

Staff Memorandum

Date: August 19, 2026
To: FILE
Through: Brad Shultz-Program Manager and Bruce Scherzinger-Lead Worker
From: Sarah Kingery-Project Manager
Western Region
Subject: Sumner Store, LUST06-94-0030; Project Status

This document presents the status of the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ's) evaluation of the Sumner Store, in Coos Bay. The status of the project is based on information documented in the administrative record for this site. A list of the key documents used to prepare this memorandum is presented at the end of this report.

Background

The former Sumner Store is located at 95646 Coos-Sumner Road in the unincorporated community of Sumner about 10 miles southeast of Coos Bay, Oregon (Figures 1 and 2). The Site property covers approximately 0.51 acres and is situated in the SE1/4 of the SW1/4 of Section 29, Township 26 South, Range 12 West, Willamette Meridian. Two structures are located on the Site: the former Sumner Store building by the road and an adjacent shed northwest of the store. The store straddles over Wilson Creek, which flows westward another 200 feet to its confluence with northward-flowing Catching Creek. Adjacent properties are residential, agricultural, and undeveloped land.

The former Sumner Store structure is currently vacant. The dates of operation are unknown, but according to the Coos County assessor's office the structure was built in 1947.

The site is at an elevation of approximately 11 feet, mean sea level (msl) and situated within a valley incised by Catching and Wilson Creeks, which flow into Catching Slough north of Sumner (Figure 1). Wilson Creek flows through the site property and beneath the former Sumner Store.

Soil beneath the site consists of silty sand and clayey silt. Shallow groundwater at the site was measured at approximately 5 feet below ground surface (bgs) during explorations in 2024 (GSI 2024 Former Sumner Store Project Report).

Beneficial Land and Water Use Determinations

Land use

The site property is within the Coos Bay Estuary Management Plan boundary and specifically in the Catching Slough Shoreline District with zoning designation Rural Shorelines (Coos County, 2024). Except for the area across Coos-Sumner Lane, adjacent properties are also the same designation. The zoning district consists of generally diked farmland that is to be managed to maintain the

present low-intensity, rural character and uses in a manner compatible with protection of the aquatic resources. Permitted uses include residential, agriculture, roadways, and recreation. While the site was once used for a store, the current zoning prohibits commercial use. Currently, the site has a mobile residential trailer on the southern corner of the property, which is used only during a portion of the year. Adjacent properties are undeveloped.

Groundwater use

The site and surrounding areas consisting of private residences are using a shared water system (Cooperative water supply). Shallow groundwater near Wilson Creek is not used by the residents. In 1927, George Gray obtained a surface water right to pipe water to his residence from a dam on an unnamed stream just northeast of town (Permit No. 7927; OWRD, 2023). The water system was expanded to the community of Sumner in 1928, being transferred over to the Sumner Water Corporation in 1969 when the town had a population of 60 people (Permit No. 34481; OWRD, 2023). Currently, the Sumner Water Co-op has 15 connections serving 75 people (Oregon Health Authority, 2024).

Investigation And Cleanup Work

In 1994, Pacific Coast Environmental decommissioned four USTs by removal from the front area of the former store (Figure 2). Two 500-gallon USTs and one 1,000-gallon UST were removed from along the southeast portion of the storefront, and another 1,000-gallon UST from the northwest portion. The USTs reportedly held gasoline.

During removal, petroleum odors were noted at three of the USTs, and approximately 10 cubic yards of surface soil with residual gasoline spillage was reportedly placed on plastic within a hay bale berm. A release was reported, with DEQ assigning the site as LUST #06-94-0030. Six soil samples were obtained from the excavation limits for analysis. Groundwater was not encountered in UST excavations.

The six samples were analyzed by HCID, with diesel-range hydrocarbons detected in five samples. Follow-up analysis for diesel was only performed on three of the samples with results ranging from 10 to 14 mg/kg diesel. There was no follow-up analysis on the two other samples to quantify the HCID diesel detections or for chemical constituents in diesel such as polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs).

The Site was investigated further in 2024 by sampling soil and groundwater from six push probe locations (P1 through P6 on Figure 2) (GSI, 2024). Samples were analyzed for total petroleum hydrocarbons (TPH) as gasoline, diesel, and oil; volatile organic compounds (VOCs); polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs); and lead (GSI, 2024).

In 2026, three surface water samples were collected directly from Wilson Creek. A porewater sample was collected in the bank of Wilson Creek downgradient of the former UST locations. These samples were analyzed for TPH as gasoline and diesel, VOCs, PAHs, and lead.

Nature and extent of contamination

Contamination detected at the site is typical for fuel USTs. Gasoline and diesel-range hydrocarbons, VOCs, PAHs and lead were detected in soil and groundwater samples collected between the former USTs and the store building. Concentrations were highest in the location of boring P5 located

between the former UST locations (Figure 2). This part of the property is used as a driveway and off-street parking in front of the vacant store.

Shallow soil contamination is present at boring P2 and P5 above the residential RBCs direct contact. Specific contaminants exceeding the RBCs are gasoline, naphthalene, and 1-methylnaphthalene. Concentrations decrease with depth. Field screening and analytical data indicate that the contamination may not be continuous across the north side of the store. Contaminant concentrations detected in P5 decrease laterally in east and west directions away from P5. Gasoline and diesel hydrocarbons had their highest concentrations in P5 and were not detected in samples to the east.

Gasoline, diesel, benzene, ethylbenzene, and naphthalene were detected in water from P5 at concentrations exceeding the residential RBCs for vapor intrusion into buildings. Of these chemicals, only benzene and ethylbenzene were detected in another boring (P6) at concentrations less than the vapor intrusion RBC. Diesel contamination was present in water to the west of P5 collected from P4 and P6. Porewater collected between P5 and Wilson Creek contained low levels of PAHs.

To assess the potential for contaminated groundwater to affect ecological receptors in Wilson Creek, DEQ compared concentrations of contaminants in groundwater to freshwater ecological RBCs. Concentrations of PAHs in groundwater exceeded ecological surface water RBCs. To evaluate whether groundwater was causing unacceptable ecological risk in Wilson creek, DEQ measured porewater and surface water. Several PAHs were detected in porewater including acenaphthene, fluorine, and naphthalene. DEQ used the PAH analytical data and freshwater ecological RBCs to calculate hazard quotients (HQ) below 1 for both light and heavy PAHs. PAHs were not detected in Wilson Creek surface water. Based on this data, groundwater contamination is not causing an unacceptable risk to ecological receptors in Wilson Creek.

Human health risk

Shallow soil contamination (0 to 3 feet bgs) is present in areas of the driveway in front of the vacant store. Concentrations exceed the residential direct contact RBCs. However, under current use of the site as a seasonal residence and with no use of the area north of the vacant store other than parking, current risk is low.

Shallow groundwater contamination is present beneath the driveway north of the vacant store. Concentrations exceed the residential RBCs for vapor intrusion into buildings. The building is constructed with post and beam construction and a wooden floor. A small section of the building footprint may be above the groundwater plume. Based on photographs the northern 5 feet of the building sit on the north side of Wilson Creek. The building is built over Wilson Creek which flows beneath the floor and interrupts the potential migration of vapors into the building. Based on this the risk of vapor intrusion to the current structure is low. There is a potential future risk if a new building was built north of Wilson Creek.

Recommendation

Soil contamination in the upper 3 feet exceeds residential RBCs and the site cannot be closed until that is mitigated. Given the current use of the site as a seasonal residential property with a vacant store, risks to human health are low. Residents should avoid digging in soil north of the former store.

Natural biodegradation is expected to continue to occur. Additional sampling would be required to show biodegradation has occurred. The project will be moved from active to inactive and placed on our backlog list. Reports for this project can be found in the environmental data management system also known as Your DEQ Online (YDO) under project number LUST06-94-0030 and directly here <https://ordeq.org/LUST06-94-0030>.

Attachments

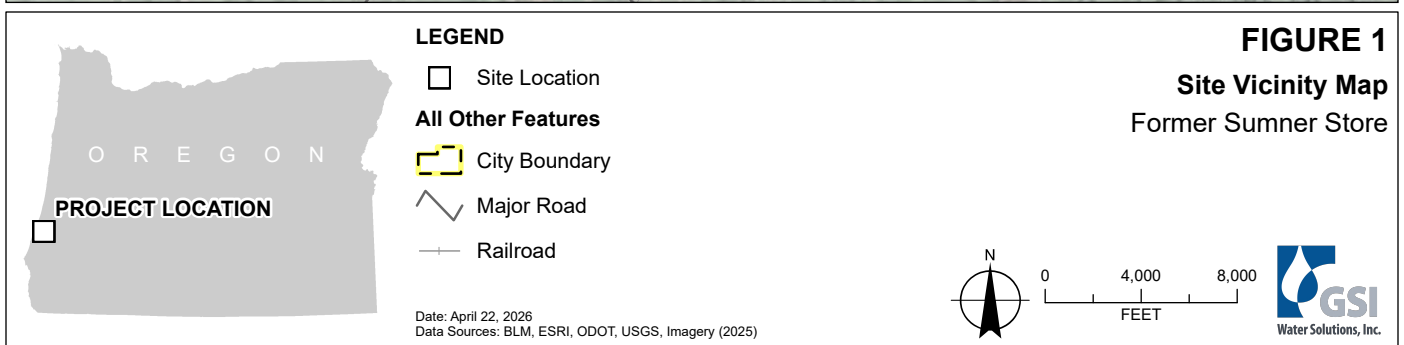
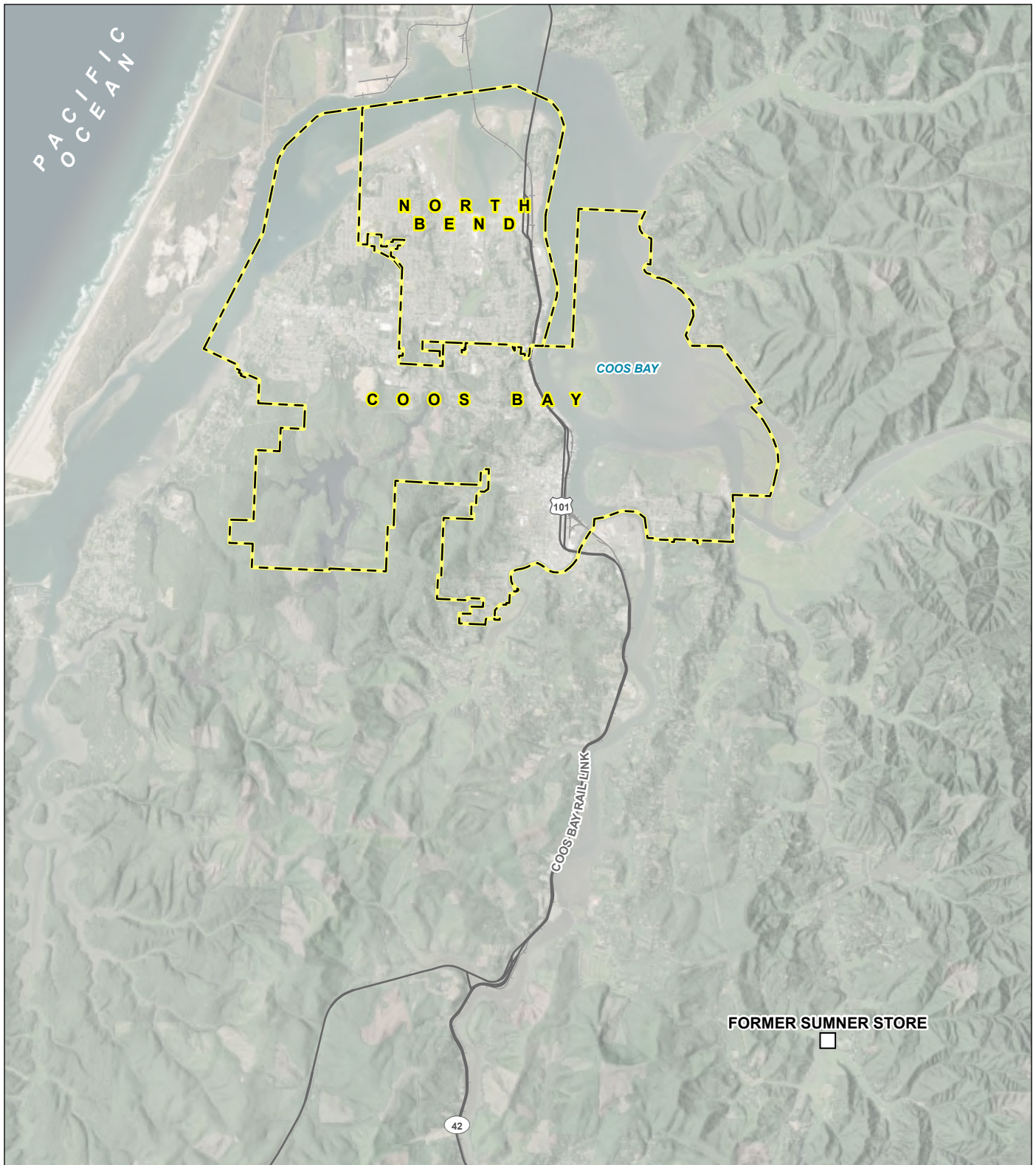
1. Vicinity map
2. Site map

Include the non-discrimination statement below without altering or revising – delete this highlighted line.

Non-discrimination statement

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LEGEND

Push Probe Location	Former LUST	Tax Lot
Soil Sample (1994)	Excavation Area (1994)	Watercourse
Proposed Porewater Location	Former Pump	
Proposed Surface Water Location	Locality of the Facility	
Assumed Groundwater Flow Direction	Property Boundary	

FIGURE 2

Sample Locations

Former Sumner Store

NOTE
 All features are approximate.
 Date: April 22, 2026
 Data Sources: BLM, ESRI, ODOT, USGS, Aerial Photo (2020)