

PROJECT ACTION MEMO

Port of Tacoma Commission



Item No: 6C
Meeting Date: 7/16/26

DATE: July 7, 2026
TO: Port of Tacoma Commission
FROM: Eric Johnson, Executive Director
Sponsor: Jason Jordan, Sr. Director, Environmental & Planning Services
Project Manager: Engineering: Kyle Smith, Project Manager II
Project Manager: Environmental: Scott Hooton, Project Manager II
SUBJECT: Tru-Grit Remedial Action (Parcel 115) Construction Project Authorization and Ecology Agreed Order Amendment

A. ACTION REQUESTED

1. Request authorization to enter first amendment to Agreed Order No. DE 8978 with the Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) at the Tru-Grit Abrasives Site (Port Parcel 115).
2. Request project authorization in the amount of \$9,000,000 for a total authorized amount of \$11,685,000, for work associated with the Tru-Grit Remedial Action, Project Identification #101652.01.

Strategic Plan Initiative:

EL 1: Remediate contaminated Port properties in a manner that ensures protection of human health and the environment while enabling economic development.

TA 5: Continue to prioritize maintenance of navigational channel depths and the Blair Waterway deepening program.

B. SYNOPSIS

This project will remove contaminated sediment from an area of the Blair Waterway adjacent to 1110 E Alexander Ave (Port Parcel 115) to enable the Blair Waterway Federal Navigation Channel (FNC) Deepening.

C. BACKGROUND

The Tru-Grit facility was located at 1110 E Alexander Avenue and operated since at least 1993. The Port acquired the property in 2007, and Tru-Grit continued to operate until vacating the premises in 2020. Tru-Grit operated a ship-to-shore conveyance system to offload granular abrasive material from incoming shipping barges. Material spilled into the waterway during this unloading operation.

Concentrations of copper and zinc in the spilled abrasive material are of concern because they exceed Washington State Sediment Water Quality Standards. Ecology named Tru-Grit as a Potentially Liable Party (PLP) in 2011 due to these releases of Hazardous Substance under Washington's Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA). In 2012, Ecology issued an Agreed Order for the Tru-Grit facility requiring a remedial investigation and feasibility study. The Port was not named as a PLP or a party in the 2012 Agreed Order.

The Port and United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) are currently engaged in pre-construction engineering design for the Blair Waterway FNC Deepening project, which will deepen the FNC from -51 feet mean lower low water (MLLW) to -57 feet MLLW and widen it at the mouth and middle reach in accordance with the 2022 Congressional authorization. That effort is progressing toward 65% design and on target for a Q3 2028 construction start date. However, USACE identified sediment contamination associated with the former Tru-Grit facility within the side slopes of the FNC dredge prism during feasibility. USACE will not begin deepening in this area until the Port removes contaminants from the FNC side slopes. Therefore, the Port must conduct this remediation prior to the adjacent channel deepening.

This remedial action is expected to provide a final cleanup of the lower slope areas of the site that coincide with the FNC and slough area, so that the Blair Deepening Project can proceed unencumbered. The need for cleanup of remaining contaminated sediments located in the upper slope areas, as well as demolition of existing overwater structures, will be addressed through a separate future cleanup action that is not within the scope of this project.

A revised draft Cleanup Action Plan (CAP) was submitted on June 5, 2026, and provisional comments provided by Ecology staff on June 25 do not present a material change to the project scope of work. One of Ecology's minimum requirements for any sediment cleanup action is to provide an opportunity for public review and comment to cleanup planning documents (i.e. the CAP, Water Quality Monitoring and Protection Plan (WQMPP), Compliance Monitoring and Contingency Response Plan (CMCRP), and Ecology's SEPA determination). Ecology has tentatively scheduled the comment period for this action from July 23 through August 21. The scope of this cleanup action is unlikely to change based on input Ecology receives during the public comment period. To keep on schedule and complete this work within the work window that closes in February 2027, the Port needs to be prepared to solicit construction bids in early August 2026.

D. AGREED ORDER AND AMENDMENT

In 2012, Ecology issued an Agreed Order for the Tru-Grit facility requiring a remedial investigation and feasibility study for the uplands and adjacent submerged waters and sediments. The Port was not named as a PLP or a party in the 2012 Agreed Order. Tru-Grit submitted a draft remedial investigation and feasibility study for Ecology review and comment; however, the Ecology site manager has retired, and the project has not been reassigned.

Agreed Order Amendment Terms

The amendment incorporates by reference the terms of 2012 Agreed Order DE 8978. The amendment adds the Port as a party to the Order and describes the Port's intention to perform an interim action to address contaminated sediments at the Site. Adding the Port to the Order so that it may perform an interim action constitutes a minor amendment that does not require public notice and comment.

E. PROJECT DETAILS

Scope of Project:

- Design, permitting and dredging contaminated sediments from the slough area coinciding with the Blair FNC Deepening
- Ecology coordination, interim action work plan development and approval.
- Interim action implementation reporting
- Investigate potential cost recovery actions

Scope of Work for This Request:

- Design, permitting and dredging contaminated sediments from the slough area coinciding with the Blair FNC Deepening
- Construction of a temporary shore-based dewatering transload facility (located on an NWSA licensed property) to dewater dredged sediments prior to transport.
- Transportation and disposal of the contaminated sediment at an approved Subtitle D sanitary landfill.

Schedule:

Advertise for Bid	August 1, 2026
Open Bids	September 1, 2026
Notice of Award	September 16, 2026
Substantial Completion	March 31, 2027
Final Completion	April 30, 2027

F. FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Estimated Cost of Project

The total project cost including all stages is estimated at \$11,685,000.

Estimated Cost for This Request

The total estimated cost of the construction for this project is \$9,000,000. If the cost of this estimate is anticipated to exceed the authorized amount, additional Commission authorization will be requested.

Estimated Sales Tax

The total estimated sales tax to be paid to local and state governments for this project is \$705,000.

Cost Details

Item	This Request	Total Previous Requests	Total Request	Total Project Cost	Cost to Date	Remaining Cost
INVESTIGATION	\$0	\$1,835,000	\$1,835,000	\$1,835,000	\$625,000	\$1,210,000
DESIGN	\$0	\$850,000	\$850,000	\$850,000	\$510,000	\$340,000
CONSTRUCTION	\$9,000,000	\$0	\$9,000,000	\$9,000,000	\$0	\$9,000,000
TOTAL	\$9,000,000	\$2,685,000	\$11,685,000	\$11,685,000	\$1,135,000	\$10,550,000

Source of Funds

The 2026-2030 Capital Investment Plan allocates \$11,685,000 for this project, with the total expected cost estimated at \$11,685,000.

Financial Impact

Project costs will be recorded as expenses; therefore, no depreciation will be recognized.

G. ECONOMIC INVESTMENT/JOB CREATION

This project is a necessary component of the Blair Waterway FNC deepening program to allow larger vessels to call at the gateway.

H. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS/REVIEW

Permitting: The work is covered by the Port's existing state and federal Comprehensive Mitigated Maintenance Programmatic (CMMP) permits. Once permits are verified and work is complete, this beneficial activity is expected to generate ESA credit for future Port use. A Shoreline Substantial Development Permit/Exemption, Hydraulic Project Approval, and other required permits will be obtained prior to construction.

Remediation: This is an MTCA cleanup action governed by WAC Chapters 173-204 and 173-340. Once complete, this project will remove contaminated sediment within the side slopes of the FNC, allowing the subsequent deepening of the Blair Waterway. Additional coordination with Ecology will be required in the future to determine a final cleanup action plan for the Tru-Grit site.

Stormwater: The construction effort involves sediment rehandling and dewatering for upland disposal. Any associated dewatering activities will be closely coordinated so as not to discharge impacted water into surface water without proper treatment.

Air Quality: No new emissions will be generated by this work except short-term emissions during dredging.

I. PREVIOUS ACTIONS OR BRIEFINGS

Date	Action	Amount
November 18, 2025	Commission Authorization	\$1,500,000
May 20, 2025	Commission Authorization	\$910,000
November 27, 2023	Executive Authorization	\$275,000
TOTAL		\$2,685,000

J. ATTACHMENTS TO THIS REQUEST

- First Amendment to Agreed Order No. DE 8978

K. NEXT STEPS

- Obtain final agency approvals of the interim and cleanup action plans, August 2026
- Advertise the public works contract and solicit contractor bids, August 2026
- Begin dredging, Q3-Q4 2026
- Complete dredging, Q1 2027