

Key Events Relating to Cherry Point

1954 Mobil Oil (Tosco) constructs the first pier at Cherry Point.

1966 Intalco Aluminum constructs the second pier.

1971 Atlantic Richfield (Arco) constructs the third pier.

1972 Washington state voters pass the Shoreline Management Act.

1976 The Whatcom County Shoreline Citizens Committee designates the Cherry Point uplands as a Conservancy shoreline allowing water-dependent industrial use of the shoreline as an outright permitted use and recognizing the state and local importance of such uses at Cherry Point.

1977 Chicago Bridge and Iron (CBI) proposes building offshore oil drilling rigs. The project would fill 22 acres of water with one million cubic yards of rock and dirt.

1977 Whatcom County “interim Zoning” adopted identifying Cherry Point as an industrial area.

1979 Cherry Point-Ferndale Subarea Plan adopted by Whatcom County designating Cherry Point for industrial use.

1981 The Washington State Department of Ecology rejects 11 of the 15 amendments to the Shoreline Management Program, needed to build the landfill.

1981 Whatcom County updates the “Official Zoning Map” reaffirming Cherry Point as an industrial area. Ordinance No. 81-99.

1982 CBI has a bill introduced in the state legislature exempting their property at Cherry Point from the Shoreline Management Act. It is passed by the legislature but vetoed by Governor John Spellman.

1983 The Kiewit Construction Company proposes the upland fabrication of offshore oil and gas drilling platforms.

1984 The Washington State Departments of Ecology and Fisheries deny permits to Kiewit.

1992 The Cherry Point Industrial Park (CPIP)/Joseph Sheckter propose a pier stretching 2,000 feet into Georgia Strait.

1992 SSA proposes to build the Gateway Pacific Terminal (GPT) at Cherry Point.

1995 DNR Commissioner Belcher states DNR will consider at most one additional pier at Cherry Point.

1995-96 Agreement reached with Sheckter. (*Proposal is abandoned in 1998*)

1997 Pacific International Terminal (PIT) receives Shoreline Substantial Development Permit (SDP) from Whatcom County to construct a multi-use terminal consisting of a deep water pier and ocean-going barge dock with upland industrial storage - Gateway Pacific Terminal (GPT). The Washington State Department of Ecology, Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife, and a coalition of five environmental groups including the North Cascades Audubon Society, Washington Environmental Council, People for Puget Sound, and the League of Women Voters of Bellingham-Whatcom County appealed the permits to the Washington State Shoreline Hearings Board. The basis of the appeals was the failure to adequately address and mitigate for likely environmental impacts from the project.

1998 Whatcom County and Washington State adopt the 1998 Shoreline Program Update, designating the Cherry Point Management Area – reaffirming the use of the reach for water-dependent industrial uses.

1998 Washington State Departments of Fish and Wildlife, Ecology, PIT and five citizen appellants negotiate a Settlement Agreement and in early July

1999 Parties sign a Settlement with PIT. The agreement establishes important conditions aimed at natural resource protection that will be implemented if, and when, the Gateway proposal moves forward with development. The agreement deals with the limited issues that can be raised within the scope of a shoreline permit. The settlement gained important concessions and mitigation related to this single permit and how they will be enforced under shoreline laws — if and when the project receives all other permit approvals and actually goes forward to development.

2000 DNR designates Cherry Point Aquatic Reserve

2000 Army Corps of Engineers gains approval for an extension of the permit for expansion of the ARCO-BP pier to accommodate oil tanker traffic.

2000 Environmental groups, lead by Ocean Advocates, sue Army Corps of Engineers regarding permit for ARCO/BP pier expansion. Lose suit.

2002 In December PIT proposal for pier put on hold at PIT's request.

2003 Williams Pipeline (aka Georgia Strait Crossing) proposes placement of a natural gas pipeline across the Cherry Point area. Proposal later withdrawn.

2003 DNR started discussing a Management Plan for the Aquatic reserve

2004 The management planning process was put on hold temporarily in 2004 while DNR attempted to address concerns by the Cherry Point industries regarding the continued designation of Cherry Point as an aquatic reserve.

2004-05 BP expansion pier is built out to deep water trench

2007 DNR sponsors collaborative work group to study and make recommendations on the Cherry Point Aquatic Reserve Management Plan

2007 Whatcom County adopts updated Shoreline Master Program including protection of shoreline critical areas.

2008 Draft of Cherry Point Aquatic Reserve Management Plan provided to DNR by the work group

2008 In March PIT convenes a community meeting to unveil the Gateway Pacific Terminal (GPT) plan.

2008 Parties to the Settlement Agreement start new discussions.

2010 SSA Marine, parent company, launches Public Relations campaign on GPT

Sources

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