



Willamette Watershed Toxics Reduction Partnership Proposed principles and priorities May 2017



The *Willamette Watershed Toxics Reduction Partnership* is a joint commitment by Oregon DEQ and US EPA articulated in the Portland Harbor Record of Decision. The purpose is to work collaboratively with interested parties to understand and reduce upstream toxics in the Willamette River that could negatively impact the success of the US EPA's Portland Harbor cleanup plan.

The Partnership is being undertaken by Oregon DEQ, EPA, and other interested partners. The significant initial work effort is a review of existing data and reduction efforts to help determine priorities for further toxics reductions. This work will build upon past work done in the Columbia River Toxics Reduction Strategy: <https://www.epa.gov/columbiariver>.

The overall goal of this effort has four major components:

1. to compile existing watershed contamination data and identify data gaps;
2. to describe existing efforts, and evaluate the efficacy of these programs;
3. to investigate potential upstream sources of contamination to the Portland Harbor Superfund site, considering any data gaps identified; and
4. to identify new strategies to reduce contaminant loading.

Funding: The Partnership will be funded using existing resources and other funds provided to DEQ by EPA. The depth and breadth of this project is directly related to the level of available funding.

Participation: EPA and DEQ invite participation by all interested entities and residents including municipalities, federal, state and local agencies and authorities, tribal nations, advocacy organizations, interested industry groups, and the general public.

Scope: The effort will focus on identifying and assessing potential sources of contamination to the Willamette River upstream of the Portland Harbor Superfund site, to the Willamette Falls.

- Geographic scope: The initial area of focus will be between River Mile 12 and Willamette Falls (River Mile 26), and will include tributaries to this reach of the Willamette River.
- Pollutant scope: Consistent with the Portland Harbor Record of Decision, priority will be given to potential sources of PCBs, DDT, PAHs and Dioxins/Furans.
- Options to be considered are anticipated to include an evaluation of areas further upstream of the initial geographic area and the use of CERCLA, CWA and other authorities to further identify and reduce sources of toxics in the watershed.

Meeting schedule: EPA and DEQ plan to convene Partnership meetings from May 2017 – Spring 2018. Initial meeting topics may include:

- **Learn about existing watershed contamination data and identify any data gaps.** EPA and DEQ will compile water, sediment and historical land use data for review by the Partnership. This clearinghouse for information regarding water and sediment quality for this reach of the Willamette River will help identify potential sources of toxics. The information may also inform future analysis of recontamination and data gaps in conjunction with downstream Portland Harbor datasets;
- **Understand existing toxic reduction efforts and efficacy of these programs.** This Partnership will be coordinated with DEQ's current effort to update its agency-wide Toxics Reduction Strategy, and pollution reduction actions implemented through various efforts, including TMDL programs, municipal stormwater commitments, and existing cleanup work;
- **Identify new strategies to reduce contaminant loading;** and
- **Recommend additional actions that could be taken to identify and reduce sources of toxics in this geographic area.** DEQ and EPA will consider the Partnership's recommendations when developing a final report.

Final report: EPA and DEQ plan to develop a final report by late 2018. The report will include recommendations and options for developing new toxics reductions efforts within the watershed.

May 12, 2017