



# ASTORIA MARINE CONSTRUCTION - FACT SHEET

## THE CONFEDERATED TRIBES AND BANDS OF THE YAKAMA NATION FISHERIES RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

### Site Summary

The Astoria Marine Construction Company (AMCC) is located at 92134 Front Road, near the confluence of the Lewis and Clark River and Jeffers Slough, just outside of Astoria, Oregon. The Lewis and Clark River is a tributary of the Lower Columbia River. The AMCC Site (the Site) consists of approximately 8 acres of land next to the tidal flats of the Lewis and Clark River (E&E, 2010). Much of this area is relatively flat, with many wetlands present (Figure 1).

The Site has been an active marine assembly and maintenance facility since 1924 (E&E, 2010). According to the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ), the Site has mostly been used for sandblasting and refinishing ship hulls and maintaining a variety of boats (ODEQ, 1997). ODEQ reports indicate that large Navy vessels are thought to have been sandblasted over the waters of both the Lewis and Clark River and Jeffers Slough during the 1950s. However, AMCC stated that sandblasting was not conducted at this location because no air supply was available at the Jeffers Slough Dock (E&E, 2010). This statement could not be verified, and contradicts previous accounts of Site activities.

The Lewis and Clark River and Jeffers Slough were both periodically dredged (with appropriate permits) by AMCC. The dredged material was dumped south of the Site in two distinct piles. ODEQ sampling found that the older pile contained tributyl tin, lead, and barium in concentrations that were sufficiently high enough to fail aquatic toxicity tests (ODEQ, 2012). This material was removed and disposed of at a landfill in 1997 (E&E, 2010). Additional sediment contamination from 1950 or earlier may remain in sediments surrounding the Site. However, because sediment accumulates rapidly in this area, older contamination would now be covered by as much as 8 feet of silt (ODEQ, 2012). AMCC has a current dredging permit with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Oregon Division of State Lands. Jeffers Slough was last dredged in 1994 (E&E, 2010).

Sandblasting of boat hulls has not been performed at AMCC since 1996. However, some sandblasting of new material still occurs in the sandblasting shed, and the resulting grit is stored west of the older grit piles. Another potential source of contamination includes a burn area in the northwest corner of the property that has been in use since 1924. It is documented that AMCC has burned waste paint thin-

### Quick Facts

- Site is located in the city limits of Astoria, OR, off of the Columbia River.
- The Site has been an active marine refinishing and maintenance facility since 1924.
- Contaminants include tributyl tin, metals, petroleum hydrocarbons, PAHs, SVOCs, and VOC compounds.
- The most contaminated location on the Site is the burn pit. Other contamination includes petroleum hydrocarbons in soil, and metals in sandblasting grit.
- The Lower Columbia River and its tributaries provide critical habitat for several listed salmonid and other fish species migrating inland from the Pacific Ocean.
- Several habitat restoration projects are within 1 mile of the Site.
- The Lower Columbia River supports important subsistence, commercial and sport fisheries and numerous recreational activities including, boating, kayaking, swimming, and sightseeing.

ner, or used solvents for starting fires, both in the past and as recently as 2007 (ODEQ, 1997; E&E, 2010). The burn area is estimated to be 50 feet in diameter and “within 30 to 40 feet of the river” (E&E, 2010). During a 2007 Site visit, contractors noted oil stains near locations previously or currently used to store boat engines (E&E, 2010). The Site contains two 500-gallon waste oil tanks that ship owners use unsupervised, which provides an opportunity for spillage onto the ground. Some stains have been observed at this location (ODEQ, 2012).

### Contaminants of Concern

Contaminants of concern at the Site include tributyl tin (TBT); metals; petroleum hydrocarbons; semivolatile organic compounds (SVOCs); and volatile organic compounds (VOCs). According to the ODEQ Environmental Cleanup Site Information Database, releases from the Site occurred between 1924 and 1996,

Figure 1. Detail of Astoria Marine Construction Company, Clatsop County, OR.



although the more recent 2010 Site Investigation report suggests that releases may still be occurring. During a 2008 field investigation of the AMCC Site, 86 samples were collected to evaluate contamination. Results indicate that the burn pit is contaminated with tributyl tin, semi-volatile organic compound (SVOCs), metals, and volatile organic compounds (VOCs). The existing grit piles are contaminated with metals, and stained soils are contaminated with diesel range hydrocarbons, SVOCs, and metals. The ODEQ has recently begun managing the Site and will guide an investigation into any necessary cleanup.

### Species and Habitats of Interest

The Columbia River and its tributaries, the Lewis and Clark River and Jeffers Slough, provide critical habitat for several federally listed salmonid species migrating from the Pacific Ocean. Chinook, coho, chum, pink, and sockeye salmon and bull trout/Dolly Varden and steelhead trout are all found in this section of the Columbia River, as well as American shad, Pacific lamprey, and Pacific eulachon (smelt). For several years, eulachon runs have been inconsistent and often reduced in number, and they are now a listed species.

White and green sturgeon are found in the Columbia River and its tributaries,

which they use as a migration corridor and habitat at all life stages. The Columbia River and its tributaries provides rearing, foraging, spawning and adult habitat for numerous resident fish, shellfish, plants, and wildlife species.

Locally, wetlands occur within the Site boundary and adjacent to the Site. Several habitat restoration projects exist within 1 mile of the Site. The Lower Columbia River Estuary Program has identified a need to protect existing functional habitat in this area of the river. It has also identified a need to restore access for salmonids to estuarine habitat adjacent to the river – which they use for rearing, foraging, and migration (LCREP, 2012).

### Human Use

The AMCC Site is a private facility with no public access. The Lewis and Clark River is a publicly navigable waterway open to public boat traffic and related activities such as fishing. The Lower Columbia River, and its tributaries including the Lewis and Clark River, supports subsistence, commercial, and sport fisheries for salmon, steelhead trout, and white sturgeon; and numerous recreational activities including, boating, kayaking and canoeing, swimming, birding, and sightseeing.

### Yakama Nation Authority

The Yakama Nation is a federally recognized Tribe pursuant to the Treaty of 1855 (12 Stat. 951) with authority to manage, protect and restore treaty resources throughout the Pacific Northwest. The Columbia River – frequently referred to as the life blood of the Yakama Nation – has become a polluted and life-threatening environment for salmon and other aquatic resources because of industrial development.

The Yakama Nation has the additional authority, as a natural resource trustee under Federal Superfund law, to initiate and oversee response and restoration actions that affect Treaty reserved rights and interests. Furthermore, the Yakama Nation's involvement in the remediation of contaminated sites and implementation of restoration activities ensures that these efforts are protective of Treaty resources. The Yakama Nation is committed to restoring a clean and productive Columbia River that sustains cultural practices and improves life for the tribe, tribal neighbors, and future generations.

## COLUMBIA RIVER: HONOR. PROTECT. RESTORE.

### Since time immemorial...

The sacred relationship with the Yakama People, the Salmon, and the Columbia River was established in ancient time. When the first people established themselves in this region, the Creator came and revealed that He was going to make human beings. He advised the first people to take care of these new beings. After lengthy discussions, it was so agreed that the first people would give of themselves to sustain the human beings and that the human beings would honor and take care of the first people. Then the Creator asked who would be the first to volunteer and the salmon came forward.

The relationship between the People, the Salmon, and the Columbia River is the foundation of the time-honored laws of the Yakama people: the laws that protect life and the cycles of nature and provide for human well being; the laws that govern our long house traditions; the laws that support our practices, which have sustained the Yakama people since time immemorial. The sacred relationship of the Yakama people, the Salmon, and the mighty Columbia River is based on an understanding that all life is intertwined and interdependent. Today the Salmon has become the epitome of a time honored agreement; fighting to survive, fighting to maintain their natural life cycle, fighting to honor their agreement with the Creator and the Yakamas.

### References

Ecology and Environment Inc. (E&E). 2010. Astoria Marine Construction Company Site Inspection Report, Astoria Oregon. Prepared for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. June.

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