


Playa Vista Remediation

A circular inset photograph showing a landscape at sunset or sunrise. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm orange glow over a valley. In the foreground, there are dry, brownish hills. In the middle ground, there's a flat area with some green patches, possibly a wetland or agricultural field. In the background, there are mountains and a city skyline under a cloudy sky.

Large areas of high-value, open land existed between the Ballona Bluffs and Ballona Creek, west of the San Diego Freeway (I-405) in west Los Angeles. Much of the land had historically been used by Hughes Aerospace as a research and development (R&D) and testing facility. Other areas were used for localized agriculture or remained as degraded wetlands.

The land owner reached agreement with the numerous stakeholders involved the project. The agreement allowed for development on much of the land in exchange for restoration of the degraded wetlands and creation of parks and designated open-space.

Soil and groundwater contamination associated with releases from the Hughes Aerospace facility was identified at the property. Chlorinated solvents were the primary contaminants of concern (COCs); however, other chemicals were also present in localized areas.

In addition, elevated methane concentrations were detected in shallow soil gas. This methane was attributed to both biogenic (wetland) sources and petrogenic (oil field) sources. The area is also underlain by a gas storage project.

An extensive soil and groundwater investigation was performed to characterize site hydrogeology and contaminant conditions, including investigations of deeper groundwater zones and wetland sediments. Based on the investigation, and a human-health and ecological risk assessment, areas requiring remediation were defined.

To facilitate land development, some areas of soil contamination were excavated, notably where subterranean parking was planned below multi-family, residential buildings. This soil was treated ex-situ using soil vapor extraction (SVE) and bio-remediation. In addition, a groundwater remediation program using “pump & treat” was implemented. The extracted groundwater was treated with an advanced oxidation process using ozone and ultra-violet light, followed by granular activated carbon (GAC) polishing.