

Public Participation

Georgia-Pacific Mill Site Clean Up Project

Meeting minutes: Community Advisory Group (CAG) Meeting, October 9, 2025, 4 -5:00 pm

Attendees:

Caroline Mercury - Chair
Randal Friedman- CAG member
Larry Keister - CAG member
Marty Snell - CAG member
Steve Young- CAG member
Ken Lederman – CAG member
April Berlin – CAG member
Elena Ramirez - Yakama Nation
Davis Washines - Yakama Nation
Marilyn Boerke – Camas City Council
Jennifer Senescu - Camas City Council
John Svilarich - Camas City Council
Alan Peters – City of Camas
Trang Lam– Port of Camas-Washougal
Colleen Newell- MFA
Mady Lyon – DOE

The meeting began at 4:00 PM. Chair Mercury gave an update on the Ecology Public Participation Grant (PPG) and indicated the grant had still not been approved but resolution was expected soon. No work can start until this is completed.

Mady Lyon (Ecology Site Manager) joined the call. Comments about both the Upland Remedial Investigation (RI) 4th submittal and the 1st for the Sediment RI have been finalized subject to final review by DNR and the Yakama Nation. If GP incorporates the upland comments, sampling and the RI process can begin in earnest. Ecology requires one year of sampling due to tidal influence. Ecology anticipates at least another round of comments on the Sediment RI.

CAG member Young commented that the work plan is centered on operations at this incarnation of the mill. An example was the area south of the railroad tracks that was created with fill including waste from the mill. Ecology replied that the sampling plan is more robust and includes a full suite of contaminants with this in mind. Ecology had also mentioned if issues arise, the RCW the MTCA has a provision for “Interim Actions” and a set of criteria for when they can be done which accelerates timelines. Young responded by talking about public perspective about the length of time for sampling and progress. Ecology explained issues including key stakeholder participation including the CAG. Ongoing mill operations are new to Ecology in terms of cleanup versus dealing with a closed site.

CAG Member Berlin asked that with cleanup laws changing, at what point is a legal standard “locked in”? Ecology responded first by reminding this cleanup is done only pursuant to state law so changes by EPA are not relevant. Ecology also said standards are not locked in and do change with new information and chemicals of concern.

Chair Mercury asked about the coming round of demolitions and how that fits in. Ecology responded that they would entail a separate work plan and sampling program. Demolition areas include the Kraft Mill, Bleaching lines and Boilers.

CAG member Friedman brought up a cleanup in Pt Ruston, WA that was a federal Superfund site as well as having off-site contamination as a different example for expectations. The cleanup started in the mid-90’s and there have been condos there for a decade.

CAG Member Lederman pointed out that the Point Ruston cleanup was expedited because of a developer who performed cleanup in direct consultation with redevelopment. All of the cleanup work at Point Ruston involved hotspot removal and capping. Friedman responded by pointing out that cleanup process can be expedited if there's the will of a party like the developer at Pt Ruston and active community could potentially shorten the cleanup timeline.

Friedman asked with all the discussion about groundwater/drinking water issues could the state provide the road map of who does what and how will it get done? Ecology talked about a Camas community meeting last year with the state/county drinking water regulators. Ecology indicated that they have the authority to require remediation but first have to go through the investigatory process to establish the linkage. Chair Mercury added that the mill's NPDES stormwater permit does require PFAS testing.

Chair Mercury raised the issue of cleanup level which in the Agreed Order is based on industrial land use. Ecology responded that they are using Level B screening levels to determine further considerations. The screening levels are established such that no future use is excluded, and that then feeds the decision on cleanup level in the next few years. Ecology also indicated that zoning was the criteria used to establish human risk levels. Ecology also considers ecological risk levels and the most restrictive will prevail.

CAG member Boerke asked about the uses within zoning as a consideration for cleanup and Ecology indicated they do look beyond the literal name. In the end, it is about who is exposed and how. Chair Mercury added that zoning is not within the purview of the CAG and should be discussed in other forums.

Next CAG meeting: January 8, 2026 4:00 PM