for approximately 6.4 acres of the original 21 acres. The eastern 2.85 acres of the original property are currently undeveloped and not associated with rail yard-related activities. The cleanup plan is related to the remaining 11.7 acres. The recommended revised cleanup work will allow the site to be safely developed for industrial, commercial or urban residential use. The cleanup action includes excavation of contaminated soil from the western 8.7-acre area of the site and consolidation on the eastern three-acre area of the site with a vegetated cap. Deed restrictions will also be implemented to prevent development for single-family residential use and to maintain effectiveness of the capped three-acre area.

DEQ has reviewed the plan and agrees it meets state regulatory criteria considering future uses of the site and will protect human health and the environment. The most significant change to the approach is that contaminated soil will be consolidated and capped on a portion of the site instead of being hauled away to a landfill.

DEQ has determined the revised cleanup approach will be protective of human health and the environment as required by Oregon cleanup laws and will eliminate the need for transporting contaminated soil through the community for disposal. After holding the public comment period for this proposal, DEQ will consider all comments before issuing a new Record of Decision, which is the final cleanup plan.

#### Translation or other formats

[Español](#) | [한국어](#) | [繁體中文](#) | [Русский](#) | [Tiếng Việt](#) | [العربية](#)  
800-452-4011 | TTY: 711 | [deqinfo@deq.state.or.us](mailto:deqinfo@deq.state.or.us)

**Background:** The site operated as a locomotive maintenance, service and railcar repair facility between 1887 and 1986. Facility operations resulted in environmental contamination at the site. The contaminants consist of polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbon compounds in shallow soil and metals and petroleum products, including diesel and bunker oil, in shallow soil and limited areas of groundwater. In 2001, Union Pacific proposed, and, after significant public engagement, DEQ approved a cleanup plan to address contamination for potential future single-family residential site use. Union Pacific did not implement the 2001 decision because of an increase in some of the applicable regulatory cleanup limits, which meant not as much contamination would need to be cleaned up. The railroad has since collected additional data and has now proposed a new cleanup plan to address contamination.

**For more information:** Detailed information supporting DEQ's recommended revision of the remedial action is located on DEQ's project webpage at: [ordeq.org/AshlandRailYardInfo](https://ordeq.org/AshlandRailYardInfo). DEQ cleanup staff held an open house about the project on Sept. 27, 2023, at the Ashland Public Library. Slides from the presentation and a frequently asked questions document are available on the project webpage.



If you do not have web access and want to review the project file, contact DEQ Project Manager Margaret Oscilia at 503-726-6522.

**The next steps:** DEQ will address questions and comments received after the end of the comment period and prior to issuing the revised Record of Decision. If approved, cleanup work will likely commence in the summer of 2024.

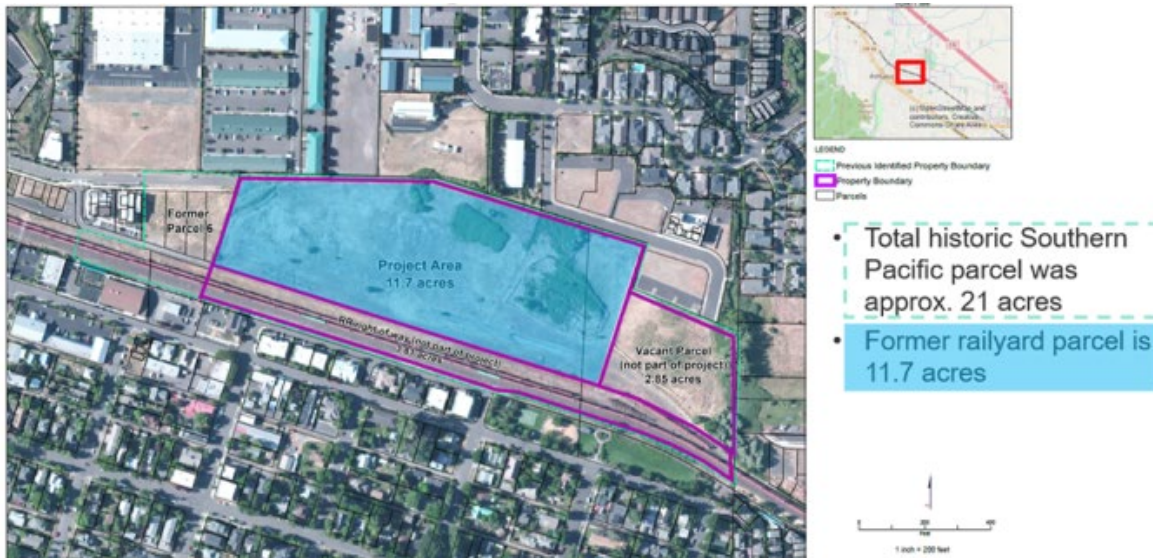


Figure 1- Dashed blue line indicates the approximate 21 acres of the total historic Southern Pacific parcel. Blue shading indicates the 11.7-acre Project Area of the former railyard parcel.

### Non-discrimination statement

DEQ does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, age or sex in administration of its programs or activities. Visit DEQ's [Civil Rights and Environmental Justice page](#).