3.15 Visual Quality and Aesthetics

Federal and state regulations (particularly NEPA) require that WSDOT consider the visual and aesthetic effects of the proposed SR 520 Pontoon Construction Project on nearby communities and resources. Local governments have jurisdiction over the visual quality resource as land use plans and policies and development review processes establish the framework for ensuring compatible land uses, part of which involves addressing visual quality. Understanding how a proposed project would affect visual quality helps planners and engineers design and build project facilities that fit their settings and are beneficial to communities.

What is the Visual Quality and Aesthetics Technical Memorandum?

This section was derived from Appendix Q, Visual Quality and Aesthetics Technical Memorandum, which details information about the visual quality and aesthetic characteristics of the study area and possible project effects.

Has any new information been developed since the Draft EIS?

No new visual quality issues were introduced and WSDOT did not conduct any new analysis beyond that which was done for the Draft EIS.

How did WSDOT evaluate direct effects on visual quality and aesthetics?

Before evaluating project effects, WSDOT analysts conducted a visual quality and aesthetics assessment to determine baseline conditions in the study areas. Visual quality, visual character, and aesthetics are influenced by all of the factors that shape an environment, such as the presence of parks, neighborhoods, or manufacturing districts. This assessment took the following into account:

- The visual and aesthetic experience of people looking at or from the project sites
- The panoramic, special, or scenic views visible from the project sites or from the surrounding landscape
- The overall visual and aesthetic character and quality of the study area and the scale and contrast between existing and proposed project elements in the area

What are viewsheds and landscape units?

A viewshed is the landscape or topography and features visible from a geographic viewing point. A viewshed is important for understanding the overall landscape character and for identifying important visual resources and views of those resources.

A landscape unit is a visually distinctive area within a project area. Defined landscape units allow a closer look at an area's details and character. Neighborhoods, parks, and shopping districts are examples of the scale and nature of a landscape unit.

WSDOT followed the FHWA methodology for the visual quality and aesthetics assessment. To gather information, WSDOT visited the two Grays Harbor build alternative sites, reviewed local planning documents and USGS and GIS maps, and reviewed other technical documents prepared for the Draft EIS (the Cultural Resources Discipline Report, and the Navigable Waterways, Land Use, and Social Elements technical memoranda provided in Appendices I, K, N, and O, respectively). WSDOT obtained information about the CTC study area from aerial photographs, as well as GIS land use and topography maps.

After the WSDOT analysts gathered enough information, they followed the four FHWA methodology steps to assess visual quality and aesthetics:

1. Establish the project's visual limits (viewshed) and define the visually distinctive subareas in the project vicinity (landscape units). Exhibit 3.15-1 shows the project viewsheds, and Exhibit 3.15-2 shows the defined landscape units.
2. Determine who has views of or from the project, based on the understanding gained in the previous step. Viewers who are likely to be concerned about the quality of the view are referred to as sensitive viewers.
3. Describe and assess the current visual character of the built and natural environments using information gained during site visits.
4. Assess the visual quality of each landscape unit; identify places where substantial numbers of sensitive viewers have views of or from the project sites; determine where there are sensitive, high-quality views; assign rankings of low, moderate, and high for the three primary visual quality descriptors: vividness, unity, and intactness.

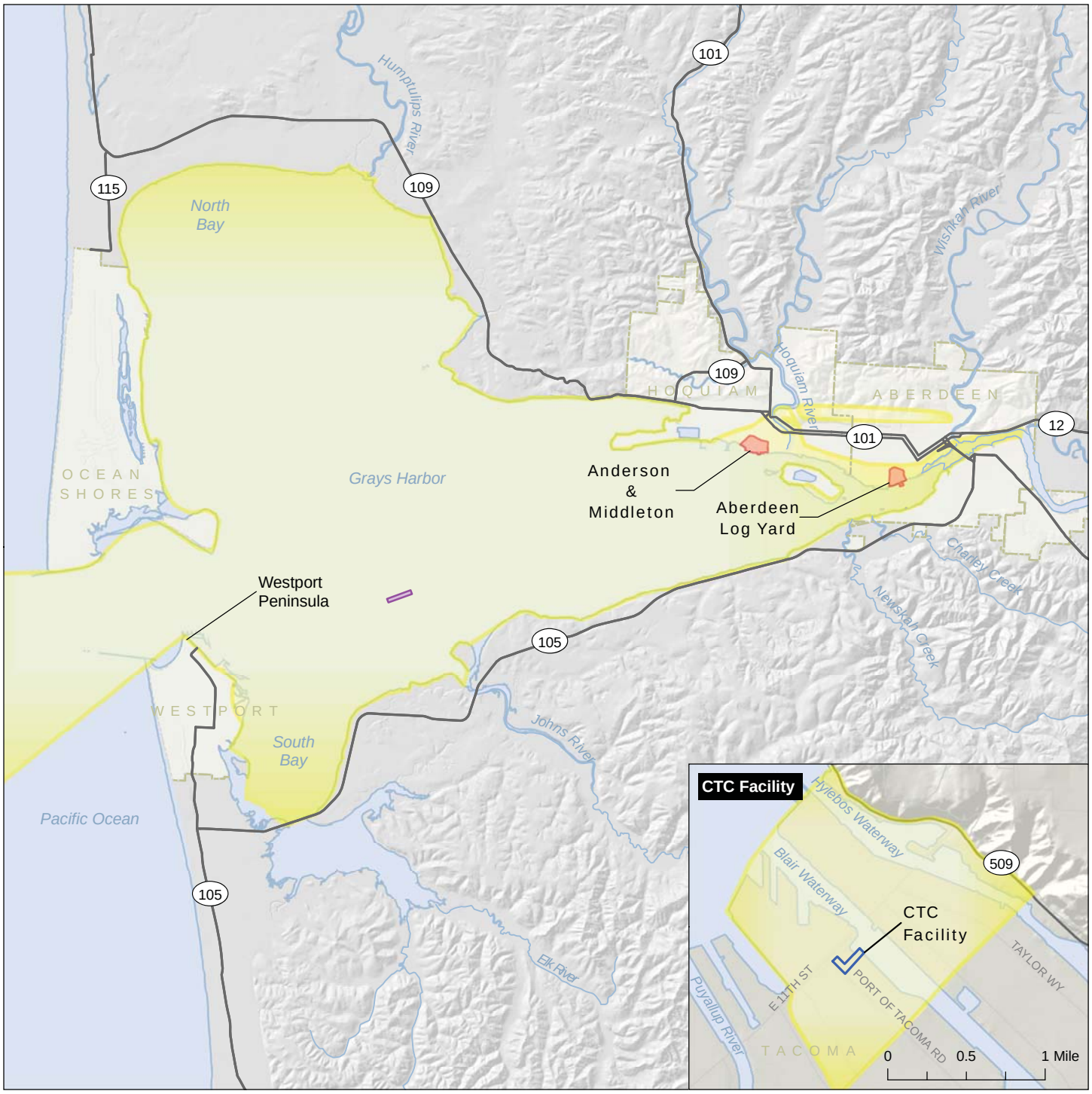
To evaluate potential effects of the build alternatives, WSDOT reviewed project engineering plans and the visual quality and aesthetics assessment to determine whether the project would affect visual quality in the project vicinity. WSDOT then compared the before and after visual qualities to reveal the degree of potential effect, based on FHWA criteria outlined in *Visual Quality Impact Assessment for Highway Projects* (FHWA 1990).

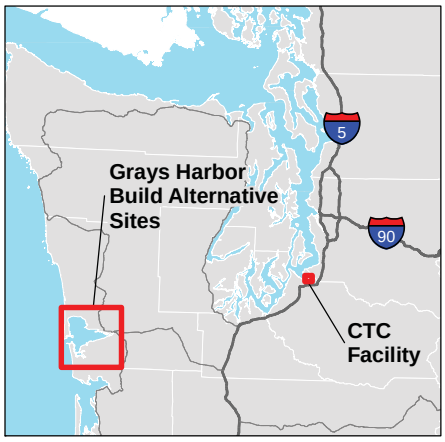
What are the visual quality and aesthetic characteristics in the study area?

The primary study area to assess visual quality and aesthetic characteristics is the viewshed. For this project there are separate viewsheds for the CTC facility and the Grays Harbor build alternative sites (Exhibit 3.15-1). The Grays Harbor viewshed includes potential open-water pontoon moorage locations in Grays Harbor.

CTC Facility

Clusters of lowrise buildings and shelters around the CTC facility limit the viewshed and screen the site (Exhibit 3.15-1) from viewers. The surrounding buildings also block views of the CTC facility from distant viewpoints, and the facility is indistinguishable from other facilities in this industrial area. The CTC site landscape unit (Exhibit 3.15-2) is an





- Viewshed
- Proposed outer Grays Harbor pontoon moorage location
- Build Alternative Site
- Existing CTC facility
- City limits

N

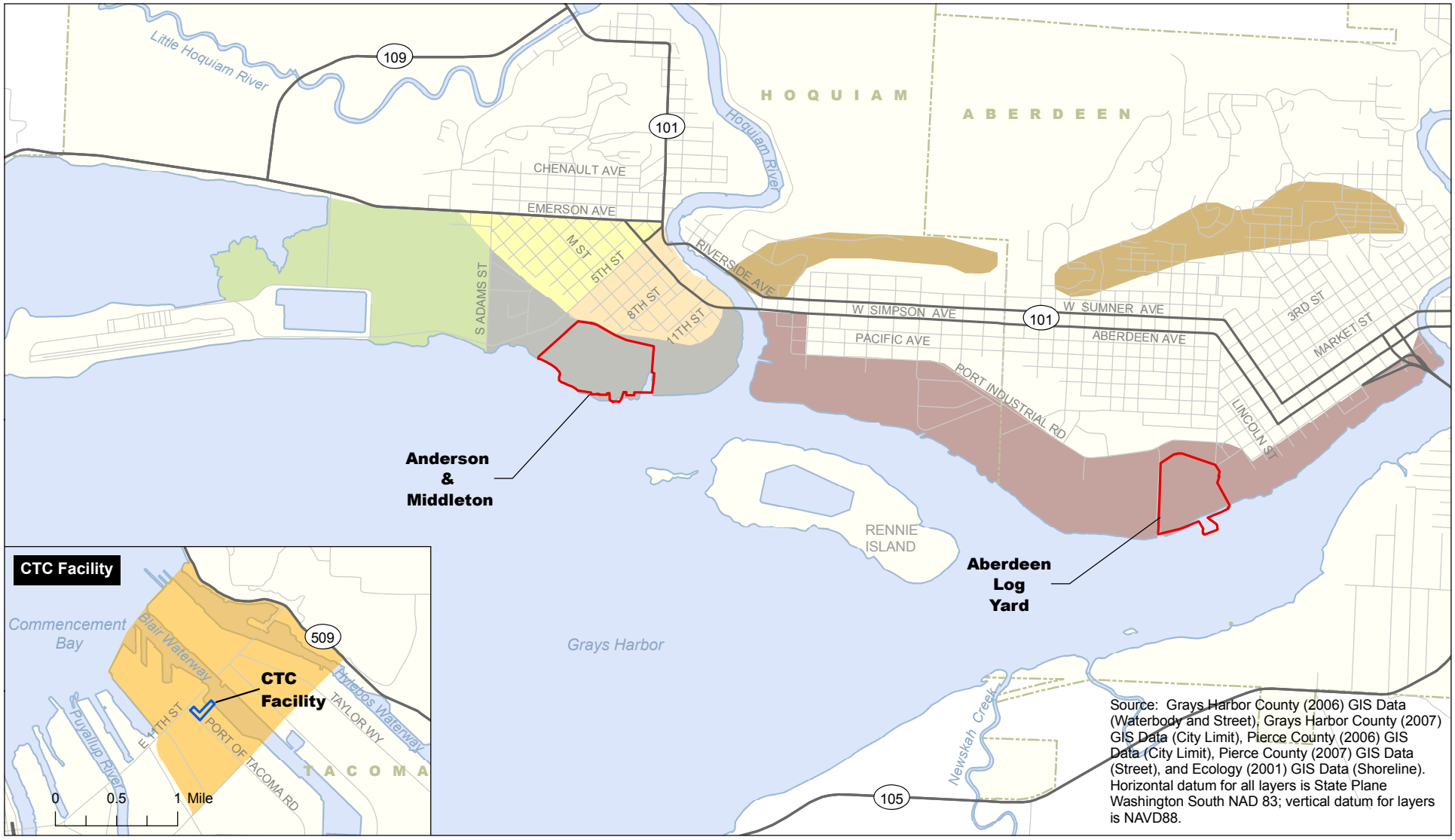
0 1 2 Miles

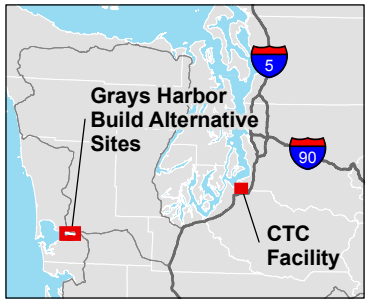
Source: USGS (1999) GIS Data (10-meter DEM), Grays Harbor County (2007) GIS Data (City Limit), Pierce County (2006) GIS Data (City Limit), Ecology (2003) GIS Data (Stream), Ecology (2001) GIS Data (Shoreline), and WSDOT (2004) GIS Data (State Route). Horizontal datum for all layers is State Plane Washington South NAD 83; vertical datum for layers is NAVD88.

Exhibit 3.15-1. **Study Area Viewsheds**

SR 520 Pontoon Construction Project

Washington State Department of Transportation





Landscape Unit

- CTC Industrial
- Grays Harbor
- Hoquiam Industrial
- Hoquiam Mixed Use
- Hoquiam Residential
- Hillside Residential
- Hoquiam Rural
- Shoreline Industrial
- Build Alternative Site
- Existing CTC facility
- City limits

N 0 2,000 4,000 Feet

Exhibit 3.15-2. **Study Area Landscape Units**
SR 520 Pontoon Construction Project

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established, active manufacturing zone with a uniform style of industrial and storage buildings surrounded by extensive parking or travel areas. The visual character of the CTC landscape unit is constructed and industrial. There are no sensitive viewers here because there are no public destination points or travel routes. The primary viewer group is people who work or do business within the industrial center.

In summary, the current visual character and quality of the CTC facility reflect the steady, long-term industrialization of the Tacoma area.

Grays Harbor Build Alternatives

Grays Harbor is a wide, long estuary with low, forested hills around the bay on the north, east, and south. Ships occasionally moor in the harbor, and remnants of wooden piles from former docks and piers protrude from the water just offshore in some locations. The harbor is otherwise free of structures.

Shoreline development and use of the harbor for commerce began with the arrival of Euro-Americans in the mid nineteenth century. Because commerce and housing developed concurrently over the last century, the use of the Grays Harbor shoreline as a visual or recreational resource was probably not as important as its economic uses. The shoreline is now zoned for industrial uses, so the trend of adding industrial buildings to the sites will continue.

Communities around Grays Harbor are built primarily on flat shorelines and promontories. In Hoquiam and Aberdeen, manufacturing and industrial businesses generally are near the shore, whereas houses and commercial businesses are on the flat uplands and low hills.

Viewshed

The Grays Harbor viewshed (Exhibit 3.15-1) is quite large because the harbor extends more than 10 miles from east to west. Only landforms and color contrasts are visible across the long distances of the Grays Harbor viewshed. The eastern edge of the viewshed is defined by Rennie Island and the curving shoreline of the mouth of the Chehalis River. The viewshed includes partial views from Beacon Hill, Scammel Hill, Aberdeen Highlands, Hospital Hill, Bel Aire, and the US 101-Hoquiam River Bridge, all of which are higher than their immediate surroundings.

How is visual quality described?

Vividness is a measure of the memorability or distinctiveness of the landscape.

Unity is the degree to which the landscape is a harmonious mix of elements.

Intactness is the degree to which the landscape is free of eyesores or elements that do not fit with the overall landscape.

Landscape Units

To assess the existing visual quality and aesthetics in the study area, WSDOT divided the Grays Harbor viewshed into seven landscape units described below (Exhibit 3.15-2).

Grays Harbor Landscape Unit

The Grays Harbor landscape unit includes the open water and shorelines of Grays Harbor, Rennie Island in the eastern harbor, and the sandbars and islets in the western harbor. The natural estuary largely establishes the visual character of this landscape unit, which is defined by the expanse of open water encircled by low sandbars and low hills. The eastern harbor is defined by the narrowing channel, Rennie Island, and constructed shorelines on the northern Chehalis River channel (Exhibit 3.15-2).

Views within the Grays Harbor landscape unit are panoramic, extending across the estuary (Exhibit 3.15-3) to the horizon. This landscape unit has little development; the only permanent viewers in this area are residents with homes on the western peninsulas and harbor-facing hillsides and shorelines. Residents and visitors engaged in recreational activities, including private boaters and birdwatchers, are likely to be sensitive to the quality of views in this landscape unit because of its natural beauty and the activities in which they are engaged.

Who are viewers?

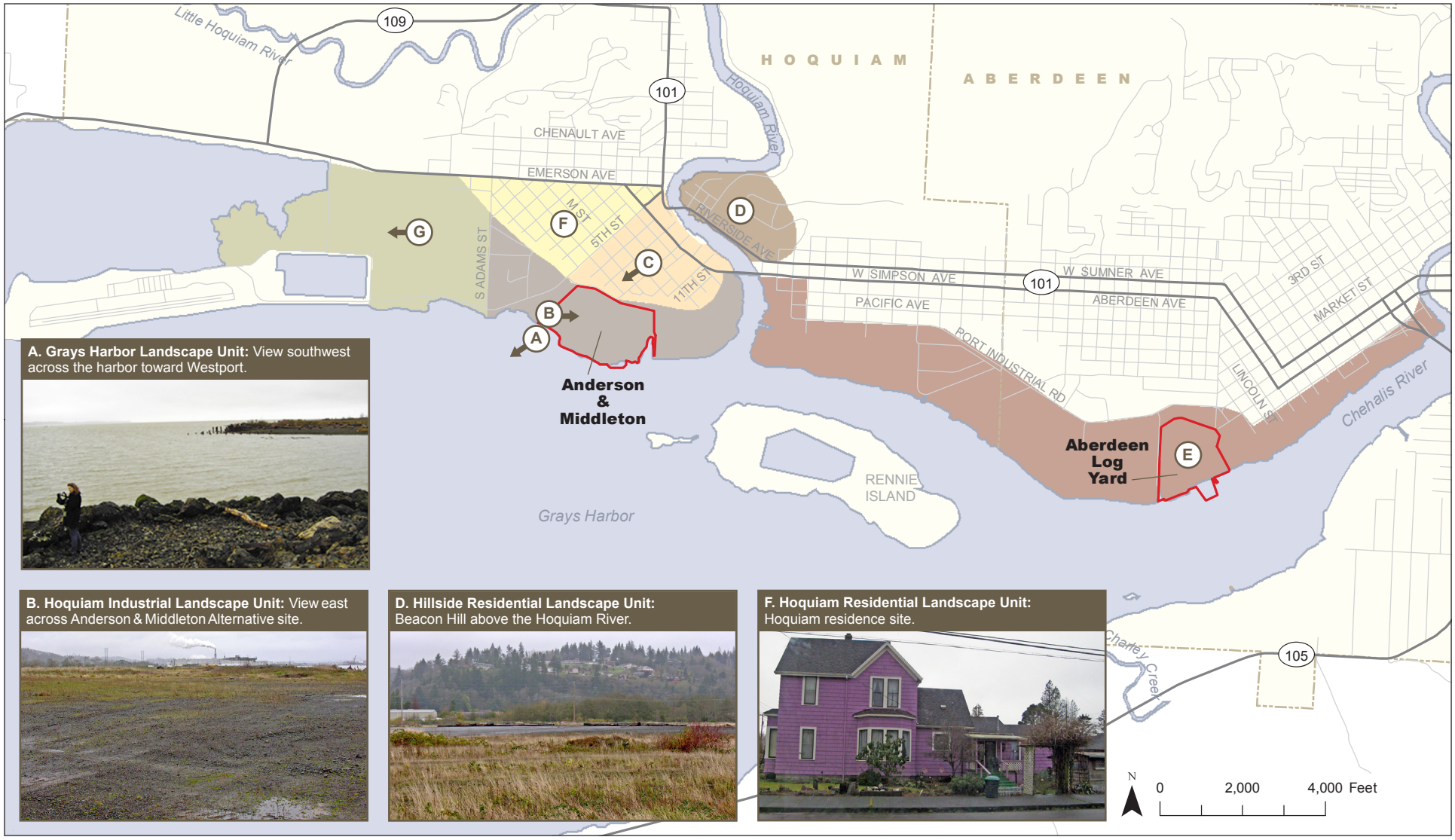
Viewers are people who have views of or from the project. Viewers are discussed using general categories of activities, such as resident, boater, jogger, or motorist, and in terms of their sensitivity to views.

From shoreline views, primarily land mass and forests are seen across the harbor. Low areas—such as the build alternative sites—are not visible from great distances. Intactness and unity in this landscape unit are high because the landscape does not contain visible constructed features that are out of character with the surroundings. Vividness is high because the estuary system, the dominant feature, is distinctive and memorable.

Hoquiam Industrial Landscape Unit

Land along the Grays Harbor shoreline south of the railroad tracks and between the Hoquiam River and South Adams Street forms the Hoquiam Industrial landscape unit (Exhibit 3.15-2). The Hoquiam Industrial landscape unit consists primarily of abandoned paved tracts formerly used for manufacturing and shipping (Exhibit 3.15-3). The visual character of this landscape unit is defined by the existing and former industrial facilities along the shoreline. The Anderson & Middleton Alternative site and adjacent Port of Grays Harbor industrial property occupy most of the land in this landscape unit. A gravel access road around the Port of Grays Harbor property is a popular local walking path.

There are few viewers in this landscape unit, and the low-lying industrial buildings, hedgerows, and trees constrain views. Trees obscure most views into the Hoquiam Industrial landscape unit from the neighborhoods to the north in the Hoquiam Mixed-Use landscape unit. Views across Grays Harbor south and west of this landscape unit are



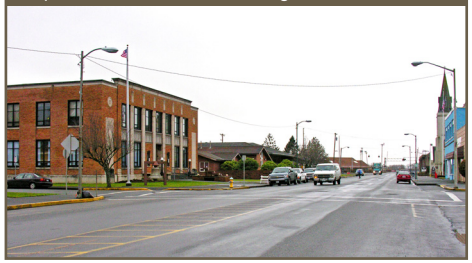
A. Grays Harbor Landscape Unit: View southwest across the harbor toward Westport.

B. Hoquiam Industrial Landscape Unit: View east across Anderson & Middleton Alternative site.

D. Hillside Residential Landscape Unit: Beacon Hill above the Hoquiam River.

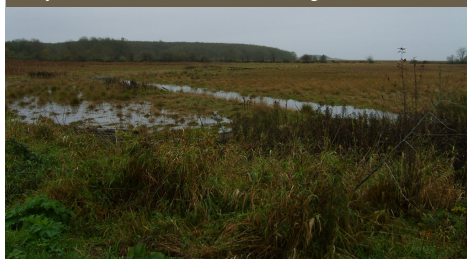
F. Hoquiam Residential Landscape Unit: Hoquiam residence site.

C. Hoquiam Mixed Use Landscape Unit: Downtown Hoquiam, view southwest looking down 8th Street.



E. Shoreline Industrial Landscape Unit: Aberdeen Log Yard Alternative site.

G. Hoquiam Rural Landscape Unit: View west into Grays Harbor National Wildlife Refuge.



Source: Grays Harbor County (2007) GIS Data (Waterbody and Street). Horizontal datum for all layers is State Plane Washington South NAD 83, vertical datum for layers is NAVD88.

Exhibit 3.15-3 **Grays Harbor Area Landscape Unit Photographs**

Pontoon Construction Project

Washington State Department of Transportation

open. Because of the great distance across the harbor, only land masses and the color and texture of the forests are visible.

Intactness in the Hoquiam Industrial landscape unit is moderate because emergent wetlands have developed on the existing land area, which was artificially created with fill from dredging. Unity in this landscape unit is high because there are only a few, comparatively small structures. Vividness in this landscape unit is low, indicating a landscape that is without memorable or distinctive features.

Hoquiam Mixed-Use Landscape Unit

The Hoquiam Mixed-Use landscape unit is the commercial and business district (Exhibit 3.15-2) bounded by the Puget Sound & Pacific Railroad tracks on the south, the Hoquiam River on the east and northeast, and 5th Street in Hoquiam on the west. The visual character of this landscape unit is defined by the street grid and medium-dense, continuous development. This landscape unit is a mix of trade and commercial services and residential, cultural, social, and recreational uses, such as the Hoquiam City Hall, the U.S. Post Office, and several small businesses along 8th Street. Buildings in this landscape unit are typically small-footprint, one- to three-story structures of various ages, styles, and materials. The range in ages of the buildings and the variety of materials and styles of the buildings along 8th Street add visual interest.

Because of the flat terrain, buildings and structures channel views within the Hoquiam Mixed-Use landscape unit along streets (Exhibit 3.15-3). Viewers in this landscape unit include visitors and residents traveling to and from work or home; these viewers are likely to be moderately sensitive to visual quality. The US 101 bridge over the Hoquiam River is the only location with longer distance views, mainly to the east and south, but they are obscured by tall trees along the river.

Intactness and unity are high in this landscape unit because the built environment is not broken up by features that are out of place. Development is continuous and comprises buildings of similar scales, so the character of the area is consistent. Vividness is low because there are no dominant or striking features that stand out as memorable or noteworthy.

Hoquiam Residential Landscape Unit

The Hoquiam Residential landscape unit (Exhibit 3.15-2) is the small neighborhood area between 5th Street in Hoquiam on the east, Emerson Avenue on the north, and the Hoquiam Industrial landscape unit on the south. The visual character of this landscape unit is defined by the suburban residential architecture and landscapes and the street grid. Viewers in this landscape unit are primarily residents and visitors

traveling to various nearby activities. Residents are likely to be moderately sensitive to visual quality. Views are primarily short range and constrained by buildings, but hills to the north are visible. Generally, southward views are blocked by the tree and shrub hedgerows along the railroad tracks and rail cars on the tracks.

Intactness and unity are high because this landscape unit is a built environment that is not broken up by out-of-place features. Development is continuous and of similar scale and style, so the community character is coherent. Vividness is low because no dominant or striking features stand out as memorable or noteworthy.

Hillside Residential Landscape Unit

The Hillside Residential landscape unit consists of the south-facing hillsides in Aberdeen and Hoquiam, including Beacon Hill, Scammel Hill, Aberdeen Highlands, Hospital Hill, and Bel Aire (Exhibit 3.15-2). Although this is a series of small, discrete areas, they are described as a single landscape unit because of their high elevation viewpoints, which afford views of all of the other landscape units and of the two proposed build alternative sites.

Each hillside has small residential developments with panoramic and scenic views, and the viewer group for this landscape unit is primarily residents. Because of the rural setting and panoramic views, these viewers are likely to be sensitive to the quality of views from their homes.

Views within this landscape unit are panoramic where not obscured by trees or land forms (Exhibit 3.15-3). Viewers in this landscape unit are primarily residents. Because of the rural setting and panoramas, these viewers are likely to be sensitive to the quality of views from their homes. Intactness and unity in this landscape unit are low because clearing the woods for development has reduced the integrity of the natural landscape, and the buildings do not blend well with the wooded landscape. Vividness is low because no features in this landscape unit are notable or memorable.

Hoquiam Rural Landscape Unit

The Hoquiam Rural landscape unit (Exhibit 3.15-2) is the undeveloped land bounded by the Grays Harbor shoreline on the northwest and south, Emerson Avenue on the north, Bowerman Airport on the southwest, and the Hoquiam industrial landscape unit and South Adams Street to the east in Hoquiam. Large stretches of open fields and woodlands define the visual character of this landscape unit. Existing structures in this landscape unit are a few agricultural buildings near the shoreline and a new chip loading facility at Terminal 3 by Bowerman Airport.

Viewers in this landscape unit are travelers along the roads connecting to US 101 or the airport, or birdwatchers visiting the Grays Harbor National Wildlife Refuge, and people traveling to and from work in the area. Birdwatchers, who visit primarily during the spring and fall, are likely to be sensitive to visual character and quality. Views within this landscape unit are short range and limited by dense stands of trees. Intactness in this landscape unit is moderate because shoreline woods are cleared. Unity is high because there is little development in this landscape unit, and buildings are only at the periphery. Vividness is low because, although the open space and vegetation are natural and pleasant, the landscape does not contain distinctive or memorable features.

Shoreline Industrial Landscape Unit

The Shoreline Industrial landscape unit is the land south of the Puget Sound & Pacific Railroad tracks between the east bank of the Hoquiam River and the west bank of the Wishkah River in Aberdeen (Exhibit 3.15-2). Existing and remnant industrial manufacturing facilities and storage lots along the shoreline define the visual character of this landscape unit. The Shoreline Industrial landscape unit encompasses surfaces paved for truck traffic or leveled for stockpiling materials such as logs (Exhibit 3.15-3). Most of the properties in this landscape unit are fenced. The railroad tracks and the tall hedgerow along the tracks physically and visually separate the eastern part of this landscape unit from the town.

Trees obscure most views into the Shoreline Industrial landscape unit from the commercial area to the north. There are few sensitive viewers in the Shoreline Industrial landscape unit because the 28th Street Landing Boat Launch is the only public destination point in this landscape unit. Viewers include people traveling to and from work in the area. Workers are not likely to be sensitive to the appearance of the surroundings because it is uniformly industrial. Views within this landscape unit are short range because of the flat terrain and the presence of industrial buildings, hedgerows, and stands of trees.

Intactness in the Shoreline Industrial landscape unit is low because this shoreline landscape was created with fill, which resulted in the loss of the natural shoreline. Unity in this landscape unit is low because structures were placed and built without sensitivity to the natural or existing setting. Vividness in this landscape unit is low, indicating a landscape without striking or attractive features that are memorable or distinctive.

How would construction of the casting basin directly affect visual quality and aesthetics?

Construction effects on visual quality and aesthetics would be similar at the Anderson & Middleton and Aberdeen Log Yard sites. All landscape units would temporarily be affected, but the level of effect would depend on their proximity to the construction, line-of-sight, and nighttime illumination. Short-term changes to views would likely result from one or more of the following: construction and excavation vehicles and equipment; exposed soils; silt fences, plastic groundcover, and straw bales to control erosion; dust and exhaust; stockpiles of excavated material; stored equipment and materials; lighting for nighttime construction; overhead gantries and scaffolding to support elevated structures; and traffic congestion on haul routes.

How would pontoon-building operations directly affect visual quality and aesthetics?

CTC Facility

There would be no operational effects on visual quality or character because the existing CTC facility is in an industrial area, and pontoon construction would not be visually different from existing industrial operations.

Grays Harbor Build Alternatives

Grays Harbor Landscape Unit

Operating the casting basin facility at either build alternative site would cause low or no visual effects on the Grays Harbor landscape unit during daylight. At night, security lighting on the facility could moderately affect visual quality because the site would be visible from many locations around Grays Harbor. Vividness, unity, and intactness would not change from their high ratings because the project would not add constructed features that are noticeably out of character with their surroundings.

Hoquiam Industrial Landscape Unit

Project operations at the Anderson & Middleton site would result in high-level visual effects on the Hoquiam Industrial landscape unit because the casting basin facility would differ from the existing landscape character of naturalized vegetation that partially defines this landscape unit. Because there are no sensitive viewer groups in this landscape unit, however, intactness would remain moderate, unity would remain high, and vividness would remain low. The Aberdeen Log Yard site is not visible from this landscape unit and would not cause any visual effects or change visual quality.

Hoquiam Mixed-Use Landscape Unit

Neither build alternative would result in visual effects on the Mixed-Use landscape unit because the trees along the railroad tracks would screen much of the Anderson & Middleton site. Intactness and unity would remain high, and vividness would remain low.

Hoquiam Residential Landscape Unit

Project operations at the Anderson & Middleton site could result in low-level visual effects on the Hoquiam Residential landscape unit. The Aberdeen Log Yard site is not visible from this landscape unit and would not cause any visual effects or change visual quality. Unity and intactness would not change from their high ratings, and vividness would remain low.

Hillside Residential Landscape Unit

A new casting basin facility at the Anderson & Middleton site would be visible from some higher-elevation Beacon Hill residences with south-facing views. The Aberdeen Log Yard site is farther from the Aberdeen hillside residential areas than the Anderson & Middleton site is from Beacon Hill, and this distance reduces the visibility of the Aberdeen Log Yard from these residences. Residents in this landscape unit would likely be sensitive to the quality of views from their homes; however, the visual effect would be low because the new structures would not interfere with the panoramic view of open water and the horizon beyond. Unity, intactness, and vividness would not change from their low ratings.

Hoquiam Rural Landscape Unit

Neither build alternative would result in visual effects on the Hoquiam Rural landscape unit because they would not be visible from this area. The vegetation buffer along the western border of this landscape unit effectively blocks any views to the east. Unity would remain moderate, intactness would remain high, and vividness would remain low.

Shoreline Industrial Landscape Unit

Neither build alternative would result in visual effects on the Shoreline Industrial landscape unit because this is an existing industrial and manufacturing area. There are no sensitive viewers in this landscape unit. Intactness, unity, and vividness would remain low.

How would pontoon moorage directly affect visual quality and aesthetics?

CTC Facility

Pontoons produced at the existing CTC facility would be moored in industrial ports and harbors in Puget Sound until needed. Because the

moorage sites are already used for industrial purposes, their use to moor pontoons would not change visual quality.

Grays Harbor Build Alternatives

Pontoon moorage in Grays Harbor could have long-term effects on visual quality and aesthetics. The pontoon moorage site would be located in the Grays Harbor landscape unit near the Grays Harbor navigation channel. The pontoons would be visible about 8 to 10 feet above water level.

The pontoon rafts would not change the high vividness, intactness, or unity levels in the Grays Harbor landscape unit because they would not be visible from most locations, including Westport and Ocean Shores. During daylight, the pontoon rafts could be visible from higher elevations around the harbor. At night, the pontoons would be prominently illuminated with navigation lights. People passing by on private and commercial boats would be most likely to see the pontoon rafts. Birdwatchers would be sensitive viewers, but the rafts would not be visible from the North Bay bird-watching areas.

How would the Grays Harbor build alternatives compare in their direct effects on visual quality and aesthetics?

Exhibit 3.15-4 compares the direct visual quality and aesthetic effects of the Anderson & Middleton Alternative with the Aberdeen Log Yard Alternative.

EXHIBIT 3.15-4
Visual Quality and Aesthetics Summary of Direct Effects

Type of Effect	Aberdeen Log Yard Alternative (Preferred Alternative)	Anderson & Middleton Alternative
Casting basin construction	During construction, heavy equipment and construction-related signage would be visible at and near the project site.	During construction, heavy equipment and construction-related signage would be visible at and near the project site. The casting basin facility would be visible from high-level views on the south slope of Beacon Hill.
Pontoon-building operation	There would be low to no visual effects during daylight hours. Nighttime illumination on the facility would cause it to be visible from many locations in the Grays Harbor landscape unit. Visibility of cranes and, potentially, the batch plant would be unavoidable for some residents in the Hillside Residential areas.	There would be low to no visual effects during daylight hours. Nighttime illumination on the facility would cause it to be visible from many locations in the Grays Harbor landscape unit. The Hoquiam Industrial Landscape Unit would experience high-level changes. The Hoquiam Residential Landscape Unit could experience low-level changes to visual character.

EXHIBIT 3.15-4
Visual Quality and Aesthetics Summary of Direct Effects

Type of Effect	Aberdeen Log Yard Alternative (Preferred Alternative)	Anderson & Middleton Alternative
Pontoon Moorage	Pontoon moorage would have the potential to produce long-term effects on visual quality. The pontoons would be visible above water, and at night, they would be prominently illuminated.	Effects would be the same.
Unavoidable adverse[a]	There would be a new industrial facility where there previously was none. The pontoons moored in Grays Harbor area would be visible.	Effects would be the same.

[a] Unavoidable adverse effects are effects that remain after avoidance and minimization measures are applied.

What indirect effects would the project have on visual quality and aesthetics?

CTC Facility

Using the CTC facility for pontoon construction would have no indirect effects on visual quality. Materials for pontoon construction would be obtained from existing sources, and haul truck traffic and pontoon construction, towing, and moorage would occur in industrial settings at locations already used for these types of activities.

Grays Harbor Build Alternatives

The proposed project would be visually consistent with the current industrial surroundings at both build alternative sites; therefore, indirect visual quality effects are not expected. Pontoon moorage in Grays Harbor, although possibly lengthy, would not be permanent. WSDOT does not expect pontoon moorage to produce indirect visual quality effects.

Grass Creek

WSDOT does not expect constructing the Grass Creek mitigation site to significantly change the visual or aesthetic character of the site or vicinity. The site is currently dominated by wetland vegetation with shrubs and trees concentrated in the higher areas of the site. The site would appear disturbed for a short period during construction and the establishment of new vegetation, but eventually the mitigation site would develop a visual and aesthetic character similar to its existing condition.

How would visual quality and aesthetics be affected if the project were not built?

There would be no construction or operational effects on visual quality and aesthetics under the No Build Alternative. The existing emergent wetlands would continue to be the dominant feature on the Anderson & Middleton site, and stockpiled logs used to characterize the Aberdeen Log Yard site until the site was cleared of logs and eventually used for other purposes. Views of these sites in the foreseeable future would only change as vegetation on the sites changes. The sites could continue to be minimally managed open spaces or storage yards or would be developed for other purposes.

What would the cumulative effect on visual quality and aesthetics likely be?

CTC Facility

The CTC facility already operates in a large industrial park, and its operation would most likely continue. Manufacturing pontoons at this site is consistent with its current industrial purpose and use. WSDOT does not expect that using the existing CTC facility for pontoon construction would have any direct or indirect effects on visual quality or aesthetics. The project would not alter the visual quality of the existing CTC facility study area. Therefore, there would be no contribution to cumulative effects on visual quality and aesthetics associated with pontoon-building or towing activities at this site.

Grays Harbor Build Alternatives

Constructing and operating the proposed casting basin facility at either build alternative site would be consistent with the existing visual context of the surrounding area, which is industrial in character. WSDOT did not identify any other projects in the area that would affect visual quality around the proposed build alternative sites. Pontoon towing and moorage would be visually consistent with existing shipping activities in Grays Harbor. While these activities would be visible, they would not contribute to a cumulative effect on visual quality within the industrial viewshed of the study area.