



August 7, 2006

Louise Bardy  
Department of Ecology  
Northwest Regional Office  
3190 160<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE  
Bellevue, WA 98008-5452

**RE: Weekly Progress Report for Week Ending August 4, 2006  
BNSF Skykomish Levee Zone Interim Action for Cleanup**

Dear Louise:

This weekly progress report is submitted on behalf of BNSF Railway Company (BNSF) per Agreed Order No. DE 3279 for the week ending August 4, 2006 and provides:

- A list of activities that have taken place during the week
- Detailed description of any deviations from the Order and project plans and
- Description of all deviations from the schedule and any planned deviations in the upcoming week, and plans for recovering lost time and maintaining compliance with the schedule

**Activities**

- House Moving:
  - The Mitchell's septic tanks and associated level controls and pumps were salvaged at their request. The Teacherage foundation was loaded out for disposal.
- Cofferd dam installation/fish removal
  - Total fish counts removed from the excavation area and to the main channel of the river were submitted to Ecology. Additional work was conducted on the downstream end of the cofferdam including excavation of a trench, placement of a liner, replacement of the FIBCs and placement of sand bags to protect downstream water quality.
- Excavation, Soil Handling and Testing, Bird Control Measures and Oil Recovery:
  - Completed in-river excavation in eastern cell and collected confirmation samples. All cells met cleanup levels except for one sample grid adjacent to bridge abutment. However, oil droplets were observed bubbling up in the excavation, and Ecology requested that backfilling not be performed until the source of the oil

was determined. Some backfilling was required however, in order for the excavator to be able to reach the location where the oil was observed. This delay in backfilling results in 2 days time lost in the schedule for in-water work. Ecology also expressed concern regarding an active seep in the southeastern part of the excavation. It was discussed that if the seep originates from the southern face, the planned upgradient excavation work may address it. If it originates from the eastern face, installation of collection sump prior to backfilling may be appropriate. The seep will continue to be observed.

- Excavation of cell 2 was initiated and collection of confirmation samples was performed.
- At least three oily birds were observed in the excavation area Tuesday (August 1) morning. Two of the birds, later identified as Harlequin ducks, were rescued by PAWS and taken to a recovery center in Lynnwood, WA. One bird was swept downriver. Neither of the rescued birds survived. PAWS left a net and pet carriers on site in the event other birds make their way into the excavation. In consultation with Andy Carson at DFW, several bird control measures were implemented including:
  1. Oil control. NRC was mobilized to the site Wednesday, August 2 to assist with oil recovery. NRC removed oil from the eastern cell using mop skimmers and other sorbent materials. They will continue to remove and control oil (using sorbent booms) in each of the three cells, as necessary on a daily basis, as the excavation continues.
  2. Mylar bird deterrent. A perimeter of posts connected by a line will be placed on top of the entire cofferdam. Mylar tape will be tied at regular increments along this line to deter birds from flying into the area. The mylar tape provides a visible and sound deterrent to the birds.
  3. Other mylar deterrents. On Friday, August 4, NRC assembled two 8-foot tall poles with mylar streamers on a perpendicular cross. Each of these are currently on the upstream side of the eastern cell to also serve as bird deterrents. These systems will be moved to areas with oil on the water as the excavation progresses downstream.
  4. Light plants. Because of the risk of birds entering the area during dawn and dusk, we will use light plants to light the work area along the river each night when works stops until work starts (this also assists in illuminating the mylar tape).

5. Predator decoys. Four 18-inch owl predator decoys were placed along the cofferdam on poles Thursday, August 3. These are expected to provide additional deterrents to birds.
- Screening of excavated materials continued. Excavated material and fines coming off of the screening operation continue to be transported off-site to Rabanco via rail, with daily change out of trains.
  - Test America continued on-site analysis of sediment confirmation samples.
  - RETEC posted soil/sediment sample results on the Quickplace website.
  - Oversize boulders that have been determined to be clean were brought to the Town's burn dump site. A crusher is being considered so that the crushed rock can be used as backfill.
  - Scour zone material was brought to the site.
- Monitoring
    - Daily particulate monitoring was performed by RETEC, and Argus Pacific conducted twice weekly air monitoring for arsenic and lead, and weekly air monitoring for petroleum distillates, diesel exhaust and PAHs in accordance with the final Air and Noise Monitoring Plan.
    - Surface water quality sampling continued in accordance with the Water Quality Monitoring Plan. On Tuesday, August 1, Ecology investigated a report of sheen in the river. Through their inspection of our sampling logs and observation of down river conditions, it was determined that turbidity had most likely been mistaken for sheen and that no sheen was or had been present. On Wednesday, August 2, excavation work was shut down in cell 2 temporarily to ensure protection of water quality pending completion of the additional work on the eastern end of the cofferdam. All water quality sampling events were in compliance with water quality criteria except for the final sampling event on Thursday August 3. As reported to Ecology via email, there was both a turbidity exceedance (18.07 NTU) and a slight sheen was detected outside the downstream end of the cofferdam by the bank. The Wilder crew was completing work in the 3<sup>rd</sup> cell at the end of the day to address water quality issues in the western most cell. We believe this work caused both the turbidity and oil sheen exceedances. Turbidity was resampled after 40 minutes and was in compliance (3.27 NTU). We placed absorbent pads to absorb the sheen, adjusted the booms that were present, and alerted the treatment plant personnel to observe conditions over night. We checked conditions after 30 minutes and there was no sheen present.

- NDPES discharge monitoring continued.
- Document Preparation and Reporting:
  - Revisions to Chapter 11 of the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) were submitted to Ecology as an amendment to the plan.
  - Internal review of the annual groundwater monitoring report is in process.
  - Wilder completed a shoring design memo which was circulated to Ecology and RETEC for review. The recovery trench design is in process.
  - A work plan to pre-characterize uplands overburden soils (above the vertical delineation limit or VDL) was submitted to Ecology.
  - Draft responses to comments from Charlie Sundberg with King County and Washington DAHP re: Effects & Mitigation Technical Memorandum for historical resources were submitted to Ecology for incorporation in their response.
- Dewatering and Water Treatment: Operation of the water treatment system continued. Wilder converted one of the overflow tanks into a second O/W separator, thereby doubling the capacity/residence time for O/W separation. Backflushing of the system was performed, and approximately 20,000 gallons sludge were removed.
- Restoration: Drawings of pre-move landscaping conditions for the relocated residences were completed and will be mailed to residents for review and to initiate discussions regarding restoration of the landscaping after houses are moved back to their original locations.
- Meetings and Conference Calls
  - Weekly construction meeting in Skykomish between Wilder and RETEC, 10 am Tuesday, August 1
  - Weekly meeting in Skykomish with Ecology and RETEC, 11 am Tuesday, August 1

Activities scheduled for the week of August 7 include:

- Backfilling of eastern cell.
- Continue water treatment and discharge.
- Continue to test and screen excavated material excavated using mobile lab.

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- Continue upland excavation where possible.
- Routine Monitoring
  - Air and noise.
  - Surface water quality.
  - Archaeological/Cultural Resources.
  - In-water protection of fish.
  - NPDES discharge.

### **Deviations**

As stated above, despite the fact that sediment confirmation samples satisfied cleanup levels, Ecology did not allow backfilling of cell 1 to be performed until the source of oil droplets rising to the water's surface was better understood.

### **Schedule**

Approximately two days were lost from the schedule for completing in river work due to Ecology's decision not to allow backfilling of cell 1 on Friday, August 4. At this time, no deviations are anticipated from the schedule in Exhibit E of the Agreed Order.

Sincerely,

The RETEC Group, Inc.



Halah M. Voges, P.E.  
Senior Program Manager

cc: Susan Lee - Ecology  
Angie Thomson, Penny Mabie, Hillary Johnson - Enviroissues  
Bruce Sheppard - BNSF  
Chris Yates, Clint Stanovsky – Town of Skykomish  
Craig Trueblood – PG&E  
Daryl Petrarca - AdaPT  
David Carson – Bell & Ingram, P.S.

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Desiree Gould – Skykomish School Superintendent  
Gary West – Skykomish Resident  
John Robinson – US Forest Service  
Lorna Goebel, Michael Moore – Skykomish Environmental Coalition  
Mike Byers, Sarah Albano, Steve Howard, Joyce Sheldon, Denell Warren, File BN050-19390