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Waves, currents, tides studied in bay

Editor's note: **The** Port of Bellingham and city of Bellingham have joined forces to redevelop 137 waterfront acres that **the** port acquired from Georgia-Pacific West Inc. **in** 2005, as well as an additional 83 acres of waterfront property. This weekly update is provided by **the** port.

Before work can begin on cleaning up Whatcom Waterway or constructing a new marina and associated development, engineers need to understand **the waves, currents and tides in Bellingham Bay**.

The Port of Bellingham hired **the** consulting firm Anchor Environmental early this year to oversee **the** multi-year engineering, permitting and design project that will include cleanup of **the** waterway and former treatment lagoon, development of **the** new marina, other waterfront improvements, and **the** creation of multiple near-shore habitat areas.

Last week, Tom Wang of Anchor Environmental updated **the** Port Commission on **the** work his consulting firm has been doing and what's ahead.

Four **wave** and **current** measuring devices operated **in the bay** from March 20 to May 1, **in** Whatcom Waterway, near Portage Island, just offshore from **the** treatment lagoon and alongside Squalicum Harbor, Wang said. **The** instruments, on **the** ocean floor, collected information about **the** height, direction, frequency and velocity of **waves, currents** and tidal action. Several high wind storms occurred while **the** instruments were **in** place.

The data, plus highly detailed information about **the** shoreline and underwater topography, will be used to create simulation models.

Anchor Environmental will complete **the** first phase of **the** project by June. Before **the** end of June, **the** commission

will consider approving a second phase of engineering, permitting and analysis work, to occur between June and next April.

Cleanup and construction are expected to begin **in** fall 2010 and be done by summer 2014. To protect endangered species, including salmon, construction **in** Bellingham **Bay** is limited to Sept. 15 through Feb. 15, which is why it will take several seasons to complete **the** waterfront work.

Anchor Environmental's PowerPoint presentation can be viewed by going to **the** port's Web site, www.portofbellingham.com, and clicking on "Waterfront Redevelopment Project Updates."

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