

Forgotten Toxic Waste Dump

Support New Superfund Cleanup Site on Columbia River

In a game-changing decision for one of the most toxic sites in the Pacific Northwest, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposes adding Bradford Island and surrounding waters to the nation's "National Priorities List," commonly known as the Superfund list.

For over 40 years, the U.S. government dumped toxic pollution—electrical equipment and other debris—in and along the Columbia River's shorelines at Bradford Island, located near Bonneville Dam. The pollution legacy: petroleum hydrocarbons, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, metals like lead and mercury, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), pesticides and herbicides, and volatile organic compounds.

Check out five reasons to support Superfund listing.

1 Off-the-charts Toxic Pollution. Resident fish containing some of the highest levels of cancer-causing PCBs in the Pacific Northwest were caught near Bonneville Dam. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), the federal agency responsible for the toxic pollution, has known for years about the problem—and failed to get the cleanup job done. In 2019, the Trump administration slashed cleanup funding for Bradford Island. It's time for a new approach.

2 People ♥ Eating Fish. People want to feed their families locally-caught fish from one of the most popular recreational fishing areas in the Mid-Columbia—but the Oregon and Washington health departments warn the resident fish, like bass and sturgeon, are too toxic to eat. Superfund listing advances clean up of dangerous toxic pollution threatening people's health.

3 Solidarity with Tribal Nations. Yakama Nation advocates for cleanup at Bradford Island and other toxic sites along the Columbia. Enrolled members of the Yakama Nation exercise Treaty-reserved rights at their usual and accustomed fishing places on the Columbia River and its tributaries, including fishing sites near and at Bradford Island. Superfund listing is a critical step to force the U.S. government to fix the toxic problem it created.

4 Stand Up for Environmental Justice. Studies show that Native Americans, Asian and Pacific Islanders, and subsistence fishers eat significantly more locally-caught fish and shellfish compared to other demographics.



5 Superfund Listing = Cleanup. The goal of Superfund cleanup is to protect people that eat locally-caught fish and the environment. Through a listing, EPA opens the gates to additional funding, heightened scrutiny, and tighter legal controls to reduce threats to public health and the environment.



Public Comment Deadline:
November 8, 2021

Go to
bit.ly/CleanupBradfordIsland
to sign a petition supporting Superfund listing.



Columbia Riverkeeper thanks the East Multnomah County Soil and Water Conservation District Partners in Conservation Grant Program for supporting public engagement in the Bradford Island cleanup.